

## **Standard Six: Students**

### **ADMISSIONS**

#### **Overview**

During the past decade Bowdoin has experienced fundamental changes in the composition of its student population. A student body that ten years ago was predominately white and mostly New England-based, with a significant percentage of recruited athletes and fewer students who participated in the arts, has evolved into one that includes twice as many students of color as it did a decade ago, has nearly 50% fewer recruited athletes, represents a broader national and international profile, and offers a newly flourishing arts community. The transformation of the Bowdoin student community is the product of myriad influences: some generated by internal initiatives, some the result of collaboration with like-minded institutions (NESCAC), and some the inevitable outcome of significant demographic changes in the United States and abroad. Yet it is worth noting that the primary impetus for change has been the unwavering will and commitment of those who are entrusted with the legacy of the institution: presidents, trustees, and faculty.

The Office of Admissions is responsible for helping to create a community that reflects institutional aspiration and has, therefore, focused much of its efforts on five broad goals over the past decade: increasing the diversity of enrolling students, with a particular emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity; sustaining and increasing the academic/intellectual credentials of incoming students; finding the appropriate role and balance for athletic admissions in an institution with 31 varsity sports and 475 incoming students; bringing to the campus students from areas of the nation and the world with limited exposure to the College; and expanding the pool of enrolling students who have demonstrated talent and interest in the arts.

#### **The Admissions Process**

Bowdoin begins its recruiting efforts each year by sending information about the College, via direct mail or e-mail, to more than 30,000 high school students. As a result of research conducted in 2000, the College has substantially revised its recruiting literature (viewbooks, introduction brochures, financial aid booklets, Web sites), and has created multi-media presentations for use by staff in the field and by alumni and alumnae.

In the early years of the past decade, Bowdoin saw an application decline from 4,435 in 1996 to 3,821 two years later. From 2003 on, however, applications rose every year, exceeding 5,000 last year for the first time in its 200-year history and rising 7.5% to a record 5,401 in the admissions cycle just completed. While the average admission rate from 1997 to 1999 was 32%, this dropped to just over 24% for the five years beginning in 2001, and decreased to an all time low of 21.6% this past year (TR6.1).

More than 2,000 students are interviewed for admission on the campus, and an additional 1,100 students are interviewed in their local areas by graduates of Bowdoin who are members of the Bowdoin Alumni Student Interviewing Committee (BASIC). Admissions staff travel extensively nationally and internationally to identify and recruit applicants, and the College hosts both potential applicants and admitted students at various times and in a variety of programs throughout the year. Applications to transfer into Bowdoin have ranged between 113 and 166 over the decade and the College normally enrolls 5-10 transfer students each year (TR6.2).

Bowdoin is distinguished from many of its peer institutions by its policy of allowing students the option to submit standardized testing (SAT I and II, ACT) as part of their applications, or to apply to the College without providing test results. The absence of standardized testing information in many applicant files has required the College to develop a process for evaluating candidates that is unusually thorough and rigorous. Two or more admissions readers evaluate each application. In addition, the vast majority of applications are reviewed a final time by the Admissions Committee or a senior reader. The evaluation of a candidate focuses on academic performance, rigor of high school program, writing ability, teacher and counselor recommendations, extra-curricular participation with an emphasis on substantive achievement and leadership, and personal qualities.

While this long-standing protocol (1970) has indeed provided impetus for an unusually thoughtful and holistic review of candidates for admission, it is not without challenges in Bowdoin's current admissions situation. Competition for admission is dramatically more intense than it was thirty-five or even ten years ago. Indeed, while an increasing number of institutions have adopted the "test optional" admissions rubric, none maintains nearly as competitive an admissions process as Bowdoin. In addition, whereas more than half the applicant pool did not submit standardized testing in the early years of this policy, in recent years non-submitters have not exceeded 25% of a pool whose qualifications have been stronger with each passing year (TR6.3). It becomes increasingly difficult to deny admission to a student with strong academic performance and superior testing in favor of a student with similar grades but no submitted test scores.

## **Diversity**

The College's efforts to build a pluralistic community have been all-encompassing in the past decade as students, faculty, alumni and alumnae, Trustees, and administrators have cooperated in community-wide efforts to recruit, matriculate, and retain a diverse student body. Among the many recommendations of a College task force formed to study the state of minority admissions at Bowdoin in 1999–2000 was an expansion of the Admissions Office by two staff members to recruit in markets with significant populations of students of color, and additional funding to offer campus visiting opportunities to prospective and admitted students of color. Both yielded significant dividends.

For nearly twenty years (1975–1995), Bowdoin’s reliance on drawing its class from traditional “feeder” high schools resulted in little success in recruiting a diverse student body. As an alternative strategy, the admissions staff developed extensive and effective relationships nationally with non-traditional programs, church-sponsored educational initiatives, summer outreach programs for disadvantaged students, and newly targeted high schools with diverse student enrollment to identify and engage students who would not normally be aware of or have access to Bowdoin. In 2000 the College created the *Joshua Chamberlain Leadership Scholarship* to bring to Bowdoin five to seven students per year who have overcome hardship and challenge to become leaders in their schools and communities. More creative outreach and the Chamberlain Scholarship Program helped accelerate Bowdoin’s efforts to become more diverse, and provided evidence to the community that the College was committed to diversity in its many forms. Myriad other recruitment activities, supplemented by the full support of the community and an extraordinary fund-raising effort to increase Bowdoin’s scholarship budget by 46% over five years, have enabled Bowdoin to increase the proportion of first-year applicants of color from 8.8% in 1998 to 14.4% for the admissions cycle just completed, and to create a community that today includes 26% students of color, compared to 13% a decade ago (TR6.4).

### **Academic Quality**

Bowdoin is first and foremost an institution dedicated to the life of the mind, and the mandate to the admissions staff is to bring to the community students who will use the College’s intellectual resources most fully and effectively. To help in those efforts the College created the Bowdoin Faculty Scholars’ Program in 2001. Designated as the top 100 academicians in the admitted pool each year, Faculty Scholars are awarded a one-time \$3,000 research grant to use in an area of their choosing. There are approximately seventy-five Faculty Scholars currently enrolled at the College. The admissions yield on this group is approximately 15-20% each year: lower than the general yield, but twice the yield for those top students before the creation of the program (TR6.5).

In addition, Bowdoin’s increased visibility and higher selectivity have drawn more top students into the applicant pool. While applications in the past eight years have risen 37.3%, those from students with SAT I scores over 1500 have increased 125.5%, and those with scores between 1,400 and 1,490 increased 59.1%. Bowdoin also is a sponsor of National Merit Scholarships, and from 2001 to 2005 enrolled between eighteen and twenty-eight National Merit Scholars each year. For the admissions cycle just completed, this cohort has surged to a record thirty-nine. By all objective measures, the academic quality of Bowdoin students has improved, even as the College has become more diverse, with increasing numbers of students from less-advantaged backgrounds—socio-economically and educationally (TR6.6).

### **Athletics**

Athletics plays a significant role in the life of the Bowdoin community. The College supports thirty-one varsity sports and nearly 35% of the student body participates in at

least one sport during the year. As the number of sports, the number of participants, and the competitive pressures of Division III increased during the past decade, fundamental questions about the role of athletics within the community emerged, as did legitimate questions about the opportunity costs of admitting athletes to fill thirty-one teams at the expense of other highly qualified applicants in the Bowdoin pool. In 2002 in concert with other members of NESCAC, Bowdoin adopted an admissions model that creates targets for the number of recruited athletes admitted in each entering class. This aims to reduce the number of recruited athletes admitted, foster competitive balance within the NESCAC schools, and raise the academic profile of athletes, while recognizing both the value of athletics in NESCAC communities and the need to pursue excellence on a national playing field. As Bowdoin has integrated the NESCAC guidelines into its admissions practices, the number of recruited, rated athletes has dropped by nearly 50% from levels in the late 1990s.

### **Geographic Outreach**

For much of its history Bowdoin was a regional institution, drawing its student body in large measure from the six New England states, and in prior generations enrolling a significant percentage of each class from Maine. During the past decade, the Middle Atlantic states and California have provided the bulk of the rest of the entering class. Indeed, the same five states have constituted the top five sources of students in every year: Massachusetts, Maine, New York, California and Connecticut. The New England and Middle Atlantic provided an average of 70.2% of the entering class from 1996 to 2005, though the New England cohort declined from 51.3% to 45.3% and the Middle Atlantic total rose correspondingly from 19.3% to 24.3%. Recent demographic changes in the United States, as well as institutional initiatives to create a pluralistic community in all its forms, make it imperative that the College seek students from beyond its traditional geographic constituencies (TR6.7).

For the recruitment cycle at hand, the office has been reorganized to assign admission officers to specific recruitment territories, with each staff member responsible for both core markets and areas of potential growth. Emphasis will be on eight states that have at least once in the past decade provided eight or more entering first-year students in a single year. Three (Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri) are in the Midwest, two (Washington and Oregon) in the Pacific Northwest, two (Florida and Texas) in the Sunbelt, and one (Colorado) in the Rocky Mountain area. Greater effort will also be made in Ohio, where Bowdoin in the past appears to have been significantly less successful than other northeastern colleges and universities.

The recruitment of international students represents another major challenge for the Admissions Office. Over the past five-year period, overseas students have constituted only two or three percent of each entering class (TR6.8). Should Bowdoin attempt to enroll a larger number of students from other countries? If so, should recruitment efforts focus on specific countries or regions? Can significant financial aid support be generated for international students? These are questions that merit discussion by those who are charged with shaping admissions policy.

Historically, recruitment has been the responsibility of the admissions staff, but small numbers of traveling staff (nine this past year) trying to cover more areas with limited resources will require the College to involve more members of its extended community in recruitment efforts. If Bowdoin is to continue to expand its national reach, alumni and alumnae will need to take a greater role in recruiting. The College currently relies on a network of alumni and alumnae (BASIC) to help identify and interview promising students, but that network has functioned unevenly—particularly in regions beyond New England. The challenge going forward will be to engage alumni and alumnae constructively, effectively, and in large numbers to increase Bowdoin’s national profile.

### **The Arts**

The Admissions Office has spent considerable time in the past decade recruiting and admitting students with interest and talent in the arts, including using dramatic, musical, or artistic talents as a significant “tip” in the admissions process. Bowdoin’s last self-study in 1996 detailed a disconcertingly small percentage of students who believed Bowdoin was the “kind of place where students can appreciate the arts,” but that environment has improved significantly from the perspective of prospective students. The renovation and construction of Wish and Pickard theaters has given the arts a demonstrable momentum at Bowdoin (and in the admissions process) as applicants now view Bowdoin as a place that offers substantive and rewarding theatrical opportunities to talented students. Recruiting top musicians remains problematic given the paucity of rehearsal and performance space, but the renovation of Curtis Pool into a first-class concert hall with full rehearsal and practice facilities should be a major boon to the recruitment of those students.

### **STUDENT AID**

Bowdoin is committed to maintaining access for all admitted students. For those with need, this means providing financial assistance to supplement family efforts through grants, loans, and campus jobs. Our stated policy is to meet the need of all enrolled students and as many entering students as funds permit. In fact, we have budgeted for and achieved our need-blind admissions goal for twelve consecutive years. (We have not been need-blind for international applicants, transfer students, or those admitted from the wait list.) The Student Aid staff evaluates a family’s financial need annually or more frequently if circumstances warrant.

In the 2005–06 academic year, 42% of all enrolled students received Bowdoin College grant support. The average award of grant, loan, and job for the Class of 2009 was \$29,375. The financial aid budget for FY 2005–06 was \$17,197,000. To meet the College’s ongoing commitment to student aid, the College anticipates continued growth in the financial aid budget; the financial aid goal in the capital campaign is \$78.5 million. The aid budget for FY 2006–07 is set at \$17,380,000. With the exception of the National Merit Scholarship program (and the Faculty Scholars’ Program described above), all aid is need-based.

## **Expanding, Endowing, and Managing Financial Aid**

Over the past five years the College has committed itself to expanding resources for financial aid and building endowment to ensure that it meets the increasing costs of aid while taking pressure off the operating budget. The proportion of students receiving grant aid has continued to expand, from 30% in 1974, to 38.1% in 1996–97, to 41.4% in 2005–06 (TR6.9). Of the aid budget for 2005-06, 65% came from endowed resources, up from 50% for the smaller budget in 2001–2002.

The financial aid grant budget increased from \$11,659,250 in 2001–02 to \$17,057,500 in 2005–06 (TR6.9) and currently represents about 16% of the College operating budget. The College raised \$35 million for financial aid from 2001 to 2003 and has a capital campaign goal of \$78.5 million of new endowment for financial aid.

Significant advances in the delivery of financial aid services and dissemination of information include: College Board software to track the status of aid applicants and calculate their financial need; online (paperless) application and awarding processes; routine e-mail communication with parents and students; an informative, in-depth Web site; and electronic forms. The Student Aid Office also assigns a professional staff person to each family for the student's four years at Bowdoin. The Student Employment Office is part of the Student Aid Office.

Employment and loan offers are an important part of each student's contribution, but the College is attentive to limiting students' debt burden as well as their work obligations. Students employed on campus typically work 8-10 hours per week, earning an average of \$1,500–\$1,800 during the academic year. Student loan offers currently average \$4,000 per year. Cumulative debt at graduation for aid recipients is approximately \$15,500; servicing these loans after graduation requires less than \$180 per month in repayment. The default rate for Bowdoin borrowers is among the lowest in the nation.

The Student Aid Office makes application materials, policy information, and personal data readily available to families and students. Every aided family at Bowdoin College has a secure personal Web portal on which application status, award details, and loan history are available in real time. Links to filing instructions, application and borrowing Web sites, and loan repayment calculators are among the many resources available. Full disclosure of policies, procedures, and borrowing outcomes are also available on the Student Aid Web site and in print.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

Over the past decade, student life at Bowdoin has changed dramatically. Many of the programs and services now provided by the division of student affairs did not exist previously or have been transformed. The reinvention of the residential program and a higher level of student leadership and engagement have been at the center of this transformation. The College has eliminated fraternities and created a College House

system. Active student leaders in student organizations, College Houses, and the residential life staff now steward a vibrant residential and campus community with developing traditions. These changes in residential life have drawn students back to live on campus and have enabled the College both to attract and to include a much more diverse student body. At the start of the decade, Bowdoin's focus was on building a pluralistic learning community, and it has made great strides in that direction.

### **Residential Life**

*Overview:* The 1996 Self-Study identified a series of issues about the structure of residential life: the weakness of “community,” the disconnection between residential and intellectual life, dispersion of dining, movement of sophomores away from the center of campus and of juniors and seniors off campus, and the heavy reliance on fraternities for “social life.” When the NEASC team visited campus in the fall of 1996, Bowdoin had just launched the Commission on Residential Life (CRL), a Trustee-led commission that evaluated all aspects of the residential experience at Bowdoin, including the fraternities.

In February 1997, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to endorse the CRL Report, “Building Community at Bowdoin College,” including its statement of “Values of a Learning Community” and its recommendation to phase out the fraternity system by May 2000. A coordinated effort followed to increase and improve College housing at the center of campus, to renovate and expand central dining, to acquire and renovate fraternity houses for use as part of the new College House system, to mobilize student leadership to make the transition and invent a new system of residential life, and to organize Student Affairs around the mission of building and sustaining a pluralistic learning community. The principal goals of this change in residential life were to bring students back to the campus and to build a stronger sense of community at, a community characterized by a culture of respect—respect for individuals and individual differences, personal safety, and the Honor Code and academic honesty. A central question in reflecting on student life, thus, is the degree to which Bowdoin has achieved these goals.

*New facilities:* New residence halls and the development of the College House system have helped to transform residential patterns. In 1996, 78% of students lived on campus. Today, 95% of students reside on campus in College residences. In 1997, 59% of seniors lived on campus; in 2005, 81% of seniors lived on campus. This is significant in terms of the growth in the sense of community and students' engagement in campus life. However, it does pose challenges in terms of bed space on campus. In 2005, 1,084 upperclass students lived on the campus, which has a maximum total housing capacity of 1,101 for upperclass students.

New central dining facilities at Thorne Hall opened in 2000 and accommodate 575 students. Students not only eat there but, along with faculty and staff, linger over meals and engage in conversation. The design metric for capacity of 2.25 students per seat per 2.5-hour meal time was based on experience in the old Wentworth Hall. Despite students' scheduled lives, they appear to stay longer at meals, with a resulting estimated metric today of 1.75 students per seat.

*The College House System:* The College House system, initiated in 1997, is now fully established with strong student interest in serving as House leaders. In 2006, 214 students applied for 150 positions as College House residents/leaders. In 2004–05, the College Houses sponsored approximately 250 programs in their facilities. The College acquired all fraternity houses (which were owned by the not-for-profit fraternity alumni corporations), and invested \$29 million to renovate several of them into College Houses.

The College received two grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support faculty involvement in student life and public intellectual life on campus. Among the programs sponsored in the College Houses over the past six years, approximately 100 involved faculty. Faculty/student meal tickets, which allow students and faculty to invite each other to a meal, are regularly used. (In 2004–05 and 2005–06, 880 and 776 tickets respectively were used for this purpose.) There are many more opportunities for intellectual engagement among students, faculty, and staff than there were a decade ago, with programs like Dinner with Six Strangers, Loose Leaves, and From the Fishhouse Reading Series. These offerings have helped shift the campus culture to one that is more academic, but have yet to capture the participation of the full student body and faculty.

*A pluralistic campus community:* Development of the College House system along with expanded support for student leadership and organizations have been important catalysts for a significantly strengthened sense of satisfaction with experience at Bowdoin. Senior Exit interviews reveal that student satisfaction in key areas related to community has increased markedly (TR6.10).

A 2003 Consortium on High Achievement and Success (CHAS) survey that assessed the satisfaction and success of students of color on campuses reinforces this view of campus community. Students of color at Bowdoin rated satisfaction with their college experience more highly than did students at other participating colleges on every one of 31 measures, from academic life to the residential experience to the administration's responsiveness to student concerns and social life on campus (TR 6.11).

In Fall 2005, Student Affairs created the Campus Climate Team, which includes the Dean of Student Affairs, other Student Affairs divisional staff, and the Dean for Academic Advancement, to monitor climate for students and to suggest strategies for improvement. That team is also attentive to issues of social class difference that are of concern on campus. One of the team's initial projects was to conduct qualitative interviews with students of color, first-generation students, and gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered students. This data is being analyzed and will help inform future programs and practices. Student Affairs has added staff to provide support for students from different backgrounds—an Assistant Dean/Director of Multicultural Student Programs, an international student advisor, an advisor/advocate for Asian student organizations. Also, the Women's Resource Center broadened its mission in 2004–05 and is now known as the WRC/Queer Trans Resource Center and has a part-time staff person working with the Bowdoin Queer Straight Alliance (BQSA) to assist in their programming efforts.

*Alcohol policy and management:* The choice whether or not to drink alcohol establishes a social dividing line between drinkers and non-drinkers. Thus, alcohol use patterns challenge the College's efforts to strengthen a pluralistic community. In particular, it is our impression that students of color are more apt to be non-drinkers than are other students and are more inclined to avoid social scenes that are alcohol-centered. To address this dividing line, much more programming of events without alcohol now occurs in the Smith Union. There are more successful co-sponsored parties between College Houses and the Russwurm African American Society (where alcohol is not served) as well as organized dry weekends during which the College Houses host parties without alcohol.

The most significant shift in alcohol policy has been the ban on hard liquor on campus and regulation of the volume of keg beer authorized per weekend night. The former has helped reduce the number of cases of acute intoxication or alcohol poisoning to one hospitalization in 2003–04, two in 2004–05, and two in 2005–06. The College will continue to reduce risk by providing training to party hosts; having Security staff work closely with hosts and student Residential Life staff in party planning and monitoring; and continuing to err on the side of caution, shutting down parties where hard liquor is present, and continually reinforcing the message that the College is primarily concerned with student safety.

Other trends regarding alcohol are discouraging and will be a priority for the new Dean of Student Affairs. (See TR6.12 for health and wellness survey data.)

### **Student Engagement and Leadership**

The College relies heavily on student leadership to initiate, plan, and execute most of the programs that take place on campus. The serious engagement of student leadership began when a student committee led the implementation of the newly designed College House system in the spring of 1997. Since then, proctors, RAs, House leaders, Outing Club leaders, student government members, and team captains have set the tone, expectations, and norms of conduct on campus. The Bowdoin Outing Club, 100 student organizations, Student Government, the athletics department, Information Technology, and the Community Service Resource Center all provide leadership opportunities for students. College training programs in Residential Life, Athletics, the Outing Club and the Community Service Resource Center emphasize leadership skills in the context of the College's statement on the Values of a Learning Community.

*Judicial Board:* The careful work of the student-led Judicial Board has made it highly effective and well regarded by faculty and students. There is now a clear campus ethos that violence has no place at Bowdoin (see Student Handbook) and this message is reinforced by the Judicial Board. Faculty, some of whom used to handle academic honor code violations locally, have expressed during Faculty Meeting greater confidence in the Board process. Over the past five years, the Board has heard on average each year five social code violations and eight academic code violations.

*Bowdoin Student Government (BSG):* Students have reorganized the representative structure to include class officers and leaders from residence halls and College Houses. BSG appoints student representatives to most faculty and Trustee committees so students are centrally involved with College planning and decision-making (Standard 3).

*Residential Life:* Today proctors, RAs, and House leaders are at the center of the community-building effort on campus. Each year, approximately 140 students apply to join the 62-person student Residential Life staff, a staff that has historically been more racially diverse than the student body as a whole. The 2006–07 staff is 33% students of color compared to a student body that is 26% students of color. These students, along with the College House leaders, participate in an extensive training program at the outset of their experience and throughout the year. These students “model the way” for other students and plan hundreds of social, cultural, and educational programs and activities both for their individual buildings and for the campus at large.

*Student Activities:* Opened in 1995, Smith Union has become *the* central crossroads and programming space on campus. On average, eight programs took place in the Union each week in 2004–05, substantially more than the two or three programs per week when the Union first opened ten years ago. The Student Activity Fee (which now grows annually with increases in tuition) is assessed to each student annually and provides the resources for campus programming, particularly in the Smith Union.

The student-led and staffed Student Activity Fee Committee, which allocates \$560,000 annually, changed its process in 2001 from group-based to event-based funding. The new system rewards active organizations with strong leadership and enables new student groups to find funding previously unavailable. This change in the annual spring allocation process has significantly increased high-quality programming on campus.

*The Community Service Resource Center:* The newly established center is a focal point for student, faculty, and staff engagement in the community through volunteer programs, support for service learning, campus-wide public events (kNOw Poverty week, Common Good Day), and leadership training. Twenty student-led service organizations organize volunteer activities for students. Students donate over 25,000 hours annually to local service organizations. Student-organized and -led alternative spring breaks engage students in intensive service work in locations ranging from New York to Thailand, and “Pre-O” service trips play an important role in the pre-orientation program.

*The Bowdoin Outing Club (BOC):* The BOC is the largest student organization on campus with over 385 dues-paying members in 2005–06 (of whom 70, or 18.2%, were students of color). During 2004–05, the BOC organized and led 85 trips with 1,650 participant days, not including the 38 pre-Orientation trips in which 337 (out of 480) members of the first-year class participated. The Leadership Training (LT) Program is a keystone in the structure of the BOC organization and a model for other campuses. Looking ahead, one great challenge of the BOC is to have the membership and cohort of leaders better reflect the diversity of the student body.

*Intramurals:* In 1996, administrative responsibility for intramural sports moved from Athletics to Residential Life to build on the residential basis for many of the intramural teams. Intramurals are now the College's largest and most popular extracurricular activity. In 2005–06, intramural teams had 1,983 registrants, up from 1,002 in 1996–97.

### **Reorganizing the Student Affairs Office**

Over the past decade the Dean of Student Affairs Office developed a mission statement and reorganized, professionalized, and systematized the work of the office. This reorganization entailed hiring new staff, including a Dean and Assistant Dean of First-Year Students to focus on first-year students and their transition to the College. Students who will need extra support are now “flagged” by Admissions. The deans identify students in need of the greatest assistance during the first year, help monitor their progress and find supports for them, and then transition them to upperclass deans. This very personal approach has resulted in a small number of academic suspensions (fourteen per year on average over the past five years) and strong student retention (the second-year retention rate and five-year graduation rate have averaged 95% and 90% respectively for the past five years).

In 1999, the Dean's Office created the position of Director of Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and shortly thereafter re-wrote the Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities to ensure that the programs, activities, and services of the College are accessible to all matriculating students, including our approximately 100 students with learning, attention, physical, and/or psychiatric disabilities. Student contact with the Dean's Office continues to increase steadily (1,946 scheduled meetings with students in 2002–03; 2,339 in 2003–04; and 2,435 in 2004–05), reflecting confidence in the quality of the office.

The 2001 Faculty Survey, administered by the Institutional Research Office, asked faculty to rate the level of change they had seen at Bowdoin over the previous three years. Among the areas faculty cited as showing the greatest improvement was “college resources to assist students who have academic difficulties” (71% reported improvement). Less dramatic, though also positive, gains for students were indicated in perceptions of the “overall intellectual climate,” “opportunities to learn from people at Bowdoin who are different from you,” “opportunities for intellectual interaction with students outside of class,” and “College resources to assist with academic advising.”

The Student Affairs Office has made other programmatic enhancements that have strengthened the sense of community and the health and well-being of students. Traditions such as the Convening and Commencing Dinners and International Student Orientation are examples. The completely redesigned Pre-Orientation and Orientation programs and the newly introduced ReOrientation Program serve the goals of building community, assisting academic decision making, and helping students meet transitional challenges. Other programming includes special retreats and forums on disabilities, body image, relationships, and diversity for students, faculty, and staff.

In Fall 2006 we expect to complete a major revision of the Sexual Misconduct Policy. The Sexual Assault Response and Resource Team (SARRT) was established in Fall 2005, and the SARRT has provided input on the new policy and begun discussing campus-based training to assure effective responses to cases of sexual violence.

A Readmission Committee was established in the fall of 1999 to provide a forum for consultation regarding the readmission of students from academic suspension, disciplinary leave, and/or medical leave of absence. Bowdoin also revised policies and practices associated with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to ensure appropriate and consistent management and disposition of student records. We also designated a person to handle student visa and I-20 issues and stay abreast of changes to federal immigration law.

### **Student Services and Support**

*Health, counseling and student wellness:* Over the past ten years, Bowdoin has reorganized its Health and Counseling services to provide a higher level of coordinated care to students. The staffs of these offices meet regularly to share essential clinical and prescription information and to collaborate as a clinical team on eating disorder treatment. The Health Center is now directed by a full-time physician and staffed by board-certified physician assistants and nurse practitioners, and a registered nurse, increasing the level of care provided and student confidence in this care. The Counseling Services staff has grown from 3.5 FTE to 5.4 FTE over the past ten years. The College now also benefits from the services of two consulting psychiatrists working one day each per week in the Counseling Service.

In 2004, the College undertook an external review of these services with resulting changes in organizational structure, administration, student health insurance, quality assurance, and planning for improved facilities.

Both services have experienced a significant increase in demand. In 2005–06, the Counseling Service staff met with 350 students and provided 2,345 counseling sessions (average of 6.7 sessions per student), which represents a 9% increase over the highest number of sessions ever provided (in 2003–04) and an increase of 27% more clients seen than ten years ago. Number of clients has increased from an average of 254 between 1995 and 1999 to an average of 315 between 1999 and 2004. Three of the five clinicians are staff of color and students of color represented 35% of the total student client base in 2005-06. Growth in utilization has been even greater in the Health Service. Since the re-implementation of a physician-director model in 1999–2000, the number of student appointments has increased 73% to 6,914 in 2005–06, with annual increases of 10-15%.

In the context of increased public attention on issues of stress-induced illness and disorders, Bowdoin has developed a wide range of wellness programming, and this proactive outreach has certainly contributed to the higher student utilization of Health and Counseling. An intra-divisional Health and Wellness Committee coordinates these efforts. Extremely popular training sessions in yoga, meditation, visualization, and even

belly dancing aim to help students find a new balance and new ways to cope with stress. In addition, the Athletic Department has offered courses in Pilates, spinning, water aerobics, and the like, which have been popular and well subscribed. Dr. Jeff Benson writes a weekly “Ask Dr. Jeff” column in the *Bowdoin Orient* to educate students about health issues. Campus buildings and events have been tobacco-free since 2003.

*Spiritual Life:* In light of growing student and community interest in the spiritual development of students, we established in 2002 the Spiritual Life Advisors Office, bringing together the advisors of the Bowdoin Christian Fellowship (BCF), the Catholic Students Association (CSA), and Hillel. In 2001, the College raised endowment support for programs supporting Jewish student life and affiliated with the national Hillel organization.

*Career Planning:* Bowdoin’s Career Planning Center (CPC) has moved to an approach based on technology and personal contact in providing education and services to a growing number of students during all of their undergraduate years. Over the past five years, the CPC has seen a 37% increase in student contact (including a 29% increase in non-seniors). The CPC collects electronic career profiles on “e-Bear,” and currently has e-Bear profiles for 62% of the student body, including 48% of the first-year class, allowing job and internship opportunities and other career-related information to be directed to students based on their specific interests.

The Bowdoin Alumni Career Network has become a significant network of contacts for undergraduates and young alumni and has been strengthened by the involvement of parents. Last year, Bowdoin alumni were involved in over 75 CPC-sponsored programs on and off campus. Off-campus activity has grown; in 2004–05, the CPC hosted four major off-campus recruiting events, in Boston, New York (2), and Washington. Recognizing that a critical step for students exploring careers is to secure a good internship during college, the CPC has worked to promote internships. At the time of graduation, 79% of the Class of 2005 reported having done an internship during college, compared to 57 % in the Class of 2000.

In 2002, the College reorganized post-graduate scholarship and fellowship advising, and the faculty established a standing committee on fellowships on which the Director of Career Planning serves. In 2006, a record number of Bowdoin seniors (nine, with one alternate) have been awarded Fulbright Scholarships, in addition to other national awards (e.g., two Watson Fellowships and a Beinecke Scholarship).

*Health Professions Advising:* Health Professions Advising now has its own office. Faculty support the director by preparing recommendations and appraising the strength of each candidate for the institution’s recommendation. This new structure has served candidates well, as those who have applied through Bowdoin have enjoyed medical school admission rates of 87.5% or better over the past six years.

## Athletics

Intercollegiate athletics play an important role at Bowdoin, engaging about 46% of students in intercollegiate competition, 33% at the varsity level. During the past decade, the College has expanded the coaching staff to improve the quality of coaching and to address disparities between the men's and women's programs. Alpine skiing was eliminated as a varsity sport (now it is a club sport), and women's rugby was elevated to varsity status because of exceptional student interest. More women have been brought into the coaching ranks and the College has nearly achieved gender parity in participation. Significant strides have also been made in support of positive team cultures. The broader climate for college athletics, particularly at the highly selective colleges and universities, has prompted rethinking of athletics and admissions.

*Staffing and teams:* Under the leadership of the Athletic Director, four full-time head coaching positions, five coaching internships, and a strength and conditioning coach have been added to the staff.

*Admissions and performance:* The debate about athletics and admissions and student performance during the past eight years has caused both shifts in admissions practices, as noted earlier, and careful internal scrutiny of the academic performance of student athletes. At Bowdoin, student athletes' academic achievement is now more or less comparable to that of all students. At the end of the 2005–06 fall semester, the all-student cumulative grade point average was 3.23, and the cumulative GPA for student athletes on intercollegiate and club teams was 3.22. In 1999–2000, these numbers were respectively 3.19 and 3.07. These are averages for all athletes; there are significant differences in team-by-team performance.

*Promoting positive team climates:* In 2004, the College adopted a well-developed policy governing the review and promotion of head coaches. This policy—implemented by a committee of faculty, staff, and senior head coaches—has more clearly defined coaches' roles as educators. The Athletic Director initiated in 1999 a Captain's Leadership Training Program so as to more fully capitalize on the role of team captains. In addition, a Captains' Council now advises the AD on issues of importance to Bowdoin athletics. In 2005, the AD established an Athletic Council to facilitate community service and community building efforts by team members.

The quality and character of team climate is especially important given that athletic teams play a large role in shaping the social norms on campus. Teams are often a centerpiece of student athletes' social lives. The visibility and solidarity of teams is envied by some students and can be seen by faculty as competing for student attention and energy with the academic program. An ongoing challenge for coaches and the College thus is to continue to work at the balance between developing strong and positive team identities and integrating and engaging student athletes in other areas of college life. Developing a co-curricular transcript and tracking involvement and leadership will help us assess engagement and impact within and beyond athletics.

*Gender equity:* The 1996 Reaccreditation Self-Study commented on concerns during the 1990s about gender equity in the athletic program at Bowdoin. Since that time, the College has made significant strides in creating greater gender balance among head coaches, moving toward parity in athletic participation rates of women and men, and in establishing women's athletics on an equal footing with men's. In 1996, the head coaches of women's basketball, men's and women's tennis, and sailing were men; in 2005–06, they were women. In addition, the College added a full-time women's lacrosse coach and part-time head coaches in volleyball and women's rugby. Each is a woman.

According to the most recent report to the NCAA on gender equity, male and female athletes have almost reached parity by number (52% male compared to 48% female in 2004–05). Women's basketball, field hockey, and ice hockey have traveled to the NCAA Final Four during this period. These and other women's sports have established themselves among students and the broader community as highly respected and well-attended athletic activities on campus.

*Diversity of student athletes and coaches:* A significant challenge for the Athletic Department going forward is to diversify the head coaching staff and the team rosters, neither of which is currently fully reflective of the broader community. Currently, only one head coach is a coach of color. Team rosters are more homogeneous than the student body from which they come. Among the 575 students who play on a varsity sport at Bowdoin, 98 (17%) are students of color compared to 26% in the student body, although these percentages vary significantly by team. A priority activity for 2006–07 is to work with the new Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid and the head coaches to create meaningful incentives for coaches to identify and successfully recruit students of color who will succeed academically while also contributing to Bowdoin teams.

*Athletic facilities:* The College built a new squash facility in 2001 in response to changes in rules for the game. A lighted artificial turf field opened in 2002 to provide a game field for field hockey and lacrosse and to support all spring teams that need to practice during mud season. The Magee Track was resurfaced and a new women's soccer field built in 2005. The College is currently planning a new 13,000-square-foot fitness center to replace the ten-year-old 4,000-square-foot Watson Fitness Center and a new ice hockey arena to replace the 50-year-old Dayton Ice Arena.

## **Institutional Effectiveness**

### **Admissions and Financial Aid**

Bowdoin continues to attract large numbers of very able applicants and to benefit from fairly high yield rates. It has made significant strides in diversifying the student body and expanding its geographic representation. The capital campaign promises expanded support for endowed financial aid to address Bowdoin's important commitment to broad access for students. With success comes a challenge to avoid complacency in a competitive and rapidly changing admissions and financial aid landscape. We know

from experience that supporting a diverse student body requires constant attention. Admissions and financial aid will conduct careful analysis of each year's admissions results, annually review recruiting strategies, and continue to use staff resources to strengthen BASIC as ways to manage these challenges.

Admissions and financial aid staff will continue to examine with the President, senior officers, faculty, and Trustees the impact of continuing cost increases on the economic diversity of the student body and on yield rates; patterns of merit aid at other colleges and the ways that they affect Bowdoin admissions; the trade-offs between being need-blind and being need-aware; and the choice between equity packaging for aided students and preferential packaging for selected aid recipients. The College is committed to directing financial aid both to lower-income students and to middle-class families who cannot afford Bowdoin and will continue to review its success in achieving that goal. It also will continue to try programs and approaches to encourage the most academically talented students to select Bowdoin, to understand demographic changes and respond to them, to maintain a commitment to Maine students in the face of declining high school populations in the state, and to attend to strategies for sustaining a personalized admissions process in the face of increasing applicant pools.

### **Student Life**

In the past decade, Bowdoin has transformed student life at the College. Ten years ago, Bowdoin was experienced by students as a fragmented community and had very limited racial and socioeconomic diversity. The culture of the campus was greatly influenced by fraternities and athletic teams, and too many of the associated traditions were exclusionary, unhealthy, and anti-intellectual. Today, the student community is dramatically more diverse and engaged. Fraternities are gone. Leadership opportunities abound for students and educational, cultural, and social programming is at its highest point. A vibrant residential life program that centers on student leadership provides opportunities for all students, and new traditions that build community through shared experiences have largely replaced those that pulled people apart.

The Student Affairs division utilizes a multitude of methods to monitor the effectiveness of its responsibilities and programs and to guide its planning for the future. Throughout the transformations that occurred during the last decade, Student Affairs relied on the Office of Institutional Research to gather data from students, to do routine or special surveys, and to do studies that monitored change and progress. The division has benefited tremendously from the extra staff support made available during the last three years as a result of a grant from the Davis Education Foundation. This grant has made possible several important student life studies, including a study on student time use, last year's study on health and wellness, and qualitative interviews with students of color, GLBT students and first generation college students about their experience. Over the coming year, the division hopes to rely on the support of this grant yet again to study whether men are more or less engaged than women and how their engagement in academic and co-curricular life differs. Support from Institutional Research in the form of data, routine surveys, and focus group development is ongoing and routinely utilized

by committees such as the Recording Committee, the Student Affairs Committee and the Health and Wellness Committee to inform policy decisions and identify programmatic opportunities.

Opportunities and challenges remain. As we look ahead, a number of topics and questions need our attention. To address these, we will build on the strong collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs and Admissions to create intra- and inter-divisional work groups made up of staff, faculty, coaches, and students.

*Enhancing our learning/living community:* A key theme of the 1996 Self-Study was “intellectual engagement.” Although the College has made significant progress in developing activities that connect students and faculty/staff outside the classroom, we would like to do even more to ensure that academic, social and athletic life are integrated venues and not distinct silos. A newly created working group, chaired by the Dean of Student Affairs and the Dean for Academic Affairs, and including students, faculty, and staff will consider promising ideas and examine key questions, among them: Do the College Houses and their associated activities appeal to each class and group of students? Is there a place for affinity housing in our inclusive residential system? How do we generate dialogue beyond the classroom to ensure that students are learning from one another and faculty and staff in our pluralistic community? To what degree are athletes integrated and engaged in other areas of college life? How are faculty and staff involved and engaged in these areas?

*Stewarding a pluralistic learning community:* To build on the educational value of a diverse community, the College must be attentive to encouraging student growth through interaction and dialogue. We are attentive to the potential for athletic teams, College Houses, and the Outing Club to become too isolated from or unrepresentative of the general campus community, which limits the potential growth of their members. A newly created working group chaired by the Director of Multicultural Student Programs and the Director of Athletics will identify barriers to participation and work to ensure that they are integrated and representative of the College. We plan to develop a co-curricular transcript that allows us to track student participation and leadership.

*Strengthening advising:* Student Affairs and Academic Affairs will continue their partnership in training faculty advisors, leading discussions of the advising process, and developing new resources to support advising (Standard 4).

*Addressing the role of alcohol in student life:* Alcohol use tends to create a dividing line in the community and IR data reveal increasing numbers of Bowdoin students are playing drinking games, binge drinking, and drinking to get drunk. A newly created working group chaired by the Director of Student Life and the Director of Residential Life will work to reverse these trends and determine how we can ensure a vital social life for all students including those who don't drink. The College will hire peer health educators to facilitate peer-based discussions about alcohol and other health-related concerns; and ask athletic captains and coaches to take leadership on this issue and help design policies and programs to reverse these trends. The Health and Wellness Committee will convene

regularly to identify programmatic gaps and opportunities and better coordinate our efforts.

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