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Report of the President, Bowdoin College 1995-1996

Bowdoin College

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Cover: Bowdoin's two new residence halls, Stowe Hall in the foreground and Howard Hall in the rear. Photo by Dean Abramson. Photographers: Dean Abramson, Dennis Griggs, Jim Harrison, Herb Pressman.
This is the sixth annual report that I have had the honor to present to the Trustees of Bowdoin College, and the first in its 202 years that a president of the College has addressed to a single Board. The story of the merger of the Overseers and Trustees into a single Board of Trustees, with the approval of the Maine and Massachusetts Legislatures, has been told elsewhere, but this clarification and simplification of governance, guided so effectively by Merton Henry ’50 and Trustee Chair Paul Brountas ’54, is symbolic of other clarifications and fresh efficiencies that my colleagues and I will set forth in the pages that follow.

It has been a good year. Record applications (4,435) were received for Bowdoin’s Class of 2000, and the 457 men and women who will arrive this fall are of exceptionally high intellectual and personal quality. Donors provided a record $18.2 million in gifts to the College in the past year, giving a superb lift to the New Century Campaign. Annual Giving received a record $3.8 million from alumni, parents, and friends. Students had major achievements (a Truman, two Watsons, a Mellon, and four Fulbrights), and our athletic teams were exceptionally successful. (Amazingly, Bowdoin, with its small enrollment, stood ninth nationally in Division III based on the success of all its men’s and women’s teams in 1995-96.) Construction moves ahead: the walls of the new science center are up, and the building is on schedule for a fall 1997 opening. Two handsome new residence halls are nearing completion and will bear the names of Oliver Otis Howard (Bowdoin 1850), head of the Freedmen’s Bureau and the commission that established Howard University; and of Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wrote her Uncle Tom’s Cabin in Brunswick while her husband was on the Bowdoin faculty. These residence halls will house students this fall.

But it has also been a year marked by sadness — the deaths of two members of the graduating class and the death in March of a 20-year old visitor to the campus, which led to the College closing two fraternities for the coming year. This tragedy gave added urgency to the work of the Commission on Residential Life. Under the leadership of Overseer Emeritus Donald R. Kurtz ’52, aided by Craig Bradley, our new Dean of Student Affairs, it will examine the present condition and future models of residential life at Bowdoin, including the future of fraternities, in light of the moral and social dimensions of a Bowdoin education.

This close community, self-analytical and intense, has in fact spent much of the past year examining all aspects of its institutional quality, in preparation for Bowdoin’s decennial reaccreditation which will take place this coming autumn. It is particularly appropriate, therefore, that this report should focus on the question — or dual questions — that numerous parents, board members, and the national media have been asking for some time, and in a few instances with some acerbity: why does a college education — why does Bowdoin — today cost what it does? And is the education...
received worth the price: in Bowdoin's case, $27,760 for tuition, fees, room and board for 1996-97. Two "supplementary" questions are in the air as well that I'll touch on: "Are faculty spending enough time teaching," and, "Is the College pricing itself out of the market?"

Nothing concentrates the mind on these questions more forcefully than having an offspring of one's own entering a private college in the fall, as I have. But this fact also underlines the difficulty of providing a response that will be uniformly satisfying to readers in different stages and conditions of life, with different dispositions toward their own college and toward higher education in general. What I can seek to do is suggest the basis for my belief, by a variety of facts and lines of argument, that Bowdoin is making a number of sophisticated, even intelligent, judgments that will enable it to provide its particular kind of education to its particularly exacting segment of the American educational market, in perpetuity.

First, a few aggregate facts suggest that the United States as a society, because of the extent and diversity of its colleges and universities, is doing a pretty good job meeting the demands of a vast and complex democracy for higher education in a competitive world. Despite the fact that median U.S. income fell in constant dollars from $42,500 in 1980 to $40,500 in 1993, and despite the fact that, depending on the type of institution, tuition and fees rose over roughly the same period between 3.1 and 5.6 percent a year, the percentage of American high school graduates entering higher education rose over these years from 49 percent to nearly 62 percent. (Enrollment rates of high school graduates from lower-income families, although more volatile and closely tied to the economic cycle over this period, rose from 33 percent to 50 percent.) Nearly three-quarters of these students attend institutions charging less than $8,000 a year in tuition and fees; nearly one-half attend four-year colleges and universities charging less than $5,000 a year.

Of this national enrollment, Bowdoin, and comparable undergraduate and university colleges that charge more than $20,000 a year constitute about 2 percent. We track quite carefully the expenditure patterns and fees of two groups of institutions that set themselves educational objectives and standards roughly comparable to our own: a 40-college comparison group and, more intensively, a set of 18 colleges with whom we compete most actively for students and faculty. Table I below sets out the 1995-96 "comprehensive fees" (that is, including room and board) of these 18 colleges.

The best of these residential, liberal arts colleges, such as Bowdoin, offer a certain kind of educational value. As I differentiated it from the serviceable, solid education provided by a

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<th>Comprehensive Fees: 18-College Comparison Group</th>
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<td>COLLEGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middlebury</td>
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state university or a community college in a letter last spring to parents, it presupposes small classes, accessible professors, libraries and labs that are truly available to undergraduates, decent food, pretty good residential arrangements, career centers, counseling and health centers, campus security, 25 or 30 well-coached intercollegiate sports, outing clubs and social clubs, green fields, historic campuses, and so forth. This sort of education — services of such density and intensity — presents an able, highly motivated student with astonishing opportunities for intellectual growth, social experience, and leadership. At the heart of this value is a standard of educational excellence, known over the years to employers and graduate schools, and a body of successful loyal alumni, who advise, assist and support the institution and its graduates. As Table I indicates, these colleges compete, in the main, not by price but by the quality, variety, and singularity of their overall programs. Financial aid (or by another description, a discounting of their educational price) has traditionally been provided only to students with demonstrated financial need, and then in order to sustain the quality and character of the student body these institutions seek.

Similar though these costs and prices may be, they are still very high. The author of an article in Barron's calculated last year that "as a result of tuition increases, a year of college absorbs 45% of median family income today, up from 25% in 1980." 1 A higher income family might make the same point somewhat differently: while it was once possible to finance an offspring's education from cash flow, it must now be financed from capital, borrowings, or a combination of them and current earnings. What happened? Was it, as the Barron's author charged, "lax cost controls and cavalier exploitation of pricing power?"

The research I've seen, supported by our own institutional history and the records of comparable institutions I know quite well, suggest that there was perhaps some of that. Many colleges tended to be creative about education but a bit unworldly about finances — until perhaps fifteen years ago. Since that time, however, and particularly over the last five years, both their governing boards and their managements have toughened. Colleges now know a lot about their costs, track their variances, and run month-to-month control systems. They have become more discriminating about adding academic programs, far better at husbanding their physical assets (buildings and infrastructure) and aggressive and professional in managing their capital (their endowments).

But what happened during the 1980s? Professor Charles Clotfelter of Princeton University wrote a thoughtful paper earlier this year in which he attributes much of this decade-long rise in fees substantially above the rate of inflation, at its root, to the fact that "the university lacks any corporate goal other than the pursuit of excellence." If we set aside the research imperative of universities, which has a dynamic of its own, there is some truth in this for colleges as well. When an institution sets as its goal the development of the intellect and character of a young person for leadership in a world that no one can easily envisage, there can, at the least, be what the armed forces refer to as "mission creep." During the 1980s colleges did indeed escalate their definition of excellence. Bowdoin, for example, internationalized (Asian Studies, including Chinese and Japanese), strengthened its computing and information technology, broadened its athletic programs and expanded student service offices (counseling and career advising).

This escalation was driven, in part, by a sharp increase in public demand for high-quality undergraduate training. Whether, as Clotfelter says, it was "caused by the dramatic increase of the economic payoff to college, the rapidly advancing affluence of the affluent, or merely the snob appeal of purchasing a conspicuously expensive service," applications to most of the better-known colleges rose, while enrollments remained fairly constant. Meanwhile, competition was sharpening among colleges and their competitors, the undergraduate, "university colleges" of Harvard, Dartmouth, Stanford and others.

Members of the Bowdoin Orchestra rehearse before a concert performance in the Chapel.

When already-high institutional aspirations are coupled with intense competition with other colleges for the best students and faculty and with high levels of demand from a population much of which is becoming more prosperous and discerning in the quality and variety of the services it purchases, college expenditures will rise and prices will increase. As another commentator, Richard Chait of Harvard’s School of Education, has observed, “Given the changes in the expectations of the parents and students, the growth (in administrative costs) has not been that remarkable. For instance, it is unthinkable to most youngsters today who want a residential college experience to consider a place that does not have a state-of-the-art weight room, a state-of-the-art computer system, e-mail, around the clock security, psychologists, psychiatrists, ob-gyn, hard-wired dormitories, and cable TV outlets. More and more students are saying that even the notion of having a roommate is an unthinkable proposition.”

Knowingly or not, Mr. Chait is describing Bowdoin and much of our competition.

What then did colleges, including Bowdoin, do with the additional money they were receiving from increased fees? First, we began to pay our faculty better, regaining ground lost to inflation in the late ’70s and early ’80s. The national situation depicted in Table II was echoed at Bowdoin. Second, the College added staff to strengthen Bowdoin’s program in the areas I’ve noted above — and some of the things Chait notes.

Third, as costs and prices rose, Bowdoin and other colleges had to come up with

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<th>Average salaries of full-time faculty in institutions of higher education: 1973-1992 (in constant 1994 dollars)</th>
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<td><strong>TABLE II</strong></td>
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2 Harvard University Gazette, May 9, 1996, p. 4
increased amounts of financial aid, since their mission of excellence (and diversity) drives their admissions programs to accept only students with high aspirations and intellectual promise. Bowdoin’s aid budget was until quite recently rising at roughly twice the rate of our overall fee increase, taking an increasing share of the budget to meet the financial needs of able students.

But at Bowdoin, and in every other institutional analysis I have seen, the largest single cost increase during the 1980s was in the category “other expenditures.” Library automation, improvements to the athletic program, increases in admissions office, computing, museum, student services staff: each college made improvements to its program in accord with its own needs analysis, to the extent that it was able to pay for them.

In this picture there has also been an important sea change that is even more notable in the affairs of universities than it is for colleges, where it is still very substantial: the gradual departure from higher education of the federal government. As reduction of the federal deficit became policy, Washington shifted away from its higher education investment program of the 1970s and early 1980s, directed toward the early years of the lives of Americans — through financial aid, graduate student support, and research assistance. Today Medicare and other programs for the aged take an increasing share of the federal budget. Colleges have filled with their own resources the gap left by the federal government in financial aid budgets and research and library grants — and with resulting pressure on their budgets and development offices.

What does all this mean for Bowdoin’s educational quality today? For the past six years we have been virtually obsessed by this question. I’d mention a few specific enhancements in what an economist would call the “inputs” to a Bowdoin education, after a period of three years in which our main goal was to cut costs, balance the budget, and stabilize fee increases.

We are in the midst of a $40 million program to improve our physical facilities. Its impact on the student fee will be minor, since this construction and renovation is being funded very largely by generous alumni. But there will be a major impact on student lives from a program that includes a new student union, a new science building, renovated dining facilities, two new student residences, a renovated theater, and other projects. The College is reusing creatively as much existing space as possible, and endowing much of the recurrent cost of maintaining new space.

By the end of next year the College will strategically have increased the size of its faculty by approximately ten percent, achieving this growth without an increase in the student-faculty ratio by increasing the student body by 150 students, or ten percent. This faculty growth will have substantially strengthened Bowdoin’s curriculum with exceptional new appointments in history, biology, sociology-anthropology, chemistry, government, and Asian studies. The design has been not to expand the academic program, but to give greater depth to the existing curriculum.

To the extent that each student benefits from the quality of the overall student body, the increased ability of admitted students over the last several years has strengthened academic

Associate Professor of Government
Marcia Weigle leads a seminar discussion on European politics in Hubbard Hall.
Associate Professor of Biology Nat Wheelwright and students conduct ornithological studies at Bowdoin’s Coastal Studies Center on Orr’s Island.

standards and improved discourse in classrooms. Faculty have testified to restructuring courses in response to student capacities.

The new Coastal Studies Center, whose marine and terrestrial labs Leon ’56 and Lisa Gorman are helping us to build, twenty minutes from the campus on Orr’s Island; a strengthened outing club; new programs to improve students’ abilities in writing and quantitative reasoning; and a new office to establish more rigorous quality control in off-campus study — all these constitute improvements in quality and an increase in educational worth. As noted, the capital costs of these improvements have been met substantially by private gifts of Bowdoin graduates, increased recurrent costs either being endowed or absorbed into tightly planned budgets.

Finally, in order to continue to shift expenditures increasingly into core academic functions, as a percentage of the budget, and away from administration, the College is investing in the “reengineering” of its own administrative processes. Our Treasurer and Vice President for Finance and Administration, Kent Chabotar, describes this redesign of core business activities in some detail in his report. As he notes there, we are assigning major sums to information technology — to a combination of new software, microcomputers, and a campus network of fiber optic and copper wire that was completed this summer. All this, at present, implies new costs — notably in infrastructure and computer user service personnel. But the reconception and recombination of functions (student course registration, the campus directory, course scheduling, a Web site to announce Bowdoin to the world [http://www.bowdoin.edu/]) that have already taken place are promising. I believe that both these specific redesigns and, perhaps even more, the engagement of virtually all Bowdoin administrative staff in thinking freshly about why certain processes exist and how, if they must exist, they can be done better, is working a quiet revolution in how the College sees its work. The academy will doubtless begin to see in the coming years the administrative cost efficiencies that have only rather recently been achieved by private industry’s years of investment in electronic processes.

But certain impalpable improvements may be even more important to Bowdoin’s educational value. Bowdoin faculty, in addition to participating strongly in program planning and project design, have themselves been assertive in examining an aspect of educational quality that they, as self-regulating professionals, can best control: the quality of their own collective activity as a faculty. As Dean Charles R. Beitz reports in this document, Bowdoin’s faculty has unanimously approved a resolution of the Faculty Affairs Committee adopting new standards of professional responsibility. It also adopted a methodology for a cooperative monitoring of faculty workloads by faculty and academic dean. The first workload study provided genuinely interesting data that are still being analyzed, but they confirm much of what one would expect in a first-rate liberal arts college: Bowdoin faculty work hard. They spend an average of 57 hours a week teaching, working with students outside formal class settings, performing scholarship and scientific research, and serving the college through such work as budget and department committees, faculty and administrative searches, task forces on computing, reengineering, and building projects. In future reports I will say more on the subject.

It is now widely accepted that price increases and expenditures per student of the magnitude seen in the 1980s will not be repeated. Bowdoin’s budget will be constrained by a rigorous campus budgetary process that will hold fee increases to the range of CPI plus one or
two percent. But neither is it expected that educational costs will decrease. With the price of a Bowdoin education now approaching $120,000 for the four years, may we expect to see alternatives springing up to colleges like ourselves — as both the providers of education and oligopolists of the certification we call the bachelor of arts degree? Clearly training of a high order exists: corporations are now reported to spend much more on their own internal programs than they provide in aid to educational institutions. Those of General Electric and Disney and the year-long apprenticeship programs of all major banks are only the best known. But these are programs related primarily to increasing corporate effectiveness and profitability and most require a first degree. The educational programs of Arthur D. Little and others that actually award the bachelor’s degree are still relatively few. But these programs do not pretend to assume Bowdoin’s mission, and the new Virtual University on the Internet, which we should all welcome, is more likely to test new electronic complements to pedagogy than suggest persuasive alternatives to what a residential liberal arts college does.

What Bowdoin “does,” the expenses funded by its budgets, are of course “inputs.” What are the educational “outcomes,” in the current parlance of skeptics, of these expenditures and the fees that fund them? For two hundred years — and certainly since William DeWitt Hyde’s Offer of the College — the college has been saying to students, not that we will guarantee you a good income or an occupation of high status, but that, if you spend four years among these pines and buildings, with students like yourself who have been selected for good character and promising intellect and aspirations, and if you engage with seriousness — even passion — with Bowdoin’s form of “total educational immersion,” you can become a certain kind of person. Active, receptive young minds, working systematically with trained, specialized older minds, managing the stresses of athletics, campus leadership, and sustaining conversations and competition with other motivated men and women, clearly grow and flourish. They will do so especially in an environment of natural and historic beauty that offers freedom and requires choice, but says also that there are objective standards of right and wrong. The
Associate Professor of Biology Amy Johnson and students in introductory biology examine the fundamentals of biology from the subcellular to the ecosystem level of living organisms.

Although it may require a psychological adjustment, it is not, on the face of it, illogical to suggest that preparation of the next generation for responsible and rewarding lives in a world of today’s complexity and competitiveness will require of families an investment in higher education not unlike their investment in a dwelling. The historians tell us that childhood began to be invested in, as a predictable period of human life, only as mortality rates fell in the nineteenth century. As society has become more complex, and the conditions of economic and social integration into it more onerous, the cost and the time of preparation for a life of significance have risen and lengthened. After fifteen years as a college president, and another fifteen years working in the developing world and Europe, I find it entirely possible to imagine economic circumstances — one of Schumpeter’s “gales of creative destruction” — that could require colleges to reduce fees and costs per student by 20 percent or so. I am sure that, if Bowdoin were called upon to handle such an adjustment, we could manage it because this adaptation would be required of an entire private education sector and the public would tolerate, in such circumstances, the reduction in and redefinition of services that would be required. But, unless the leading colleges and universities deteriorate into pools of scholasticism, moral relativism, and introversion — and, whatever our adversaries may say, they are not doing so — it is difficult for me to imagine any other social institution that could replace in the next decades the intellectual, moral, and social ferment they provide the able young in preparation for life.

There remain three questions, which blur into one another:

1. Will parents continue to value and pay significant amounts for this type of education, relative to the other goods and services offered by society: a second house, travel, other activities and possessions? That answer will depend on factors as mundane as interest rates and available financial aid, and as impalpable as trends in public values. But each year Bowdoin parents and students give me confidence that these investments — their costs probably shared between the generations more than they were — will continue.

2. Assuming that this education is as good as it says it is, will it gradually become a rarified luxury available only to the very well off? Will it be seen as inaccessible by the aspiring lower-income family? This is a far more serious question. Were this to happen, the deterioration in the temper and vitality of our student body, if students of modest circumstances but high motivation to change their
conditions of life melted away, would be disastrous. Bowdoin’s financial aid situation at present is precariously stable: 36 percent of the student body receives grant aid from Bowdoin, the average cash grant is $13,200, or 45 percent of the total cost of attendance. The cost of this grant aid for 1996-97 will be 12.5 percent of the budget. The percentage of this aid which is derived from our restricted endowments is falling; and an increasing amount must now come from general revenues (although all of our students, even those paying the full fee, continue to receive at least an $8,000 subsidy from Bowdoin each year). Of those students to whom we offered acceptance and financial aid, but who did not accept our offers, 66 percent told us that they had received superior aid offers from the college they ultimately attended. This makes the $30 million target for financial aid in the New Century Campaign of extreme importance.

3. Finally, can we maintain our quality over time, and our claim on public confidence, relative to research universities? Of this answer I am far more confident than I was when I assumed Bowdoin’s presidency six years ago. Research universities, superb modern monuments as they are, are now highly specialized research environments. The more distinguished they are, the more their focus tends to drift from undergraduate teaching, from which their most distinguished faculty are substantially exonerated. With resilient academic cultures, highly specialized faculty, and declining federal research funds, a readaptation by research universities to the needs of undergraduate students will not be easy. As smaller, more resilient educational communities, liberal art colleges, however — the best no less than those in fear of their lives — have remarkable powers of adaptation, and we are adapting now.

Critical to our longevity is our quality. I am persuaded that the greatest qualitative need of the residential colleges today is not intellectual or academic, but moral and social: can we invent structures of self-discipline and responsibility in a student body coming from a great variety of backgrounds, and from a society with few common standards of self-discipline and responsibility? This is the great experiment that Bowdoin will take on for the rest of my tenure at the College. Because Bowdoin students are so able, and have such promise — they represent our very best. It is an experiment that has grave implications for the future of our society. We approach it with wonderful new resources — a well-led and newly staffed office of the Dean of Student Affairs, and the Commission on Residential Life, led by one of our most able former Overseers, Donald R. Kurtz.

As I close this report, reflecting on the year just passed, I must note the sad losses we have had in the Bowdoin community in the last twelve months. In December, a student — Shingo Matsumoto, a senior from Tokyo — was tragically struck by a car and killed. He was mourned by faculty, who admired greatly the seriousness of his scholarship and the exuberance of his spirit, and students alike. We then lost Paul Hazelton in January. A member of the Class of 1942, Paul was professor in the English department here from 1957 until his retirement in 1985; his wisdom and his deep caring inspired students of four different decades. Former President James Stacy Coles, whose tenure here was marked by an important strengthening of the science curriculum and a major building program, died in June at the age of 83. In July, former Chair of the Board of Trustees Leonard W. Cronkhite, Jr. ’41 died in Brunswick. These deaths leave great gaps in our community, and we feel them deeply. The occasion of their deaths has allowed me to reflect on the stories of their lives in campus gatherings throughout the year. I am proud to be President of a college whose history includes them.

Robert H. Edwards
President of the College
If you think education is expensive,” a popular bumper sticker proclaims, “consider the alternative.” The point — that failing to invest in education costs one a great deal — is undoubtedly true. But, for colleges like Bowdoin, it also begs the question. Today’s concern about college costs is not only about the investment value of a college education; it is also about the effectiveness and accountability of our institutions. Are we meeting our students’ educational needs? Does the deployment of our resources — especially, our faculty’s time — reflect our educational purposes? How do we know?

These questions, never far from our minds, preoccupied the College in at least three different ways during the year just ended: in discussions about how the curriculum should change with the times, in an intensive review of faculty workload and responsibilities, and in a comprehensive self-analysis in preparation for our decennial accreditation in October 1996. These three streams of activity all took place in the midst of acute awareness of the national concern about effectiveness and accountability in American higher education. They describe a serious and thoughtful, if not yet complete, response by our faculty, students and administrators to this concern.

Curricular Change

Five years ago, the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee (CEP) resolved to focus its attention on a small number of matters of broad institutional consequence — the need to strengthen instruction in the basic competencies, the coherence and effectiveness of introductory courses in the sciences, the need for greater depth in the study of non-western societies, the rigor of the major and particularly of honors work in the departments, the lack of an institutional procedure for regular review of the apportionment of faculty positions across the curriculum. Five years on, the faculty members and students who have served on the CEP have much to be proud of: the Writing Project, now two years old, has by all measures surpassed our expectations, and served as a model for a new Quantitative Skills Program adopted this past spring by the faculty; all of our science departments have reconfigured their introductory course sequences and, working with a CEP subcommittee, sought ways to make laboratory
experience available to more students at the introductory level; a review of departmental honors programs was carried out, aiming for greater consistency and broader accessibility of honors work; and, very significantly, the CEP proposed, and the faculty adopted, a process for re-evaluating the commitment of faculty positions to individual departments when those positions become vacant. This creates a capacity, new for Bowdoin, to respond to changes in the world of knowledge and in the distribution of students’ interests by shifting faculty positions among departments (“change by substitution,” in the argot of the ’90s). A review of major programs across the curriculum will begin this fall.

The new process for reconsidering the allocation of faculty positions was modelled on the successful planning process for the “expansion positions” associated with the growth of the College, to which the CEP has devoted considerable time and effort in each of the last three years. This past spring, in the final round of decisions, new positions were assigned to biology, English, government, and the study of Japan (in a social science department to be determined). By 1997-98, a total of 12 full-time-equivalent new positions will have been established, in each case in areas judged by the CEP to represent high curricular need. There will be a significant impact on the overall composition of the faculty. Taking the new positions together with normal turnover, more than 25% of those holding continuing appointments will have come to Bowdoin in the five-year period ending in 1997-98.

I should report particularly about two aspects of our work in international and non-western studies, which is an important dimension of curricular change. First, over several years, the primary (although not the only) focus of Bowdoin’s investment in the study of non-western societies has been in Asian Studies. Major commitments were made in the late 1980s, largely with the support of grants. The expiration of these grants, which coincided with the financial retrenchment of the early 1990s, unfortunately meant that rapid growth was followed by equally rapid, though not as extensive, contraction. The pattern has now been reversed, as three new faculty positions have been added, all committed to the study of Japan, initiating a first wave of rebuilding. We must still address significant needs in the other two focal areas of Asian Studies at Bowdoin — China and South Asia.

Second, a note about the continuing work to improve off-campus study (OCS). Last year, under the leadership of Assistant Dean and Off-Campus Study Director Stephen Hall and a faculty committee chaired by Professor of Government Allen Springer, OCS programs were reviewed with an eye to ensuring academic quality, and administrative services to
students were significantly enhanced. We now have better information than ever before about off-campus study opportunities; the system of advising, which involves major departments, faculty members with special knowledge of particular programs, and the off-campus study staff, is better organized and integrated; and we are better able to respond to requests for help from our students while they are abroad. Better support is costly, and to defray expenses it was decided to establish a fee for participation in off-campus study programs on the theory that it is not fair to impose these costs on the 50% of our students who remain on campus. The fee takes effect in 1997-98; it will be included in the cost of education in calculating financial aid, for which students remain eligible when they participate in approved OCS programs. Owing to the increasing popularity of off-campus study, we found ourselves, unexpectedly, with an unprecedented imbalance in requests to study away in the fall and spring terms of 1996-97; steps have been taken to reduce the imbalance in the coming year, but it is clear that a more systematic solution will be required, one that recognizes our students’ academic needs without imposing impossible strains on the life of the College in Brunswick.

**Faculty Workload and Responsibilities**

For the last three years, the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) has been concentrating on what has become known as the “workload project.” This has been an effort to confront several related issues: a concern that there may be substantial inequities in workload across departments and ranks; a feeling that, in light of changes in pedagogy, the need to recognize substantial commitments to independent work with students, and differences in commitments to College service, there may be better ways to calibrate individual workloads than simply by counting course assignments; and the absence of any clear, institutional statement of faculty responsibilities for satisfying College obligations and engaging in scholarly work.

As the President has noted, the project bore fruit this past year. First, the FAC presented a “Report on Faculty Workloads” summarizing the results of a remarkably detailed survey of the use of faculty time. Among the most interesting findings:

- Taking the standard course as the unit of measure, the survey attempted to measure differences in the commitment of time to various forms of teaching, including standard courses, courses with labs, courses with multiple discussion sections, and independent studies and honors projects. The survey found that the average Bowdoin faculty member teaches the equivalent of about 5.2 standard courses in a year.

- The committee did not find evidence of systematic teaching load inequities by rank, gender, or division of the curriculum. But there was some suggestion that women associate professors, as a group, may have disproportionately heavy teaching and service loads, and there will be further study to learn whether this is true, and if so, what might be done about it.

- Although there was no evidence of systematic inequities, there were quite substantial
variations in workload among individuals. In the coming year, the committee will consider mechanisms that might be used to even out these variations.

A second, and possibly a more important, result of the project was enactment of new language for the Faculty Handbook describing in specific terms the responsibilities of a Bowdoin faculty member as a teacher, scholar, and member of the college community. At a time when many colleges and universities are finding that faculty members’ loyalties tend more toward their professional guilds than their own institutions, the new Handbook statement makes clear that Bowdoin faculty members hold themselves to a different standard. There is no question at Bowdoin that the College’s teaching mission must come first. Of course, we also expect ourselves to live lives of active scholarship, but we are clear that this ought not to occur at the expense of our duties to students. Both because of its rigor and its roots in the faculty itself, the new statement of professional responsibility — accepted by a unanimous faculty — argues persuasively against the fashionable skepticism of the academy’s capacity for self-regulation.

The remaining task is to explore alternatives to the familiar notion of a nominal “standard course load” as our definition of a faculty member’s teaching obligations. This task has been propelled by the FAC’s finding of significant disparities in actual teaching loads. But it would be a mistake to think that the question is motivated only by considerations of equity; at a deeper level, it is forced on us by the substantial changes in pedagogy that have taken place in the last 20 to 30 years. Lab work is now ubiquitous in the sciences, even at the beginning level; mathematics now includes computer-based teaching workshops; language study involves conversation groups and multimedia laboratories as well as lectures and recitations; and throughout the curriculum, there is considerably more emphasis on instruction in small groups and in the one-on-one settings of independent study and honors projects. Inevitably, these changes in the way we teach have consequences for the way we calibrate the teaching load; if some courses require more preparation and teaching time
than others, and if an increasing amount of teaching occurs outside the framework of regular courses, then the "course" isn’t even nominally a reliable unit of account. All of this means that the next phase of the workload project will bring us face-to-face with a really fundamental conundrum in the affairs of a college: how to define the extent of a faculty member’s teaching obligation so as to create incentives to apportion time in the most educationally effective way possible, while encouraging a conspicuously fair sharing of responsibilities.

**Accreditation**

The new academic year will see the completion of our decennial process of accreditation. An evaluation team representing the New England Commission on Higher Education will visit the campus at the end of October, changed to certify that the College satisfies the Commission’s 11 Standards for Accreditation. The Standards are detailed, but the overall intention is clear: to ensure that the College’s principal operating policies and the allocation of its resources adequately reflect a clear and well-understood educational mission, and to assess the College’s mechanisms for monitoring the success of its programs.

In the nature of things, the preparation for such an evaluation is at least as important as the evaluation itself. It is an opportunity to take a comprehensive look at the state of the institution, to identify our strengths, and to establish priorities in meeting our challenges.

Under the leadership of the Strategic Planning Task Force, last year was devoted to a searching process of institutional self-analysis. This is a normal part of the accreditation procedure, but we have tried to make it something special: a chance to concentrate on aspects of the College which could benefit particularly from the close scrutiny and constructive observations of an expert visiting team. The focus has been “Intellectual Engagement in a Residential College,” with special attention to three areas: residential life, extra- and co-curricular activities, and academic life beyond the classroom. Study papers on each area were written by student/faculty working groups. These, together with analytical papers on each of the 11 Standards, comprise the Bowdoin College Self-Study 1996—the document that serves as the basis of the visiting team’s evaluation. Assistant Dean Stephen Hall has superintended the entire process with great effect. He and the many authors have produced a self-study which is as careful and intelligently self-critical as any visiting committee could hope to see.

In recent years, there has been a good deal of criticism of our national system of voluntary accreditation, principally because it has too often seemed ineffectual. But we have reason to expect that Bowdoin’s experiment with accreditation, consciously designed as an instrument of institutional self-improvement, will persuasively illustrate the system’s constructive potential. I look forward to reporting on the outcome of this effort at this time next year.


**Developments among the Faculty**

It is a pleasure to report that Barbara Weiden Boyd (Classics) has been promoted to the rank of professor. Four colleagues were promoted to the rank of associate professor, with tenure: Paul N. Franco (Government), Janice A. Jaffe (Romance Languages), Amy S. Johnson (Biology), and Suzanne B. Lovett (Psychology).

This was the second year of the Kenan Fellowship Program, an initiative designed to support faculty development projects of unusual promise extending over several years. Competition, again, was intense — there were eleven candidates for three awards. Our new Kenan Fellows are John M. Fitzgerald, Associate Professor of Economics, for a project entitled *How Will Earnings Inequality Affect Family Structure?*; Celeste Goodridge, Associate Professor of English, for a project entitled *Performing Lives: Biographers, Subjects and Readers*; and Janet M. Martin, Associate Professor of Government, for evolving work in two areas: *Women and the Presidency and Quantitative Approaches in Political Science*.

The Sydney B. Karofsky Prize, awarded annually to recognize excellence in teaching by an untenured member of the faculty, was awarded this year to James A. Higginbotham, Assistant Professor of Classics on the Henry Johnson Professorship Fund.

James D. Redwine, Jr., Edward Little Professor of the English Language and Literature, and Guenter H. Rose, Associate Professor of Psychology and Psychobiology, retired from the teaching faculty on June 30, 1996, and by vote of the Governing Boards were named to the ranks of the emeriti. Together, Jim and Guenter served the College for a total of 53 years. They will be missed.

Finally, a note about the faculty recruitment season, which resulted in appointments to four tenurable positions, in each case of scholars with excellent educational backgrounds and strong commitments to undergraduate teaching. I have been increasingly impressed with the quality and depth of applicant pools for Bowdoin’s faculty positions and with the interest in the College displayed by our finalists. We hear from candidates that Bowdoin has a reputation as a challenging and nurturing environment for aspiring teachers and scholars. The continuing success in attracting top-notch people to our ranks is due to the hard work of department chairs, who organize and coordinate recruitment in their areas, and to the inspired collaboration of Associate Dean Susan A. Kaplan, who oversees our recruitment efforts with enormous care and unwavering good judgment.

This report concludes my fifth year as Bowdoin’s chief academic officer. As I write, the exterior walls of our new, $20 million science building are just being completed, underscoring the remarkable institutional momentum that has developed during the first half of this decade. I’ve said previously that Bowdoin in the 1990s is a strikingly countercyclical phenomenon: at a time when many of our peer institutions are running harder to stay in place, the College has advanced demonstrably on virtually all fronts. For me, it has been an invigorating five years, during which I’ve developed the highest respect for this institution and its devoted and resilient people. The opportunity to serve as Bowdoin’s academic dean at a time of both challenge and promise really is a great professional privilege.

Charles R. Beitz
Dean for Academic Affairs
The treasurer is pleased to report that Bowdoin College remains financially stable. The budget has been balanced for the third consecutive year. For fiscal year (FY) 1995-96 that ended on June 30, 1996, the College had a modest surplus of $71,000 on revenues and expenditures of $64 million. Approved by the Governing Boards last March, the FY 1996-97 budget is also projected to be balanced. Nearly half of the increase in total budget in recent years is attributable to the planned growth of the College from 1410 students in FY 1993-94 to 1550 in FY 1997-98.

This year, the treasurer’s report will summarize the College’s financial condition, participatory budget process, and how we are restoring the budget priority of the academic program. Then, the report will examine how reengineering is helping us not only to control costs but also enhance the quality of our administrative services.

FINANCIAL CONDITION

Revenues
The student comprehensive fee comprises 67% of total revenue. This includes tuition, fees, room, and board. In the last few years, the comprehensive fee (tuition, room, board, and fees) has risen modestly above consumer price inflation. Bowdoin College annually compares itself to a group of eighteen competitor colleges, including Amherst, Swarthmore, Wellesley, and Williams. The percentage increases that the College has budgeted in the last three years compare favorably with the average increases for private colleges in the U.S. and the 18-college group.

From charging the second highest student fees among the 18-college group five years ago, Bowdoin College’s rank has fallen as low as fourteenth and, based on a 4.75% increase, is eighth for FY 1996-97. The number of applicants to Bowdoin College has increased by a third over the last three years due not only to our solid reputation but also to the outstanding job of Admissions Dean Dick Steele and his staff. Nevertheless, the College is not complacent about costs to students and parents. Our reliance on other sources of revenue (notably the endowment and annual giving) and continuing cost containment help to keep student fees competitive and consistent with the quality of the College’s educational program.

The investment earnings of the endowment used in support of the budget — including interest, dividends, and realized gains — are about 17% of total revenue. Use of the endowment has plummeted from 9.7% of its market value five years ago to an estimated 4.5% in FY 1995-96, thereby conserving its purchasing power. Chaired by Barry Wish ’63, the investment committee of the trustees has prudently invested the endowment with professional managers and allocated assets among stocks, bonds, real estate, and other investment vehicles. Almost half of the endowment is invested in domestic and international stock, a quarter in investment partnerships and venture capital/private equity, and the remainder largely in bonds, real estate, and cash. The market value of the College’s endowment is estimated at $276 million as of June 30, 1996, an increase of 24% over last year. The average annual increase of 11.4% over the last five years is also impressive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Bowdoin</th>
<th>Average — U.S. Private Colleges</th>
<th>Average — 18 College Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annual giving from alumni, parents, and friends constitutes about 6% of total revenue. A review of the most recent five years shows that a steady increase in annual giving has helped significantly to restore a balanced operating budget.

The support of the FY 1995-96 budget by annual giving, endowment earnings, and other revenues enabled the College to offer an academic program, residential life, and support services that cost an average $38,000 per student compared to a comprehensive fee of $26,500.

### ENDOWMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Mkt Value at FY end</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>Endowment per student</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 1991-92</td>
<td>$165.7 mm</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>$115,777</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1992-93</td>
<td>$185.2 mm</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>$129,424</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1993-94</td>
<td>$193.9 mm</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>$129,943</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1994-95</td>
<td>$222.6 mm</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>$150,791</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1995-96 (est.)</td>
<td>$276.0 mm</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>$181,102</td>
<td>20.17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ANNUAL GIVING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents Fund</td>
<td>$334,788</td>
<td>$273,298</td>
<td>$241,545</td>
<td>$218,711</td>
<td>$207,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends Fund</td>
<td>$38,726</td>
<td>$44,041</td>
<td>$43,569</td>
<td>$37,681</td>
<td>$44,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$3,879,126</td>
<td>$3,645,594</td>
<td>$3,551,259</td>
<td>$3,241,960</td>
<td>$3,256,497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, the New Century Campaign, of which annual giving is a part, is the key to our success in our third century. As of June 30 1996, the campaign received commitments from 14,615 donors totalling $66.9 million or 59% of the $113 million goal. In addition to the hard and effective work of Bill Torrey and the staff of the College's development office, the Campaign has been ably led by two trustees and a superb Campaign Steering Committee. Following his election as chair of the board of trustees, Fred Thorne '57 has been succeeded as campaign chair by Donald Zuckert '56. Even with the Campaign, I see a solid financial future only if the College is managed with exceptional prudence and discipline over its costs.

Cost Controls
Winston Churchill once declared that “there is no surer method of economizing and saving money than in the reduction of the number of officials.” Costs have been contained at Bowdoin College primarily by eliminating almost fifty permanent administrative and support positions from the regular operating budget since FY 1990-91—made easier by offering two early retirement programs. Expense budgets have also been trimmed by 25% in real terms. Rigorous position controls ensure that departments do not exceed budgeted staffing levels, vacancies are filled only after careful review, and new administrative positions are rarely authorized. This limits "budget creep," the gradual growth of costs, one position at a time, that leads eventually to the same budget crisis that the College overcame in the early 1990s.

The result of these efforts has been most striking in the severely constrained growth of the annual operating budget. During the five years from FY 1985-86 to FY 1989-90, Bowdoin’s total educational and general budget increased at an average annual rate of 11%. The average rate of growth fell to 3% between FY 1990-91 and FY 1994-95. Expenses for institutional overhead decreased by an average 3.6% per year during this period due, in part, to a reclassification of expenses to standardize comparisons with other colleges. On the other hand, instructional and research expenditures—at the center of the College’s mission—increased 5% on average.

Investments in Quality
Still, the College continues to invest in the quality of our students, staff, and physical plant. Financial aid grants assist over six hundred students to attend Bowdoin College, thereby helping to build a student body that is both excellent and diverse. College funding for financial aid grants will rise 6.6% in the FY 1996-97 budget to $8.1 million. Between FY 1991-92 and FY 1995-96, the average annual increase in college grants has been 8% while tuition and fees have climbed an average of 5.2% per year. Compared to FY 1995-96, the aid budget for FY 1996-97 increases the num-
ber of students on grant aid by 2% (in part to compensate for the additional thirty-five students admitted as part of the College’s four-year plan to increase enrollment). The average grant award rises by 4.5% and, as a percentage of the cost of attendance, remains 45%.

Employee salaries and benefits exceed half of total expenses. Targets for faculty salaries are fully supported in FY 1996-97. Administrative and support staff salaries also increase; nearly half of that increase is needed to restore our competitive position in relevant labor markets. The other half recognizes their extraordinary performance in effectively serving more students and faculty with fewer staff and reduced budgets.

The FY 1996-97 budget plans a 31% increase in expenditures for major maintenance and capital projects based, in part, on a comprehensive building audit. The recommended $2.9 million (of which $750,000 is from restricted funds) is nearly double what was spent in FY 1993-94 and reduces deferred maintenance by 20%. A new science center is scheduled for completion in fall 1997. The trustee facilities committee, chaired by Peter Small ’64, has adeptly assisted in setting priorities and controlling costs.

Finally, the staff in computing and information services managed the completion this summer of the campus technology network. This collection of cables, wires, and electronic equipment will link almost all college-owned buildings—on and off campus in Brunswick—to telephone and phone-mail services; locally produced or external programming from cable or satellite feed; and central computing services, library resources, E-mail, and the world wide web. For me and other children of the 1950s and previous decades, this advanced technology is, in the words of the science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke, “indistinguishable from magic.”

**Bond Rating**
The College’s health financial condition was recognized by Moody’s Investors Services. This rating firm evaluated the College’s creditworthiness for $30 million in tax-exempt bonds issued in the spring and summer of 1995 for renovations to Moulton Union and other buildings and new construction. Although Polonius advised Laertes in *Hamlet* to “neither a borrower nor a lender be,” institutions often borrow for major capital projects at low tax exempt interest rates rather than spend precious endowment assets with potentially higher rates of return. Two new residence halls — named for Harriet Beecher Stowe and General Oliver Otis Howard — opened in fall 1996 for 100 students. They will assist the academic and social programming efforts of the new dean of student affairs, Craig Bradley.

Although these two bond issues quadruple our total long-term debt and require annual debt service payments from the current fund alone of about $800,000, Moody’s preserved the College’s strong A1 bond rating, saying:

Due to cost-cutting measures, the College has substantially improved its operating performance over the past four years. Unrestricted operating margins have gone from -3.5% in 1990 to over 7.6%. At the same time, the College capped its endowment spending at $10.1 million, effectively reducing its endowment spending rate from a high of 9.1% to approximately 5% currently.

### Financial Aid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 1994-95</th>
<th>FY 1995-96</th>
<th>FY 1996-97</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number with grant aid</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of student body</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average college grant</td>
<td>$11,941</td>
<td>$12,645</td>
<td>$13,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of cost of attendance</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant aid as percent of total budget</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost 80% of Bowdoin students participate in some form of athletic activity, from intercollegiate teams and club sports to Outing Club trips and aerobic classes.

BUDGET PROCESS

Participative Campus Process
This is the fifth budget recommended to President Edwards by the budget and financial priorities committee. Its membership includes members of the senior staff, representatives of the administrative and support staffs, faculty, and students.

- Jim Ward (faculty) chaired the budget committee for the second year; he also served as the committee’s first chair for the FY 1992-93 budget. Kent Chabotar (senior staff) continued to serve as vice chair. Other committee members were: Charles Beitz (senior staff), Kathryn Humphreys (administrative staff), Michael Jones (faculty), Irena Makarushka (faculty), Bonnie Pardue (support staff), Karen Tilbor (senior staff), and Craig Strauss ’96 (student). Joshua Dorfman ’97 was the student alternate. Committee staff was Gerald Boothby (budget office) and Christine Brooks (institutional research).

Guiding Principles
The budget committee worked closely with the financial planning committee of the trustees under the leadership of Donald Kurtz ’52 as chair and Tracy Burlock ’81 as vice chair. All of us were guided primarily by the need to preserve a balanced operating budget and to shift budget priorities toward the academic program. Budget decisions were reached in the context of the College’s long-range financial planning model that now estimates revenues and expenses to FY 2006-07. Budget growth was severely constrained except in faculty and student services related to increased enrollment. Other major priorities were limiting endowment spending and increases in student charges, supporting fair and competitive compensation for faculty and staff, preserving the functionality and appearance of the physical plant, and ensuring that the gradual growth in the size of the College was budget neutral. In presenting their proposed budget to the trustees last March, I paraphrased St. Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy: “We have fought a good fight, we have finished our course, and we have kept the faith.”

Shifting Priorities
The budget committee has worked in recent years to increase the percentage of the educational and general (E&G) budget spent on instruction, our primary mission, and to decrease the percentage spent on administrative overhead or “institutional support.” The E&G budget is about 80% of the total budget and excludes dining services, bookstore, and other auxiliary services.

Historical Trends
Until two years ago, instruction was combined with research in the College’s annual financial statements. From 25.6% of the education and general budget in FY 1986-87, instruction and research has gradually increased to 31.5% in FY 1994-95. This is the highest percentage in at least twelve years. Instruction alone fluctuat-
ed between 30% and 30.4% between FY 1992-93 and FY 1994-95. Conversely, administrative overhead or "institutional support" has decreased from its peak of 21.7% in FY 1986-87 to 14.7% in FY 1994-95. This is the lowest percentage in at least twelve years.

Both trends persist in the proposed budget for FY 1996-97 and budget estimates for FY 1997-98. Instruction remains a high budget priority, especially as enrollment increases and new revenues help to enrich the academic program and increase faculty size. Between FY 1994-95 and FY 1997-98, annual expenditures for institutional support related to the new enrollment are budgeted to increase by only $75,000 while instructional expenditures rise by $790,000.

**Comparative Analysis**

In instruction, the higher the rank, the better. In FY 1994-95, Bowdoin College ranked thirteenth highest in the percentage of the educational budget spent on instruction among the 18-college group (fourteenth in FY 1992-93) and tenth in instructional expenditures per student (also tenth in FY 1992-93). For institutional support, the lower the rank, the better. Our rank for the percentage of the budget spent on institutional support improved perceptibly by dropping from first in FY 1992-93 to eleventh in FY 1994-95; this is due in part to reclassification of expenses to standardize comparisons with other colleges. Support expenditures per student also fell from fourth to twelfth over this period. Only in expenditures for student services and plant does the College rank near the top of the 18-college group.

**PROCESS REENGINEERING**

The College will invest $1.7 million in process reengineering over four years. Reengineering may be defined as a fundamental, zero-based rethinking of a core administrative process such as hiring new employees in order to make it more efficient, effective in terms of achieving desired outcomes, and user friendly to staff, students, alumni, and friends. It recognizes the validity of the Latin epigram: *tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis* or "times change and we change with them." In our case, it consists of upgrading technology by converting to new administrative computer software, standardizing data to facilitate communication among departments, and redesigning processes. Chaired initially during my treasurership by Rosalyne Bernstein and now by J. Taylor Crandall ’76, the audit committee of the trustees has been particularly helpful in ensuring that the new software and process redesign received adequate attention and funding.

As the retrenchment begun in 1990 achieved the goal of balancing the budget, the main purpose of reengineering is not to save money and cut positions. Instead, we strive to make administrative services more user friendly and efficient, in part to enlarge the student body without enlarging staff. We aim to have 150 more students served by almost the same number of non-faculty employees who are working smarter and not just harder. Reengineering at Bowdoin does not involve instructional processes and most other elements of the academic program. What is also driving reengineering at Bowdoin is our movement away from the decentralized conditions of previous decades toward a more cohesive institutional structure and culture. This effort is being coordinated by a reengineering steering committee, chaired by the treasurer, that comprises faculty, staff, and students.

**Mission**

In Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, we are warned that if you do not know where you are going, any way will get you there. A mission statement answers the crucial question of “Why are we reengineering?” At Bowdoin, we developed a mission statement intended to rally the campus and focus the process. It declared:

Reengineering aims to create an environment in which services and management processes are continuously examined and improved in response to changing constituent needs; information systems enhance the capability to retrieve, exchange, and analyze institutional data; and evaluation of
success is based on responsiveness to constituents' needs, efficiency and cost effectiveness, and contribution to the academic mission of the College.

**Process Redesign**

This aims at creating fundamentally "new and improved" processes rather than incremental changes. Out of 250 administrative processes identified by six functional working groups (involving seventy-five faculty, staff, and students), twenty will be redesigned in four years. Reengineering here does not include the academic program. Process redesign involves standard steps: mapping the current process, brainstorming on improvements, building a prototype of a profoundly improved process, validating the new process with user departments, and reporting back to a steering committee. Key members of the teams have standard roles: leader, facilitator, process owner, and technologist as well as a senior administrator who serves as the sponsor. They commit up to 75% of their time to reengineering over a 6-8 week "timebox" which puts tremendous strains on the departments they leave behind.

- **Course registration** (with John Cullen of Athletics as team leader) was redesigned in the winter of 1995 as a pilot test. Three other processes were redesigned in FY 1995-96: events and room scheduling (Anne Springer/Admissions); staff and student directory information (Jim Ward/Mathematics); and cash handling (Joe Drummond/Development). Admissions applications processing was done this summer 1996 (Rick Parkhurst/Facilities Management). Note that one of the features of reengineering is the contribution of team leaders and others from departments who are not administratively responsible for the process being redesigned.

The other fifteen processes that the College plans to reengineer in the next three years are: mailing lists, gift processing, college catalogue, hiring administrative and support staff, hiring casual and other temporary employees, inventory control, daily calendar, ordering course textbooks and materials, faculty grant support, student employment, budget formulation, student orientation, service billings, payroll processing, and purchasing. Thus, what Alfred
Lord Tennyson wrote about the world of King Arthur in *The Idylls of the King* will apply in equal measure to Bowdoin College: "The old order changeth, yielding place to new..."

Bowdoin also developed a team symbol for most redesigns. For events and room scheduling, it was a *brown envelope*; in the old process, a scheduling form with multiple copies was sent around campus in the envelope so that each department could remove its copy and learn about an upcoming event. The cash handling team adopted the *quarter coin* because that was the most popular denomination (for vending machines, washer and dryers, and video games) and the most difficult to transport in quantity. These symbols appeared on t-shirts, invitations to team events, and stationery.

Redesigned processes are handed off to administrative departments for implementation. The convening of a meeting after redesign but before implementation serves both practical and symbolic purposes at Bowdoin. The process team, representatives of implementing departments, and senior staff officers attend to witness the "passing of the torch" from the team to the administrators responsible for carrying out the new process.

**Software Application Conversion**

In the FY 1994-95 budget, the College embarked on a comprehensive upgrade of its administrative information system. This system serves not only accounting and development but also admissions, financial aid, registrar and student records, student life, events and summer programs, and other departments. A relational data base management system, ADABAS, was purchased from a commercial vendor. This decision was based on a recommendation from an administrative information system study team, composed of representatives from all user departments.

**Professional Development**

A notable benefit of reengineering has been the enhanced personal and administrative skills of participants. We trained far more faculty and staff than were needed for reengineering. Our rationale was that leadership, meeting facilitation, and management were skills that everyone on campus could use, and the training would advertise another benefit of reengineering. Participants report:

- Increased knowledge about administrative functions and programs outside their normal responsibilities [team leaders and facilitators are not experts in the processes they are redesigning; others on the team are];
- More opportunities to work collaboratively with employees from different departments and students;
- Feeling empowered to improve key processes that matter; and
- Excellent training in project management, team leadership, and meeting facilitation that is applicable to more than just reengineering.

**Beyond Bowdoin**

Reengineering is becoming higher education’s version of MBO. In most colleges and universities, financial pressures and the need to be more efficient are the principal stimuli. In other institutions, competitive concerns have focused reengineering on offering better services to faculty and students. A few anecdotes from other colleges and universities will illustrate reengineering’s importance in our industry.

- At Boston College, the reengineering of course registration reduced the number of positions in the registrar’s office from twenty-two to eighteen through attrition. Moreover, much “busy work” was eliminated and staff members were relieved to find that they would be redeployed into “more interesting jobs” in enrollment management and desktop publishing.
- Senior administrators at Carnegie-Mellon phoned their counterparts at Yale, MIT, and Columbia to learn more about reengineering. They later formed an enrollment process reengineering team who visited MIT, Boston College, University of Pennsylvania, and the University of...
Delaware to observe “best practices.”

- Stanford’s School of Medicine appointed and trained five “research process managers” to assist the reengineering teams. Quick action and mobility were considered essential. Thus, RPM’s were equipped with bicycles, laptops, cellular phones, access to a central shared database, and university signature authority for expenditures and contracts.

- For several years, Virginia Tech has been involved in a national benchmarking project that provided comparative cost and workload data from 170 institutions to use in five business-redesign initiatives.

- Bryant College invited faculty, staff, and students to monthly community forums at which reengineering goals and timetables were discussed. Additionally, all recommendations made by the reengineering team were placed on reserve in the library for review and comment. The director of information technology said that most of the comments received were helpful with the possible exception of “outsourcing the entire IT function.”

- MIT’s President Charles Vest conveyed the importance of the institute’s $40 million reengineering project in a letter in which he stated, “What you are being asked to accomplish is not a routine matter. We are asking for a revolution.”

**Beyond Reengineering?** A frequently quoted article in *The Boston Globe* on November 12, 1995 claimed that reengineering is a fad, often used as a euphemism for layoffs, and a gravy train for consultants.

That is not true at Bowdoin College. We have a fully-budgeted four year plan to reengineer selected processes on a campus-wide basis. It has already led to local reengineering efforts in the library and bookstore. As discussed earlier, because most of the position reductions have already been made in balancing the operating budget in FY 1993-94, reengineering at the College is being used to improve processes and not just cut staff. Consulting help has been valuable but minimal, amounting to less than 5% of the total project budget. We also linked with reengineers from Bath Iron Works, a major ship-building company, for training and with L.L. Bean for more general advice, with the assistance of its president, Leon Gorman ’56. Nevertheless, a hallmark of reengineering here is that we have done it *largely on our own.*

Thus, Bowdoin College has its own version of education’s 3 Rs: retrenchment, reorganization, and reengineering. These initiatives will allow the current FY 1996-97 budget to be the fourth consecutive balanced budget.

But a college with a national reputation and a splendid history needs more than just a balanced budget. It requires adequate investments in what makes any educational institution great: excellent students, a distinguished faculty and academic program, the best facilities and equipment for teaching and learning, and a first-rate staff dedicated to providing top quality administrative services. It also requires tuition and financial aid policies that are affordable and an endowment that is conserved for future generations. That this budget can accomplish these objectives and remain balanced is evidence of the high purpose and ability to make difficult choices of everyone who worked so hard to produce it. Their efforts mirror what Henry Wadsworth Longfellow of the Class of 1825 wrote in *The Village Blacksmith:*

Each morning sees some task begin,
   Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done
   Has earned a night’s repose.

These are the central messages and challenges of this treasurer’s report, the fifth that I have been privileged to write for the Bowdoin Community.

**Kent John Chabotar**  
**Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer**
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