

**Focus on Research:**

**The Role  
of Precollege Programs  
in Summer Session:  
*An Investment in the Future***

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•• **Preface: “Precollege”—What and Why** ••

Across the country, increased attention is being given to adequate student preparation for college life. Once considered peripheral to the central mission of most institutions of higher education, precollege programs are uniquely poised to make a significant contribution in this area. Of particular concern in the precollege area are issues arising from changing demographics, rapid diversification, and other factors. Let us understand the term “precollege programs” to broadly refer to those programs that serve students who have not yet matriculated into an institution of higher education. On the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, precollege programs range from Saturday morning classes for preschool students to “bridge” programs offered to entering freshmen.

Typically (although not exclusively) offered during the summer semester, precollege program offerings are diverse, ranging across age

## •• *The Role of Precollege Programs* ••

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groups, special needs populations, and subject areas. Programs often fit into a number of categories, making analysis difficult. They provide opportunities for advanced study and research, career exploration, skill development, and exposure to the college environment. Career education—in the form of research internships, training programs (for example, where students learn the skills needed to become camp counselors), apprenticeships, field trips to places of business, shadowing, mentoring, actual paid work experience, stipends for research, visits by individuals from specific professions, or other information related to the world of work—are embedded in many of the programs for the older precollege audience. The various subject areas also cut across all groups.

Cross-college involvement with precollege programs facilitates development, recruitment, and retention of a diverse group of well-prepared undergraduate students. In Wisconsin, 92 percent of the students participating in precollege programs graduate from high school and continue to an institution of higher education at a rate of more than 65 percent.<sup>1</sup>

From prior research<sup>2</sup> we know that:

- u Many precollege students can learn in different ways (pacing, mode) than they encounter in regular schools.
- u Precollege students flourish in environments responsive to their needs, interests, and ability levels.
- u Self-expectations change in a positive way upon experiencing precollegiate programs.
- u Identification and recognition afforded by programs are important to precollege students and their families.
- u There is a cumulative effect from a series of precollegiate experiences.
- u Precollege programs are inexpensive and cost-effective ways to identify talent and to have students understand and maximize their own abilities.

Precollege programs are also beneficial to the university and community. They provide support to the public schools by offering programs in breadth and depth beyond the scope of most schools and by developing models and methods for developing extraordinary talent. The university is able to provide facilities, equipment, and instruction that K-12 schools are not expected, prepared, or designed to deliver. From the university perspective, precollege programs have significant community and public relations value, help in recruiting high ability and minority students, provide valuable training experiences for teachers, and offer youth educational experiences that are not available in their K-12 schools.

They also utilize the campus buildings and help pay the cost of maintaining the physical plant. Finally, as university faculty and staff are drawn together with teachers and administrators, state and local government, business and industry, and foundations in collaborative approaches to meet needs identified, children receive programming that matches needs and interests.

**• • Precollege Programs  
on the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus • •**

The term “precollege” had not been coined when the University of Wisconsin began its involvement in the area with the establishment of its Preparatory Department in 1849, the year in which the university itself was founded. The Preparatory Department was established out of necessity since the state’s schools were not able to adequately prepare students for university instruction. The university’s more modern precollege programming efforts, serving students preschool to high school, date back to 1929 when the music clinic was established—a program that has been in successful yearly operation to this day. Current programs stem not only from a continuing need for additional preparation for university studies, but also from the realization that the university’s mission of teaching and public service is not limited to those citizens 18 years of age and older. It is important to emphasize that precollege programs do not compete with K-12 education; they complement it.

At present there are nearly four hundred precollege programs offered throughout Wisconsin by ten private colleges, eight technical colleges, and twenty University of Wisconsin campuses. One hundred and fifty of these programs are on the Madison campus. Annually almost 12,000 precollege students are involved in programs on the Madison campus, ranging from one day exploratories to three-credit course options for extraordinary high school students. Since 1994-95, annual participation in all precollege programs on the Madison campus has increased four percent,<sup>3</sup> with an increase in minority participation of seven percent this past year. Clearly, precollege programming has become an important and competitive vehicle for education of K-12 youth.<sup>4</sup>

**• • The Study • •**

Spurred by burgeoning interest in precollege programs on the UW-Madison campus, a five-year review of such programs began in 1994. Members of the Council on Precollege Programs were presented with a

## •• *The Role of Precollege Programs* ••

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specific charge from the Provost at the Madison campus: How can precollege programs be more fully woven into the fabric of the university? In discussions on strategies for connecting various programs to departments and to each other, it became increasingly apparent that certain information was missing regarding precollege programs at UW-Madison. Although council members had a “feel” for certain needs and trends, there was little hard evidence to support these feelings.

Consequently, in winter/spring of 1995 and under the guidance of the Council on Precollege Programs, two complementary surveys were conducted. In both cases, the surveys were purely informational and were not designed to assess individual programs. One looked at a representative sample of 46 precollege programs on the Madison campus (utilizing a mailed survey instrument). The return rate for the Madison campus survey was 65 percent. The criteria used to select the survey sample included:

1. Target Audiences—K-12 Students;
2. Duration of Program—Minimum of one day;
3. Focus of Program—Academic, athletic, arts, and vocational;
4. Administrative Home—UW-Madison.

The second survey looked at precollege programs at a representative sample of institutions across the United States. Following a review of precollege promotional literature (detailing 232 programs) received from the following 20 institutions in response to a written request, telephone interviews were conducted with various individuals at 10 institutions (asterisked). The nationwide study focused on academic precollege programs, excluding sports programs from the data analysis.

Boston University,\* Johns Hopkins University,\* Ohio State University, UCLA,\* Marquette University,\* Syracuse University,\* University of California-Berkeley, University of Miami, University of Virginia, University of California-San Diego, University of Michigan, University of Washington,\* George Washington University,\* University of Missouri, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire,\* University of Illinois, University of Nevada, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee,\* Indiana University,\* University of North Carolina.

Although the surveys were not identical, they addressed the following:

- u Program design: structure (term, focus, duration, administrative location) and goals (long and short-term);
- u Audience: staffing and participants (faculty involvement, recruitment, and demographics); linkages to outside institutions and K-12 schools;
- u Enrollment and tracking practice;

## •• Gallagher & Rios ••

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- u Administrative structure, including program development and course approval process, communication/coordination issues (precollege program visibility);
- u Funding: support sources, allocations, needs, and strategies;
- u Assessment: evaluation, tracking, and longitudinal data.

Tables on the following pages summarize the information collected. Separate and combined analysis of the Madison campus and the nationwide data informed the following generalizable suggestions for improving precollege programs on university campuses.

### • • Data Analysis and Implications for Precollege Program Improvement • •

Given increasing interest in adequately preparing students for success in college and the current climate of fiscal concern and accountability, how can institutions maximize the benefits of precollege programs? Analyses of the surveys highlighted three broad areas—administration, recruitment, and program development—where increased collaboration might improve precollege programming. Increased collaboration in these areas has the potential to integrate precollege programs more fully into the fabric of universities, encourage cross-college and interdisciplinary approaches, maximize human resources, and strengthen initiatives to serve a broad range of learners. In addition, recognizing that precollege students may experience a mix of programs across campus, centralized tracking could help provide data essential in answering the question “are precollege programs effective in increasing matriculation into college?” as well as helping to leverage funding.

The recommendations are discussed briefly below:

#### • • Administration • •

**Seek ways to collaborate on administration, recruiting, programming, and assessment across all colleges.**

Precollege programs frequently originate out of schools or colleges, sometimes resulting in a scatter-shot, piecemeal approach to administration and programming. Formal connections between precollege programs within a school or college are rare enough; connections across colleges are generally minimal. A collaborative, holistic approach could help standardize procedures and policies in common, eliminating costly duplication. For instance, on the Madison campus, all summer residential programs require compliance with State Dept. of Health guidelines and have need for organized recreation and orientation sessions covering

•• *The Role of Precollege Programs* ••

**Table 1**  
**Precollege Program Structure and Audiences Served**

<u>Program Structure</u>	<u>UW-Madison</u>	<u>Nationwide</u>
<u>Location of Classes*</u>		
Residential	47%	32%
Commuter (On Campus)	43%	87%
Off Campus		38%
Combination	10%	
<u>Time of Year Programs Offered</u>		
Academic Year or Year 'Round	20%	21%
Summer	80%	79%
<u>Type of Program</u>		
Enrichment	67%	
Skill Building	20%	
Combination	13%	
Credit**		13%
Non-Credit		87%
Career Education		27%
Work (salaried, per hour)	5%	
Stipend paid (flat fee)	7%	
Apprenticeship (including mentoring, visits to places of business, other unpaid)	15%	
<u>Audiences</u>		
<u>Age Range of Precollege Students</u>		
Elementary	20%	11%
Middle School	47%	26%
High School	77%	66%
Post High School		8%
<u>Type of Student Served</u>		
Talented/Gifted	3%	17%
Minority/Low Income/Rural	27%	30%
General	70%	53%

\*Many programs had a residential of commuter option. Similarly, in some programs, the age range overlapped, fitting into two categories. In these cases, the program was counted twice, once for each group, thus the total percentages are greater than 100 percent.

\*\*Credit courses for the precollege audience were offered at 76 percent of the nationwide institutions surveyed. Of the total number of *programs* surveyed, 13% were credit, 87% non-credit. On the Madison campus, high school students may register for regular undergraduate courses as Special Students through the DCS' Summer Sessions Office.

Table 1 (continued)

Note: The Madison numbers represent 20% of the total number of precollege programs offered on campus and 65% of those programs surveyed.

**Table 2**  
**Precollege Programs, Subject Areas**

	<u>UW-Madison</u>	<u>Nationwide</u>
Arts*	20%	27%
Athletic	27%	
Sciences	20%	26%
College Readiness**	3%	23%
General (asst'd.; integrated)***	6%	14%
Health Care Professions	6%	6%
Engineering	3%	5%
History		5%
Journalism/Writing		5%
Computers		4%
Languages	3%	3%
English as a Second Language		2%
Languages/Foreign Travel		2%
Law		2%
Leadership		2%
Teachers' Programs	3%	2%
Philosophy		<1%

\*including drama/theater, visual arts, dance, music on all campuses surveyed, with the addition of architecture, advertising, video/media on nationwide campuses surveyed.

\*\*workshops in financial aid, computer skills, library research, academic enrichment in the areas of writing, math, sciences, and an introduction to campus life as well as access to counselors

\*\*\*an interdisciplinary approach or a variety of subjects offered within one program

Note: The Madison numbers represent 20% of the total number of precollege programs offered on campus and 65% of those programs surveyed.

•• The Role of Precollege Programs ••

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**UW-Madison:** The Madison survey focused on four areas: structure, audiences, funding, and assessment. Several general themes were identified, outlined in the following two tables.

**Table 3**  
**Summary of Themes for Program Structure**  
**and Audiences, UW-Madison**

Structure

- u Program Location  
*14 residential and 13 commuter*
- u Time of Year Programs Offered  
*majority are summer programs (25)  
minority programs mostly during  
summer sessions*
- u Administrative Structure  
*loosely associated with departments  
school/college typically identified  
as administrative home*
- u Administrative Support  
*clerical  
managerial  
financial/budgetary  
technical*
- u Oversight Mechanism(s)  
*UW academic staff  
UW administration  
UW faculty*
- u Targeted Populations  
*enrichment programs focus on exposure  
enhancement programs focus on intervention  
bridge programs combine both  
enrichment and enhancement*
- u Length of Programs  
*varies from 1 day to full year*

Audiences

- u Instructional Staff  
*UW academic staff  
UW graduate students  
UW undergraduates  
K-12 faculty*
- u Participants  
*heavy focus on grades 7, 8, 10, 11  
gap at grades 9 and 12  
even between males and females  
all serve minority, urban,  
and rural populations  
8 programs targeting minority students  
WI, IL, IA and MN  
are most represented states  
Puerto Rico included  
among minority programs*

**Table 4**  
**Summary of Themes for Funding**  
**and Assessment, UW-Madison**

<u>Funding</u>	<u>Assessment/Tracking</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u User Fees <i>athletic programs</i> <i>arts programs</i> <i>informal education programs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Frequency of Assessment <i>end of program</i> <i>twice during program</i> <i>more than twice during program</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u “Soft” money (1-3 yrs) <i>academic programs</i> <i>combination grants and state funds</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Accountability <i>funding source</i> <i>department</i> <i>UW administration</i> <i>UW system</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u “Hard” Money (5+ yrs) <i>academic programs</i> <i>year-to-year budget allocations</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Involvement <i>participants</i> <i>instructional staff</i> <i>administrative staff</i> <i>UW faculty</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Expenditures <i>instruction</i> <i>student support</i> <i>supplies and expenses</i> <i>administrative costs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Frequency of Tracking <i>none (10)</i> <i>annual (11)</i> <i>biannual (5)</i> <i>more than twice per year (1)</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Needs <i>secure long-term funding</i> <i>university commitment—</i> <i>space, staff, money</i> <i>identify grants</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Duration of Tracking <i>none (10)</i> <i>more than three years (8)</i> <i>one year (6)</i> <i>two years (3)</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Strategies <i>collaboration among programs</i> <i>cost-sharing among programs</i> <i>identify long-term funds</i> <i>negotiate base funding with UW</i> <i>raise fees</i></li> </ul>	

•• The Role of Precollege Programs ••

**Nationwide:** The nationwide study focused on programmatic structure, campus administrative structure, the precollege audience and program visibility, funding, and tracking, outlined in the following three tables.

**Table 5**  
**Summary of Themes for Programmatic**  
**and Administrative Structure, Nationwide Institutions**

<u>Programmatic Structure</u>	<u>Administrative Structure</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Number of Programs Reviewed/Institution</li> <li><i>UW-Eau Claire 61</i></li> <li><i>UW-Milwaukee 24</i></li> <li><i>GWU 21</i></li> <li><i>U of IL , U of MN 17</i></li> <li><i>UVa 13</i></li> <li><i>IU, Johns Hopkins, Marquette 11</i></li> <li><i>Boston 10</i></li> <li><i>Syracuse 9</i></li> <li><i>UCLA, UCSD, U of WA 5</i></li> <li><i>UC-Berkeley 4</i></li> <li><i>U of MO, Ohio State 3</i></li> <li><i>U of Miami, UNLV 1 Total 232</i></li> <li>u Program Location</li> <li><i>32% residential</i></li> <li><i>87% on campus</i></li> <li><i>38% off campus</i></li> <li>u Time of Year Programs Offered</li> <li><i>79% during summer</i></li> <li><i>21% year-round</i></li> <li><i>or during academic year</i></li> <li>u Credit/Non-Credit Precollege Programs</li> <li><i>87% of the precollege programs surveyed were non-credit</i></li> <li><i>13% of the 222 programs surveyed offered credit to H.S. students</i></li> <li><i>76% of the institutions surveyed offered credit to H.S. students</i></li> <li>u Career Education Component</li> <li><i>27% of the programs had a career education component; of these:</i></li> <li><i>5% offered salaried (per hour) positions</i></li> <li><i>7% offered a flat fee stipend</i></li> <li><i>15% offered apprenticeships, including mentoring, visits to places of business, and other unpaid types of exposure</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Campus Oversight</li> <li><i>57% of the campuses surveyed provided some oversight and coordination of precollege programs</i></li> <li><i>52% provided centralized publicity</i></li> <li><i>43% of the institutions were not centralized in any way; programs were developed and administered by the departments</i></li> <li>u Academic Home of Precollege Programs Oversight Entity and Percent of Programs:</li> <li><i>Departments 37%</i></li> <li><i>Schools 17%</i></li> <li><i>Student Life/Precollege Centers/ Minority Programs Office/ Upward Bound 14%</i></li> <li><i>Centers/Institutes/Misc. 10%</i></li> <li><i>Office of Special Programs/ Summer Scholars 6%</i></li> <li><i>Summer Sessions/ Continuing Education 6%</i></li> <li><i>Extension 5%</i></li> <li><i>Colleges 5%</i></li> <li>u Length of Programs</li> <li><i>varied from one day to one year</i></li> </ul>

**Table 6:  
Summary of Themes for Audiences  
and Precollege Program Visibility, Nationwide**

<u>Audiences</u>	<u>Precollege Program Visibility</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Age Groups of Students <i>66% high school students</i> <i>26% middle school students</i> <i>11% elementary school students</i> <i>8% post high school students</i> <i>(Note: some age groups overlapped, thus are counted twice)</i></li> <li>u Targeted Populations <i>17% talented and gifted</i> <i>30% for minority/low income/ or rural populations</i> <i>53% general</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>u Centralized direct mail marketing <i>Syracuse markets programs to top 150 schools in the U.S.</i> <i>U of Minnesota—Central office serves a coordinating capacity for purposes of publicity; a direct mail approach is used for the Summer Honors Program, purchasing labels from The College Board, based on PSAT scores. Information also sent to MN high schools</i></li> <li>u Community Recruiting/Linkages <i>UW-Milwaukee's Precollege Center recruits through schools, community groups; internally they present at departmental meetings</i> <i>UW-Eau Claire—each department handles their own publicity; they use CESA as advisory board members, share mailing lists.</i> <i>Syracuse U's Summer College Director visits area schools to promote precollege programs.</i> <i>Marquette—Linkages with community and public schools established at the departmental level.</i> <i>GWU works closely with D.C. Public Schools and other community agencies, businesses to develop and sponsor programs.</i> <i>Johns Hopkins works with community health care providers to offer students volunteer and work experiences</i></li> <li>u Electronic Linkages <i>At the time of the survey (1995), The Summer Programs Office at Johns Hopkins had a Webpage (<a href="http://www.jhu.edu/~sumprog">http://www.jhu.edu/~sumprog</a>) but reference to webpages in other nationwide precollege program literature was not found.</i></li> </ul>

•• The Role of Precollege Programs ••

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**Table 7:  
Summary of Themes for Funding and Tracking, Nationwide**

<u>Funding</u>	<u>Tracking</u>
<p>u Program Revenue Support <i>87% of precollege programs are revenue supported, however administrative support is generally provided through departments, Summer Sessions, Academic Affairs, or other, funded, oversight entity</i></p> <p>u External Funding <i>13% of those surveyed received external funding—of that 13%, 47% received Federal funding 27% received corporate funding 26% received funding from community agencies, partnerships w/ local schools</i></p> <p>u External Contractors <i>&lt;1% of total precollege offerings surveyed were administered by outside contractors</i></p>	<p>u General Lack of Formalized Reporting <i>With the following exceptions, there do not appear to be formal mechanisms in place for collecting precollege assessment/tracking data</i></p> <p><i>UW-Milwaukee— Records from Fall '91- Summer '92 (6th-12th grade students) indicate 92.5% of the participants were minorities; 76.4% African American</i></p> <p><i>UW-Eau Claire— each department maintains independent data bases.</i></p> <p><i>Indiana University— They estimate “about 50% of the precollege students show up on IU campuses. Some programs get as high as 66% return rate, although students don't necessarily go into programs they have experience with (with the exception of Philosophy).”</i></p> <p><i>Johns Hopkins reports The Summer Programs Office (under the College of Arts &amp; Sciences) is tracking 277 precollege students.</i></p> <p><i>University of Minnesota offered enrollment statistics for the Summer Honors College, but no demographic break downs.</i></p>

similar rules and activities. A cross-campus planning committee facilitated the development of common guidelines, and planned weekend excursions and evening activities. By working together, precollege programmers benefited from each other's experience, maximized staff time while providing valuable cross-campus interactions, thus ultimately better serving the students.

In the program development area, ideally students will become accustomed to a college campus beginning in their early years, moving through a progression of experiences across campus. Using the Department of Public Instruction's 1995 classifications, sequential programming, moving from *skill building* (also known as enhancement, involving intervention and improvement of basic skills) to *enrichment* (focused on exposure to new opportunities and academic areas) to *specialization* will facilitate movement of students through precollege programs in a way that will build upon, rather than duplicate, efforts. In the evaluation and assessment area, sharing of results across campus can help inform program improvement in general.

While a formalized policy body such as the Council on Precollege Programs facilitates such collaboration, another approach is to bring together programmers working in a specific discipline (for example, to look at outreach science programming serving the K-12 audience, considering how to build a progression of experiences) or with a specific age group (for instance, how can all precollege programmers work together to provide skill building and enrichment opportunities for the middle school student that would feed into more specialized programs at the high school level?), or might be comprised of an assortment of cross-campus program directors tackling student recruitment issues (related to both marketing and tracking of students through precollege programs).

**Provide base funding for certain general administrative costs relating to program development, evaluation, student tracking, and public relations.**

Precollege programs can be categorized as funded or revenue-based. The cyclical and uncertain nature of funded programs makes long-term planning difficult. Long-term administrative funding at the departmental level, negotiated between program directors and their administrative homes, along with base funding underwriting concerns in common to precollege program directors may help strengthen precollege initiatives by providing some continuity and coordination, and may eliminate costly duplications of goods and services at the departmental levels. Given the present atmosphere for outside funding, funding requests for student

## •• *The Role of Precollege Programs* ••

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and instructional costs are received more favorably than requests to cover administrative costs. In addition, while there is frequently a distinction between funded (usually for minority/disadvantaged students) and unfunded (fee-based) programs, scholarship pool(s) (in effect underwritten by other fee-paying participants and/or by donations), could help provide accessibility to diverse populations and could be administered either at the departmental levels or through a centralized administrative office. Some combination of base funding, user fees, and grant money for precollege programs is desirable.

### **Facilitate collaboration among precollege program directors.**

Increased communication, both internal and external, is a prerequisite for collaboration. Often there is no single avenue for program directors to learn about other precollege efforts (either on their own campus or worldwide), but mechanisms can be created to facilitate sharing of information among precollege program directors. At the campus level, one effective model, the retreat, has been used to circulate information, encourage discussion, and build collegiality among directors of precollege programs. A precollege newsletter, circulated on the campus and in the community, has the potential of raising awareness and serving as a vehicle for communication. An internal List-Serve could also be an accessible and cost-effective mechanism. On a broader scale, the web has great potential.

### **Improve student follow-up mechanisms.**

On all campuses, student tracking has been identified as both a necessity and problem area for precollege program directors. This type of data, which may include name, address, date of birth, student ID number, ethnicity, school identification code, gender, current school level, precollege program participation, or other data fields is needed to satisfy funding agencies and to evaluate the overall effectiveness of programs over a period of time. Yet many program directors are not in a position (financially or administratively) to maintain the database or to follow-up with past participants. A standardized registration form and seamless data base interface shared among precollege program directors, with links to admissions and marketing, has the potential to facilitate marketing efforts and to gather data from students who participate in a wide variety of precollege activities. In the event data is forwarded to a central data entry point, annual fees paid by participating colleges could underwrite this service, one which ultimately benefits the campus at large.

•• **Recruitment** ••

**Coordinate recruitment results between and among programs.**

In general, precollege programs are administered at departmental levels. Student recruitment is largely the result of individual efforts. Recognizing, however, that the first grader who took part in a creative drama class today might be the second grader participating in a science program tomorrow, coordinated recruitment efforts are desirable. On campuses where individual programs are competing for small pools of minority and disadvantaged (M/D) students and/or high ability students, better coordination would ensure more effective recruitment and placement. Marketing strategies that present groups of complementary precollege programs may yield higher attraction and retention of students in the precollege program pipeline. For instance, in the middle school age group, summer program directors may decide to work together to offer a cohesive summer day camp program lasting 6-8 weeks, requiring each participating campus unit to develop a one week segment that could be “plugged into” the overarching framework. Programs could be managed at the departmental level, but could be marketed with one publicity piece via the middle school data base.

**Connect Admissions and Financial Aid Offices to precollege programs.**

If a goal of precollege programs is to attract students to attend institutions of higher education, it may be helpful to better coordinate with Admissions and Financial Aid. In the case of minority/disadvantaged students, it may be helpful to offer incentives to attract students to matriculate into the institution from precollege programs. These incentives could be used in marketing precollege programs to attract a larger pool of diverse applicants.

•• **Program Development** ••

**Improve year-round sequencing of programs.**

As alluded to earlier, in some cases, the study revealed a need for developmental sequencing in the precollege program area. In general, primary grade programs tend to be geared toward enrichment; middle school programs focus on enrichment, with an increasing emphasis on instruction of basic skills; high school programs incorporate a greater degree of skills enhancement and academic intervention. On most campuses, precollege programs originate as a result of an individual’s interest in starting such a program, rather than as part of a comprehen-

## •• *The Role of Precollege Programs* ••

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sive precollege program strategy. A more formal developmental sequence of programs might help clarify the goals of individual programs and create a better sense of progression through the network of precollege offerings. In general, the majority of the academic precollege programs focus on sciences or the arts. Outside of programs in the visual arts, dance, and music surprisingly few precollege programs are in the humanities. Relatively little is offered in the areas of communication arts, business, economics, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology. There is a need to develop an array of programs to attract students from diverse fields of interest.

**Tie programs more closely to departmental missions and create multiple avenues to engage faculty and other personnel in precollege activities.**

If recruitment is a priority, precollege program involvement must become a legitimate, recognized, and rewarded workload activity for faculty and academic staff. At present, such work is often considered overload work. Many precollege programs are seen as being on the periphery of the institutional mission, and thus are not recognized by members of the department. The subsequent lack of rewards creates a serious impediment to involvement in precollege activities.

Again, attention to tracking and data collection can highlight the effectiveness of precollege programs and underscore the recruiting benefits. Positive results can provide a good basis for raising awareness and building support with department chairs, ultimately helping to increase faculty involvement in precollege efforts and strengthening connections to individual departments. Faculty involvement could include program design, curriculum development, program instruction, and individual mentorships.

**Tie programs more closely to K-12 teacher education programs.**

Many precollege programs offer workshops and in-services for practicing and pre-service teachers. Increased attention to use of instructional technology in K-12 settings has created a need and a broad market for quality programming for both students and teachers. In order to increase school (public and private) involvement in precollege efforts, strong connections to teacher education programs should be encouraged. Clearly, in developing programs to serve the K-12 student population, it is mutually beneficial for precollege program directors, schools of education faculty, teachers and administrators to work collaboratively on program design, curriculum development, program instruction, research projects, individual mentorships, and the development of practicum experiences for education students.

**Increased involvement of community and business in planning, instruction, and assessment.**

Precollege directors will benefit from including community members and business leaders in their programs. These individuals will not only provide different perspectives on the programs themselves, but they can serve as valuable resources for funding, volunteers, and recruitment. Having community and business as strong partners in precollege efforts provides a greater sense of legitimacy to precollege efforts. This legitimacy increases the visibility of precollege programs within the campus community, at local levels, and around the state. For instance, the steering committee of a recent pilot program on the Madison campus serving low income middle school youth included representatives from ten units on campus, representatives from two City of Madison agencies, and from two other independent community agencies. Involving numerous stakeholders improved the planning process, helped in student recruitment, raised visibility, and increased support.

•• **Conclusion** ••

Institutions of higher education cannot afford to ignore the calls from parents, schools, and communities for help in reaching out to the precollege audience. In the end, the long-term viability of higher education depends on a diverse student body; one that is well-prepared for study at the university, as well as for the challenges that lie ahead. Precollege programs create an entry point to campuses, link programs to constituent groups, and most importantly meet the needs and interests of a wide variety of students. While there is a tightrope to be walked between orchestration of campus-wide efforts and over-regulation of what are typically healthy and dynamic enterprises, increased communication and collaboration among precollege program directors, admissions and financial aid offices, and increased visibility of precollege programs on campuses and in the community will strengthen connections among programs, and promote new initiatives that serve the needs of youth throughout the country.

•• **Notes** ••

1. P. Spraggins, speech. Wisconsin Educational Opportunities Programs, Department of Public Instruction, Dec. 11, 1997.
2. R. Clason, personal communication, 1996.
3. Office of Precollege Programs, report, Precollege Enrollment Figures, Aug. 8, 1996, and Nov. 10, 1997.

## •• The Role of Precollege Programs ••

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4. The Office of Precollege Programs is situated within the Division of Continuing Studies (DCS) on the Madison campus and was established in 1989 to provide an umbrella coordinative office for precollege programs, interfacing with schools and colleges in regard to safety issues, tracking, and other policies. In addition, the Office of Precollege Programs works collaboratively with The Program Information and Publication Office (also a part of the DCS and located in the same office suite as the Office of Precollege Programs) in the design and publication of precollege promotional literature for the various programs managed by program directors across campus. The Office of Precollege Programs provides leadership in initiating new program directions, and in a limited number of cases provides program management assistance to facilitate new directions. In 1990, the Council on Precollege Programs was formed. It is comprised of 15 staff and faculty representatives from the different schools and colleges of the university, appointed by the Provost's office for three-year terms on a rotating basis. While 57 percent of the institutions surveyed provided some campus oversight and coordination of precollege programs, University of Wisconsin-Madison was unique in providing this formalized forum for discussion, planning, review, and approval of new program initiatives.

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