



Encouraging Intellectual Engagement beyond the Classroom: Administrative Structures and Student Programs

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**THE EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Project Challenge

A member approached the Council with the following questions:

Administrative Collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs: In what ways do other institutions' organizational structures foster collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs administrators? Is there a designated liaison between academic affairs and student affairs? Are there committees charged with integrating the academic affairs and student affairs' goals and programs? What guidelines do other institutions recommend for increasing effective collaboration between student affairs leaders and academic affairs leaders? What programs are jointly sponsored by academic affairs and student affairs? How are these programs funded?

Promoting Student Intellectual Engagement beyond the Classroom

- ***Through additional programming:*** What programs (e.g., residential colleges, living learning communities, speaker series, faculty advising, undergraduate research grants, honors programs) have other institutions found effective in promoting intellectual engagement outside of the classroom? What are the advantages of these programs? How have these programs been evaluated? Do academic affairs, student affairs, or another university division execute these programs?
- ***Through limited programming:*** Do administrators at other institutions intentionally limit the number of co-curricular events and programs so as to allow students time for studying? Do administrators try to distribute events evenly over the course of a week or a month? Does the institution maintain a central co-curricular events calendar?
- ***Through communal space:*** Where is out-of-classroom engagement taking place? What physical spaces on campus best cultivate student intellectual engagement? What types of activities do these spaces accommodate? Why are students drawn to these spaces?

Sources

- Education Advisory Board's internal and online research libraries (www.educationadvisoryboard.com)
- National Center for Education Statistics (<http://nces.ed.gov/>)

I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Parameters

The council interviewed administrators at seven private liberal arts colleges located in removed and rural settings.

A Guide to the Institutions Profiled in this Brief				
Institution	Region	Carnegie Classification	Approximate Total Enrollment	Type
College A	Northeast	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	1,800	Private
College B	Midwest	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	2,000	Private
University C	Northeast	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	2,800	Private
College D	Mid-Atlantic	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	2,500	Private
College E	Northeast	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	1,900	Private
College F	Northeast	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	2,500	Private
College G	Northeast	Baccalaureate Colleges -- Arts & Sciences	2,100	Private

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Observations:

- ❖ **At most contact institutions, a dean of the college or a dean of students manages student life initiatives (e.g., residential life, student health, student conduct, and academic support). Correspondingly, a vice president for academic affairs, a provost, or a dean of faculty is the chief academic officer and oversees matters related to academic departments and faculty.**
- ❖ **Student affairs and academic affairs administrators collaborate around responses to student conduct violations, honor code violations, and academic standing.** Contacts report that both faculty and student affairs staff are represented on committees that address these topics.
- ❖ **Additionally, although either chief academic affairs administrators or chief student affairs administrators direct academic support services, both parties are involved in directing students to those services.** For example, contacts at College F explain the Dean of the College works closely with academic affairs in pairing first-year students with faculty advisers.
- ❖ **Most student affairs and academic affairs administrators interact frequently through regular, one-on-one meetings or through representation on the same committees.** For example, Deans of Students at several contact institutions sit on the standing academic affairs committee, and Provosts attend the standing student affairs committee meetings. At other institutions, an associate dean is designated to liaise with the academic affairs or student affairs counterpart.
- ❖ **Contacts suggest that common read programs, summer research grants, visiting speakers, and community service-based learning foster intellectual engagement outside the classroom and also provide opportunities for academic affairs and student affairs to collaborate.**
- ❖ **Through College D's first-year experience program, first-year seminar instructors partner with student affairs administrators to lead weekly, hour-long workshops designed to orient students to the campus and academic resources.** Additionally, the first-year seminar instructor incorporates skills addressed in the workshops (e.g., how to use the library resources).
- ❖ **At many contact institutions, administrators highlight residential education as an area ripe for collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs. Additionally, contacts report that academic-focused living environments (e.g., living learning communities or language houses) are conducive to intellectual discussion and study outside the classroom.** College F, for example, assigns all first-year students to one of five residential commons based on students' enrollment in a fall semester first-year seminar. Students live in the residential commons throughout their first and second year at College F and form a community with their seminar classmates.
- ❖ **Across contact institutions, faculty-sponsored, student affairs-sponsored, and student organized events may appear on a central calendar.** Contacts recommend selecting calendar software that can interface with social media websites, and some contacts suggest requiring student organizations to register their events on the central calendar in order to reserve event space.
- ❖ **Most contacts report that student centers are popular spaces for informal student gatherings and group study.** Contacts also indicate that dining halls, residence hall corridors, and academic buildings with study rooms provide space for group study or informal, academic conversations.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES ACROSS CONTACT INSTITUTIONS

Administrative Overview

At most contact institutions, a dean of the college or a dean of students manages student life initiatives (e.g., residential life, student health, student conduct, and academic support). Correspondingly, a vice president for academic affairs, a provost, or a dean of faculty serves as the chief academic officer and oversees matters related to academic departments and faculty. However, **College G** operates under a slightly different structure, with one dean dedicated only to student support services and another administrator responsible for residence life, student health, and additional functions. **College B** also organizes under an alternative structure.

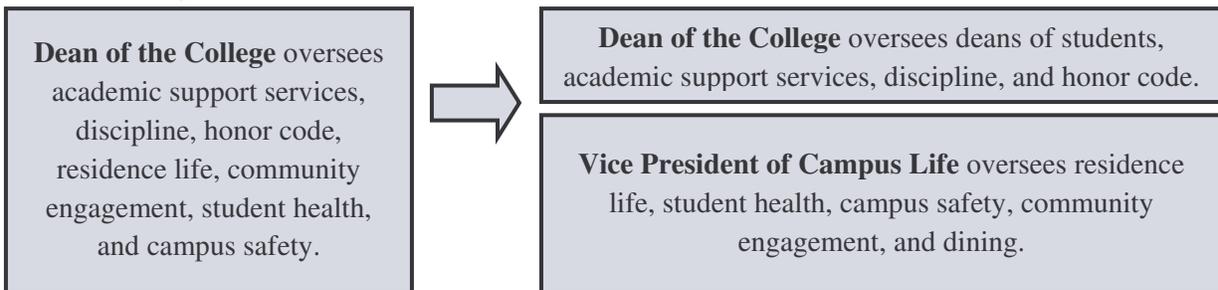
Typical Distribution of Administrative Responsibilities across Most Contact Institutions

- **Dean of Students (also referred to as Dean of the College or Dean of Student Affairs at some contact institutions)** oversees athletics, deans of students, residence life, student health, student activities, community service, academic support*, and the outing club.
- **Dean of Academic Affairs or Dean of the Faculty** oversees the center for teaching and learning, directs the library, and partners with the faculty.

*At **College A** and **College G**, academic support falls under academic affairs.

New Position at *College G*: Vice President for Campus Life

Administrators at **College G** recently decided to divide the Dean of the College's responsibilities among two positions: the Vice President of Campus Life and the Dean of the College. Because a faculty member serves as the Dean of the College for a three-year rotation, contacts explain that the college struggled to develop long-term strategic goals related to student affairs. Under the new structure, a professional administrator will serve as Vice President of Campus Life, allowing for student affairs planning beyond a three-year time frame and affording the Dean of the College more time to improve student support. With greater capacity, contacts expect that the Dean of the College will develop the services offered to first generation college students and students with disabilities.



Vice President of College Life and Dean of the College Collaborate at *College G*

Contacts report that the two administrators will communicate regularly about the following:

➤ **Student Conduct: Discipline Committee**

The Dean of the College, along with all reporting deans and appropriate division heads (e.g., the director of campus safety), attend a weekly meeting during which attendees review conduct violation cases and deliver sanctions. The Vice President of Campus Life attends, although as the role takes shape, the vice president may not need to continue to attend.

➤ **Students of Concern Meeting**

The Dean of the College and all reporting deans also meet weekly to discuss students of concern. The appropriate division heads (e.g., director of student health) are also in attendance. The Vice

III. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES ACROSS CONTACT INSTITUTIONS

President of College Life attends, although as the role takes shape, the vice president may not need to continue to attend.

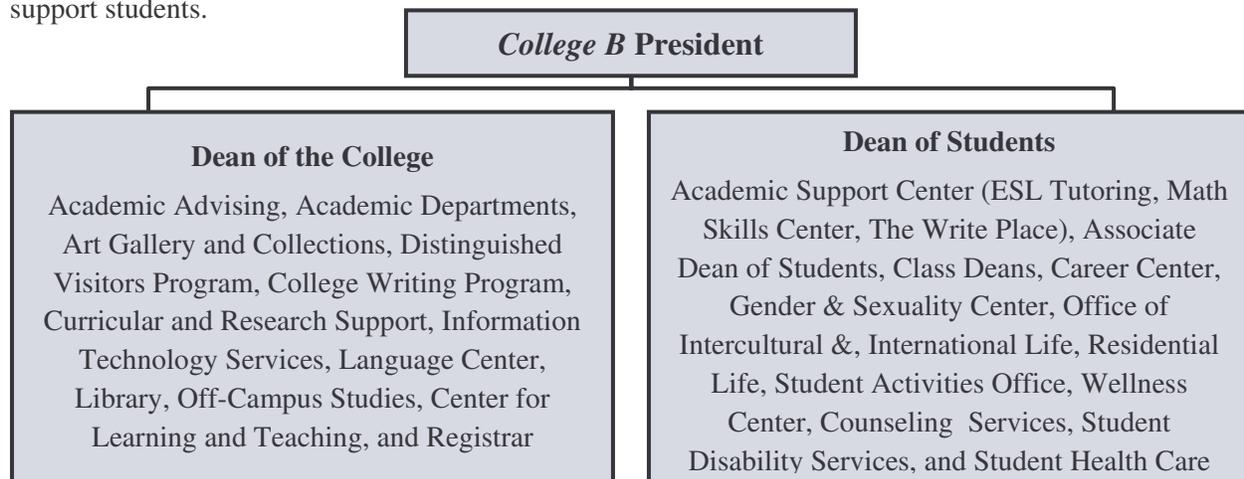
➤ **Residence Life and Student Health**

Contacts explain that the Dean of the College will continue to contribute to the overall direction of residence life and student health as well as any crisis situations that arise. The Vice President of Campus Life, however, will manage the day-to-day operations of these two student services.

The physical offices of the Vice President of Campus Life and the Dean of the College share a hallway. Contacts feel that proximity encourages collaboration, especially informally.

Dean of the College at *College B* Manages Academic Matters

At College B, the position *Dean of the College* maintains oversight for academic matters, including academic departments, the library, and the registrar. Contacts at College B explain that the Dean of the College and the Dean of Students collaborate closely on issues involving academic standing and orientation. Like most other contact institutions, academic advising at College B falls under the purview of the chief academic officer and academic support falls under the dean of students; despite delineation of reporting lines, student affairs administrators work closely with instructors and academic advisors to support students.



Additional Considerations from *College F*

◆ **Dean of College is Chief Diversity Officer, Furthering Cross-College Collaboration**

At College F, the current Dean of the College retains her previous role, Chief Diversity Officer (CDO). The CDO consults about faculty recruitment, mentoring, and retention; human resources; college-wide policy; curriculum development; and research and programming housed in academic centers.

◆ **President Establishes Culture of Collaboration**

Contacts emphasize that, in order to achieve fluid decision making between academic affairs and student affairs, the president must establish that the the chief administrator of student life and the chief academic officer participate equally in decision making.

III. COLLABORATION BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators Designated as Liaisons



Within Academic Affairs

At **University C**, one of two associate deans in the Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs' office is the liaison to the Assistant Dean of the College.

Within Student Affairs



At **College E**, an Associate Dean of Students for Academics and an Associate Dean of Students for Study Abroad liaise regularly with the Dean and Assistant Dean of the Faculty to collaborate on shared responsibilities.

Co-Representation on Committees for Student Case Management

Several contacts emphasize representatives from both student affairs and academic affairs play a role in student cases involving disciplinary action, honor code violations, or decisions of academic standing.

Appeals of Discipline Sanctions	At College G , the Discipline Committee is composed of faculty, students, and the dean of students. The committee convenes to hear students' appeals to the deans' sanctions for conduct violations.
Honor Code Violations	Several contacts observe administrative collaboration through the honor court committee, which hears cases concerning violation of the academic honor code and delivers sanctions. Contacts at College F and College E report that faculty, students, and the dean of students sit on the honor court committee.
Academic Standing	Across contact institutions, faculty members and a dean or associate dean of students sit on a committee on academic standing. At College B , students participate in academic standing committee meetings as well. Agenda items include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing students on academic probation • Approving special requests for academic credit

Academic Support Initiatives Conducive to Collaboration

Across contact institutions, student affairs administrators typically oversee student academic support services but seek input and direction from academic affairs administrators and faculty.

- **Academic Advising:** Most contacts report that academic advisors work closely with deans and associate deans of students. Contacts at **College D** report that the close proximity of the office of academic advising and the office of the dean of students has contributed to closer collaboration. Academic advising is typically under the purview of the provost or dean of faculty.
- **Orientation and first-year student support:** Contacts at **College B** emphasize that the Dean of Students involves academic affairs administrators in planning new student orientation, which includes information on student success and registering for courses. During orientation at **College F**, faculty and student affairs staff members co-lead a text-based discussion. Similarly, the dean and assistant dean for first year students at **College A** work closely with staff in

III. COLLABORATION BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

academic support and academic advising (both managed by the Dean of Faculty) to support students as they adjust to college.

- **The Writing Center and Academic Resource Center:** At **College G**, the writing center director reports to the Dean of the College but also has an informal reporting relationship to the Dean of the Faculty. Together, the director and the deans developed faculty programs on writing pedagogy. Similarly, the Dean of the College oversees the academic resource center and helped develop a remedial program in basic science skills.

Academic Support Sometimes Under the Purview of Academic Affairs Administrators

At **College A** and **College F**, academic support services are part of a Center for Teaching and Learning, which the dean of the faculty or provost oversees. However, the deans of students regularly work with the directors of the support centers.

- **Multicultural Affairs:** Most student affairs contacts report involving faculty in diversity initiatives.
- **Off-Campus Studies:** At **College B**, student affairs and academic affairs administrators are discussing sharing responsibility for directing off-campus studies.

Regular Meetings between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs

Contacts at **College E** explain regular meetings further the frequent interaction among many administrators that is inherent to small campuses:

Meeting	Institution(s)	Attendees	Notes
Informal Meeting	College E and College A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean of Students • Dean of Faculty 	Meet weekly (College E) or biweekly (College A)
Student Affairs Committee	College D and University C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deans & associate deans of students • Student senate representative • Provost • Four faculty members (University C only) 	N/A
Community Council Meeting	College F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean of the College • Three faculty members • Vice President of Student Government Association & three additional students 	Committee discusses student life programs and policy. Dean presents agenda to provost.
Academic Affairs Committee	College D and College F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic administrators (e.g., dean of faculty, dean of curriculum, registrar) • Student senate representatives • Dean of College (<i>ex-officio</i> member) 	At College F, a provost oversees academic deans and joins this meeting.
Faculty Council Meeting	College E and College F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Members • All Deans of Students at College E • Only Dean of College at College F 	The Dean of the College at College F also attends an Academic Deans meetings.

IV. PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES TO FOSTERING STUDENT INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

1. Summer Research Opportunities

Contacts at both **College G** and **College E** explain that out-of-classroom research during the summer can foster an intellectually charged community of students. Contacts at College E report that about 200 students conduct research in the sciences, humanities, and arts each summer. Students receive research grants, which contacts report are an honor to receive. Additionally, academic department leaders pay faculty summer stipends if they are conducting summer research with a student or advising a student's research. Neither institution offers summer courses.

2. Common Read Program

Contacts at **College E** and **College F** recommend a common read program to encourage campus-wide engagement around a specific text. At both institutions, all first-year students are required to read the book designated for the common read program during the summer before their first semester. The administration also encourages faculty members to incorporate the book into their curriculum, thereby encouraging students of all class years to participate in the program.

At **College F**, first-year students discuss the common read book over Facebook and during orientation.

3. Visiting and Faculty Speakers

Speakers Important to Intellectual Engagement on *College E's* Isolated Campus

Contacts at **College E** emphasize that outside speakers encourage students to discuss academic topics and current events outside of the classroom. Additionally, contacts find that visiting speakers are especially important for encouraging student intellectual engagement because of the isolated location of the campus. Contacts cite the following speaker events:

- **Annual High-Profile Speaker:** The College invites one speaker to campus that will generate interest across campus; past speakers include Al Gore and Condoleezza Rice.
- **Departmental Speaker Series:** Contacts explain that faculty in several departments, such as the department of chemistry, host speakers relevant to their discipline. The department often requires students majoring in the discipline to attend the speaker series.
- **Brown Bag Series:** Faculty members present a topic they are researching over lunch; contacts indicate that these lunches are opportunities for students become better acquainted with instructors.

Academic Centers and Dean of College Collaborate to Bring Visiting Speaker at *College F*

According to contacts, the following campus-wide events lend themselves to collaboration across academic departments, academic centers, and the Dean of the College's office.

- The **interdisciplinary research symposium:** A series of lectures, panels, and roundtables that involve College F faculty and outside experts (a recent theme was inequalities in public health)
- The **President's lecture series**
- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Programming:** Last year, the Women and Gender Studies and Environmental Studies departments collaborated with the Dean of the College and students to plan Martin Luther King, Jr. events around the intersection of race and environmental degradation. Similarly, each collaborator contributed funds.

4. Service-based Learning

IV. PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES TO FOSTERING STUDENT INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Student affairs administrators at **University C** and **College B** oversee community service coordinators who are charged with developing opportunities to link academic inquiry and community service. To that end, at both institutions, these community service coordinators increasingly seek input from academic affairs administrators and faculty:

- The director of the Center for Outreach and Volunteerism at **University C** reports to Dean of the College (i.e., student affairs administrator) but maintains an informal reporting relationship with the Dean of the Faculty.
- **College B** administrators recently merged two positions – coordinator for community service (a student affairs position) and coordinator for civic engagement (an academic affairs position) – in an effort to integrate co-curricular learning into the academic culture. The new position now reports to the Dean of the College, who oversees academic departments as well.

5. First-year Seminars Incorporate Orientation Programming

At **College D**, six College Life staff and six faculty members collaborated to integrate the First Year Seminars (FYS) and the First Year Experience (FYE), a series of 12 workshops designed to orient new students to campus life and academic resources. Workshops are planned by College Life personnel and address topics such as college history and mission, time management strategies, and academic support resources. Now that the programs are integrated, students who enroll in first year seminars attend the first year experience workshops with their classmates and FYS instructor; additionally, the FYS instructor incorporates skills addressed in the workshops (e.g., how to use the library resources) into the FYS curriculum. Contacts explain that the success of the orientations sessions, which last an hour and occur at the same time every week, depends on the effort that the faculty and staff team dedicates to planning these sessions.

Evaluation of the Integrated First Year Seminar & First-Year Experience at *College D*

Students participating in the FYS-FYE program complete an evaluation that asks students to rate themselves based on the following learning outcomes:

- Understanding of the integrative thinking goal of the college curriculum
- Knowledge of concepts in multiple disciplines
- Understanding of the relationship between and fluidity of boundaries between disciplines
- Ability to recognize cross disciplinary perspectives in a text or class discussion
- Ability to make connections between ideas and concepts from different disciplines
- Ability to analyze ad issues from multidisciplinary perspectives
- Ability to articulate a reasoned point of view supported by cross disciplinary evidence

Additionally, students respond to an essay prompt at the beginning and conclusion of the semester. The prompts typically focus on an interdisciplinary theme (e.g., food and the human relationship to food).

IV. PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES TO FOSTERING STUDENT INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

6. Living Learning Communities

First-Year Student Housing

Across contact institutions, participation in a living learning community (LLC) entails...

- ...enrolling with LLC participants in fall semester course,
- ...living near classmates in a single residence hall, and
- ...assigning the course instructor to serve as faculty advisor to LLC participants.

Several specific program examples follow:

◆ Residential Commons at *College F*

At College F, all first-year students are assigned to live in one of five residential commons during their first two years as an undergraduate student. Contacts explain that students' reported preference for first-year seminar subject determines their placement in the residence halls. Consequently, all of the students enrolling in a particular 12- to 15-person seminar also live together in the residence hall.

Oversight for The Commons

- A tenured faculty member directs the programming and curriculum of each residential common.
- A Dean of the residential commons, a student affairs administrator, guides the daily operations of all these residence halls.
- The Dean of the College oversees the Dean of residential commons and works closely with the Center for Teaching and Learning to integrate academic advising into these residence halls.

◆ Optional Living Learning Community at *College E*

At College E, the offices of admissions, the provost, and the dean of students coordinate a living learning community (LLC) for 80 first-year students who live together in a single residence hall and co-enroll in a fall semester course. Similar to the model at College F, the course instructor serves as faculty advisor to LLC participants. Since its launch three years ago, contacts report that the program attracts more participants every year. Contacts explain the LLC course evaluation serves as the primary evaluation tool for the program.

Language and Academic Interest Houses

Contacts at **College F** emphasize that the foreign language and academic-themed residence communities deeply integrate academic affairs and student affairs. For example, the sponsoring department oversees both the classroom and residential curriculum:

- The department of French coordinates the residential curriculum in the French House.
- An academic center for the study of race and ethnicity coordinates the residential curriculum for the Intercultural Academic Interest House.

"With involvement from academic departments, the Language and Academic Interest houses are charged academic environments."

--Council Interview

IV. PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES TO FOSTERING STUDENT INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

As part of the College House system at **College A**, between 28 and 34 students live in one of eight College Houses; most residents are sophomores, although all first-year students are assigned a house affiliation. Fraternities previously occupied the houses before College A's Greek organizations disbanded. The House system is part of and funded by the residence life division. Contacts tout the following characteristics of the House system:

Faculty Advisers Interaction with Residents

A faculty adviser partners with each house, and house living rooms are used to host meals and other gatherings that promote intellectual discussion. Faculty advisers receive a stipend for their participation in the house and the Dean of Faculty notes the advisor's service.

Support for Academic Planning

Contacts suggest that the house system helps direct sophomores to consider major selection and studying abroad; the house system is especially effective in mitigating the common sophomore assumption that less support for academic planning is required beyond the first year.

Resources for Intellectual Engagement

Each house operates on a budget of \$8,000, which includes funds to take trips to nearby cities and to invite speakers to the house. Contacts report that administrators are in the process of building an evaluation that assesses the skills the house program affords students.

V. PROGRAMMING CALENDARS AND EVENT SPACE

Campus Calendars

Across contact institutions, faculty-sponsored, student affairs-sponsored, and student-organized events may appear on a central calendar. At **College E**, athletic events are also advertised on the central calendar. However, contacts acknowledge that student organizations prefer to advertise events through Facebook and social media websites, so the central calendar does not comprehensively capture the variety of events in any given week.

Recommendations for Encouraging Campus Calendar Use

	Recommendation		Strategy
✓	Encourage student groups to submit events to campus calendar.	➔	Select a calendar software that allows users to interface with Facebook and other social media websites.
✓	Encourage calendar use and avoid scheduling events with overlapping themes.	➔	Require students and faculty to submit events to the calendar in order to reserve space.
✓	Divide resources among academic interests.	➔	Require speaker approval. At College E , the Dean of the Faculty approves all speaker selections.

Distributing Events throughout the Academic Year

Several contacts explain students and faculty plan most spring semester events during April because of poor weather during January and February and spring break occurs in March. Contacts recommended that student affairs offer programs when student organizations are not operating in full (e.g., during September and around spring break) but note that administrators cannot easily limit events because every department and student organization believes its event is a priority.

Contacts at **College A** recommend that student affairs units coordinate during a retreat: they compare event offerings and distribute them accordingly on a master, poster-size calendar that everyone can view simultaneously.

“Coordination is always an issue with talented students and faculty members always looking to add to the community.”

--Council Interview

Making Time for Informal Gathering

Contacts at **College D** explain the students participating in scholarship and fellowship programs gather regularly informally and, more recently, have opted to live together in a single residence hall. These students report that informal gathering helps build community and encourages continued engagement in academic coursework and research.

V. PROGRAMMING CALENDARS AND EVENT SPACE

Space for Informal Gatherings

Contacts identify several campus spaces that are conducive to small, informal gatherings in which students may discuss coursework, current events, or a visiting speaker's remarks. Additionally, contacts report that students also use these spaces for study groups, group project meetings, or to meet with faculty members.

Student and Academic Affairs Buildings

Contacts at **College F** identify the Multicultural Center and the Science Center as buildings with small rooms intended for informal gatherings. Additionally, contacts at **College E** explain that the recently renovated science and social science buildings offer space for group study.

Student Centers and Unions

At most contact institutions, contacts report that the student center, especially the café housed in the student center, is a popular place for student gatherings. Contacts at **College E** explain that the library is reserved for individual study.

Semi-Public Gathering Spaces Connote a Culture of Intellectual Engagement

Contacts at **College E** describe group study spaces (e.g., cafés and rooms with glass walls) as semi-public, sending the message that students are engaged in learning.

Student Center Features

College G: recreation room with pool tables, a movie theater, the academic support hub, a reading room, and rooms for group study.

College A: indoor track, café, student organization offices, athletics office, international affairs office.

Dining Halls and Residence Halls

At **College A**, contacts suggest that the dining halls offer a space for informal discussion of current events, academic course work, and campus activities--especially on the weekend over brunch. Additionally, contacts at **College A** observe that first-year students frequently gather in the residence hall corridors where students hold informal conversations and sometimes even study.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES NOTE

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