Standard Eleven: Integrity

Bowdoin College is committed to truthfulness, transparency, and fairness in its relations with all internal and external constituencies. The administration of the College endeavors at all times to ensure that communications, deliberations, and reporting on matters are prepared and/or conducted in a manner that gives all participants the information necessary to comment and to participate appropriately.

The College’s By-Laws proscribe discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, creed, ancestry, national and ethnic origin, or physical or mental handicap. College publications carry statements of non-discrimination, and appropriate mechanisms are in place to communicate policies and ensure that they are followed. The College also adheres to its obligations under other federal regulations including ADA, EEO, and Freedom from Harassment policies. Much of this information can be found at <http://www.bowdoin.edu/hr/index.shtml>.

In the past ten years, Bowdoin has established or revised policies designed to support the College’s mission and to sustain the highest ethical standards for College operations. The College has attempted to create systems that are clear and fair to all concerned, and there have been a number of changes in policy and procedure over the past decade. The effort in this Standard is to comment only on major changes in campus climate, policy, and procedure over the past decade.

Gender Equity, Racial Diversity, and Campus Climate

At the time of Bowdoin’s last accreditation, both the self-study and the visiting team commented on diversity and gender issues. At that time, women and minorities were “seriously under-represented” at the senior administration level and the visiting team noted the lack of women in some departments. The undergraduate population had few students of color, especially African American students and Hispanic/Latino students, and the minority students who were at the College too often reported negative experiences and unhappiness. In the report of the outside review team the College was commended for the strides it had made towards achieving a more diverse community, but the visiting team remarked on “persistent, unresolved gender issues,” suggested that a number of problems might be ameliorated by a more diverse faculty and administration, and asked “if the departments are as committed to affirmative action as is the administration.”

Gender: Since 2002 the College has made significant strides in addressing gender issues. In 2006–07, four of the senior officers are women, compared to none in 1996. The proportion of women in the faculty has continued to increase, now totaling 39% of the tenured faculty and 53% of the tenure-track faculty in 2005–06 (Standard 5). Over the past five years 40% of the academic department chairs and program directors have been women, closely reflecting the representation of women in the tenured faculty. Reviews of salary distributions continue to show that the salaries of women faculty are comparable to those of male faculty, when controlling for rank and years of experience.
The administrative and support staff is composed of approximately 57% women, with a significant increase since 1996 in women represented at the director level and other higher levels in administration.

The Oversight Committee on the Status of Women and the Oversight Committee on Multicultural Affairs were established in the 1995–96 academic year as general College committees to involve faculty, students, and administrative staff in continuing oversight of important issues related to climate and equality at Bowdoin.

In the spring of 2006, the Oversight Committee on the Status of Women reviewed the issues set out in the 1996 reaccreditation self-study and reported to the Steering Committee that none were familiar to the current members of the committee, especially the more flagrant examples of harassment reported in the 1996 focus groups. Their review was far from exhaustive, but it was the sense of the Committee that life is noticeably better for women than it appears to have been ten years ago. Among the factors likely contributing to this perception are the number of women in senior administrative positions and directing departments or programs; elimination of fraternities and the creation of College Houses; changes in Residential Life with proctors and RAs creating community in their buildings; expansion of relevant orientation programs for staff and faculty along with significantly greater respect for sexual harassment training; the strengthening of Gender and Women’s Studies as an academic program; and the substantial success and visibility of women’s athletics that now occupy a place comparable to men’s sports as reported in Standard 6.

Changes have occurred in practice to make the College more welcoming to women faculty. In particular, the implementation of the Parental Leave policy established in 2000 has been improved so that it is as accessible to faculty as it proved to be to non-faculty staff. This topic is covered in greater detail in Standard 5.

By 1996, Bowdoin had a functioning and high-quality Children’s Center which has since expanded and moved into new space. Issues of cost, however, create challenges of access for staff. The size of the Center also limits access. Some of the concerns about hours of operation and their relation to the timing of demands for faculty engagement (e.g. faculty and committee meetings) have been resolved, with expanded hours of operations to accommodate attendance at the monthly, late-afternoon faculty meetings.

As noted under Standard 5, the College has also been pressed by faculty to examine its practices regarding spousal or partner hiring. Some faculty would like there to be a more clearly articulated policy on such hiring and hope for additional resources that would increase Bowdoin’s capacity to hire spouses or partners on a continuing, part-time basis.

**Racial and socioeconomic diversity and campus pluralism:** As described in more detail under Standard 6, the composition of the student body has become considerably more diverse regionally, socioeconomically, and racially over the last ten years. These changes have helped create critical masses of students that, along with shifts in campus climate
noted below, appear to have made Bowdoin a more welcoming place for minority students, although students of color still tend to be less satisfied with the campus experience than are other students. Issues related to social class appear to remain below the surface and are on the agenda for the Campus Climate group described under Standard 6.

Racial diversity among the faculty has increased at the same time that we have lost African American faculty representation. Standard 5 reports on the strategies undertaken by the College to diversify the faculty.

The College adopted a new Affirmative Action statement in July 2005 (http://www.bowdoin.edu/hr/handbook/02_general_policies/3733.shtml). Over the past several years diversity hiring initiatives were established for non-faculty positions. The Diversity Hiring Coalition of Maine (DHC) was established in 2002–03. Since its inception Bowdoin has been a member organization and has listed employment opportunities on the Coalition’s Web site. In addition to the job postings, the DHC offers other diversity hiring and applicant resources.

In 1995 Bowdoin became the first employer in Maine to add domestic partner benefits. Before Maine recently enacted legal protection for sexual orientation, the College included it on all Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statements.

**Initiatives to improve campus climate for students:** The elimination of fraternities between 1997 and 1999 played a significant role in changing institutional symbols and informal patterns of conduct that had reinforced the perception of Bowdoin as a men’s college with women students in the first 25 years of coeducation. The turn from a social life dominated by fraternities, in combination with the greatly increased diversity of the student body, has also helped to establish a stronger sense of connection and community that crosses lines of gender, race, and class. Enormous amounts of student energy that previously went into activities that benefited a small portion of the student body now flow into on-campus organizations, College House programs, theater and dance, Bowdoin Cable Network, and other aspects of campus life. In recent years, data about student perceptions of campus community, sense of belonging, and engagement do not show differential patterns of response for men and women.

From 1998 to 2003, with funding from the Hewlett Foundation, a committee of faculty and staff planned and oversaw close to 50 events that focused on the objectives of improving teaching, encouraging diversity, and promoting community. The group orchestrated, for example, a series of workshops for faculty to provide strategies and guidance for promoting comfortable classroom climate with regard to multicultural, gender, and sexual orientation issues. Other workshops included Creating the Thoughtful Classroom and Women throughout the Curriculum.

The Bias Incident Group was created in 1988 to respond to acts of bias that violate the ideals of the College. The President calls the group into session, typically in response to public, anonymous acts (hateful posters, destruction of property, graffiti) for which
perpetrators cannot be identified and held accountable. The group shares with the Bowdoin community both the facts of the incident and a statement about their inappropriateness.

**Staff Working Conditions, Job Structures, and Compensation**

Administrative and hourly staff throughout the College work very hard, are dedicated to the College and its mission, and contribute vitally to the fulfillment of that mission. The College employs approximately 300 administrative personnel and 340 support staff members. It was a challenge to maintain morale while the College retrenched financially in FY 2002–03. Stabilization in employment prospects, subsequent work performed on a new job classification and compensation structure in 2004, wellness and employee safety initiatives, and holding down the share of rising health benefit costs borne by employees have positively influenced the staff work environment.

The College, like many of its peers, differentiates the reference points for faculty and staff compensation targets. In both instances, the College has the policy of paying fairly and competitively in the relevant marketplaces. For faculty, the 4-5-6 policy described in Standard 5 provides the benchmark for salary increase pools that then are distributed based on determinations of merit. For administrative and support staff, salary and wage pools are set in relation to general market data, and equity pools are employed to adjust salary and wage levels in those positions where comparative benchmarks suggest that adjustments may be appropriate. Staff total compensation is benchmarked against local and peer group market data. There are other aspects of support staff compensation such as pay differentials for evening, night, and weekend work; clear overtime policies; and overall benefits that demonstrate the College’s commitment to fairness. As noted in Standard 5, the differential compensation increases for faculty and staff create some misunderstanding and resentment among staff that we address through communication and explanations about market conditions.

To reformulate its job classification system and to assess the competitiveness of Bowdoin salaries and wages in relevant markets, the College undertook a review by Mercer Human Resource Consulting in 2004–05. This review—and annual reviews by the College’s Human Resources Department—adjusted salary and wage levels to reflect market conditions and established a new banding structure for administrative and staff positions. The Mercer work has built confidence in the new pay bands and allowed employees to better understand how the bands work. Work continues internally, with the assistance of Mercer, on building career ladders into a number of multi-incumbent positions (TR9.7).

One of the greatest current challenges for staff members in many areas of the College—as for faculty (Standard 5)—is to manage the pressures and expanded demands that have resulted from modest institutional growth, and in some cases by new job expectations that have developed with new technologies and the changing demands of the workplace. Employees have been challenged to work differently and to partner with colleagues across campus in new ways. Part of the new job classification project was to look at the
ways that individuals work today and to consider that when looking at classification and compensation.

Professional development activities are supported in all departments in a variety of ways. Many employees take advantage of conferences and training sessions run by the professional organizations to which they belong. A number of departments (dining, facilities, security) conduct their own intensive training and team-building exercises during the year. External consultants are brought to campus on a regular basis, and for a variety of purposes ranging from supervisory skills training to sexual harassment training. Bowdoin also participates in such programs as Leadership Maine and Wellesley’s Management Institute for Women in Higher Education.

In 2003 the College also revised the way it recognizes employees for years of service, retirement, and other special recognition. The Polar Star Awards event is an annual employee gathering that creates a single afternoon of employee recognition. This festive event continues to be well attended with growing numbers of employees nominated for the five individual recognition categories of Innovation, Commitment, Customer Service, Leadership and Teamwork.

In 2000, the College published a revised Employee Handbook. At that time all policies were reviewed and updated and the new Employee Handbook was distributed to all employees. In 2005-06, as the College implemented new administrative systems, the Employee Handbook was again updated and placed on the College’s Web site.

Handling Complaints

Procedures for handling grievances brought by faculty, staff, and students are outlined in the relevant handbooks. In general, procedures are relatively clear for administrative employees and students, and somewhat less clear for faculty, except for tenure and reappointment decisions, for which there is an Appeals Committee.

Procedures for handling of faculty or staff grievances are taken very seriously and investigations are conducted thoroughly. The College employs counsel when needed, but the community is largely self-regulating in carrying out grievance hearings as required.

Sexual harassment prevention training is required under Maine law. Bowdoin revised the annual training in 2003 and has revised and expanded it annually since then. It continues to be a challenge to increase the numbers of faculty members who participate in the training.

In September 1998, the Workplace Advisors Group was established to provide an informal means of addressing workplace issues. The advisors are staff and faculty who are trained to provide “a confidential, neutral, and informal process to facilitate fair and equitable resolutions to concerns that arise in the workplace.” They meet confidentially
with “visitors” but may share with the President, other senior officers, or the Director of Human Resources any patterns of concern that they observe in the workplace.

**Integrity in Teaching, Learning and Research**

Bowdoin has both an Academic Honor Code, established in 1964 and subsequently revised, and a Social Code. At the time of matriculation, all students sign the Academic Honor Code and Social Code pledge form. All alleged violations of the Honor and Social Codes are reviewed by the Dean of Student Affairs and his staff; matters are either referred to an individual dean for administrative handling or referred to the Judicial Board for a formal hearing.

As noted under Standard 5, Bowdoin gives systematic attention to issues related to plagiarism with its students and faculty. Now all first-year students are required to complete work on a Web site that introduces issues of plagiarism and techniques for proper citation of sources.

Bowdoin College is committed to academic freedom for its faculty to teach and its students to learn. The principle of academic freedom is set forth for the College in its mission and in the *Faculty and Student Handbooks*. Debate in the Student Government Association about a proposed (and defeated) “Academic Bill of Rights” in 2005–06 attuned students and faculty to these issues, particularly as they relate to student expression in classrooms.

The faculty endorsed a draft Intellectual Property policy in May 2006 (TR3.5) that will be received and reviewed by the Trustees in the fall. This policy will address the treatment of intellectual property created by students, faculty and staff.

**Compliance with Federal and State Laws and Policies**

Bowdoin manages its academic and research programs in accordance with the policies of the College, granting agencies, and federal, state, and local government as well as all applicable law. Responsibility for compliance rests primarily with the principal investigator of a project, but it is monitored by the Office of the Dean for Academic Affairs and the Controller’s Office. The offices involved worked together to produce a Grants Manual in 2005 that spells out the steps and responsibilities for faculty and others involved in seeking and administering grants (Standard 9).

Important improvements in record-keeping and reporting for the Research Oversight Committee will begin in 2006–07, when the committee will have administrative staff support for its work. Reports summarizing the activity funded by granting agencies are typically organized by the Office for Corporate and Foundation Relations and completed with attention to the granting agency’s deadlines.

In the area of student affairs and student records, the College is in compliance with all relevant regulations including FERPA, the Clery Act, and Title IX. Similarly, all
employee record-keeping complies with all relevant privacy and other regulations (HIPAA, FERPA, Title IX, etc.)

Information Technology has established policies about the uses of technology to accord with legal requirements and to establish ground rules to insure privacy and to prevent abusive uses of technology. These policies include the following, all of which are available in the team room and on the IT Web site: Faculty Computer Policy, Computer and Network Usage Policy, Bowdoin College Compliance Protocol - U.S. Copyright Act & The Digital Millennium Copyright Act Sound and Video Recordings, Web Site Privacy Policy, and the Web Site Terms and Conditions of Use Policy.

In the area of environmental health and safety, the College has designated a manager who works to assure compliance with applicable regulations, such as hazardous waste rules. The College has adopted an Environmental Mission Statement outlining its commitment to sustainable awareness, education, and policy. The statement is published in the Catalogue and Student Handbook and available on the Web site.

Employment Practices

Bowdoin’s Faculty Handbook, Employee Handbook, and Student Handbook contain many of the policies and procedures that set standards for members of the community and the management of its programs. Major changes in each area are highlighted in the remaining text of this standard.

In 2005 the Director of Human Resources became the College’s Affirmative Action Officer. The Dean for Academic Affairs monitors faculty compliance with appropriate requirements on an annual basis and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs now serves as an associate Affirmative Action Officer and reports to the Affirmative Action Officer on faculty hiring. The current configuration strengthens affirmative action oversight by placing it much closer to the hiring process for both faculty and non-faculty staff. As noted earlier, the College’s affirmative action statement was revised in 2005.

The hiring, promotion, and retention policies of the College for faculty and staff are presented in the relevant handbooks and on the HR Web site. The Human Resources office plays a significant role in employee relations and offers professional development and other opportunities. The Support Staff Advocacy Committee and the Bowdoin Administrative Staff Steering Committee provide programming for employees. A greatly-expanded Wellness Program serves many members of the community. There is a Benefits Advisory Committee to consult with senior administration on benefits issues.

In 2004, the College changed the scheduling of performance evaluations from a common June date to a new quarterly cycle that spreads the evaluations out. The change to this process means managers have fewer appraisals to complete at one time and can spend more time in conducting and writing the evaluations. Doing so is important to employees as well as to the College. We hope that this shift will help resolve a problem with the timely completion of staff performance evaluations.
At the recommendation of the Support Staff Advocacy Committee, the College established an Emergency Sick Time Bank for hourly support staff members. In the first year, 2,793 hours were donated by more than 18 support staff members, and 869.5 hours were awarded to 10 employees.

Financial Integrity and Oversight

Members of the Board of Trustees and all members of the administrative staff are subject to a Code of Conduct, adopted in 2005 by the Audit Committee of the Trustees, which includes a Conflict of Interest statement, copies of which are reviewed by the President and Audit Committee (Standard 9).

Institutional Effectiveness

The College will continue to monitor the perceptions of experiences of its students and its employees—primarily through standing committees, through the occasional creation of special committees when particular issues arise, and through the continued efforts of Institutional Research—in order to ensure that it maintains in practice the positive climate to which it aspires. Continuing examination of student climate remains a high priority for Student Affairs (Standard 6). In addition, future plans include an increase in training and development for administrators and support staff, especially manager/supervisor training. The College is looking at a more coordinated effort to provide annual supervisor training on general and specific relevant topics.

Over the past ten years, the College has taken steps to codify and make more transparent its policies and procedures in a number of areas. These steps give members of the community opportunities to participate as policies are confirmed or developed, and they allow the community to better understand Bowdoin’s standards when they are presented. These are important characteristics of a small college community. However, these same issues also present a real challenge going forward. The complexity of the College as an organization continues to increase, and the demands on Bowdoin to make clear what is increasingly regulated and technical in many areas, requires a level of attention that is significant, but that we take as high priority.