I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document offers two proposals for implementation, aimed respectively at student-alumni connections and student employment, in fulfillment of the charge given to the project originally called Intelligent Experimentation, but later called The Beloit Project, beginning in August of 2014. With respect to these two proposals, then, this document serves as the conclusion of the first phase of The Beloit Project—the conceptualization phase—while offering concrete recommendations for a second, implementation phase. This document further outlines a proposed research project aimed at our third area of emphasis, “being here.”

With respect to student-alumni connections, we propose, beginning in the spring of 2017:

1. That Beloit College’s annual reunion be moved from its current summer timeframe to the spring semester post-spring-break, likely in early-to-middle April;
2. That reunion be reconfigured to emphasize the connection of alumni with current students;
3. That the spring advising practicum be moved to the Friday preceding reunion weekend, and that it be built expressly around student-alumni interactions;
4. That we explore the prospect of also moving student symposium day in the spring Thursday preceding advising practicum and reunion;
5. That these reimagined and newly-aligned events be renamed (in coordination with Communications & Marketing) to call out their unity and importance.

With respect to student employment, we propose, beginning in the academic year 2016-2017:

1. That job descriptions for student work across the college be developed to make explicit the skills students will develop on the job, and that this be done in a two-stage process;
2. That student employment be made a deeper part of the academic advising experience, with respect to both academic advisors generally and Initiatives advisors in particular;
3. That at least minor improvements be made to the visibility and functionality of our online job-search platform;
4. That mechanisms be developed (including an online toolkit and face-to-face sessions) for sharing best practices in student employment supervision, and for providing support as supervisors develop the capacity for understanding and supporting the liberal arts in practice experience of Beloit students; and
5. That a “Work Ventures” committee be created, comprised of 5-8 student employment stakeholders—both supervisors and student workers—with a primary role of overseeing the implementation of the above recommendations and overseeing our campus student employment pipeline more generally.

With respect to “being here,” we propose, beginning in the spring of 2016, a research project aimed at better understanding a related set of concepts broadly captured under the broader conceptual umbrella of “being here,” such as belonging and inclusion, and trying to answer the following questions concerning them:

1. What are these things?
2. Why do they matter?
3. What questions do we need to ask, with respect to these concepts, about our student body?
4. What data already exist for answering these questions?
5. What data are missing and needed in order to answer these questions?
Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
II. THE CHARGE AND TEAM ACTIVITY
III. THE LIBERAL ARTS IN PRACTICE AND EXTERNAL RESEARCH
IV. ALUMNI CONNECTIONS
    A. THE PROPOSAL
    B. RATIONALE & JUSTIFICATION
    C. LOGISTICS & NEXT STEPS
V. STUDENT EMPLOYMENT
    A. THE PROPOSAL
    B. RATIONALE & JUSTIFICATION
    C. LOGISTICS & NEXT STEPS
VI. BEING HERE
    A. THE PROPOSAL
    B. RATIONALE & JUSTIFICATION
    C. LOGISTICS & NEXT STEPS
VII. APPENDICES
    APPENDIX 1: ORIGINAL PROPOSAL (MAY 2014)
    APPENDIX 2: INITIAL CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENT
    APPENDIX 3: SIX IMAGINARY SCENARIOS
    APPENDIX 4: APRIL 2015 SUMMARY
    APPENDIX 5: RETREAT AGENDAS
    APPENDIX 6: LAP IMPACTS RUBRIC
    APPENDIX 7: CURRENT STATE OF STUDENT EMPLOYMENT: FINDINGS
II. THE CHARGE AND TEAM ACTIVITY

The Beloit Project began with a proposal from President Scott Bierman to Beloit College’s Board of Trustees in May 2014 (appendix 1). That document, entitled “A Proposal to Support Intelligent Experimentation in the Liberal Arts in Practice,” stakes out claims in at least two directions. The first claim concerns Beloit’s position in the higher education marketplace, and how, strategically, to be proactive in response to that position:

Space between a college and other colleges is most frequently generated by incremental resources. But, space can also be created through innovative and substantive programming that is readily and broadly recognized and appreciated for its distinctive power. Since the resource based space-creating approach is unlikely at Beloit College in the short run, riding the reputation-resource spiral upwards (and I think of little else) requires that we hang our hat on the latter.

The second claim concerns Beloit College’s commitment to the liberal arts in practice as a kind of organizing principle for how we realize our educational mission:

We have an organizing pedagogy in the “liberal arts in practice” that builds on the college’s uniquely sophisticated position as a leader in higher education in America. We are already far ahead of nearly any other educational institution in the country in this realm.

Given these claims (among others), President Bierman proposed a two-year project beginning in the fall of 2014 and concluding in the summer of 2016 aimed at exploring structural change at Beloit College that simultaneously (a) advances the liberal arts in practice, and (b) offers the prospect of distinctiveness in the marketplace of higher education. This project would be led by Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Philosophy Matt Tedesco, and would involve a working team of four other faculty (Matt, Chuck Lewis, Chris Johnson, Amy Briggs), four staff (Ellie O’Byrne, Jessica Fox-Wilson, Jennifer Walsh, and Rob Mirabile), and two students (Fabi Hernandez and Lola Davis). The campus team would additionally have the assistance of a small trustee partnership group, whose members would intermittently connect with the work happening on campus through calls and participation in off-campus retreats, and who would serve as a liaison between the campus team and the board of trustees as a whole.

The Beloit Project team convened for the first time in early August of 2014 for a two-day retreat (appendix 5), at which they endeavored to come to a shared understanding of the charge and develop a timeline for the life of the project as outlined in President Bierman’s initial proposal. Given the openness of our charge, the team decided to go to the community very early as a way of crowdsourcing the big ideas that would, ideally, become the focus of The Beloit Project. A call
for idea submissions, together with a series of brainstorming conversations, were early attempts in the fall of 2014 to reach the community (appendix 2). These events were successful, with over 120 faculty, staff, and students attending the sessions, and over 200 distinct ideas submitted to the team for consideration. As the fall semester progressed, the team created a collection of imaginary scenarios (appendix 3)—essentially, thought experiments cobbled together from elements of the various idea submissions—and posed them to the community at another round of open meetings. Feedback from participants in these meetings set the team’s agenda for the spring semester in 2015, developing further a set of preliminary proposals that would intelligently experiment with time, student employment, alumni connections, health and wellness, and community diversity and inclusiveness. Those last two elements were married under the heading of “being here,” as the team saw a kind of coherence in the way that both tapped into a kind of flourishing—at the individual level with respect to health and wellness, and at the community level with respect to diversity and inclusion.

Beginning early in 2015 and following a second two-day retreat in January (appendix 5) joined by two trustees from The Beloit Project’s board partnership group, the team divided into pairs, each focusing on one of the areas of emphases generated at the close of 2014. Each pair was tasked with conducting interviews around campus with stakeholders and other interested parties who could plausibly be connected with the area of emphasis in question. These interviews, and subsequent team and community conversations that followed, saw the team sharpening its focus in three particular areas: alumni connections, student employment, and “being here” (appendix 4). Much time, in particular, was given over a period of six to seven weeks to developing a proposal for a coordinated curricular experiment in “being here.” When discussions on the developing proposals in all three areas of The Beloit Project were brought to separate faculty and staff meetings, resistance from faculty on the “being here” pilot sent the team back to the drawing board in that area, while green lights in other areas led the team to continue its work on alumni connections and student employment. These different responses also brought to light a developing divergence from the initial proposal as presented by President Bierman to the board of trustees in May 2014: while that proposal imagined a single timeline, the team arrived at the end of its first academic year with the acknowledgment that different proposals may need to move at different paces. The proposals that follow in this document—relatively well-developed in the case of alumni connections and student employment, less so in the case of “being here”—reflect this divergence.

In early August 2015, the team of staff, faculty, and students working on The Beloit Project, along with one trustee and a member of the newly-constituted Inclusive Living and Learning task force, reconvened for another two-day retreat, this time moderated by higher education consultant Dave DeLong (appendix 5). This retreat resulted in a plan for the fall semester that would (a) generate a document by the end of the fall semester with proposals for both student employment and alumni connections, (b) outline how implementation of the proposals might proceed, (c) invite relevant community members and other local stakeholders into conversation on these proposals, and (d) continue to explore possibilities around “being here” in close collaboration with the Inclusive Living and Learning task force. In the spirit of item (c), it is worth
noting that the membership of the team evolved significantly in the fall. Chris Johnson and Lola Davis departed (due to a very busy fall schedule and study abroad plans, respectively), and the team added student Hugo Alvarez, faculty member Pablo Toral, and staff members Mark Wold, Melissa Dix, and Megan Muthupandiyan. The new, larger team divided into three groups at the start of the fall 2015 semester, focusing on the three developing areas of focus in The Beloit Project. They then regrouped in the second half of the semester, bringing the three areas together again and culminating in this report.

It is worth noting that the community conversations around The Beloit Project have begun to generate ripple effects around the college that go beyond the particular proposals included in this document. For example, significant time was spent while developing the aforementioned “being here” pilot with Catherine Orr and others connected with Beloit College’s Initiatives Program. While the pilot did not come to fruition as initially imagined in the spring of 2015, the Initiatives Program saw the theme of “being here” as deeply consistent with the objectives of the program, and it has adopted that theme into the FYI program beginning in fall 2015.
III. THE LIBERAL ARTS IN PRACTICE AND EXTERNAL RESEARCH

The liberal arts in practice was formally adopted as a curricular requirement, and as a kind of orienting principle for the curriculum and college as a whole, in the fall of 2011 with the introduction of Beloit College’s (then new, still current) curriculum. Beginning earlier than that, however, with Beloit College’s participation in the Wabash National Study 2010, a group of faculty and staff was convened to develop a working understanding of the liberal arts in practice at Beloit College, where this group developed a document entitled “Liberal Arts in Practice Impacts Rubric” (appendix 6). This impacts rubric defined the liberal arts in practice as fundamentally about three kinds of student activities—connecting, reflecting, transferring—and these activities in turn became the basis for how The Beloit Project team would understand the concept of the liberal arts in practice for the purposes of its work. The Liberal Arts in Practice Center’s website explains to students our approach to the liberal arts in practice more generally:

By participating in one or multiple entry points during your first year, you develop the agency to take charge of your college experience. With thoughtful planning, you can engage in educational experiences inside and outside the classroom that connect and build on each other. Reflection allows you to deepen your learning in various contexts. This ultimately allows you to transfer your learning across subjects and situations.

In light of this developed understanding of the liberal arts in practice, then, in our initial campus call for ideas in September 2014 (appendix 2), we described the concept based on the impacts rubric as follows:

By “the liberal arts in practice,” we mean:

- Cultivating in our students a disposition to regularly and meaningfully make connections across the many aspects of their Beloit education;
- Providing our students with opportunities to reflect on their experiences;
- Enabling our students to transfer what they have learned in one area across very different realms of experience.

Importantly, the three proposals outlined in this document, aimed at advancing the liberal arts in practice experience of Beloit College students, build on current research on effective learning and teaching practices in higher education. In Daniel Chambliss’ and Christopher Takacs’ How College Works (Harvard UP, 2014), a decade of research into liberal arts education and student outcomes at a single institution yields a crucial conclusion regarding the importance of interactions and relationships: “The key to improving education in a college, we think, is found less in the organization of programs than in the deployment of people.” This book, which also served as a team reading assignment for The Beloit Project team prior to our January 2015 retreat, makes a compelling case that the best thing we can do to ensure that students have an impactful and transformative college education is to create the possibility for them to form connections with others—faculty, staff, students, or, perhaps, work supervisors and alumni as
well, as The Beloit Project is proposing. Fundamentally, this is about, as the authors suggest, “helping the right people find each other at the right time.” (155)

The findings of Chambliss and Takacs are mirrored in a very different kind of study of higher education. The Gallup-Purdue Index 2015 Report, “Great Jobs, Great Lives: The Relationship Between Student Debt, Experiences and Perceptions of College Worth” surveys more than 30,000 U.S. college graduates regarding their perceptions of the worth of their college experience. Central to the recommendations in this report is the idea that “universities should consider more ways to foster formal and informal mentoring relationships.” (9) These kinds of relationships positively impact a variety of areas measured in the study, including graduates’ perceptions that their education was worth the cost, the odds of graduates being meaningfully engaged at work in post-college employment, and the odds that graduates score well in five dimensions of well-being (purpose, social, financial, community, and physical) measured in the study. According to the Report, students were 1.5-2 times as likely to strongly agree that that their education was worth the cost if professors cared about them as people, if they were extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations, if they had mentors who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams, or if they had internships or jobs that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom.

The Gallup-Purdue work is bolstered by research conducted by David C. Braskamp, Larry A. Braskamp, and Chris R. Glass, published in “Belonging: The Gateway to Global Learning for All Students” in AAC&U’s Liberal Education (Summer 2015, Vol. 101, No. 3, p. 22-29). There, based on analysis of the data from the national Global Perspectives Inventory—a survey completed between August 2011 and June 2013 by nearly 38,000 students from more than a hundred four-year institutions—the authors tell us:

The GPI data clearly demonstrate that the quality of faculty-student interaction has a strong, direct relationship to students’ sense of belonging…. Not only do faculty members provide critical academic support, but they also can serve as key sources of social support that enhance students’ sense of belonging. Talk of college-level learning often remains abstract without explicitly recognizing what is hidden in plain sight: dedicated faculty members lie at the heart of a quality education. (24)

The upshot of these studies—very different in their structure but united in their findings—is that we have strong research-based reasons to believe that the best way to give students an education that they will find most meaningful is to help them find the right people to help them make the connections across their experiences at college, both inside the classroom and beyond. So there is a straight line to be drawn between our emphasis on the liberal arts in practice—on students making connections, transferring skills between them, and doing all of this in a reflective, intentional way—and the structures we have in place for Beloit College students to have the right kinds of interactions, and form the right kinds of relationships, for facilitating these core mission-based activities. In the context of the three areas of emphasis of The Beloit Project—alumni connections, student employment, and “being here”—one way to understand the
connection between all three areas of emphasis is through this lens of building a variety of relationships, including faculty, staff, alumni, and peers, that enhance and facilitate deeper, richer educational experiences (both in the classroom and beyond) through which students can reflect, transfer, and reflect.
IV. ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

A. THE PROPOSAL

The first proposal offered here in The Beloit Project concerns the ways in which we offer Beloit College students opportunities to meaningfully connect with alumni. We propose, beginning in the spring of 2017:

1. That Beloit College’s annual reunion be moved from its current summer timeframe to the spring semester post-spring-break, likely in early-to-middle April;

2. That reunion be reconfigured to emphasize the connection of alumni with current students;

3. That the spring advising practicum be moved to the Friday preceding reunion weekend, and that it be built expressly around student-alumni interactions;

4. That we explore the prospect of also moving student symposium day in the spring Thursday preceding advising practicum and reunion;

5. That these reimagined and newly-aligned events be renamed (in coordination with Communications and Marketing) to call out their unity and importance, perhaps as “Beloit Days.”

B. RATIONALE & JUSTIFICATION

This proposal advances the liberal arts in practice by building and enhancing interactions and relationships aimed at facilitating students’ ability to make connections among the many disparate experiences that comprise their Beloit College experience, transfer skills from one setting to another, and do so in a way that is reflective and intentional. The justification for this proposal is grounded in the research-demonstrated effectiveness of building the possibility for various kinds of meaningful interactions and relationships for students (see Section III above), and the widespread belief that meaningful interactions between students and alumni are highly valuable for both groups. At one level, this can be seen in the ways in which alumni events have proliferated with the introduction of the advising practicum at Beloit College over the last several years. While faculty have expressed some struggle with differentiating activities for their advisees across the two advising practicums each year—a challenge that this proposal is meant, in part, to address, by differentiating the spring advising practicum in its focus from the fall advising practicum—many departments have utilized the day in order to connect students with alums, either in person or via Skype. These activities are one kind of evidence of faculty support
for developing student-alumni connections; other evidence was solicited in an October 2015 email to chairs briefly describing The Beloit Project’s work in this area, and asking for the value they see in student-alumni connections. Some of their responses are summarized as follows:

- Help students see possibilities for life post-graduation
- Give students the ability to envision themselves in careers of their dreams
- Provide a different face on the messages faculty try to send
- Broaden options
- Give a dose of reality/offer a reality check
- Demonstrate no one “correct” path to future employment
- See the obstacles and opportunities of various career choices
- Encouraging/inspiring
- Help students think about what to do NOW while at Beloit
- See the benefits of the Beloit College experience
- Get alums to give back, reconnect
- Demystify life after Beloit
- Can provide a morale boost
- “One of the most wonderful things we can do”

We also have evidence that students themselves see value in being connected with alumni, and, in fact, the value they find in these connections is quite consistent with the value that faculty report in these connections. The Liberal Arts in Practice Center gathered student response information for two student-alumni connection events in Madison in 2014 and 2015, and a summary of student responses echoes many of the themes that faculty emphasized in their comments above:

- Broaden perspectives on the many paths possible after leaving Beloit
- Encouraging to see success can be achieved regardless of GPA
- Inside perspective on the prospects/tools for getting a job
- Seeing how many alumni deviated from college majors with great results
- Made it seem okay not to go to grad school
- Reassuring: it’s alright to not know now what I want to do in the future
- Seeing connection: liberal arts education and the skills needed on the job
- Seeing the variety of unique experiences can impact study plans
- Got a feel for what I have to do now (at Beloit) to do the kind of work I want to do

These views, gathered from both Beloit College faculty and students, suggest a shared belief from those who have experience with alumni-student connections that alumni can play a valuable and perhaps unique role in helping students connect, transfer, and reflect, in the ways that are at the conceptual heart of the liberal arts in practice.

Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) have been close partners in developing this proposal, as it aligns with their interests in key ways. Conceptually, the office has moved, under
Beth Monteiro’s leadership, to a model of interacting with alumni that shifts from a focus on giving capacity to a model built on an “Alumni Engagement Index.” This model, as presented to the trustee campaigns committee during the October 2015 board meeting, emphasizes the fundamental importance of alumni being connected with the college in a multitude of ways, and sees giving as flowing most readily from alumni who feel engaged with the college. And with reunion in particular, alumni feedback strongly suggests that student engagement is important to them: 62% of survey respondents indicate that they miss students being on campus or miss reunion being during the academic year, compared to just 28% who enjoy living in the dorms during summer reunion. Similarly, DAR’s Kronholm Report, commissioned from consultants to help shape a future direction for the office, sees alumni-student interactions as key:

With a clearer External Relations strategic stewardship objective, the Alumni office would be able to shape its programming in a way that would provide alumni a greater sense of partnership with Beloit. Without that objective then there is a danger that alumni programming is only about serving alumni—not sustaining Beloit. For example, reunions become less about a party with old friends and more about how old friendships are stronger because they are helping Beloit serve future generations of students.

So, while the shift to the summer for reunion is a relatively recent phenomenon, DAR is fully on board with moving the event as outlined in this proposal to the spring. More generally, the shift to summer for reunion has not panned out as initially hoped: summer reunion participation has yet to exceed 400, compared to an average of 450 for fall reunions in the last three years of fall reunion. The timing of June reunion has also created unforeseen stresses, as it is limited to the first three weeks of June, due to the Fourth of July holiday week. These weekends are limiting because they either conflict with Father’s Day weekend, many high school or college graduations, or weddings. Moving reunion out of June opens that weekend up for the college to use the campus facilities in June in different revenue-generating ways.

A reconfigured reunion offers a variety of exciting possibilities for student-alumni engagement, and programming around this engagement. A non-exhaustive list of possibilities includes:

1. With significant numbers of alumni returning to campus as a result of the work of academic and co-curricular departmental outreach, academic departments and other groups (clubs, fraternities and sororities, athletics, etc.) can partner with the alumni office to plan and deliver distinctive reunion programming.

2. Given the timing of such a joint event, there exists significant opportunity for student involvement in planning.

3. Admissions might similarly be engaged in this event: imagine, for example, a Visit Day event taking place during a combined reunion/advising practicum during which certain market segments of prospective students (and their parents) are invited to witness the power of alumni and student engagement around the liberal arts in practice.
4. This proposal also provides a naturally renewing cycle of alumni: the five-year reunion model provides a naturally occurring and far more sustainable cycle of alumni to be engaged in the advising practicum programming around which reunion would now be (at least partially) designed.

5. This is a proposal that is genuinely for all students; as opposed to some alumni events that are aimed at seniors or purely at networking, this proposal offers opportunities for advanced students with declared majors, new students still exploring major possibilities, and every student in between, to learn from and engage with alumni. For younger students in particular, interactions with alumni open up the possibility of transforming their approach to being a student at Beloit College—a benefit that is hard to realize when alumni engagement events are aimed at students near graduation.

6. This event has the possibility to flourish over time in a self-sustaining way: such a joint event naturally provides excellent examples to our current students of the roles and responsibilities that Beloit College expects of our alumni.

This proposal also includes the provocative element of aligning student symposium day with this reconfigured advising practicum and reunion. One potential concern about concentrating days without class together, particular next to a weekend, is that students may be tempted to see this special alignment of events as little more than a four-day weekend. But we believe there are strong reasons to resist this possible objection. Most importantly, the synergies between these events are potentially quite deep. That is, if we create the opportunity for alumni to attend symposium presentations, this could plausibly (a) deepen and enhance their connection to the active intellectual life of the college (and so enhance the kind of alumni engagement for which DAR is striving), and (b) enrich our students’ experience, by increasing their audience and allowing us to imagine transforming the day in ways that bring alumni into direct conversation with student presenters. Relatedly, the strong encouragement from classmates participating in symposium day, together with the strong encouragement from faculty (particularly academic advisors) and staff who see the power of student-alumni interactions, should work to reinforce for all students the great value of these conjoined events.

Beyond advancing the liberal arts in practice by building and enhancing interactions and relationships aimed at facilitating students’ ability to connect, transfer, and reflect, this proposal also satisfies the other element of The Beloit Project’s original charge: offering the prospect of distinctiveness in the marketplace of higher education. Alumni-student connections are certainly not a new idea in higher education, but our proposal is distinctive in the following ways:

1. Alumni-student connections at other institutions are most often branded as “networking” and “career” focused, rather than relational, engagement-centric, and academic. This allows us to take an angle on these connections that would be distinctive in the marketplace: something like, “engaging students and alumni through both their
disciplinary (or vocational) and non-disciplinary (or avocational) interests through events that highlight students' and alumni lifelong engagement with the liberal arts in practice (connecting/reflecting/transferring between contexts).

2. Alumni-student connections at many other institutions are, like some of our events (e.g., Econ Day), aimed primarily at juniors and especially seniors, whereas this proposal is aimed at all students. One exception to this model, for example, is Colgate University's job shadowing efforts for first- and second-year students, but there again, their aim is explicitly career-focused.

3. Our emphasis on skills at the heart of the liberal arts in practice—making connections across experiences, transferring what we've learned in one setting to another, doing so reflectively—is also distinctive. Where other institutions talk specifically at skills, it is typically in the context of a career-centered understanding of skills, such as in Randolph-Macon College's two-day “skill immersion experience” in their Edge Career Boot Camp.

4. Very few institutions seem to be taking advantage of reunion for this kind of student engagement with alumni. George Washington University has recently added student-alumni interaction to their reunion planning, for example, but their efforts are expressly about networking.

So while a great many schools find and foster connections between their students and alumni, there is great potential here for an angle on that engagement—in connecting with reunion and student symposium presentations, in reaching to all students across all four years, and most importantly, in our emphasis on the liberal arts in practice—that is truly distinctive in higher education.

C. LOGISTICS & NEXT STEPS

With respect to the timetable:

1. We propose introducing the aligned reunion, practicum, and symposium as Beloit Days beginning in the spring of 2017.

2. We propose framing the aligned events as a five-year pilot. This would allow us some time to experiment with structures and programming, while also aligning with DAR’s five-year cycle in reunion planning.

With respect to staffing:
1. In DAR, the staffing impact is quite minimal, and plausibly even beneficial. That is, alumni relations already has a team in place to work on reunion; this new model would simply involve shifting that team to this new model. And insofar as this event would be spaced out a bit more evenly with homecoming on the academic calendar, it would plausibly create a bit more evenness and balance in that office’s work plans.

2. Significant thought, however, would need to be given to coordination in academic affairs, around both student symposium and especially the student-alumni interactions on the day of this new advising practicum. This kind of staffing decision is under the purview of senior staff, but we recommend a staffing model that positions someone to both oversee these events and, more structurally, to be an interface between academic affairs and alumni relations. It is plausibly the case that, conceptually, alumni relations as an office ought to deeply connected to both development and academic affairs. A staffing model that realizes these deep connections would be ideal, and it should be linked in key ways to both the Liberal Arts in Practice Center and the provost’s office.

As we move towards implementation of this proposal, because of the importance of strengthening through the realization of this proposal the relationship between development, alumni affairs, and academic affairs, the implementation team ought to have strong representation from these key constituencies.
V. STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

A. THE PROPOSAL

The second proposal offered here in The Beloit Project reimagines student employment at Beloit College as an opportunity for students to engage the liberal arts in practice, where students make connections between their liberal arts education and their campus employment experiences in ways that can inform and enrich both areas of endeavor. We propose, beginning in the academic year 2016-2017:

1. That job descriptions for student work across the college be developed to make explicit the skills students will develop on the job, and that this be done in a two-stage process: first by engaging a small number of especially willing and prepared partners, and second by using that first-stage work to inform job description development more broadly around Beloit College;

2. That student employment be made a deeper part of the academic advising experience. This involves making the new job descriptions visible to academic advisors through the online advising tool in Portal, as well as including at least a nominal student employment component in New Student Days of our first-semester FYI/Initiatives program, in which advisors would be given some orientation about student employment and offer students basic information on finding and securing work—not only the “nuts and bolts” but also as a framework for introducing the liberal arts in practice;

3. That at least minor improvements be made to the visibility and functionality of our online job-search platform. This work, potentially in coordination with Communications & Marketing, involves developing a more accessible and integrated approach to the posting of both available positions and other positions currently filled (potentially involving the LAPC, Admissions, and Initiatives websites, as well as in the Portal) and a richer array of search terms available to students, such as including in postings not only job descriptions and skills developed in them, but also variables such as scheduling commitments.

4. That mechanisms be developed (including an online toolkit and face-to-face sessions) for sharing best practices in student employment supervision, and for providing support as supervisors develop the capacity for understanding and supporting the liberal arts in practice experience of Beloit students; and

5. That a “Work Ventures” committee be created, comprised of 5-8 student employment stakeholders—both supervisors and student workers—with a primary role of overseeing
the implementation of the above recommendations and overseeing our campus student employment pipeline more generally.

B. RATIONALE & JUSTIFICATION

As described in Section II above, The liberal arts in practice developmental model provides an integrative approach to classroom learning together with practices and experiences beyond the classroom. In emphasizing the connections between the many disparate experiences both inside and outside the classroom that comprise a Beloit College education, our attention should immediately be drawn to the opportunity presented by an experience that is shared by the majority of Beloit College students during their time as a student: on-campus student employment. Employment is, for many of our students, a key part of their experience of Beloit College. In fact, after taking courses, living in residence halls, and eating in Commons, it is difficult to come up with a structure at Beloit College that so many students experience. While student employment does not (and does not need to) include all students, it does offer us an important opportunity to expand the scope of the liberal arts in practice as a way of understanding, enriching, and enlivening the whole student experience at Beloit College for the majority of our students who participate in it.

Student employment sits at a useful intersection: enough students already participate in on-campus student employment for us to feel confident that student employment as a pathway to liberal arts in practice experiences is a pathway that could benefit many students. Simultaneously, enough students do not currently participate in on-campus student employment that we see the possibility for expansion. This expansion might be funded, at least in part, by unspent dollars already allocated to student employment.

63% of degree-seeking students who were on campus in Fall 2014 worked at all during the 2014-15 academic year. This finding shows that student employment already touches many students; an intentional effort to enhance student employment opportunities with a liberal arts in practice approach has the potential to enrich the student experience in a deep and broadly reaching way. Students across class years, gender, and racial/ethnic groups all participate in student employment; even nearly 50% of international students worked on campus in the 2014-15 academic year\(^1\).

The work that students do is varied: The college offers 200-250 student employment positions across 71 different departments. Many students work multiple jobs, some across different departments. Approximately 57% of students who worked on campus in 2014-15 worked in more than one position. Approximately 39% of students who worked on campus in 2014-15

\(^1\) International students are generally legally allowed to work, but some reasons exist for us to expect them to work at lower rates: 1) Some international student cohorts have been less likely to have work study allocations 2) International students need to arrange social security numbers before being allowed to work—a bureaucratic obstacle most domestic students cleared well before arriving at Beloit College.
worked in more than one department. Some student positions are supervised by faculty (e.g., course assistants), but the majority of positions are in campus offices supervised by staff. Indeed, student employment is one of the main avenues by which students and staff build relationships.

While we recognize the very broad reach of on-campus employment into the lives of students at Beloit College, we also recognize the existing capacity for greater impact. In the 2014-15 budget year, approximately 80% of the money allocated to student employment opportunities was spent; that is, offices on campus had more resources to offer student employment opportunities than were used. This budget finding is consistent with what we see in student-level financial aid findings: many students who are offered work study as part of their financial aid packages do not work for all the hours they are promised. Of the students with high financial need in 2014-15, only 21% worked 90% or more of the work study hours they were offered. 40% of students worked less than half of their offered work study hours. These findings suggest that student employment is an under-utilized pathway for students (and for the offices that supervise students). Improving the pathways into and through student employment may increase the number of students in student employment, or the amount of time students spend working on-campus jobs. Enriching on-campus employment through a liberal arts in practice model has the potential to increase the number of students interested in working on campus, to increase the number of hours students work on campus, and to improve the experiences students and supervisors have.

See Appendix 7 for more findings about student employment on campus.

With respect to student employment, then, the liberal arts in practice calls those of us who are taking up the charge of deepening student engagement to:

- Continually seek ways of promoting student agency in students’ campus work experiences;
- Identify skills and other outcomes that students can practice and develop through their campus work experiences;
- Encourage and design student work experiences that foster growth over time;
- Place an emphasis on work relationships and work experiences which, complementing other campus initiatives, identify institutional metrics of success which are in alignment with national studies such as the Gallup-Purdue Surveys and *How College Works*;
- Recognize the role mentoring and advising plays in the growth of individual students and emphasize the ways in which student workers’ relationships with supervisors, co-workers, and the campus community they serve, as well as the unique learning
experiences while working as paid employees, can inform and broaden our institutional efforts around the liberal arts in practice.

The rationale for the explicit changes we recommend to job descriptions, regarding the emphasis of skills developed on the job, is directly grounded in our developed campus understanding of the liberal arts in practice. That is, conceptually, our developmental model recognizes that students are developing meaningful, life-long, transferrable skills in employment, and reflective attention to this very fact is at the heart of the liberal arts in practice’s emphasis on connection, transferral, and reflection. While the most obvious candidates for this kind of attention to skills might seem to be student jobs involving activities that are most obviously professional in nature (e.g., costume design or videography), conversations with student supervisors in all manners of student jobs (from office work to food service) have convinced us that this approach to student work can be applied very widely, and perhaps even universally. Skills that student develop in employment go beyond particular professional competencies, and include deeper transferrable skills such as managing time, working within a team setting, negotiating power structures, and the like. We recommend a staged strategy for the development of student job descriptions, whereby a selection of particularly interested supervisors at all levels of campus employment work first to develop job descriptions explicitly around skill development, and then their work by used as a jumping off point in a second stage aimed at developing job descriptions more widely around the College with respect to skill development.

Central to our recommendations is the recognition that, in a variety of ways, robust support will need to be provided to student work supervisors for this work to be as deep, meaningful, and ultimately successful as possible. At one level, this support involves the sharing of best practices and the ability of supervisors to learn from each other generally around work supervision under the liberal arts in practice. Our recommendations around both an online toolkit and face-to-face sessions are aimed at this level. At another level, we should also recognize that the kind of reflection called for by the liberal arts in practice involves a key role, but not an exclusive role, for work supervisors. That is, while work supervisors certainly will play a key role in helping students reflect on the connections between skills developed on the job and other settings (both in the classroom and out of it), there is also an important role for academic advisors to play in this reflection. By making the new, skill-centered job descriptions visible in the online advising toolkit available to academic advisors, we mean to signal the importance of recognizing the role that employment plays in our students’ total Beloit College experience. Just as the existing advising toolkit marks off space for student activities such as clubs and sports in recognition of their intrinsic role in the liberal arts in practice, so too should there be space in the same way for student employment, so that it becomes a regular part of advising conversations at Beloit College.

In another way, too, advisors play a key role in the recommendations we offer here, this time with respect to the Initiatives program. Campus conversations hosted by The Beloit Project team revealed that our current electronic job posting/search platforms and interface are weak (for
instance, we have single link to “student jobs” on the Terrarium), resulting in students not finding jobs as easily as they might or at all. And while our current rationale for posting student job availabilities and allowing students to apply for those jobs is noble, in that it rightly emphasizes the importance of student agency, The Beloit Project Team has come to be wary of this process going forward, for the way that it assumes that students (particularly in their early years at Beloit College) have the self-confidence and savviness to believe that jobs in which they might flourish are genuine, live possibilities for them. For all of these reasons, we suggest that changes to the pipeline through which students find jobs be considered:

1. First, we recommend that the College develops a more accessible and integrated approach to the posting of both available positions and other positions currently filled. This might include a link to job information on our LAPC site, for example, as well as Admissions or Initiatives sites. Similarly, we might link to the Portal, two locations that could offer various degrees of integration. We also might consider a richer array of search terms available to students, such as including in postings not only job descriptions and skills developed in them, but also variables like potential scheduling concerns such as likely hours (number per week, time of day or week, etc.).

2. Second, we note that students don’t learn about student employment in the same places they learn about other campus opportunities; here, advisors in the Initiatives program (reaching as far back as New Student Days in FYI) have a key role to play. Currently, students and advisors do not include student employment in their advising conversations the way they do for other “liberal arts in practice activities.” Yet the Initiatives Program could be an opportunity for academic advisors and new students to address the issue of work in their first weeks and potentially throughout the Initiatives program (e.g., Advising Practicum). Given that over half of our incoming students will seek campus employment at some point, this subject at least should be included in our approach to New Student Orientation. Student employment therefore should be included as an area for training workshops for Initiatives advisors.

The rationale for a Work Ventures committee is grounded in a relevant disanalogy between this proposal and our proposal above regarding reconfiguring reunion and advising practicum around alumni-student connections. In that case, the people who would plausibly be most responsible for shepherding the proposal forward were fairly clear: Development and Alumni Relations, which already organizes reunion, and (with some support) the Liberal Arts in Practice Center, which has become a locus for a variety of opportunities for students to interact with alumni. With respect to student employment, while it is likely that Human Resources will play a vital role in some aspects of this proposal, it is also clear that student supervisors (and perhaps academic advisors as well) will need to have a prominent voice in the work, and we do not presently have a body that represents these constituencies as an organized entity. A Work Ventures committee of 5-8 student employment supervisors (ideally, faculty as well as both salaried and hourly staff) and student workers is offered as the body that oversees and organizes student employment in the context of the liberal arts in practice. The participating
student members should be nominated by departments and offices employing them; relatedly, a more robust group of nominated student workers might serve as a useful resource for this Work Ventures committee. Fundamentally, the guiding idea behind the composition of this committee is that all members are stakeholders in student employment as a liberal arts in practice experience.

Some suggestions for the work of this committee are as follows:

- As a primary role, this committee will oversee our campus student employment pipeline generally (concerning how students find their way into and through jobs as LAP experiences), manage the toolkit for work supervisors, and organize related activities, such as supervisor workshops, a student jobs fair to introduce student to employment opportunities on campus in ways that make clear the relevant skills they could expect to develop, and practicum and symposium events aimed at highlighting the role of student employment in the liberal arts in practice. The supervisor toolkit could include a template or menu of suggestions, such as the following:
  - requiring and critiquing student resumes
  - conducting and critiquing student interview
  - strategies for student worker performance review
  - structured opportunities to solicit student worker input on working conditions and practices
  - potential for related work/academic projects, sample readings, prompts

- If we are to realize the possibility of students’ meaningfully developing skills across offices over time (i.e., where a student develops a skill in one office and then later puts it to use or develops it further in another office), the Work Ventures committee would be the body for facilitating the realization of these developmental pathways. These developmental pathways might also plausibly be accompanied by some sort of credit, credentialing, and/or documentation of student work, highlighting students’ developed skills and accomplishments and so also serving as means to recognize the meaningfulness of a student’s employment experience.

- The body of this committee should leverage existing structures by coordinating and integrating with their respective members and charges. These could include Initiatives Committee, Inclusive Living and Learning Task Force, The Dean of Students, LAPC, and Strategic Enrollment Task Force.

- One person should be identified as a coordinator whose role is specified formally as a part of their regular position. Similarly, one honors term student should be selected each year to serve as the Work Ventures Associate.

In the long run, it is plausible that the Liberal Arts in Practice Center might (and even should) assume a principle role in this organizing work around student employment. But in the absence
of sufficient staffing in that office to support this work presently, and in recognition that our previous proposal already puts pressure on the staffing of the Liberal Arts in Practice Center, a Work Ventures committee is the most plausible model for carrying this work out in the next few years. Taking this proposal on student employment together with the previous proposal for student-alumni connections, however, certainly offers intriguing possibilities for reimagining the staffing and structure of the Liberal Arts in Practice Center.

The recommendations offered here regarding student work build on a proven institutional track record of increasing thoughtfulness and systematicity regarding student employment at Beloit College. Specifically, over roughly the last decade, efforts led by Human Resources have resulted in student employment moving from a place where many student jobs on campus did not have a written job description, to a place where now all do; and, similarly, we have moved from a place where student pay rates were inconsistent and disorganized to a place where all student work is organized under a consistent three-tiered model for student pay ($7.25, $7.50, or $7.75 per hour). This proposal from The Beloit Project is meant in part to honor that work by building on it in ways that are specifically aimed at the liberal arts in practice. This means, first, honoring the efforts around job descriptions by recommended their further development with respect to the skills students can expect to develop on the job. And second, more prospectively, the existing three tiers of pay for student work may provide a helpful model for constructing a tiered approach to skill development over time, either within or across offices.

C. LOGISTICS & NEXT STEPS

With respect to the timetable:

1. We propose that the Work Ventures committee be in place no later than the end of calendar year 2016.

2. We propose that, within one year (so by the end of academic year 2016-17):
   ○ Willing partners for the first stage of job description development emphasizing skills complete their job description changes; and
   ○ Sharing mechanisms for student work supervisors of best practices and related concerns be developed.

3. We propose that, within two years (so by the end of academic year 2017-18):
   ○ The two-stage work of job description changes emphasizing skills be completed;
   ○ Academic advisors should have access to those new job descriptions in the online advising tool in Portal;
   ○ FYI should incorporate at least a nominal student employment component to help students find and secure work; and
   ○ At least minor improvements to the visibility and functionality of our online job-search platform be completed.
4. We propose that, within three years (so by the end of academic year 2018-19):
   ○ The resource toolkit for work supervisors be developed; and
   ○ At least one additional “campus structure” be engaged to develop and support
     this approach to student employment, such as a job fair, an Advising Practicum
     workshop, a curricular tie-in, a credential/credit mechanism, and/or a student
     work supervisor “forum” (analogous to faculty forum).

With respect to staffing:

1. The Work Ventures committee, as described in section V.B above, must be comprised of
   stakeholders who care about, and are invested in, student employment as a key part of
   Beloit College students’ liberal arts in practice experience.

2. In the long run, both this proposal and the previous student-alumni connections proposal
   are conceptually connected in important ways with the Liberal Arts in Practice Center.
   This is not surprising, given the ways in which both proposals are aimed at tying events
   and experiences (in reunion and student employment) ordinarily divorced from traditional
   conceptions of a student’s academic experience to the academic mission of the college,
   and to the concept of the liberal arts in practice in particular as one central and
   distinctive way we have developed at Beloit College to realize our mission. So, taken
   together, these two proposals make a compelling, unified argument for developing the
   staffing capacity in the Liberal Arts in Practice Center such that the LAPC’s staff can be
   meaningfully and deeply connected to both the ongoing planning of reunion and the
   ongoing development of student employment in accordance with these two proposals.
   Developing this capacity, therefore, should be seen as a long-term priority emerging
   from The Beloit Project.
VI. BEING HERE

A. THE PROPOSAL

The Beloit Project’s third proposal offered in this document is a research project, which we hope will be carried out under the purview of a Mellon Foundation grant currently in development aimed at understanding student inclusion and belonging. This research project, developed in coordination with the Inclusivity and Intercultural Assessment Group as well as the Inclusive Living and Learning Task Force, is aimed at better understanding a related set of concepts captured under the broader conceptual umbrella of “being here,” such as belonging and inclusion, and trying to answer the following questions concerning them:

1. What are these things?
2. Why do they matter?
3. What questions do we need to ask, with respect to these concepts, about our student body?
4. What data already exist for answering these questions?
5. What data are missing and needed in order to answer these questions?

The end goal of this research is to be able to formulate an intelligent, well-grounded, focused action plan addressing inclusion and belonging following the research project.

B. RATIONALE & JUSTIFICATION

While the initial proposal for The Beloit Project (appendix 1) imagined a single timeline for any emerging proposals, The Beloit Project team recognized fairly early that different proposals may need to move at different paces, depending on the conceptual and logistical work required. The Beloit Project’s third main area of focus, “being here,” was from the start conceptually dense, in that it was meant to bring together the range of community idea submissions aimed at both individual and community flourishing that were generated shortly after our initial campus call (appendix 2). In the spring of 2015, The Beloit Project team had devoted significant time to the development of a curricular pilot project aimed at “being here,” captured in a summary document of our work from April 2015 (appendix 4). While that pilot project had significant support from some segments of the Beloit College community, and while The Beloit Project team continues to find the proposal provocative and potentially worth pursuing, resistance from other segments of the community (primarily some faculty) led the team to step back from that proposal. In particular, most usefully, faculty questions about the purpose of such a pilot project—essentially, “what problem are we trying to solve?”—led us to think more deeply about precisely what we know about the student experience, with respect to “being here” and community belonging.
The research project proposed here is meant to be directly continuous with the external literature outlined above in Section III of this report. There, the lesson from the work of Chamblass and Takacs in *How College Works* (2014), the Gallup-Purdue Index 2015 Report, and Braskamp, Braskamp, and Glass' 2015 article “Belonging: The Gateway to Global Learning for All Students,” concern the importance of people and relationships in student success. For this third proposal, the work by Braskamp, Braskamp, and Glass is particularly revealing, for the way that it connects the relationships that students form with their sense of belonging.

Especially striking, and directly relevant to this proposal, is the gap demonstrated by the data among students in different demographic groups regarding their sense of belonging at college:

> Yet our data show that, far too often, first-generation, transfer, and international students lack this crucial sense of belonging. Just as participation in study abroad programs varies across student demographics, the sense of belonging in college is unevenly distributed among today’s students. (22)

These findings connect with what many of us at Beloit College have come to believe about the student experience at Beloit: namely, that different students experience Beloit very differently, that not every student feels a sense of belonging and inclusion at Beloit, and that differences in belonging seem to at least roughly track along various demographic lines. Under the leadership of the Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning Office, among others, we have at Beloit begun to gather and analyze some evidence that we have about belonging, from sources such as student surveys. We also have no shortage of anecdotes that testify to these concerns about the student experience. But given the research-demonstrated importance of meaningful connections and belonging to student success, it is imperative that we understand the student experience at Beloit more clearly, and on still firmer empirical grounds. This third proposal is aimed at providing this firmer foundation, so that we might act to ensure that all of our students have the best chance to succeed. Following this research project, we should be in position, as a community, to take intelligent, informed action for improving the student experience with respect to inclusion and belonging.

This proposal, then, advances the liberal arts in practice in potentially perhaps the deepest way of all three proposals: students can flourish in making connections, transferring skills, and doing all of this reflectively, only if they feel a sense of belonging to the Beloit College community, and have the support of key relationships within that community. We run the risk of failing segments of our student body if we do not act to ensure that this sense of belonging, and so these relationships, are being realized; and we can act most effectively if our actions are grounded in the kind of information at which this proposal aims. Because this report is a first step towards acting well, it may not be immediately obvious how this proposal offers the prospect of distinctiveness in the higher education marketplace. Yet the national data tells us that the challenges we face at Beloit College regarding inclusion and belonging are very widespread; if we can move decisively towards addressing these challenges, we position ourselves to be leaders in what is surely an important national conversation.
C. LOGISTICS & NEXT STEPS

We recommend that this project begins in the spring of 2016, or as soon as funding from the Mellon Foundation grant is fully secured. A report aimed at answering the five questions outlined in this proposal should be completed by the end of academic year 2016-17, with further steps to be determined based on the results of this report, as well as other work at Beloit College aimed at inclusion and belonging. The work on this report should be led by members of the Inclusivity and Intercultural Assessment Group, especially the members of that group who have been a part of The Beloit Project, Amy Briggs and Jen Walsh.
VII. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Original proposal (May 2014)
Appendix 2: Initial campus announcement
Appendix 3: Six imaginary scenarios
Appendix 4: April 2015 summary document
Appendix 5: Retreat agendas
Appendix 6: LAP impacts rubric
Appendix 7: Current state of student employment: findings
APPENDIX 1: ORIGINAL PROPOSAL (MAY 2014)

A Proposal to Support Intelligent Experimentation in the Liberal Arts in Practice

“A college of Beloit’s type has primary responsibility for being intelligently experimental. The belief is not that there should be change for the sake of change…Rather, the belief is that a college to be faithful to its social responsibility must be humble of its accomplishments so far, honestly introspective regarding its strong and weak points, and sensitive to the changing currents of society and the educational demands of the present and needs for the future. Change based upon such a process is what is meant by being “intelligently experimental.”

Profile of Beloit College
1963

A key question coming out of the February 2013 Board meeting was how would we be different than we currently are if we were to have a clean start? As a partial response to that question came three partial recommendations: (1) the college should look to explore new collaborations; (2) the college should explore new ways of taking advantage of technology; and (3) the college should explore new ways of using time.

Fast forward one year to the February 2014 Board meeting in which we took up, one more time, a more pointed but related question which was broadly cast as how do we best support a college organizing itself around the liberal arts in practice? If we take as starting points that a twenty-first century world is increasingly characterized by complexity, ambiguity, and change, and that the liberal arts in practice is a developmentally based pedagogy privileging students increasing ability (1) to make connections across multiple aspects of their education - curricular and co-curricular; (2) to participate in opportunities the college helps make available – summer research, internships, off-campus programs, community partnerships - to experiment with and develop sophistication in forging these connections; (3) to take time to thoughtfully reflect on how theory and practice interact in specific instances and then to see generalizations; and (4) to develop the hardest of habits of mind: an inclination and ability to transfer what they have learned in one area across very different realms of experience.

Here is a hypothesis:

Four years of intentional and sustained focus on the liberal arts in practice, within a college that is organized to best support this approach, will provide an engaged student with one of this country’s most distinctive and powerful approaches to achieving a mission similar to Beloit’s.
Here is a second hypothesis:

> Since we do not know all that we would like to know about how to best organize ourselves around an intentional and sustained focus on the liberal arts in practice, we can learn a great deal from intelligent experimentation.

And, here is a third hypothesis:

> We will fail at fully creating a college best organized to support a four year intentional and sustained focus on the liberal arts in practice if there is not a decisive and sustainable effort to identify, develop, implement, and learn from intelligent experiments as we move smartly towards significant structural change. Of course, there is already significant experimentation currently unfolding on campus and we must capture and utilize what we learn from these.

The first hypothesis is one that you have heard most directly from Ann Davies, Christina Klawitter, and me for the better part of the last five years. The second hypothesis reflects to current state of higher education’s understanding of what are effective organizational structures. The third hypothesis comes directly from the Beloit College Board of Trustees.

**Reputation and Resources**

Beloit College’s future rests on its ability in the years ahead to enhance its reputation and promote resources that flow to it. Our success with one will be directly connected to our success with the other. It is that simple.

But, there is nothing in the paragraph above that is not well understood by every president of every liberal arts college in America. We all know that relative reputation growth leads to greater resources that can be used to augment the college’s relative reputation even further and the spiral continues upward. And, because everyone knows it, everyone is trying very hard to find traction on the spiral. Positively impacting relative reputation requires the hard work of finding traction better than everyone else. *Marginal change will keep the college, at best, pretty much where it is in the higher education hierarchy.*

**Beloit College needs to be exceptional and to be seen that way.**

Space between a college and other colleges is most frequently generated by incremental resources. But, space can also be created through innovative and substantive programming that is readily and broadly recognized and appreciated for its distinctive power. Since the resource based space-creating approach is unlikely at Beloit College in the short run, riding the reputation-resource spiral upwards (and I think of little else) requires that we hang our hat on the latter. But, a critical side benefit of spending energy on space-creating programmatic change
is that for it to be successful it has to make a real difference in the quality of the educational experience for our students. It has to serve the college's mission more effectively than what we are currently doing. It has to be real.

**What makes a future of Beloit College programmatic exceptionalism believable?**

First, we have confidence in our potential, we are entrepreneurial in spirit, and we are terrifically humble and energetic learners and adopters of good ideas coming from other institutions. All these factors allow us to embrace risk and uncertainty more boldly and intelligently than nearly any other higher education institution. Second, we have an organizing pedagogy in the “liberal arts in practice” that builds on the college’s uniquely sophisticated position as a leader in higher education in America. We are already far ahead of nearly any other educational institution in the country in this realm. Furthermore, it is widely recognized that these are impactful pedagogies. Third, we have a campus-wide commitment to a clear mission that is understood, embraced, and used as an orienting guide by nearly all members of the Beloit community.

*All these combine to say we have a capacity for successful change; we have a direction in which to change successfully; and we have a culture that can be successful at changing. That is a very good start.*

**Beloit College can be exceptional and can be seen that way.**

So, let’s get real.

This proposal puts together a structure that offers the type of sustained committed effort that is required for ultimate success. It consists of five stages:

- (1) Intelligent Experimentation: Inquiry and Discovery
- (2) Intelligent Experimentation: Shaping and Vetting
- (3) Intelligent Experimentation: Proposal Development
- (4) Intelligent Experimentation: Department/Program Preparation
- (5) Intelligent Experimentation: Implementation, Assessment, Feedback, and Structural Change

We propose that the first four stages of the process take place over a two-year time period led by an Intelligent Experimentation Team (IET) of seven faculty and staff. I propose to ask Associate Dean and Professor of Philosophy Matt Tedesco to serve as Chair of the IET. Three faculty would be selected by the Academic Strategic Planning Committee in consultation with the Provost, Dean of Students, and President. Three staff would be selected by Senior Staff in consultation with the Academic Strategic Planning Committee.

**Fall 2014-15 Intelligent Experimentation: Inquiry and Discovery**
The IET will meet for two days in August prior to the start of the academic year to construct an approach to effectively engage the community in identifying and testing paths of inquiry and promoting the development of ideas associated with better supporting the liberal arts in practice. Since we are an educational institution it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that these ideas will begin and end with academic affairs. To limit us in this way, however, would be a fatal error. The hard work of the Fall will be getting the entire campus – every office – developing ideas for intelligent experimentation (the most exciting of which probably cut across departments and divisions).

**Spring 2014-15 Intelligent Experimentation: Shaping and Vetting**

The IET will meet for two days in January prior to the start of the spring semester to shape a strategy for clarifying key questions and taking a first pass at categorizing ideas and proposals developed in the Fall. Over the course of the semester they will engage the community in beginning to shape and vet the most promising proposals.

**Fall 2015-16 Intelligent Experimentation: Proposal Development**

The IET will meet for two days in August prior to the start of the academic year to establish an approach to develop a workable number of specific proposals – well-defined intelligent experiments – and a plan for vetting these proposals. The daily iterative work of developing and testing and sharpening these proposals with all the appropriate members of the community will be led by Matt Tedesco.

**Spring 2015-16 Intelligent Experimentation: Experiment Preparation**

The IET will meet for two days in January prior to the start of the academic year to establish a plan to implement experiments that the community has endorsed. The daily work of helping forge the right partnerships and working directly with those departments and programs most impacted will be led by Matt Tedesco.

**Summer/Fall/Spring 2016-17 Intelligent Experimentation: Implementation, Assessment, Feedback, and Structural Change**

The Experiments are implemented. Assessment and Feedback loops are developed. Matt Tedesco continues his leadership work through the summer of 2016.

The budget categories for this are fairly straightforward:

- Dedicated and compensated time, outside of the academic year, for the seven members of the IET for 8 days over 2 years.

- One year of Matt Tedesco’s time as project director.
• One week of an external consultant’s time to provide an outsider’s perspective.

• Ancillary travel and materials to learn from other institutions.

• A communication budget to take advantage of opportunities to enhance the college’s reputation as appropriate during this process.

**Concluding Comments**

Beloit College has an opportunity, right now with this leadership team, to be truly exceptional in all the ways that propel us upward on the spiral of reputation and resources. But, we will need to change to get on that spiral.

We are humble about what we currently know and very curious about what we can learn. Because of this we need to be as smart as possible in fully engaging the entire community in the development of ideas for productive change.

One enormously important thing I have learned from members of the Board is that systemic change within a complicated organization like Beloit will not happen unless there is a leadership team (person) provided with sufficient time and charged with dedicated focus towards the development, management, and communication associated with any proposed changes.

If funding for this proposal were forthcoming, I am confident it would be well invested.
APPENDIX 2: INITIAL CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENT

In the last few weeks, you may have heard about a college-wide effort to put our commitment to the liberal arts in practice at the center of what we do here at Beloit College in an innovative, distinctive, and potentially game-changing way. The president and the board of trustees are fully committed to this effort, and the president has called together a group of faculty, staff, and students whose shared project in the next two years will be to seek out and help develop new or existing ideas for doing so. This note is to share with the community our group’s plan for how we expect this to happen.

In a nutshell, our objectives are:

1. To bring about significant structural change at Beloit, that
2. Advances the liberal arts in practice, and
3. Offers the prospect of distinctiveness in the marketplace of higher education.

By “the liberal arts in practice,” we mean:

- Cultivating in our students a disposition to regularly and meaningfully make connections across the many aspects of their Beloit education;
- Providing our students with opportunities to reflect on their experiences;
- Enabling our students to transfer what they have learned in one area across very different realms of experience.

“Significant structural change” is meant to be broadly construed and can include (for example) how we:

- Arrange ourselves organizationally
- Structure and manage time--from class periods to the academic year
- Collaborate within and beyond Beloit College
- Arrange and experience physical space--from residential life, to offices, to classrooms
- Use digital resources in ways that are mindful of our mission as a residential liberal arts campus in a changing technological landscape
- Design and practice our curriculum, co-curriculum, and programs
- Approach our teaching and learning styles and strategies
- Address broader cultural and demographic forces

While discussions of this initiative are already underway in various places around campus, our group will be offering some brainstorming sessions in the next few weeks, to be announced shortly. These will be open to everyone--staff, students, and faculty. Shortly after that, we’ll make available an electronic form, where we’ll be asking for your ideas.

We’re looking forward to this campus discussion about what we’re calling “The Beloit Project.” Thanks for being a part of it.
--Amy Briggs, Lola Davis, Jessica Fox-Wilson, Fabi Hernandez, Chris Johnson, Chuck Lewis, Rob Mirabile, Ellie O’Byrne, Matt Tedesco, Jen Walsh
APPENDIX 3: SIX IMAGINARY SCENARIOS

21st Century Liberal Arts Education: The Liberal Arts in Practice

Rationale:
Liberal arts colleges are often criticized for providing a “knowledge for the sake of knowledge” style of education. The essence of the liberal arts in practice, however, is not knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but knowledge gained and/or applied outside of the classroom. This connection between our programs and the world at large is the critical link that differentiates a liberal arts in practice education from simply a liberal arts education, and it provides extraordinary meaning and value to what Beloit offers. Our faculty, students, and alumni seek to engage with, improve, and learn from the world around us through programs ranging from internships, research, and entrepreneurship to sustainability, volunteering, and community action.

Description:
If learning and/or applying knowledge beyond the classroom is central to the DNA of a Beloit education, and it represents a good solution to market demands, then a key question is: how can we expand our strength in this area? Some possibilities:

- **Replace traditional majors and departments with interdisciplinary development domains.** The question we should be asking students is not what do you want to major in, but what do you want to do in the world? The answer to this question is the dream a student harbors as she searches for a college and navigates her way through life in college and beyond. What might the domains look like? Some possibilities include health and wellness, education and research, nonprofit and public service, business and entrepreneurship, technology and innovation, fine and performing arts. If we were structured in this way, we could adjust the focal knowledge and skills prioritized in each of the interdisciplinary domains to be current with evolving needs (e.g., sustainability, global citizenship, business intelligence) instead of being married to isolated knowledge bases.

- **Create explicit, multi-stage, developmental programs for each of the interdisciplinary domains, (akin to what is already occurring in the sustainability program).** Each pathway could start with relevant coursework, then progress to student involvement in projects, and then, ultimately, student leadership of projects. The final stage would serve as both a program capstone and the fulfillment of a curricular liberal arts in practice requirement.

- **Award professional development certificates in key aspects of the interdisciplinary domains.** Some examples could include sustainability, leadership, organizational ethics, data analytics, and intercultural engagement. One recently proposed example of this is the “Mellon Leadership Certificate.” Mellon Leadership students would connect the intercultural literacy and leadership skills they gain in the classroom and in leadership settings, transfer this learning back and forth, and reflect on the entire process. This occurs in three steps: 1) Completing a menu of “C” courses and a leadership development course; 2) Performing an intercultural leadership role (on or off campus) while taking a concurrent seminar similar to the Duffy (structured, advised, monitored, mentored, reflective); 3) A final independent research project. These certificates would be credentials recognized on student transcripts.

- **Help every student develop an e-portfolio that reflects a rich body of intellectual, professional, and personal development.** This would be an electronically stored collection of a person's experiences, achievements and artifacts, together with their reflections on their own learning. Arming each student with such a platform would allow Beloit graduates to stand out in the post-college marketplace, and provide a much more robust representation of each student’s abilities to prospective employers, graduate programs, etc. than just a transcript. Indeed, more than 4 out of 5 employers say an electronic portfolio would be useful to them in ensuring that job applicants have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their company or organization.
A Beloit “Mod-Quad” Time-Structure Scenario

Rationale/Background
The community ideas submitted repeatedly and variously called for changes to our time structures, from the week to the year. These were tied to calls for more flexibility and diversity, more integrated coordination and connection among the elements of students’ education, deeper immersion in their experiences, and more capacity for realizing the liberal arts in practice. Rather than proposing a specific set of LAP initiatives, this scenario offers a broader structural framework within which a range of LAP components could be developed and implemented to allow the college to embark on a pathway of institutional experimentation around the liberal arts in practice.

Description
The academic year is recast into four 7-week modules (hence “mod-quad”) roughly aligned with our current semester system. Students typically take 2 units during each module for a total of 8 units a year. Faculty would normally teach 6 units a year (no more than 2 units per module, with variations of 2.1.2.1 load being typical). These modules could realize the following outcomes:

- offer students shorter and more intensely immersive coursework, while potentially enhancing their success by focusing and simplifying their concurrent areas of study.
- make interdisciplinary, experiential, and other collaborative integrative exchanges more logistically viable (with faculty and students engaged in fewer courses at a given time) as well as more central and vital as a conceptual framework. High-priority LAP initiatives (such as student work, internships, wellness, research projects, student-proposed courses, career development, and community engagement) would be more integrated into and structurally aligned with the general curriculum.
- allow faculty to bundle our current curriculum into these shorter modules while proactively encouraging more variable, interactive, and project-oriented pedagogies, such as labs, studios, fieldwork, and workshops to complement discussion and lecture components.

Some Possible Logistical Details

- Regular classes and LAP offerings could be .5 or 1-unit. Full-time students could enroll in 1.5-2.5 units per module. We could set some target graduation requirement for LAP units (2?) and total units (30 units?).
- Classes are offered 2x weekly in one of four blocks: M/TH or T/F for 3-hour blocks in morning or afternoon (e.g., 9-12 or 1-4). Half-unit offerings could use all or portion of regular blocks to meet various contact/workload variables. No classes on Wednesday, which is for projects, special activities, presentations, practicum, symposium etc. Major committee meetings on Wednesday 8-10 am.
- Faculty could offer one of the following each year instead of a regular 1-unit class (the “new 5+1”): a .5-unit tutorial (with smaller enrollment cap than normal), .5-unit class, or .5-unit LAP offering.
GAMIFYING BELOIT

Rationale:
College is in some ways already a game. The LAP has as part of its aims the goal of helping students break out of the traditional classroom-learning paradigm and actualize their education in meaningful ways, and gaming would be a productive paradigm for pursuing the LAP mission. This would be an opportunity to recast both Beloit and games in a new way. We would adopt games as a model for un-traditionalizing education, but also use Beloit to un-traditionalize approaches to gaming. In the essay "Gaming Literacy: Game Design as a Model for Literacy in the Twenty-first Century" (in 'The Video Game Theory Reader 2), Eric Zimmerman outlines a new definition of literacy based on systems, and argues that games are the best method for teaching students to be systems-literate. Since games, in theory and design, promote people's ability to operate productively within and around systems, they are a powerful way to prepare students to be versatile and cope with a variety of challenges in creative and meaningful ways.

Proposal:
Make games and gamification a core component of education at Beloit. While several faculty incorporate some element of games or play into their courses, a larger institutional commitment could prove rewarding for students, and help Beloit establish a more unique identity. Such a commitment could take one of three possible forms:

1. A new domain for Games, and a requirement that each department contribute to it in some form. Like the LAP requirement, it could have several options for how a course can contribute (e.g. Play, Game Design, Gaming Literacy).

2. An interdisciplinary major in Games Literacy. While this could involve departments like Computer Science, Art, or Creative Writing and resemble the type of Game Design majors taught at other institutions, it would be more broad and liberal arts-y in its aims—that is, it would stretch beyond design to establish and promote skills in games/systems literacy.

3. Reconceptualizing the FYI/semester/year/4-year experience on a grand scale as some sort of an ongoing game. The reflects the big picture ideas advanced in Jane McGonigal's book 'Reality is Broken.' Since in many ways college is already set up as a game (goals, rules, obstacles), this would not actually be as labor intensive as it may seem, but might be disruptive in just the right ways. It could even be a productive IDST project to imagine what this might look like, and we could perhaps create a track of students who want to 'play' Beloit, leaving others to pursue the more established experience if they so desire.

All of these approaches should be revenue neutral, since they rely on leveraging resources of people and place that Beloit already possesses. The Quest Academy in NY has pioneered approaches like this, and it has served to make them distinctive in the k-12 field.
The Liberal Arts in Practice... Amplified!

RATIONALE
The Beloit Project calls for us to put the Liberal Arts in Practice at the center of Beloit College’s operations. This proposal pulls together three themes that each run through multiple idea submissions, infusing the LAP into student employment, the class schedule, and the senior year. This both puts the LAP at the center of what we do, and opens up possibilities for many kinds of LAP experiences for students.

DESCRIPTION
1. At work
All student work--of any type--is a LAP opportunity for reflecting, making connections, and transferring skills (in both directions, from work to the classroom and vice versa). This involves training, mentoring, and development, but most importantly, it involves a clear plan for reflecting on the connections between the work (whatever it is) and other aspects of the Beloit experience and beyond. The facilitation of the LAP experience at work happens through the student’s advisors/mentors--both those directly connected with the student in the workplace, as well as the student’s academic advisor.

2. Through the class schedule
We currently have a schedule that distributes four courses over two 15-week blocks. A LAP class schedule shifts the two 15-week blocks of four courses each to two 12-week block of three courses each, plus a three-week block of one course. So students are still taking four courses over 15 weeks, but they are distributed differently (3-1/3-1 instead of 4/4, essentially). This opens up more opportunities for blocks-style teaching (both on and off campus, including short-term study abroad and other travel-oriented learning), where students have their full attention on one course for three weeks. Possible January and May terms would move the year from 4-4-1 now to 3-1-(1)-3-1-(1). Students would always take three courses in the twelve-week semesters, and then would utilize two or three of the three-week blocks. Faculty could distribute their typical 5-course load flexibly across these slots; some may teach largely/exclusively in the 12-week slots, while others might focus more on the 3-week slots.

3. In the senior capstone
The senior year is a kind of intersection--a time of both deep synthesis (especially through collaboration) and meaningful preparation. The senior year will thus conclude in the spring with a 2-unit capstone course, each taught by a two-person multidisciplinary faculty team, and each oriented around some issue or problem in the world (broadly construed, including local foci) that requires serious interdisciplinary thinking. The themes of the variety of capstone courses offered in a given year will be determined *both* by student interest and faculty capacity/expertise. Whatever the theme, these capstones will focus on bringing expertise from different disciplines to bear on understanding and addressing the issue/problem. Projects and assignments will focus on students interacting and collaborating with each other, and may (depending on the course) involve off-campus work. Another focus of the class will be on attending carefully to the meaning of this kind of synthetic experience for life beyond Beloit.
Brainstorming scenario: the living liberal arts (LLA)

I. Rationale:
The living liberal arts in a nutshell: create just enough structure to ensure that students cannot live, work, or learn here without being immersed in LAP at all times. This scenario seeks to facilitate a liberal arts education that is 1) broad, 2) deep, 3) exploratory, and 4) liberating. This proposal creates the minimal structures necessary to foster the creativity, collaboration, flexibility, and independence necessary to foster those four characteristics. Structural changes to curriculum, residential life, and student work will facilitate this “living liberal arts” education.

(note: for the purposes of this proposal, and in the spirit of the living liberal arts, many logistical details have been overlooked, with the hope that the proposed scenario creates the flexibility to account for some of those logistics)

II. Proposal:

A. Curriculum: Classes will exist to provide structured support and facilitation of learning and exploration. Each semester, students will enroll in two courses, one independent team study, and complete one credit of college service.

- **Courses:** Taking only two courses at a time will allow courses to be longer, deeper, and more intensive. These courses will be interdisciplinary, inquiry-based, and collaborative in nature, and therefore further disciplinary graduation requirements should not be necessary—it will be impossible for students to complete their education at the College without being involved in multiple disciplines.

- **Independent team studies:** Teams of three to five students collaborate on a single undertaking for the semester. These teams can be composed of students from multiple years to encourage peer mentoring. These studies will be student-designed and will require submission and acceptance of a proposal. Examples of independent team studies: a Biochemistry independent study for four students that know they need background in biochemistry in order to succeed at the MCAT, or three second-year students interested in directing and producing a one-act play.

To facilitate this curriculum, the College will need to revisit the paradigms of majors in their current incarnations.

B. Housing:
Students live in intentionally designed co-operative communities on a smoke-free campus, and they are a part of their housing community for all four years of their college education. This means that any particular house will have first through fourth-years. These houses can be special interest based, but don’t have to be. Each student house is responsible for:

- Creating space to host one course and one wellness workshop per semester (classes on the residential side)
- Housekeeping and grounds for their house
- Meals in their house
- At least one City of Beloit community collaboration per year

C. Student work:
All students will be required to complete eight College Service credits, so they will work in service to the college every single semester that they are enrolled. This service will take the form of apprenticeships in College departments and offices. For example, students may work for grounds, accounting, chemistry department, etc. There will be incentives and structures in place to encourage students to stay in the same apprenticeship for at least two semesters, creating the possibilities for peer student mentoring and more meaningful projects.
Rationale/Background
Within the Liberal Arts in Practice Developmental Model, we have indicated the developmental milestones for young alumni. However, our relationship with a student and our opportunities for development begin when we first make contact, when a student is considering attending the college. Strengthening the bookends of students’ four year education would lead to stronger relationships with two important constituencies and increase our impact on students’ lives.

Description
- **Stage One: Imagining the Liberal Arts** As prospective Beloiters, students are imagining themselves as Beloit College students. They are paired with an admissions counselor, who navigates the enrollment process, and a current student, who answers the specific questions about student life and academics. They attend a series of Liberal Arts in Practice learning opportunities, which bring together current students, faculty, and alumni. Examples include student-alumni panels for job shadowing trips and faculty-student research symposia. Students progress to the next stage once they matriculate.

- **Stage Two: Exploring the Liberal Arts** In their first year on campus, students explore the opportunities that Beloit offers, both in and beyond the classroom. They are paired with a First Year Initiative seminar, which includes an intentional cohort of peers, peer mentor (OL/TA), and faculty advisor. The seminar includes college readiness skills development in addition to exploration of an academic topic of interest. Students progress to the next stage upon successful completion of 8 courses and documentation of 3 introductory beyond the classroom experiences.

- **Stage Three: Experimenting in the Liberal Arts** Students transition from exploring the liberal arts experience to developing theories about their future paths. Each student is connected with an alumni mentor, who answers questions about their future academic and professional aspirations. They are also required to complete a short declaration of intent, when declaring their major(s). Outside of the classroom, the students are expected to increase their level of responsibility in one beyond the classroom opportunity. Students progress to the next stage upon successful completion of 16 courses, a declaration of intent, and documentation of 4 alumni mentor conversations.

- **Stage Four: Cultivating the Liberal Arts** Students develop roots into their communities of choice and their disciplines. They deepen their expertise in their area of study, culminating in a Symposium session in either spring of their third year or fall of their fourth year. They also create and engage in significant Liberal Arts in Practice Experiences, through the Liberal Arts in Practice Requirement. This includes internships, studying abroad, independent research, or synthesizing two or more classroom and beyond the classroom experiences. This experience is supported in a required reflective class, led by a faculty or staff mentor. Students progress to the next stage upon successful completion of 24 courses, including the Liberal Arts in Practice Requirement course, and their symposium.

- **Stage Five: Connecting the Liberal Arts** In their final year on campus, students make connections between their declaration of intent and the realities of their academic and professional journeys. They engage in a Capstone course, which covers the culmination of their academics and guidance in creating a sustainable future life. Students reconnect with their alumni mentor to create professional networks in their chosen fields. Students progress to the next stage upon successful completion of 31 courses, including the capstone, as well as all of their major(s), domains and skills requirements.

- **Stage Six: Transferring the Liberal Arts** Alumni remain connected to the college, by becoming mentors for younger students. As they engage in their careers, they mentor current students, which helps them to reflect on their own experiences while contributing to the college. They support the college through creating Liberal Arts in Practice experiences in their workplaces and home communities, returning to campus to reflect on their work experiences as scholar-practitioners, and mentoring current students in the previous five stages.
APPENDIX 4: APRIL 2015 SUMMARY

TBP: TAKING STOCK, MID-APRIL 2015

With AY 14-15 soon drawing to a close, this document is an attempt to offer a full summary of where we stand on each of our three proposals, in as much detail as we currently have. The goal of this document is to ensure that TBP team shares a clear understanding of the many moving parts of our current work heading into end-of-semester discussions with faculty and staff, and to help TBP team look ahead to next steps in the summer, the fall retreat, and into the fall semester.

THE BELOIT PROJECT AND THE LIBERAL ARTS IN PRACTICE

At Beloit College, the liberal arts in practice fundamentally involves students making connections across the many experiences that the college offers them (both inside and outside of the traditional classroom), transferring the skills developed in one setting to others, and doing all of this in ways that are reflective and intentional. Since taking up the liberal arts in practice as a kind of organizing principle across the institution, we have moved the concept front-and-center in much of what we do. The Beloit Project, at base, is about advancing the liberal arts in practice in the student experience, helping us come to a richer and deeper meaning of the concept and so allowing us to make the concept more meaningful and visible to external audiences. The three working proposals described in what follows are all aimed at this: finding pathways for our students to make connections between experiences, transfer skills across them, and be reflective and intentional throughout this work, as we more fully come to understand and live the liberal arts in practice at Beloit College.

PROPOSAL #1: “CULTIVATING ALUMNI MENTORS”

The starting point for this proposal is four widely (universally?) shared beliefs: 1) current students love being connected with alums; 2) alums love connecting with current students; 3) faculty (as teachers and as advisors) love these connections; and 4) Development loves these connections too. But connections with alums are currently very uneven across campus, highly contingent on major, almost always very department/major-focused (requiring students to have declared a major), and very commonly career-focused. The Beloit Project has been focused on trying to imagine connections between alums and students that are not so department/major/career focused, but instead reach into a student’s first and second years, and are more about thinking about the liberal arts and Beloit experience (what it means to be a Beloit student, and what it means to be out on the world as a Beloiter) beyond the context of a particular department or major. It’s probably not possible for every student to have an alumni mentor; but can we create meaningful opportunities for interaction between alums and first and second year students, where a mentoring relationship could conceivably develop?
This proposal has three main structural emphases:

1) Identifying outcomes for student/alumni engagement, for all participating parties;
2) Rethinking existing structures to re-orient their focus more directly to connecting alumni to current students;
3) Imagining new structures that we can build on campus to train current students to be alumni mentors after they graduate.

The second structural emphasis involves thinking about our goals for engaging with alumni, and how those goals are realized through existing offices and activities. For example, what is the relationship between Alumni Relations and the Liberal Arts in Practice Center? How do events like Reunion or alumni activities during Advising Practicum offer opportunities for offering our current students deeper and richer understandings of their Beloit experiences? What are the mechanisms, especially in a student’s first and second year, through which alumni connections might be realized? Here, serious and careful thought would need to be given to these institutional questions, and being confident in our understanding of the costs and benefits of any change; an external consultant may be useful in this respect. Already, shifts in Alumni Relations (from a traditional evaluation of alums according to giving capacity to a more holistic evaluation according to engagement, broadly construed) are broadly consonant with this kind of rethinking.

The third structural emphasis builds on the following claim: “the best way to develop good alumni mentors is to train students when they’re here to be alumni mentors.” If one accepts this claim, then there is some justification for the twin emphases we have taken up: instead of seeing The Beloit project as simply concerned with connecting current alums to students, we might instead see it as also about building structures for developing current and future students to have a self-image at graduation that involves a commitment to connect with (and possibly mentor) future students. These new structures might build on existing structures where students self-identify as leaders in pursuing these opportunities: the OL program, the RA program, and the tutoring program are three such possibilities. What is entirely open at present is what forms these new structures take: does it involve, for example, a partial-unit course (e.g., a “Mentoring Leadership Seminar”), or a certificate, or specified roles complete with a title (e.g., “Alumni Mentoring Fellow”)?

While much remains uncertain in this proposal, it is clear that we will need to structure the opportunities here so that all students—not just our most motivated—see them as real possibilities. We will also need to give though to how the connections between alumni and current students are happening (where, how often, and through what media).

PROPOSAL #2: “L.A.P. IN STUDENT EMPLOYMENT”

This proposal is anchored around the following claim: we should make every employment experience a liberal arts in practice opportunity for students. Several years ago, a working group tackled the student work experience, significantly developing it from a highly decentralized place where there were typically no job descriptions for students, as well as no coherence in how
students were paid from one setting to another. Thanks to the work of that group, all student jobs now have descriptions, and there is a standardized pay scale ($7.25-$7.50-$7.75), where the upper two tiers involve having and developing specialized skills. This proposal stands on the shoulders of that work, recognizing the following connections between that work and the LAP:

1) All student work—whether specialized work (such as, for example, C&M’s Collective) or unspecialized work (such as washing dishes in Commons) involves the development of meaningful skills: time management, working in teams (understanding office dynamics), working within power structures, how to present oneself, etc. This corresponds with all workers getting paid at least $7.25.

2) Some student work goes beyond these first-level skills, also developing more specialized (second-level) professional skills. This corresponds with some workers getting paid $7.50 or $7.75.

This proposal involves four main structural emphases:

1) We should explore and develop ways very early for students to understand work options and job-finding strategies at Beloit (which may be a part of a model that extends to work in later years and beyond Beloit College).

2) All student job descriptions (which already exist) should evolve to make clear the kinds of LAP skills that the job will develop for students, thus becoming a topic of periodic conversation between student and supervisor (as is often already the place, and what we typically aspire to when supervising student work).

3) These job descriptions should be shared with advisors—presumably through the advising tool in Portal—thus also becoming a part of advising conversations between student and academic advisor.

4) Opportunities should be created for supervisors of student work across the college to periodically share ideas, challenges, and best practices. These opportunities should also help ensure a shared, rich understanding of the LAP as the organizing principle underlying these efforts.

The first structural emphasis must be developed in ways that are mindful of students’ very different starting places, in terms of backgrounds, levels of understanding, and confidence. And as we aim to make the skills developed in the workplace clear and intentional for the student, the second and third structural emphases together recognize that the work of helping the student see and reflect on these skills is shared across the experiences that the student is having by those who advise the student across experiences (that is, both the supervisor at work and the academic advisor).

At this point, one open question remains whether student off-campus work might also be brought into this proposal. A more provocative open question concerns the possibility of student exchange through offices: as we come to fuller, shared understandings of the skills that students are developing in different jobs, are there sensible developmental pathways that we might imagine students taking over an extended period of time through multiple offices on
campus? Even within individual offices, we should think carefully about the feasibility of structuring developmental opportunities for students through their employment.

**PROPOSAL #3: “BEING HERE: A FIRST-YEAR PILOT CLUSTER”**

This proposal emerges from idea submissions that clustered around two kinds of considerations: community well-being (thinking about how we engage with each other, especially regarding matters of identity, diversity, and inclusion) and individual well-being (understood broadly, cutting across physical, mental/psychological, spiritual, and emotional aspects of ourselves). Taken together, this notion of “taking care of ourselves and each other” came together with a third theme in the idea submissions—time. It takes time to take seriously what it means to “be here,” to take care of ourselves and each other.

Our working proposal builds on the Initiatives Program’s shift, beginning in the fall of 2015, from a focus on social identity to a broader focus on this same theme of “being here.” We’re imagining a voluntary pilot program in the fall of 2016, offering a coordinated, integrated experience of the liberal arts in practice in a student’s first semester, focused on “being here.” This pilot would involve six faculty members, each of whom would teach a section of an Intro class in their discipline in this program. It may be the case that the participating faculty members are simultaneously teaching FYI (and this is attractive in some ways, given that instructor’s immersion in “being here”), but this is not required, as it would too greatly restrict the possible pool of faculty who might be interested in participating. These classes would, ideally, come from most/all of the domains, where approximately 35-40 students would choose their remaining three classes (besides their FYI) from the six sections of Intro being offered in the pilot. These classes would have two central features:

1) They would be credible introductory classes in their departments;
2) They would take as an area of emphasis the notion of “being here,” broadly construed.

These classes would operate on a modified schedule designed to keep Wednesdays open for coordinated activities around “being here.” This would likely be a modified MF schedule, though it could conceivably be open to a variety of creative permutations (such as MTTF). Participating instructors would, ideally, be free entirely on Wednesdays, though we recognize that this may be a place where some flexibility is needed. The instructors teaching these courses would have a great deal of latitude in designing activities that fill the week around “being here,” especially focused on Wednesdays. Early coordination in planning is important for a variety of reasons, including ensuring that staff members can play integral roles in many of the activities in the pilot. Lessons in coordination may be drawn from the living/learning communities being piloted in FYI 2015. Some possibilities for activities include:

1) Tours of local farms, together with a meeting with Bon Appetit
2) Sustained Dialogue
3) A variety of fitness activities: yoga, Frisbee, running, etc.
4) A mindfulness workshop
5) Overnight camping
6) Working in gardens, such as BUG
7) Community activities and local volunteer opportunities
8) Shared meal preparation and dining
9) Attention to sleep and other daily activities
10) Budgeting and financial management
11) College history and traditions
12) Connecting “being here” to “being there”
13) Study practices & time management skill development generally
14) Student-run activities of any kind connected with “being here”
15) Sustained multi-week projects of various kinds
16) Time dedicated to the various course slots for longer activities

Importantly, these events must not feel like optional “add-ons” for students—they must be integrated into the courses participating in the pilot in meaningful ways (through assignments and other graded expectations). In some sense, they must have a “required” feel.

This pilot is located in the student’s first semester for three reasons:

1) We want students to build good habits, as they think about what it means to be here at Beloit, taking care of themselves and each other. Inculcating good habits requires reaching students as early as possible. The earlier we reach students, the longer the reach is through their Beloit career.

2) Students are most able to explore courses in their first year, especially in their first semester. The pressure to begin to address major requirements builds quickly, and is common in the second year and beyond. Given that we are trying to build a program where all students have a schedule with time on Wednesdays carved out for taking care of themselves and each other, this is most possible logistically at a time where students are free from countervailing pressures in their schedule.

3) Locating this program in departmental introductory courses significantly reduces their impact on departments, to the point of negligibility. Given that virtually all departments offer at least one (and often more than one) section of an introductory class each fall, and these classes are typically aimed at first-year students, this program asks for no sacrifice of any curricular plans or priorities from departments, as long as they are convinced that the particular course’s emphasis on “being here” does not interfere with the course being a credible introductory course in the department.

While the numbers imagined here (six courses and 35-45 students) are approximate and could be adjusted in either direction, they are explained by the following math: 35 students would need to fill 105 seats over three classes (to fill out their schedule beyond FYI). Assuming a roughly even distribution of students across the six courses, this would mean an average of 17-18 students per section. 45 students would need to fill 135 seats over three classes, which
would mean an average of 22-23 students per section. Given an expected incoming class of 330-360 students, we are imagining 10-13% of the incoming class participating in this pilot. Logistically, students would learn about the program prior to arrival, and then opt in near the beginning of New Student Days.

While some (and perhaps many) incoming students will not find courses that they are eager to take available in this pilot, and so may not be interested in it, students can expect to find this program appealing for at least three reasons:

1) Most importantly, this program (if structured well) should sound like an exciting and interesting way of beginning their liberal arts education.

2) Ideally, the six options will comprise an array of courses that are appealing to students, offered by instructors who may be seen by students as particularly good options.

3) Through the pilot, the students should be able to satisfy most of their domain requirements.

4) Given that some students find the registration process stressful and daunting—especially in their first semesters, where they are choosing last for the only time in their college careers—this would allow them to largely opt out of that process.

This pilot offers us a way to consider all of the following questions:

1) Is paying this kind of attention to “being here” meaningful, and worth expanding to a greater number of first-year students?

2) Is it worth expanding beyond the first year—perhaps to the second year or senior year?

3) Independent of the experiment in scheduling, have we tried activities in the pilot that ought to be maintained, perhaps through the Initiatives program?

4) Do the faculty, staff, and students find the experiment in time structures useful and worth exploring in other ways, independent of this focus on “being here”?
APPENDIX 5: RETREAT AGENDAS

Intelligent Experimentation
Fall 2014 retreat
August 4-5, 2014

LOCATION:
Hamilton House Bed & Breakfast
328 W Main St, Whitewater WI 53190
(262)473-1900
http://www.bandbhamiltonhouse.com

Monday, August 4th

12:00 PM Arrival

12:30 PM Lunch @ Sweet Spot Coffee Shop

1:45 – 3:45 PM Session I: Charge
Reading through the president’s document, how do you understand our charge? What do you hope we’ll accomplish? What do you think an “intelligent experiment” looks like? What excites you about this task? What concerns you? Where are the opportunities and obstacles?

3:45 – 4:00 PM Break/refreshments

4:00 – 6:00 PM Session II: Timetable
What needs to happen during the fall ’14 semester? At our retreat in spring ’15? During the spring ’15 semester? During the summer ’15? At our retreat in fall ’15? During the fall ’15 semester? At our retreat in spring ’16? During the spring ’16 semester? During the summer ’16? When/how are we utilizing an external consultant (and what does this person look like)? When/how are we visiting other institutions (and which ones)? And how does all this happen in ways that make appropriate use of our time? How often and when will we be meeting? We can continue our conversations from the day over dinner….

6:30 PM Dinner @ Black Sheep

Tuesday, August 5th

7:30 AM Breakfast at Hamilton House

8:45 – 10:45 AM Session III: Communication
Senior staff has their retreat next week; how are we engaging them? What questions/issues/challenges will we ask them to take up? How does our conversation with them continue, through the semester and beyond? Over the next two years, how are we engaging the whole community? Beyond senior staff, how are we engaging ASP? Departments? Students? Alumni? Others? When, where, and with whom are these engagements happening?

10:45 – 11:00 AM    Break/refreshments

11:00 – 12:15 PM    Session IV: Wrapping up, looking ahead
Scott Bierman joins us. What have we accomplished? What are our next steps? What are our biggest challenges in the weeks ahead? Continued over lunch….

12:30 PM    Lunch @ Taco Fresco
The Beloit Project
Spring 2015 retreat
January 14-15, 2015

LOCATION:
Lake Lawn Resort
2400 E. Geneva St., Delavan, WI 53115
1-800-338-5253
http://www.lakelawnresort.com
Meeting room: Courtyard 3

Wednesday, January 14th

11:30 AM  Arrival

12:00 PM  Lunch @ Frontier Restaurant

1:30 – 3:30 PM  Session I: The big picture
Reviewing what we accomplished last semester, are we where we expected to be, given our planning at our last retreat? Does our planning from then still look right? How should it be adjusted? Are we where we should be, with respect to fulfilling our charge? Where have we been most successful? What are your biggest concerns right now? What have we missed? Are there lessons to be drawn from “How College Works”?

3:30 – 3:45 PM  Break/refreshments

3:45 – 5:45 PM  Session II: Our next conversations
Regarding each of our four (initial) areas of focus, with whom are we speaking? What are we asking of them, and how are we asking, in order to learn about successes and find obstacles? How might we utilize visits and/or visitors in helping us move forward in fulfilling our charge? Are those visits about process, concept, or something else? We can continue our conversations from the day over dinner, also looking ahead to the conversations coming tomorrow….

6:30 PM  Dinner @ Frontier Restaurant (drinks @ 6:00)

Thursday, January 15th

8:00 AM  Breakfast in meeting room

8:45 – 10:45 AM  Session III: From areas of focus to preliminary proposals (and beyond)
How does this important move from areas of focus to preliminary proposals happen? How do we do it in consultation with major faculty committees, senior staff, the board of trustees, and other key constituents? What do we need to do to succeed, and where are the landmines? How
might Kathy Greene’s class be a useful resource for us? Looking further to the summer and into the fall retreat and semester, how do we move from preliminary proposals to concrete proposals?

10:45 – 11:00 AM  Break

11:00 – 12:15 PM  Session IV: Wrapping up, looking ahead
Scott Bierman joins us. What have we accomplished? Is there anything else we should be doing, or keeping in mind? Are you comfortable with where we stand, and where we’re planning on going? Continued over lunch....

12:30 PM  Lunch @ Frontier Restaurant, followed by departure
The Beloit Project  
Fall 2015 retreat  
August 11-12, 2015  

LOCATION:  
Lake Lawn Resort  
2400 E. Geneva St., Delavan, WI 53115  
1-800-338-5253  
http://www.lakelawnresort.com  
Meeting room: Courtyard 3  

Desired outcomes for the retreat:  
1) Deciding the relationship between LAP, TBP, and curriculum  
2) Agreeing on processes (& action plans) for:  
a. Developing & analyzing potential initiatives  
b. Implementing change in the community over time  
3) Developing the team’s capacity for effective change management  
4) Determining what TBP requires from college leadership  

Tuesday, August 11th  

8:30 AM  Arrival  

8:45 – 10:15  Session I: Taking stock of the past year  
A snapshot of our current reality through a review of the past year, from the August 2014 retreat through both semesters. Dave DeLong will briefly discuss the findings from his report to jumpstart a roundtable discussion: What was the team’s charge? What actually happened? Why were there differences? What can we learn from this and do differently in the coming year?  

10:15 – 10:30  Break  

10:30 – 12:30  Session II: Clarifying TBP Team’s Objectives (OUTCOME 1)  
Here we engage our charge directly, working through some major sources of concern and/or confusion given what we’ve learned over the past year. How do we understand the Liberal Arts in Practice as the focal point for distinctive change at Beloit? Is curriculum change necessary in order for TBP to be successful? Is it possible? What might distinctive non-curricular change look like at Beloit? What are the costs and benefits of leaving curriculum largely out of TBP? Are the directions we’ve staked out so far (employment, alumni connections, inclusivity) the right directions? How do they connect with the LAP and/or the curriculum? What we discuss in this session may significantly shape subsequent sessions.  

12:30 – 1:30  Lunch (pre-ordered) @ Frontier Restaurant
1:45 – 3:45  Session III: Clarifying Our Process (OUTCOMES 2 & 3)
Debra Majeed and Matt Vadnais of the Inclusive Living & Learning task force join us for this session. Two major, related questions about process are raised by Dave’s document: first, how do we develop potential TBP initiatives, and second, how do we implement those initiatives in the community over time? In this session, we take up the first of these process questions. In collaboration with Debra and Matt V., we will explore a possible new initiative concerning inclusivity. How might inclusivity be a part of fulfilling our charge? What shape(s) might this initiative take? What partnerships on campus might we find around campus? What lessons can we take from the Being Here pilot discussion of the spring?

3:45 – 6:45(ish)  Relaxation, merriment, and general resort enjoyment

3:45 – 3:45

7:30  Dinner @ Frontier Restaurant (drinks @ 6:45)

Wednesday, August 12th

8:00 AM  Breakfast in meeting room

8:30 – 10:15  Session IV: Processes, continued (OUTCOMES 2 & 3)
Here we take up the second process question—implementing initiatives in the community over time—in the context of our continuing work on student employment and alumni connections (such as through an annual Chicago alumni conference). We will work with a change management framework introduced by Dave DeLong to address a series of implementation issues. Can these initiatives be developed in distinctive ways? How do we reconcile the general agreement (on the committee, and from the community) that these are promising directions with the sense of some on the committee that these initiatives aren’t distinctive enough? What needs to happen in order for these initiatives to be successful in helping us fulfill our charge? Do these need to be rethought in any significant way? Who are the campus leaders who have key roles here? At what point might these initiatives be passed off to implementation teams?

10:15 – 10:30  Break

10:30 – 11:45  Session V: The role of college leadership (OUTCOME 4)
President Scott Bierman joins us during this discussion.
Beloit’s president initially charged our team with introducing major structural change to support LAP. But our experiences in the past year raised a series of questions that the team must address in collaboration with President Bierman. For example, how is radical innovation possible in the context of distributed power? How do we create more urgency around TBP within the community? And what assumptions are we making about links between TBP, LAP and the college’s reputation? Other critical questions that arise during the retreat will also be addressed during this session. Continued over lunch....

11:45 – 12:00  Conclusions: lessons learned from the retreat & commitments to change
12:30  Lunch @ Fat Tuesdays
       337 S 8th Street
       Delavan WI 53115
       (262)725-6977
**APPENDIX 6: LAP IMPACTS RUBRIC**

Liberal Arts in Practice Impacts Rubric *Working Draft 10/2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting Knowledge</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>References in a passing way connections in content between experiences outside the formal classroom and academic knowledge. (all similarities, all differences)</td>
<td>Infers differences as well as similarities in content between experiences outside the formal classroom and academic knowledge</td>
<td>Selects and develops evidence, including perspectives other than one’s own, to convincingly and explicitly connect content between experiences outside the formal classroom and academic knowledge</td>
<td>Meaningfully synthesizes connections in content between experiences outside the formal classroom and academic knowledge. Makes clear distinction between subjective impression and evidence, focusing on the latter. Subjects evidence to analysis and data drawn from other sources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transferring Skills</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>References in a passing way the use of skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation.</td>
<td>Demonstrates or explicitly explains the use of skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to contribute to the understanding of problems or to explore issues.</td>
<td>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore complex issues in original ways.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Notes:*

- **Connecting Knowledge:**
  - Brings together knowledge of content between experiences outside the formal classroom and academic knowledge.

- **Transferring Skills:**
  - Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations.
| Reflecting and Self-Assessing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts | Describes own performances with general descriptors of success and failure. | Acknowledges increased self-awareness and articulates strengths and challenges within specific performances or events | Evaluates changes in effectiveness as a learner, recognizing complex contextual factors (e.g., works with ambiguity/ risk, deals w/ frustration, considers ethical frameworks). | Envisions a future self by making plans that build on past experiences that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts. |
APPENDIX 7: CURRENT STATE OF STUDENT EMPLOYMENT: FINDINGS

Appendix 7 offers a statistical overview of campus work positions and profile of student employment on campus. The findings are divided into four sub-appendices.

- Appendix 7A: Student employment positions
- Appendix 7B: Students’ experience in campus employment
- Appendix 7C: Budget for student employment
- Appendix 7D: Student financial aid for work study

APPENDIX 7A: Student employment positions

How many positions exist?

As of Fall 2015, there are more than 230 student employment positions on campus.

Student employment positions are classified into three classes, which are paid $7.25, $7.50, or $7.75/hr. There are more than 80 positions paid $7.25 and $7.50, respectively; approximately 60 positions are paid $7.75. (A small number of positions vary in pay.)

How many students can be hired for each position each semester varies by position, as does how many hours per week a student may be hired for. The positions with the potential to hire more than 10 students per semester include:

- Admissions Lunch Host (12)
- Admissions Tour Guide (20)
- Alumni & Parent Relations Reunion Resident Assistant (12)
- Athletics Lifeguard (12)
- Athletics Sports Team Manager (12)
- Athletics Intramurals Referee or Statistician (20)
- Athletics Laundry (20)
- HYSP Merrill/McLenegan Tutor (10-15) (Note Help Yourself has another ~30 positions)
- Chemistry Course Assistant (15)
- Sustained Dialogue Moderator (16)
- Library Circulation Assistant (18)
- Facilities (30)
- Development Student Caller (35)
- Food Service - Java Joint (40)
- Food Service - DK’s (45)
- Food Service - Commons (145)
- Residential Life VanGalder Shuttle Driver (10-12)
- Athletics Office Assistant (10-15)
- IT Assistant - Class Two (10-20)
- Theatre Scenic Technician (11-15)
- Writing Center Tutor (12-15)
● Athletics Game Day Event Crew (20-30)
● Athletics Sports Center Monitor (30-40)
● LEDS Tutor (Course Specific) (60-95)

There are many more positions that hire multiple people. 85 positions are available for only one student; another 50 positions are available for 1-3 students. Exactly how many positions are available is likely determined in different ways by different departments; for departments where the hours are more flexible, they may hire more or fewer students depending on how many hours the students work.

In what departments?
The following 71 departments have at least one student employment position:

● Accounting
● Admissions
● Alumni Affairs & Parent Relations
● Anthropology
● Art & Art History
● Athletics
● Beloit Access Television
● Biology
● Campus Center
● CELEB/Gallery ABBA
● Chemistry
● Classics
● Communications & Marketing
● Critical Identity Studies
● Computer Science
● Development
● Dean of Students Office (see LEDS)
● Economics
● Education & Youth Studies
● English
● Financial Aid
● Food Service
● Research Assistant
● Geology
● Grounds
● Health & Society
● Help Yourself
● Research Assistant
● Health Center
● Human Resources
● Intercultural Affairs
Institutional Research
Information Technology
Liberal Arts in Practice Center
Learning Enrichment & Disability Services
Library
Mail Center
Mathematics & Computer Science
McNair Scholars Program
Morse Ingersoll Secretarial Office
Modern Languages & Literatures
Music
Logan Museum
Logan Museum
Wright Museum of Art
Office of International Education
Office of Summer Programs
Philosophy & Religious Studies
Physics
Political Science
Facilities
President's Office
Provost's Office
Psychology
Registrar
C-Haus
Residential Life
Science Division
Student Engagement & Leadership
Security
Student Excellence & Leadership
Silo Self Instruction Language Opportunity
Sociology
Spiritual Life Program
Theatre
Turtle Creek Bookstore
Upward Bound
VP Finance & Planning
VP Human Resources & Operations
Women's & Gender Studies
Writing Center

How many hours offered?
The number of hours available to work each week varies by positions, and many positions offer a range. Most positions do not have more than 10 hours per week available; the ones that do tend to be positions that are event-dependent, such as theatre box office where some weeks may have higher hours required than others.

**APPENDIX 7B: Students’ experience in campus employment**

**Student employment**  
In fall 2014, there were 1303 enrolled students at Beloit College. 1217 of these students were studying on campus, and 1225 were degree-seeking. This sub-appendix focuses on the 1139 students who were both degree-seeking and living on campus in Fall 2014. These students are the ones we would most expect to be able and interested in on-campus student employment, which is the subject of sub-appendix 7B.

**How many students have been employed?**  
Of the 1139 degree-seeking students on campus in Fall 2014, 63% (719 students) worked at least once during the academic year (i.e. had received a check from payroll at least one time).

A student employment participation rate of 63% in a given year is promising. It is high enough that a concerted effort to improve student employment opportunities through a liberal arts in practice approach is likely to affect many students. It is low enough that there are still many students on campus who could benefit from an expanded and more attractive approach to student employment.

The proportion of students who work may be influenced by many factors, such as:

- Financial factors, such as a family’s ability to contribute to tuition & fees & expenses, and a student’s work study allocations in their financial aid package
- Legal factors, such as required visas for international students
- Cultural factors, such as cultural expectations for working while a college student or social capital required for finding and securing a job

Student employment participation rates by student sub-groups related to some of these factors are shown below.

**Gender**  
Student employment participation rates in 2014-15 varied by gender: 56% of males in this group worked during the year compared with 69% of females who did. It is not obvious why males and females would have different rates of student employment. Financial need, for example, is unlikely to vary by gender (although I have not tested it). However, it is worth noting that males have lower participation rates and worse outcomes across a number of other curricular and co-curricular experiences.

**Ethnic/race groups**
Student employment participation rates 2014-15 varied by race and ethnic group:

- 81% of Black or African American students worked during the academic year
- 81% of Hispanic students worked during the academic year
- 73% of all domestic minorities (including Blacks and Hispanics) worked during the academic year
- 62% of White students worked during the academic year
- 47% of international students worked during the school year

Class year
Student employment participation rates 2014-15 varied by class year:

- 59% of freshman students worked during the academic year
- 66% of sophomores worked during the academic year
- 61% of juniors worked during the academic year
- 68% of seniors worked during the academic year

Our theories around how and why students have jobs will affect how surprising we believe these participation rates our. If we believe, for example, that freshman get jobs because they have work study allocations they need to fulfill and they are not likely to have found other ways to fulfill them (e.g., summer employment, off-campus employment, additional scholarships), then we might be surprised that a smaller proportion of freshmen than seniors have on-campus employment. If, however, we believe that students get jobs when they are connected on campus, are aware of opportunities, and have the relationships and skills to secure a job, then we might be less surprised by the fact that more seniors have on-campus jobs (of course, some jobs, such as those that require a course as a prerequisite are generally not open to freshman).

Diversity of positions and departments in which students worked
The number of positions a student held during the year, as well as the number of departments a student worked in, provides some context for how students engages with, or chooses to engage with, student employment. How we interpret these patterns, however, may require further study: Do we believe that a student who works multiple positions in a year is especially well-connected on campus? Or has especially broad skills valued across campus? Or has acute financial need that s/he is attempting to meet through multiple avenues? Or all of the above?

The section that follows shows the patterns of student employment participation as they relate to the number of positions a student held during the year and to the number of different departments a student worked for.

Positions
Nearly half of students who worked on campus during the 2014-15 year worked in only one position during that year. Approximately 80% worked in one or two positions; approximately 20% worked in more than 2 positions.

Table 1: Number of positions a student who worked in the 2014-15 year held during that year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of positions held</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (any jobs)</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of jobs a student held during a year did not vary considerably by class: similar patterns held for all class years.

Table 2: Percentage of students in each class who worked at all with given number of student employment positions during the 2014-15 year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of positions held</th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Sophomores</th>
<th>Juniors</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Percentage of students in each class who worked at all with given number of student employment positions during the 2014-15 year
Departments
Students who worked during the 2014-15 academic year largely focused their employment efforts: 60% of students worked within one department on campus, even if they had multiple positions. Approximately 10% of students worked in three or more departments during the 2014-15 year.

Table 3: Number of departments a student who worked in the 2014-15 year worked for during that year (may have worked in multiple positions within department)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of departments</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (any jobs)</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source and limitations
The data source used here is all 2014-15 payroll records for students enrolled in Fall 2014. In this data source, a student is considered to have participated in student employment if they have received a check from payroll at least once in 2014-15. Students may have been paid for multiple positions in multiple time periods, or may have been paid once for one position (possibly a one-time event). Payroll checks associated with prizes or awards have been excluded from the analysis.
One of the limitations of using a year of data is that we are not able to speak about all the student employment experiences a student may have had during their 4 (or more) years at Beloit. This limitation is unfortunate, but necessary at the present time. IRAP recommends learning as much as we can from the analyses in these sub-appendices; if truly pressing questions remain about graduates’ experiences during their entire time here, we can investigate options for further analysis.

APPENDIX 7C: Budget for student employment

Student employment budgets and opportunity

In the 2014-15 budget year, $1,020,244 was allocated to student work opportunities. These dollars were allocated to departments from a “student employment pool” and then spent down in the following three categories:

- **Student Work Opportunity**: For work done by students as part of their Federal Work Study.
- **Student Work Study**: For work done by students as part of their Beloit College Work Study (institutional financial aid) and work done by students who do not have an institutional work study allocation.
- **Non-Fin Aid Student Employment**: For work done by students outside the ordinary academic semesters, such as lifeguarding or mail center coverage in the summer. This is not a category that we traditionally think of as “student employment”, but is included in the report because it is part of student budgets.

In the 2014-15 budget year, $850,363.13 was spent across all departments. Most departments underspent, many significantly, from their student employment budgets. There may be many explanations for this underspend. One possible explanation is that departments made a deliberate efforts to conserve campus resources in a lean fiscal year. Another possible explanation is that departments wanted to use their full funds, but were unable to hire enough students for enough hours to use all their allocated funds.

Regardless of the explanation as to why the underspend occurred, the almost $170,000 in allocated but unspent resources in 2014-15 (almost 20% under budget) suggests that resources exist to support student employment that have not been spent. These monies would not all be available, of course, for other aspects of student employment development, as they may be budgeted specifically to pay students. But the underspent resources are a sign that if Beloit Project efforts to increase the impact of student employment led to increased student demand for student employment, our recent budgets certainly had the capacity to have students working additional hours.

*Data source*
Data to inform this summary document was provided by Caryn Zimmerman (Accounting) in December 2015 to IRAP. The report provided is called “Student Work Study and Budgets.pdf” and shows the trial balance grouped by department for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015 (current as of 3 Dec 2015).

APPENDIX 7D: Student financial aid for work study

Student employment: Financial aid

In fall 2014, there were 1303 enrolled students at Beloit College. 1217 of these students were studying on campus, and 1225 were degree-seeking. This sub-appendix focuses on the 1139 students who were both degree-seeking and living on campus in Fall 2014. These students are the ones we would most expect to be able and interested in on-campus student employment.

Of the 721 students degree-seeking students in Fall 2014 who worked on campus during the 2014-15 year, 439 had significant financial need (defined as having been offered a work award of $1500 for the year\(^2\)). This analysis focuses on students with financial need.

These 439 students were all given work study allocations as part of their financial aid packages (some additional students may have been given smaller amounts of work study allocation in their packages, but are not discussed here). Work study allocations can be “federal” or “institutional.” In “federal” work study, the federal government promises to fund the college on a student’s behalf, up to a certain amount, if the student works those hours for the college. In “institutional” work study, Beloit College offers students the opportunity to pay for part of their tuition or fees through on-campus work. Students with federal or institutional work study allocations have first priority for jobs on campus. Students who are legally allowed to work in the United States but who have neither kind of work study allocation may work on campus, but they have second priority for jobs: supervisors are asked to hire only students with work study allocations during the first three weeks of classes. This analysis does not distinguish between students with federal and institutional work study awards; they are both treated as work study.

Students with significant need

All of the 439 students with significant need worked at least some hours on campus during the 2014-15. However, these students did not work as many hours as we might have expected, given that they had clear financial need the work was meant to fill.

---

\(^2\) These students had “expected family contributions” toward their tuition & fees of less than $20,000 for the year. Certainly, students with family contributions greater than that amount may still have had need, but we chose this cut-off because students with family contributions less than $20,000 were almost certain to have work study allocations. The data set used for this analysis does have a field for students’ total work study allocation amount, but this field gets back-filled with small amounts for students who originally were not offered work study in their financial aid package but begin working on campus, which means it is a difficult field to use to ascertain originally offered work study allocations.
• 60% of the 439 students worked enough on campus to satisfy more than 50% of their work study allocation. That means that 40% of these students did not work enough hours on campus to meet half of their work study allocation.

• Only 21% of the 439 students worked enough on campus to satisfy more than 90% of their work study allocation. That means almost 80% of these students did not work enough on campus to come even close to satisfying their work study allocations.

• 7% of students worked considerably more than their work study allocation required more; 30 of the 349 students with significant need worked more than 110% of their allocation.

**Students with very high need**

80 of the 721 students had very high financial need, defined as having an “expected family contribution” of zero dollars. That is, information from the FAFSA shows that the family is not able to contribute any money toward tuition and fees. The median work study allocation for these students was $2000. We might expect these students to be especially financially sensitive and likely to work many hours on campus.

All of these students worked at least some hours on campus during the 2014-15 year.

• 64% of these 80 students worked enough hours on campus to satisfy more than 50% of their work study allocation. That means that 36% of these students did not work enough hours on campus to satisfy even half of their work study allocation.

• Only 29% of these 80 students worked enough on campus to satisfy more than 90% of their work study allocation. That means only almost 70% of these students did not satisfy their extensive work study allocation through on-campus employment.

• 20% of these 80 students worked more than 110% of their work study allocation. That is, they earned quite a bit more money in on-campus employment than they needed to solely to satisfy their work study allocation.

**Discussion**

How to interpret these findings is not entirely clear. On the one hand, the FAFSA made clear that these students had real financial need. On the other hand, it’s clear that these students are finding other ways to pay the portion of their tuition & fees allocated to work study. Explanations include: 1) the student’s parents found more money 2) another relative contributed 3) the student works off-campus during the semester and applies those earnings toward the allocation 4) the student works off-campus during winter and summer breaks and applies those earnings toward the allocation. Beloit College does not have a clear view of how common each of these explanations might be, nor which specific students are utilizing which arrangements.
What is clear is that many students have the capacity within their financial aid offers to work more on campus than they do. These student-level findings are consistent with the [budget-level analysis done here](#), which also finds spare financial capacity for more student work on campus. As with the budget analysis, this financial aid analysis suggests that student employment is at sweet spot: Student employment is already relevant to the experiences of many students here at Beloit College (after the formal curriculum, residential living, and eating on campus, it is certainly among the most common experience students have), but underspent budgets and financial aid dollars suggest that there is spare capacity for additional students to benefit.

**Data source**
The data source used here is 2014-15 financial aid records for students enrolled in Fall 2014. This data source largely aligns with the [payroll data discussed here](#); it's likely that the Hours Worked and Total Earnings information in the financial aid data is populated from the payroll data (or both are populated from the same source). This dataset is different from the payroll data in that it also includes information about students' financial need (from FAFSA) and work funds offered in aid (both federal and institutional are included).