

Creative Collaboration: The Associated Colleges of the South

Creative Collaboration: The Associated Colleges of the South is a history of the ACS from 1991-2014, written by founding President Wayne Anderson (retired). It appeared in print in late 2014 and is reproduced here in html format - the pagination and page design are significantly different than the print version. [Click to begin reading](#).

Acknowledgements

I want to acknowledge the various individuals who helped enormously to gather and provide information for this publication on the Associated Colleges of the South.

First thanks goes to Dr. Samuel Williamson, the former president and vice chancellor of Sewanee: The University of the South who shared his reflections on the early days of the consortium. Next, I would like to thank Andrea Wayand, the former editor of our Palladian newsletter, who described major activities that took place in the consortium's earlier period.

All the members of the current ACS staff have provided information, suggested ideas and encouraged me to proceed. These extraordinary individuals are: Dara Hawkins, office manager, Cindy Reese, finance director, Christiane Williams, director of technology support, Amanda Hagood, director of blended learning and Elizabeth MacNabb, director of environmental studies and sustainable development. Particular gratitude goes to Linda Hughes for using her extensive word processing skills to put the manuscript in readable form.

I also want to express appreciation to Fred Moody for his expert editing, which considerably improved the format.

Special thanks to all these extraordinary colleagues!

Forward

The Associated Colleges of the South hopes this story will provide knowledge, understanding and even inspiration about our work. We hope it will deepen your understanding of the constructive role that consortia play among colleges, universities and other organizations, encouraging and stimulating individual groups to work together in common cause.

This is a story about sixteen strong and highly regarded institutions which are determined to be among the best. With these objectives in mind, they are willing to devote their time, energy and

brainpower to realize the benefits of collaboration, which enables them to take strides impossible on an individual, institutional basis.

This is also a story of individual faculty, staff and students who believe in the gospel of cooperation. It is about history professor Jack Lane of Rollins College, who devoted an enormous amount of time and effort to create a viable and transformational annual Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop. It is about the late professor of psychology Terry Goodrick of Birmingham-Southern College, who, while keeping cancer at bay, kept the ACS workshop operating at the highest level of quality and distinction before she died in 2010. It is about classics professor Kenny Morrell of Rhodes College, whose compelling vision and creativity led the consortium to use technology to link institutions in imaginative new ways, opening up exciting possibilities for students. It is about Barry Allen, professor of environmental studies at Rollins College, who galvanized his academic colleagues to demonstrate the individual and systemic change that initiatives in sustainable development could bring about. It is about Ed Roy, the late vice president for academic affairs at Trinity University, who spearheaded an effort to create a network through which faculty could significantly improve offerings and experiences in science for those not majoring in that area (that is, for most students). And it is about Jim Hunt, the vice president for academic affairs at Southwestern University, who has been steadfast in his determination to make diversity on campus a high consortial priority, leading chief academic officers to engage in dialogue with minority students at their meetings. It is a story about numerous other specific groups and individuals without whom the ACS would not have served its institutions so long and so well.

Those individuals, one must add, include stellar members of the consortium staff who have worked tirelessly, professionally and joyfully to help ACS institutions and their students succeed.

In short, this is quite a story—we hope you find it of interest.

1. Introduction

The heart of the ACS story is the intense collaboration of sixteen stellar institutions working together to create stimulating and rewarding learning experiences for students. ACS member institutions are creating and offering programs that cannot be done as effectively by individual schools. Mobilizing resources on sixteen campuses gives us the critical mass of faculty, staff and students we all need to solve common problems and take advantage of new opportunities. ACS has created a laboratory in which new ideas can be tested and programs incubated without excessive fear of failure, and where joint projects can attract significant financial support from funders looking for the biggest “bang for their buck.” Bringing faculty, staff and students together from different campuses broadens their experiences and enlarges their perspectives, creating enduring networks of colleagues on whom they can call for advice for years to come.

Many challenges face the consortium, starting with attracting the interest of faculty, staff and students when there are so many other opportunities available to them—and conveying precisely to them what participation in ACS programs could mean. In response to this challenge, the consortium has worked assiduously to communicate to the 3,000 faculty members, 5,000 staff

members and 30,000 students on our campuses, describing the rationale for the consortium and the value of its specific initiatives—through the consortium’s print and on-line newsletter, the “Palladian,” on-line announcements that go to all the faculty on the campuses, and ACS workshops, seminars and campus “listenings” (staff visits to the campuses). In the final analysis, providing effective services has proved to be the best way to elicit the interest and involvement of the various campus constituencies.

The outcomes of consortial programs have been measured in many ways, including the participation of faculty, students and staff in numerous seminars, conferences and projects. Participants are asked to evaluate these activities and their advice is taken seriously, and they are tracked over time to see what new teaching techniques, research publications or community services have been triggered by their ACS experience. ACS also conducts short-term and longitudinal evaluation and engages outside consultants to perform extensive evaluations.

Measuring outcomes has been illuminating. We have learned what does and does not work, how initiatives should be structured and timed, what kind of financial resources are required, how useful pilot programs can be, what kinds of individuals provide the best kind of leadership for programs, how to prepare and train those leaders, how to sustain successful programs over time (one lesson being to prepare a plan for sustainability when a program is originally being crafted), how to develop effective working relationships with funding organizations, and how to construct a thorough and effective evaluation process and make sure it is put to effective use.

Many ACS programs demonstrate what a difference collaboration can make for those involved. Examples include an annual micro-teaching Summer Teaching and Learning workshop, called “transformative” by faculty who participated; an on-line classics program deemed a “career lifeline” by faculty involved; an environmental and sustainable development initiative making significant and systemic difference on campuses and in nearby communities; student programs in China, Turkey, Costa Rica and elsewhere that have changed lives forever; and an energy conservation initiative that saved \$250,000 on one campus and even more elsewhere. In short, by demonstrating such significant results, ACS makes a compelling case for collaboration.

ACS is also known for innovative programs, such as a virtual department of classics; annual, intensive, “micro-teaching” faculty development experiences; ACS environmental faculty fellows, facility fellows and student environmental interns; an intensive energy audit of one institution as a model for other institutions to replicate; a cooperative effort to teach mathematics in new ways; a pedagogical initiative drawing on the latest insights into learning from neuroscience and cognitive science; a consortium-based initiative in which sixteen institutions plan, teach and carry out collaborative efforts in Chinese Studies; a distinctive technology center offering programs for faculty and students (which later became part of the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education [NITLE]); new experiences for students in “blended learning” (the effort to link computer-mediated instruction to the distinctive interpersonal education offered by these liberal arts institutions); a collaborative effort to draft measures to evaluate study abroad experiences...and the list goes on.

These breakthroughs or innovations, however, did not happen overnight; they took considerable time, as the following narration will make clear.

The “Sweet Sixteen”

The consortium benefits enormously from being comprised of splendid member institutions—its “sweet sixteen.” All are highly regarded national liberal arts institutions located in the South. All are demanding, rigorous academic institutions committed to preparing students well for graduate and professional school, careers and lives after graduation. They are all relatively small residential colleges that individualize the educational experience, gearing the program to the full development of each individual student. They are dynamic institutions emphasizing active teaching, active learning and high-impact practices. Yet each is a distinctive place with special features setting it apart. More may be learned about them in the consortium’s 2012 publication, *Sweet Sixteen—Great Colleges of the South*, by John Pulley.

Further insight into the individual institutions may be gained from reading the 2012 Ph.D. dissertation by Lauren Keller Collier, entitled *Organizational Adaptations and Network Influences: The Associated Colleges of the South from 1985 to 2010*. Dr. Collier analyzes how the institutions mitigate the uncertainty of change by adopting appropriate and effective adaptive behaviors. She discusses specific program changes reflecting institutional adjustments to new circumstances, challenges and opportunities. Moreover, she analyzes the ACS as a social network focusing on collaboration within the network and its influence on program adoptions on its individual campuses.

The Origins

The seeds of ACS were planted by a group called the Southern College and University Union (SCUU) in the early 1980s. SCUU consisted of nine institutions—Birmingham Southern College, Centenary College of Louisiana, Centre College, Furman University, Millsaps College, Morehouse College, Rhodes College, Sewanee: The University of the South and University of Richmond. SCUU, which was served administratively by a part-time staff member at Vanderbilt University, supported a variety of workshops and, most notably, a science semester program at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. Unable to sustain itself, SCUU lapsed; the new consortium was formed in June 1989, and incorporated in 1991.

Remembering the positive aspects of SCUU and being aware of success stories of other consortia such as the Great Lakes Colleges Association and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, a group of presidents and academic deans from the nine SCUU institutions committed to forming a first-class consortium supported by significant dues from member institutions and served by a full-time administrator. While searching for that administrator and identifying other potential members, the new consortium initiated faculty workshops. While the search effort did not produce administrative leadership until 1991, the institutions contributed annual dues and planned future programs in the interim.

The member presidents and chief academic officers decided on a highly decentralized management structure, with individual institutions taking the lead on the separate programs offered, thus spreading opportunities and responsibilities among all the participating institutions, giving them all a greater stake in consortial programs, and allowing them to demonstrate how effectively their representatives can lead.

From the start, the founding presidents and deans began identifying other prospective members. Criteria included being an outstanding, independent, four-year, residential, undergraduate liberal arts institution, located in the region extending from Virginia to Texas. The target membership was fifteen, with the hope that there would be at least one institution in each state in the region. Hendrix College, Rollins College, Southwestern University, and Trinity University joined the original nine, thereby adding Arkansas, Florida and Texas to the geographical coverage. In following years, Washington and Lee University, Davidson College and Spelman College joined, bringing the total to sixteen members. The consortium has since held firmly to that number, believing that adding other outstanding southern liberal arts institutions—and there are many—could make the ACS unwieldy.

As recently as 2012, the presidents thoroughly reviewed possible expansion and concluded that the current number was manageable, that there was no compelling need to expand, and that it was extremely difficult to differentiate among a number of stellar institutions interested in membership.

Leadership from the Board of Directors and the Council of Deans

The consortium's board, consisting of member presidents, and its council of deans, consisting principally of chief academic officers, provided extraordinary leadership at the start and have continued to do so throughout the consortium's history.

The Presidents

The ACS presidents have been exceedingly active. Meeting face-to-face once each year, and in an annual mid-year conference call, they make the consortium's final decisions. They also play a key role in preparing five-year plans for the consortium, the latest being "Vision 2015." Collaborating with their deans and the ACS staff, the presidents articulate the consortium's values, mission, goals and activities. In the last planning iteration, they put forth the overarching goals of enhancing the academic program, producing administrative benchmarking and efficiency, and added a new dimension to ACS goals: namely, thinking well out of the box about new and creative possibilities. They have held the membership accountable, regularly suggesting projects that meet its goals and reviewing the projects' subsequent progress.

Particularly noteworthy has been the presidents' ability to stretch the consortium and ensure that it addresses itself to major issues facing its institutions. They have identified the most perplexing issues and problems and asked whether the consortium might play a role in addressing them. Examples include energy conservation, sustainable business plans, engagement with China, administrative organization and efficiency and potential educational partners outside the consortium.

All the presidents have been helpful to the consortium, but one in particular should be highlighted for his pioneering efforts as board chair. Sam Williamson, the President of Sewanee: The University of the South, served as chair when the consortium was incorporated in 1991, playing a key role in educating the new CEO, and explaining the rationale for the consortium and the ambitions shared by all of its presidents.

The Council of Deans

Most ACS institutions are represented by their chief academic officers; others by their academic deans and vice presidents. From the outset, the deans assumed major responsibility for defining the academic purposes of ACS and suggesting ways in which they could be fulfilled. The deans essentially formed a co-management team with the ACS president to assist in formulating and carrying out ACS objectives. From the beginning, the president has been in constant contact with the deans on virtually all consortial issues and opportunities.

The chief academic officers or deans formerly met face-to-face three times a year; now, they meet twice a year with a conference call in between. The face-to-face sessions are two days long, including a roundtable following dinner the first day. Each participant shares reports on the latest activities, issues, crises and successes on his or her campus. Through these frank interchanges, deans have taken home concrete ideas for application at their institutions.

For the first few years, the official meeting on the second day started with ACS business, but the group has since adjusted its focus first on key educational issues and problems facing their institutions. They made it clear that they were not deprecating the value of the ACS programs; they simply wanted to ensure that there was ample opportunity to discuss their most pressing and immediate campus matters. Interestingly enough, ACS business discussions have focused on ways in which many of these issues could be handled through inter-institutional collaboration.

The business portion of the meeting has included brainstorming on possible initiatives, reviewing current ACS programs, forging specific plans for the future and assessing specific fundraising opportunities. All projects described in this publication have been reviewed and evaluated many times.

One constant throughout the years has been a meeting with minority students. For many years, students from the host institution joined the meeting for a lively and engaging dialogue. This began after a number of students at an ACS diversity conference expressed the need to meet with senior college and university officials to make known their needs and elicit interest and support. Immediately following that conference, the deans initiated the joint sessions, which have proven extremely beneficial.

The deans' joint meetings with various ACS interest groups have proven fruitful and have extended to diversity officers, teaching and learning directors, and faculty and staff responsible for engaged learning, with advising and assessment leaders slated for future meetings. Through these sessions, the deans have signaled the high value they put on the work of these leaders, and both sides of the dialogue have identified new ideas for future collaboration.

While the deans have considered and shaped myriad consortial policies and projects, one example, relating to online instruction, comes readily to mind. In dealing with a complicated, controversial subject, the deans carefully scrutinized online instruction options ranging from stand-alone programs to blended or hybrid learning (a combination of online and interactive pedagogy), eventually opting for the latter. They raised critical questions about the potential impact and value of online efforts and how its technology might be incorporated into courses, seminars, tutorials, and other modes of instruction. They participated with faculty in a number of online forums, discerning a sharp sense of concern and anxiety among faculty over potential undermining of liberal arts colleges and threats to their jobs.

With that in mind, the ACS deans crafted a statement carefully delineating blended learning and the central role faculty would play in exploring and deciding on such approaches. (Their statement is included in the technology section of this publication.)

Zeddie Bowen, provost at University of Richmond, served as the first chair of the council of deans and effectively extended the efforts of Brown Patterson, the Dean of the College at Sewanee: The University of the South who helped put the organization together, and Irvin Penfeld, his counterpart at Birmingham-Southern College who labored diligently to create the organization and served as an interim director until a full-time president was named.

Dean Penfield was ably assisted by Mary Hendley, an administrator at Birmingham-Southern College who assembled the first newsletter for the group, entitled *The Palladian*. Leigh Capps, a senior graphic design major at Birmingham-Southern College, designed the logo—a Palladian window—and suggested the name for the newsletter. Presidents and deans were attracted to the symbolism of the window, through which the southern institutions would look outward to the nation and the world while others would look inward, observing and learning from initiatives undertaken by ACS.

Southwestern University provost and dean of the faculty Jim Hunt has offered this assessment of the Council of Deans: “As a Chief Academic Officer, participation in the ACS has provided me with access to a wealth of experience and ideas that would not have been available to me without the consortium. The open and collaborative nature of the ACS Deans’ Council, as it is manifested in regular meetings and email exchanges over the years, has provided me with countless ideas and opportunities to spark innovation on my campus. I can name numerous programs at Southwestern University that have resulted directly from information I received from my dean colleagues over the years. I consider my participation in the ACS Deans’ Council to be the most valuable professional development opportunity I have experienced in my almost 14 years as Provost.” From my experience, this is neither unrepresentative nor atypical.

Emory University Connection

Special note should be taken of the role played by Emory University and its president, James Laney, as ACS was assembling its organization. President Laney invited ACS to become affiliated with Emory, which meant that Emory would assume the human resources role for the

consortium, putting ACS staff on its employee payroll, with funding coming from the consortium.

The University's secretary, Tom Bertrand, assisted in the incorporation of ACS, and the vice president for business, Bobby Williams, helped in many ways, including securing office space, establishing a bank account and purchasing furniture. The University also invited me to become an adjunct professor of political science, teaching seminars in presidential elections and campaigns. Moreover, Emory has collaborated over the years in projects related to environmental studies, gender studies and China programs.

The Response

From the outset at ACS, faculty and staff were enormously interested in collaboration. In its first year, so many groups were organized and began to share information and explore collaborative possibilities that one of the presidents exclaimed, "We have created a monster." Initial alarm, however, dissipated as it became clear that these groups felt they had considerable information to exchange and that collaboration could be of substantial benefit. Accordingly, one of the presidents directed me to "make stuff happen." It seems that the mandate was fulfilled from the outset.

The Financial Picture

As noted earlier, the presidents began designating funds for ACS in 1989, two years before the organization hired a full-time president and was incorporated. By 1991-92, \$217,738 had accumulated. This provided the group with a running start, enabling numerous groups to meet in 1991-92 to identify collaborative efforts to pursue. The basic business plan included these features:

- The annual dues of \$12,000 per institution at the start, with the likelihood of increasing annually by \$1,000 for the first few years.
- Dues would fully underwrite two staff positions—the president and the president's assistant; funds to support additional staff and program initiatives would be underwritten by outside grants.
- Staff was encouraged to expand the reserves over time by never fully spending budgeted funds and generating a modest sum from registration fees and charges levied in connection with conferences, workshops and special consortial events.
- The reserves would be expanded until they equaled one year's budget, thereby enabling the consortium to have a "decent burial" (in the words of the one of the presidents) if things did not work out.

The operating budget for that initial year was \$198,100 (reaching \$800,061 for 2013-14). Total assets on June 30, 1992, were \$321,469 (rising to \$4,767,371 on June 30, 2013).

In the related area of fundraising, the presidents sent explicit directions to the staff to avoid conflicting with fundraising efforts undertaken by individual ACS institutions. This meant alerting institutions to the prospective targets the ACS president had in mind, the nature of the

consortial projects, and the timing involved. It should be noted that staff has been scrupulous in avoiding such conflicts. Fortunately, a number of major foundations have made it clear that they are quite willing to consider proposals from the consortium and the individual ACS institutions at the same time.

The consortium has raised considerable outside support, totaling approximately \$28 million since 1991-92, enabling it to initiate and sustain the broad range of initiatives described in other parts of this publication.

The ACS received its first endowment grant in 2011—a marvelous \$2.5 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—to underwrite the positions of chief financial officer and technology director. A downturn in the market limited the interest available for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 years, but sufficient funds accumulated for use beginning in 2013-14.

With a few notable exceptions, the consortium has been able to retain outstanding staff over time by replacing one grant with another. The funded projects may have differed a bit, but a steady stream of funding has given ACS considerable staff continuity and stability.

2. Academic Tracks

At the risk of leaving some initiatives out, or deprecating their role, I would like to describe four major tracks on which the consortium has run since its inception. They are: active teaching and learning, with emphasis on the teaching; interdisciplinary study, featuring environmental studies and sustainable development; a further interdisciplinary effort in international studies; and the creative application of instructional technology.

Active Teaching and Learning

Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop

The crown jewel of faculty development in ACS has been the aforementioned Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop, held at Rollins College from 1992 to 2011, after which it moved to Trinity University. The impact has been considerable on the more than 400 faculty who have taken part. Leaders Jack Lane, Rollins College professor of history; Roger Casey, the former provost at Rollins; Barbara Carson, Rollins professor of English professor; Terry Goodrick, psychology professor at Birmingham-Southern College; biology professor Barbara Lom of Davidson College, and their remarkable partners, have made this experience a memorable one, with a large number of participants indicating they have found no comparable professional development opportunity during their careers.

The idea for the workshop came from Professor Lane, who drew on his experience as a participant in a Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) Teaching Workshop and from conversations with Peter Frederick, professor of history at Wabash College, who played a key role in the GLCA workshop.

For the initial intensive weeklong experience in “micro-teaching,” Professor Lane put together a workshop teaching staff, which worked with small groups of faculty on testing and experimenting with various pedagogical approaches. Feedback from faculty was exceptionally positive for the first workshop, a pattern that has persisted ever since; no other consortium program has received comparable affirmation.

The impact on faculty over time has been documented in a comprehensive review of the program prepared by Birmingham-Southern College’s Terry Goodrick and Trinity University professor of music education Diane Persellin, one of the facilitators in the program. Their review, “Faculty development in higher education: Long-term impact of a summer teaching and learning workshop,” appeared in the January 2010 *Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Their conclusion: “The ACS Teaching and Learning Workshop has brought together faculty members from different institutions across different disciplines, and at different points in their careers to 1) receive feedback on teaching in a non-evaluative setting, 2) give feedback on the teaching of others from a perspective of learning, 3) have the chance to observe teaching strategies and approaches from different disciplines, 4) share teaching problems and concerns, and 5) discuss broad pedagogical issues. The results of our survey suggest that the workshop has had a lasting impact on the professional development of its participants and has provided a valuable forum for faculty development of teaching. A large majority of participants, particularly female respondents, reported more awareness and thoughtfulness about their teaching, having tried new strategies, and having taken more risks in their teaching since having attended the workshop. A large majority of participants also continued to perceive the underlying approach to microteaching—receiving feedback from the perspective of the learner—as valuable.”

The authors also observed that “other institutions and consortia may consider using workshops such as this as useful models for developing similar programs in order to support faculty development of teaching. Additionally, this study may encourage academic institutions to explore implementing various components of this workshop on their campuses, such as the guidelines for peer feedback, as well as establishing interdisciplinary forums for discussing teaching and learning.”

Outside funding secured by the consortium gave the workshop a significant boost. A BellSouth Foundation grant minimized the cost to institutions of their faculty participation. Although the grant, slated to be for three years, but was abbreviated to two when the Foundation shifted its priorities, it was enough to put the program on a solid foundation and persuade member institutions that the services provided were well worth paying their cost. This turned out to be the first of many consortial initiatives that started with relatively small seed money grants and became sustainable. Perhaps the consortium’s strong commitment to sustaining effective programs has been a key reason funders have provided money to ACS for so many years.

At one point during the first workshop, it looked as though the program was a failure. One of the facilitators reported that he could not locate any of the participants on campus after an early evening session—no gatherings of visiting faculty, no intense discussions of salient pedagogical issues. The leadership group met and concluded that they must have worked the faculty to exhaustion, sending them to their beds immediately following the group’s plenary session. But it

turned out that the group's members had dispersed to various Winter Park, Florida, establishments to hold vigorous discussions that went on past midnight. Things were going very well—and they have continued to go well ever since.

Some of the comments from participants are:

- "I have never had as valuable an experience in my teaching career."
- "This workshop will teach you more about teaching and learning than all those teaching-technique books you have sitting on your bookshelf!"
- "The most important thing at the workshop was to talk about teaching with leaders and participants. The discussions, across disciplines and outside of regular sessions were quite useful. My facilitators were sensitive and enthusiastic and supportive. Bravo! They worked hard with each one of us."
- "Thanks for a most helpful and thought-provoking week. I feel I will be a better teacher this fall. I had expectations that I would learn something about interactive teaching and also had strong anxiety about my performance here. I rapidly gained a sense of confidence from the tone set by the facilitators. I came away with concrete knowledge of what interactive teaching is, how to do it better and why it is so important. I now feel less anxious about using these techniques."
- "Thoroughly professional! Packed with great information. I'll use this material for the rest of my career."

A key reason behind the success of these workshops is their non-remedial nature; the deans identified and nominated capable faculty interested in being even better. Consequently, the consortium has been able to convene highly motivated faculty wanting to test different teaching approaches and techniques—something time doesn't permit during the regular academic year. Workshop leaders have also made a profound difference. Typically, they have been drawn from past workshop attendees fully conversant with the aims and processes of effective microteaching. Further enhancing the experience for faculty has been the grouping them apart from peers from their own institutions, giving them the freedom to try bold teaching experiments without fear that they will fail and embarrass themselves.

I have been most taken with the faculty participants who in early June, after a long and arduous academic year, report that the workshop experience has been so stimulating and energizing that they are anxious to get back into classroom on the next Monday. These folks remind me of the statement attributed to Japanese workers who reportedly say, "Thank Buddha, it's Monday" (and we can get back on the job).

New Tools

The consortium has emphasized opportunities for faculty to make optimal use of technology. These extensive efforts, which have been funded principally by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, will be discussed in a later section. For now, mention should be made of the 145 fellowships given thus far to faculty to make creative use of technology, thereby expanding their teaching skills and fostering an enhanced learning environment for students.

Faculty Renewal

Another significant initiative has been a set of rejuvenation and renewal grants to faculty, also made possible by the Mellon Foundation. These grants, which were offered in 2007-2011, stimulated faculty to propose projects for their professional, personal, and leadership development, and led to many individual and cooperative projects. Consortial staff have disseminated project results so as to promote cooperative follow-up efforts.

Grants in 2007-2008 underwrote a broad array of faculty activities, including a “Workshop on Engaged Learning Across the curriculum” (Centre College), “The Memory Group: A New Interdisciplinary Mechanism for Discourse in Curricular Development” (Davidson College), “Aerial Ballet” (Washington and Lee University), “Bali Music Workshop” (Furman University), “Navigating Retirement Zone: Making a Healthy Transition from Teaching and Retirement” (Birmingham-Southern College) and “Development of an Interdisciplinary Human and Animal Nutrition Course” (Centre College). In this competitive grant program, like others in ACS, a committee was formed to review and decide on individual proposals. The deans and faculty on the review committee recused themselves from reviewing proposals from their own institutions.

Later faculty renewal and advancement grants included “Teaching Ethics in International Affairs” (University of Richmond and Davidson College), “Engaged Learning—Across Institutional Global Initiatives in Ghana” (Birmingham-Southern College and Centre College), “Creating Best Practices for Peer Tutor Training” (University of Richmond), “The Responsible Conduct of Research in Undergraduate Institutions” (Davidson College and Centre College), and “Preparing Faculty to Teach in a Blended Learning Environment” (Rollin College).

Faculty renewal and advancement activities have taken many other forms as well. For example, since 1992, Birmingham-Southern College has offered a Latin American Studies conference each year for faculty and students in ACS and elsewhere, sharing the results of their research and stimulating each other’s thinking. In recent years, the splendid British Studies at Oxford program, managed by Rhodes College, has broadened to include an annual workshop.

Interdisciplinary Studies

There has been a sharp interdisciplinary focus from the beginning of the consortium. The presidents and academic deans have expressed keen interest in getting faculty in different disciplines to work together, on the theory that students should see linkages and connections among different fields of study. Given that students will face multi-faceted and interconnected problems after they graduate, ACS leadership felt that students need to be prepared on an interdisciplinary basis. In dealing with a complex toxic waste issue, for example, graduates of ACS institutions could benefit greatly by understanding how biology, chemistry, economics and political science interact as they define the problem, identify its economic implications and determine if and how government agencies might come into play.

Environmental Studies/Sustainable Development

Faculty in interdisciplinary areas were particularly open to collaboration across institutional boundaries. For many, joining with colleagues at other institutions was a logical extension of what they were already doing. Among the various interdisciplinary connections made, those related to sustainable development stand out. Advances in this area were originally brought about by funding from the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation, a Denmark-based organization with offices in New York. Thomas Kepple, vice president for business and community relations at Sewanee: The University of the South, made the initial contact with Martin Kaplan, director of the Foundation, reporting that a wide variety of environmental activities were under way on ACS campuses. Staff quickly followed up, sharing information on over 60 courses and research projects related to the environment then under way on the 16 campuses, and sketching out what might be accomplished if the institutions were to work together.

To explore a possible partnership, Mr. Kaplan invited A. V. Huff, vice president for academic affairs and provost at Furman University and chair of the ACS Council of Deans, and me to meet with the Foundation's board of directors in Charleston, South Carolina, in Fall 1996. Also attending was Tony Cortese, the leader of Second Nature, a vibrant sustainable development advocacy group with which Mr. Kaplan hoped ACS would collaborate. Dean Huff and I described in detail what was taking place on the ACS campuses and how collaboration could enhance sustainable development in a myriad of ways, and we expressed our delight at the prospect of working with Second Nature (while pressing vigorously for a grant to make this partnership succeed). I will never forget the hug I received at the end of the day from one of the Foundation trustees, who kiddingly said, "We Scandinavians must stick together." Nor will I forget the \$1,695,000 grant we received soon thereafter—a grant that served as a catalyst for a wide variety of initiatives that emerged over time.

A broadly representative, interdisciplinary faculty committee shaped the consortium's environmental plan, which featured six separate faculty and staff alliances, each of which became exceedingly active over time. (The six were consolidated into three later in the program's development.) A total of 180 faculty and staff served as members of the alliances.

One alliance focused on curriculum and faculty development, with faculty working jointly on many projects. The principal mechanism for faculty development was a set of workshops through which faculty could exchange experiences and ideas. Over time, new courses were conceived and implemented, courses were refined, various modules were developed in order to supply courses with an interdisciplinary dimension and the number of institutions offering majors, minors and concentrations greatly increased.

A second alliance focused specifically on student leadership development and called for the active participation of students, who shared information through the internet, participated in workshops and carried out specific campus projects. Those projects encompassed an extensive array of activities, including recycling, creating organic gardens, composting, organizing special environmental days and weeks, writing articles for student newspapers, cleaning streams,

preserving land, offering environmental education for secondary school students and innumerable others.

A third alliance was the college-community partnership. Working through its institutional representatives, the consortium disseminated information on college-community linkages and fueled the expansion of such linkages in various ways. One highlight was the collaborative effort between Birmingham-Southern College and the school system in Birmingham—an outgrowth of many activities fostered by the College's remarkable environmental center, led so ably by director Roald Hazelhoff.

The campus as a laboratory for sustainable development was the focal point of the fourth alliance. The committee orchestrating this alliance helped to foster energy conservation, construction of LEED-certified buildings, preservation and other initiatives. ACS facility fellows spearheaded these efforts.

The fifth alliance—for the global community—expanded institutional commitments and efforts to a broader scale. The most noteworthy product was a series of sustainable development programs that took place in Costa Rica, led first by professors Charles Brockett and Robin Gottfried at Sewanee: The University of the South and later by professors Barry Allen and Lee Lines of Rollins College. A total of 135 students took part from 1996 to 2005. Later, professors Allen and Lines designed seminars for faculty, providing demonstration models for overseas sustainable development programs. Rollins College covered a considerable amount of the cost of these seminars, keeping the participant expenses to a minimum. A total of 32 faculty participated in these seminars.

The sixth alliance concentrated on spirituality and sustainability. Faculty identified various religious principles on sustainability. For example, a faculty group visited Assisi, Italy, for a Catholic view and a reservation in Washington State to learn how American Indians perceived the environment.

The ACS worked extensively through its faculty fellows and student interns. On each campus, at least two faculty fellows were named and given a small stipend to play a key role in initiating environmental activity and working closely with student interns—one on each campus. The interns, also given a modest stipend, were encouraged to initiate, lead and coordinate a broad array of environmental initiatives. The member institutions contributed \$114,750 in matching funds to become eligible for another grant from the Rasmussen Foundation, this one for \$1 million to extend the program's activities.

In 2008, the consortium attracted a \$3.5 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to engage 24 post-doctoral environmental fellows, each to serve two years on an ACS campus. The objective was to enrich the institutions' programs and provide an opportunity for the fellows to acquaint themselves with teaching in a liberal arts environment and perhaps persuading them to consider careers in ACS-like institutions.

Here are some observations from the environmental fellows and their mentors:

Fellows

- “I have a highly positive overall evaluation of my experience as a fellow. It can easily be the best job I've ever had so far. I like the academic freedom, the availability of funds for research and travel (this one is very important), the opportunity to teach at such an amazing liberal arts college. This is a very unique postdoc experience and I encourage the foundation to find ways to continue it. I have been extremely satisfied with my mentor, who is great in every aspect and has collaborated in research and advised me well for teaching and the job search. Finally, meeting the other fellows and receiving additional job market guidance at the most recent conference was a great idea. Overall, I am very grateful to all the people who have made this happen. “
- “My Mellon/ACS Postdoc experience has grown richer and more rewarding in its second year. I am now taking fuller advantage of everything that the Fellowship has to offer, including the ability to apply for ACS teaching grants, the opportunity to interact with other Fellows, and the extra time for research projects (have gotten two articles under review this semester--keep your fingers crossed)... I have learned to see the things I perceived last year as impediments (namely, my odd position between a department that doesn't have much involvement in the environmental studies program and an environmental studies program that doesn't have much involvement with my department) as opportunities; I am sure other fellows are facing similar situations, and I also think humanities disciplines in general have less grasp on why environmental studies are important. At best, it's an opportunity to be an ambassador; at worst, it's an opportunity to claim a privileged space to do the work you most want to do. I feel that the Fellowship has pushed me farther into a professional profile that would be characterized as Environmental Humanities; this is a risk in that it means it will be more difficult to talk about myself as a discipline-specific scholar, but at the same time, that risk seems less risky to me in that I want less and less to be characterized in that very traditional fashion. I want to do Environmental Humanities, and I'm willing to be creative, and to explore options outside a traditional faculty position, because working with people on environmental issues is now my priority.”

Mentors

- “The Fellow has both expanded our curricular offerings in ways that would not have been possible without him and he has helped with on-the-ground efforts to move our campus operations (especially agriculture) into a new direction. This latter effort has involved student collaborators, so there has also been a significant educational benefit in this realm as well. His expertise in fire has proven useful and he has assisted forestry classes with prescribed burns. Overall, he has fit in quite well and we will miss him when he moves on.”
- “Our Fellow continues to be a wonderful postdoc. He is an experienced, knowledgeable teacher. In class and out of class, our best students learn much from his measured, thoughtful presence. His research proceeds apace. Last year he published his first book. The second book is nearly out. The third book is under contract. What more could an aspiring history professor accomplish? He even helps out with department matters, contributing to our ongoing discussion of assessment and curriculum changes, without us really expecting him to chime in. Our interactions consist of informal meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, when he is

around the campus. His office is one door down and across the hall from mine. This semester my main effort as his mentor has been to help him find a tenure-track job. I have written about two dozen letters on his behalf.”

Dr. Elizabeth MacNabb has ably served as the director of the environmental program from 2001 to the present, working with extraordinary faculty dedicated to educating students about the environment and inspiring them to have a constructive impact on sustainable development.

In looking at the consortium’s program as a whole, Furman University professor of health and exercise science Frank Powell offered these reflections: “Both the timing of the creation of the ACS and its early and significant emphasis on environmental activities are now seen as the most important factors in Furman’s early adoption of sustainability as a strategic goal. The many resources provided by ACS were used to direct our efforts to make Furman University a more environmentally conscious institution.” Other participants offered similar sentiments.

Grants from ACS have stimulated many other interdisciplinary initiatives. Here are a few:
2009-2010 Competition

- “Exploration of Model Undergraduate Research Programs” (Centre College)
- “Developing a Gender-Oriented Strategic Plan for Women’s and Gender Studies” (Furman University)
- “Interdisciplinary Music Technology” (Rollins College)
- “Crossing boundaries: Psychology Meets Bio-chemistry” (Southwestern University)

2010-2011 Competition

- “Condensate Water Quality and Quantity” (Trinity University)

2011-2012

- “Collaborating for More Inclusive Campuses” (Hendrix College)
- “Teaching Symposium for Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty” (Washington and Lee University)
- “Workshop on Ethics and International Affairs” (University of Richmond and Davidson College)

Funding for these projects came from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

International Initiatives

From the outset of its international efforts, ACS endeavored to offer programs as rigorous and engaging as possible. As I wrote in “Cooperating Internationally” (in *Best Practices in Higher Education Consortia: How Institutions Can Work Together*, Page 103), “Ultimately, programs must be of the highest quality, fulfilling the advertised objectives. This applies to any international program an institution initiates whether it is part of a consortium or not. No amount of transparent organization or sophisticated marketing can compensate for program of poor quality. Moreover, one low quality program can undermine the reputation of the overall organization.”

ACS members were interested in collaborating on international programs from the beginning. Various presidents and deans asserted that it made no sense for the various institutions to duplicate one another's efforts overseas, particularly in starting new programs outside of the English- and French-speaking world.

In addition to promoting participation in the splendid British Studies at Oxford Summer Program, which was already in place and managed by Rhodes College, the deans identified Central Europe as an area where students should be interested in attending programs and where ACS institutions offered none. In the consortium's first program, in 1992, students studied for one month each in Budapest, Warsaw and Dresden. Finding the shifts in sites to be too complicated, the program settled in Budapest after the first year. With Millsaps German professor Karl Markgraf taking the lead, and his institution certifying the credit, the consortium operated there for five years. Enrollment ranged from twelve to thirty-one during the Fall semester programs. In 1997, finding it increasingly difficult to recruit on-site directors from member institutions' faculty and confronted by a related decline in student interest, ACS folded the program into the Council for International Educational Exchange (CIEE) program based in Budapest.

In 1996, the consortium offered its first program for students in Costa Rica, with Sewanee: The University of the South professors Robin Gottfried and Charles Brockett as program leaders. The group spent time on language studies in San Jose, then traveled to the dry northwest lowlands, the cloud forests of Monteverde, and the tropical rainforest of Puerto Viejo. Throughout, the focus was on efforts to create sustainable development in the country.

The program moved to Rollins College in 2004, where Professor Barry Allen assumed leadership. Students had the opportunity to examine projects to improve the lives of Costa Ricans, study the influence of organizations and powers there, meet with members of indigenous communities, analyze and explore the possibilities of eco-tourism and carry out various projects.

In 2006, Allen and fellow Rollins College professor Lee Lines shifted the program to a faculty development seminar carried on in collaboration with member colleges of the Great Lakes Colleges Association and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest. In a program heavily subsidized by Rollins, participating faculty explored the tensions between conservation and development in Costa Rica. In 2008, the seminar was offered for the third time, with Rollins extending the use of its highly developed infrastructure to global partners' faculty interested in teaching in Costa Rica. Judging from participants' feedback, these workshops were singularly successful in enabling faculty to prepare courses and programs on their own campuses.

Consortium priorities changed, shifting to the Middle East. ACS classicists, who already had an archaeological dig in Turkey, in collaboration with Bilkent University, weighed in on behalf of a program there. Bilkent and nearby Middle Eastern Technology University (METU) were chosen as the consortium's partners for a Fall semester program after a group of faculty representatives visited and reviewed many alternative partners and sites. In large measure, the choice came down to a decision between Ankara, where Bilkent and METU are located, and the cosmopolitan Istanbul, which offers many potential partners. A strong argument was offered for Istanbul on the

grounds that it is a particularly attractive and appealing place, sitting at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. A majority of faculty on the program coordinating group, however, opted for Ankara on the grounds that it is a more “authentic” Turkish experience and that solid connections were already in place with Turkish partners. The program lasted for seven years (2001-2008), with annual enrollments ranging from seven to eighteen.

For a few of those seven years, ACS offered the fall-term study abroad program in Turkey as part of a Global Partners alliance, which included the Great Lakes Colleges Association and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest as well as ACS. As part of the alliance, which extended from 1999-2005, GLCA offered a program for faculty in Kenya and ACM made available programs for students in Russia. Together, the three consortia also offered “best practice” workshops, through which international program directors shared their expertise and experiences, and offered a series of “strategic briefings” or dialogues for presidents, chief academic officers and faculty from the three consortia. These briefings focused on “macro” issues involving international initiatives and study abroad, raising such questions as: What outcomes are desired for study abroad experiences? How should study abroad fit into a liberal arts curriculum? How should study abroad be assessed? While these dialogues did not lead to any specific actions or advance collaboration among the forty-two institutions involved, they did produce an informative paper summarizing the discussions and highlighting key lessons and recommendations.

In June 2007, the ACS presidents shifted the consortium’s primary focus to China, while also recommending exploration of further Middle East and Arabic-languages possibilities. Since then, the ACS has launched various Chinese initiatives. Following a typical pattern for the consortium, faculty who teach Chinese subjects were brought together to explore program possibilities and plan for the future. Professor Ilan Alon, the George D. and Harriett Cornell Chair of International Business and Director of the China Center at Rollins College and Visiting Scholar and Asia Fellow at Harvard University, took the lead role in bringing the group together in October 2007. Participants reviewed current programs and identified potential areas for collaboration in study abroad, exchange of faculty, joint research, the use of such technology as on-line webinars and courses and Chinese language instruction.

The next critical step was to attract funding; fortunately, the Henry Luce Foundation provided a grant of \$490,000 in 2008. Interestingly, consortium staff had asked Luce initially to fund a planning meeting; in response, Foundation officials indicated that they preferred to consider a much larger grant request covering the next four years. Following the planning meeting (underwritten by funds secured elsewhere), the consortium received the Foundation grant that provided the basis for myriad activities that followed.

With the Foundation’s support, the consortium hired a full-time staff person, Dr. Jinping Zhu, and moved rapidly forward on several fronts. A series of faculty workshops gave seventy-five ACS faculty teaching Chinese-related topics a chance to share experiences and explore collaborative possibilities. The first workshop, held at Washington and Lee University in October 2008, provided an opportunity for faculty to examine ways of creating new Chinese-

related programs on campus and strengthening existing programs. Three faculty workshops have been held thus far.

In April 2009, the consortium's first student research conference on China was held at Morehouse College, with twenty-one students participating and making presentations. This effort, deemed very successful by the planning committee, was designed to stimulate further research on the campus and provide a forum for students to present their research and exchange ideas with students and faculty from many ACS institutions. Lindsey Waldrop of Southwestern University won the outstanding paper award for her paper on Dong Qichang's painting "Qingbian Mountains" and its place in Chinese art.

During an ACS faculty trip to China in the Spring of 2009, funded by the U.S. State Department, eight Chinese universities indicated that they would be interested in working with ACS on a project employing ACS graduates to teach English in China. In summer 2010, three ACS graduates (Taylor Adams and Daniel Steven from Hendrix College and Jay Russell from Centre College) started teaching there.

The China coordinating committee has also focused on the possibility of creating a center in China that would bring together student and faculty exchange programs and provide a site for joint research conferences. Staff have extensively studied the centers created by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) as possible models for an ACS center.

Technology figured centrally in discussions of future China-related programs, the use of technology being a major topic at the first faculty workshop at Washington and Lee University. Discussion focused on creation of an on-line "maintenance course" that would enable students who have been learning Chinese overseas to access the language on-line when they returned to the campus. In subsequent conferences, technology has been a featured topic, and numerous technology-assisted efforts have begun. Here are a few examples:

- Linked courses involving students from Rollins College and Southwestern University, offered by professors Li Wei of Rollins and Carl Robertson of Southwestern University
- Five 24/7 Chinese language tutorials offered by Spelman College Professor Richard Lu
- A three-way course in Chinese music offered by Jay McDaniel, Hendrix College; Hongchu Fu, Washington and Lee University; and Li Wei, Rollins College
- Courses in Chinese culture offered by professor McDaniel in collaboration with four Chinese universities

In 2007, the consortium launched a new initiative, a Summer Language Chinese Institute in Suzhou, China, which was managed by Furman University. Furman was selected during an ACS competition to host such an institute for the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). Following its successful nine-week Summer institute in 2007, Furman held additional institutes in 2008 and 2009, and was joined by Hendrix College, which managed similar institutes in 2008 and 2009 in Harbin, China.

The connection with CAORC proved to be critical for the consortium's program. It attracted further attention among ACS institutions by signaling the seriousness of the consortium's Chinese initiative. The connection also gave the ACS enhanced visibility and credibility in the broader Chinese higher education network. It helped in discussions with the Henry Luce Foundation and was instrumental in securing a grant from the State Department for a CAORC-endorsed consortium faculty trip in Spring 2009.

Representatives from nine ACS institutions explored possible bi-lateral and multi-lateral cooperative arrangements during the group's visit to China. The Morehouse College representative, for example, was particularly interested in working directly with Shanghai University. Others suggested China Normal University as a potential ACS partner. Officials from each visited Chinese university were extremely receptive, and expressed a keen interest in collaborating. One indicated that an ACS office would be made available on the campus.

Three members of the ACS delegation visited Hanban, a public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, where I made a presentation requesting support to create a Confucius Institute for the ACS institutions. The director of Hanban expressed interest in the proposal, and a site visit was arranged later by the Chinese education department office in Houston, Texas, to Atlanta and the ACS offices. The Chinese government representative indicated later that he had submitted a very positive review to Beijing, but thus far no grant to establish a Confucius Institute has been received.

Religion professor Jay McDaniel of Hendrix College, who played a key role in creating Ecological Civilization, Inc., an organization established to promote relationships between China and the U.S., helped plan a new ACS-China program including faculty exchanges, joint research projects, and possibly joint courses and webinars conducted through the internet. At an organizing meeting in Claremont, California, in Spring 2013, he was joined by Joyce Hardin, professor of biology at Hendrix College; James Dow, assistant professor of philosophy at Trinity University; Stephen Field, J. K. and Ingrid Lee professor of Chinese, co-director of East Asian Studies at Trinity University; David Ribble, professor of biology at Trinity University; and David Bello, associate professor of history and director of East Asian Studies at Washington and Lee University, along with numerous representatives of Chinese institutions.

Latin America

An especially attractive program is a Latin American Studies forum created in 1992 by Birmingham-Southern College professor Gama Perruci and managed by Birmingham-Southern College each spring. Numerous ACS and non-ACS faculty and students have participated over the years. Faculty offer leadership and presentations, and students present research papers on a wide array of Latin American topics. Special kudos go to Barbara Domcekova, associate professor of Spanish at Birmingham-Southern College, for her leadership of this very successful program.

In conjunction with that initiative, the ACS signed a consortial licensing agreement in 2002 with the Hispanic American Periodicals Index (HAPI). The joint agreement provided substantial

financial savings to the individual institutions while providing a substantial database related to Central and South America.

Carpathian Exchange

With funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the consortium forged a collaborative arrangement between ACS and the eighteen-member Association of Carpathian Regional Universities (ACRU). Through this program, the consortium invited other private and public U.S. institutions to join ACS in working with their Carpathian counterparts on engaging colleges and universities with the public and in community service. ACS representatives shared their considerable experience and expertise with the Carpathian institutions, for which community and public service were not regular functions. While the ACS representatives shared important lessons, they also learned important lessons about this part of the world, its institutions of higher learning and the kinds of services communities need.

Other Efforts

The consortium has developed other international linkages over time, including the College Year in Athens, Greece, for which Southwestern University handles student applications and credit, the program of Danish International Studies in Denmark and the Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy, where Hendrix College serves as the coordinating institution.

With a grant of approximately \$50,000 from the Mellon Foundation, the consortium developed a partnership with South Africa's Foundation of Tertiary Institutions in the northern Metropolis (FOTIM) in 2004. The grant funded our exploration of numerous collaborative efforts, settling on cooperation in gender studies and environmental studies. Faculty exchanged in these areas brought the perspectives of participants from both partners. Environmental studies faculty were struck by the parallel issues and challenges in the American South and South Africa, reinforcing their desire to work together.

The consortium also connected with Lancaster University and Aberdeen University, following discussion with ACS faculty on the need for international partner institutions that were strong in science. Research and visits to these universities confirmed their strength in the sciences and illuminated past successful performance of ACS students on their campuses. It was discovered, for example, that pre-medical students who attended these institutions had performed well and secured admission to medical schools in the U.S. However attractive these arrangements were, few ACS students availed themselves of the opportunities at Lancaster and Aberdeen. The pattern was quite similar to what developed in 1994 with the Fall Semester program at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. That program, also designed for science students, enrolled only one ACS student (from Southwestern University) over time. The common reason given for lack of participation was student concern over missing key classes on their home campuses, particularly in science and in the pre-medical curriculum.

Anne Ledvina, director of international programs at Birmingham-Southern College, offered her view of the ACS role in these words: "ACS has been a critical partner in the internationalization

of liberal arts colleges within its own consortium and beyond. The partnership is unique in fostering an atmosphere of collaboration among institutions and educators that includes teaching, research and publications, conferences, symposia and task forces. This partnership ultimately has led to educating young people about the world and the opportunities that come through engagement with the global community.”

Technology Initiatives

Early in its existence, ACS put technology to effective use in bringing its institutions together and advancing academic collaboration. There were two main reasons for this burst of energy and creativity: first, imaginative faculty—particularly in classics—foresaw that technology could strengthen their academic programs; second, the Mellon Foundation provided funding for exploring and experimenting with technology. Key faculty, such as classics professor Kenny Morrell of Rhodes College and computer science professors Kenneth Abernethy of Furman University and Robert Shive of Millsaps College, envisioned a wide array of technology-assisted efforts, including on-line instruction and webinars.

In response to a request from ACS, the Mellon Foundation made available a \$46,500 planning grant in 1994 to assist in examining possible technology initiatives in nine academic disciplines. Faculty in chemistry, economics, computer science/technology, classics, archaeology, sociology, modern languages, music, theatre and drama held meetings and examined possibilities for collaboration, with the classics faculty being by far the most active. Representing many of the ACS institutions, they developed plans for joint on-line courses, an annual review, planning meetings, joint sabbaticals, and a virtual department with a consortial department head. In 1995, the Mellon Foundation was persuaded by these plans to award a \$1,150,000 million grant to realize these ideas.

This would engender a far-reaching, comprehensive program called Sunoikisis, named after the alliance of Greek cities that revolted against the Athenian Empire in 428 B.C. Sunoikisis faculty created a virtual department, with a chair, offered online courses among the participating institutions and arranged sabbatical replacements, among other activities. (An accompanying online archaeology initiative, led by professor Mark Garrison of Trinity University and linked to a site in southwestern Turkey, allowed the ACS, in the words of Professor Garrison, “to bring scholars together from, literally, across the planet to enrich the research and pedagogical experiences for students and faculty within ACS.”) Through this program, ACS classicists became a single department of thirty faculty members rather than one or two working separately on each of the ACS campuses. By working together, they were able to establish a critical mass for various classes rather than teaching very few students on their own campus or being precluded by insufficient student interest from offering classes at all. One faculty member called the initiative a “lifeline,” supplying him with renewed interest in and enthusiasm for his profession.

An evaluation by Dr. Susan Frost, former vice president for research at Emory, noted student interest, faculty satisfaction, and expanded range of courses, but also noted the considerable faculty time needed to sustain the program.

Dr. Suzanne Bonefas, who assumed a leadership role for the consortium's overall technology initiative, oversaw the classics program and the movement to create a technology center serving all ACS faculty and institutions. Her efforts were a substantial reason for the success of the classics program.

In 1998, the Mellon Foundation came through again for the consortium, providing \$1,250,000 to support creation of a technology center on a member campus. There was a very lively competition among seven ACS institutions to host the center, and proposals were carefully reviewed by a committee of academic deans. Southwestern University was selected after it presented a compelling proposal committing significant campus facilities for the center, with a possible upgrade to a new building in the future, and offering potential linkages with the nearby Dell Corporation (possibly involving student internships). Southwestern University also committed faculty and staff time to the center, and coverage of the cost of two full-time staff until 2010.

In addition to holding numerous technology workshops each year for different faculty groups, the consortium provided 145 \$2,500 fellowships over ten years for faculty from twenty-two disciplines to experiment with technology in new ways related to their teaching and research. The general consensus was that the consortium's faculty, staff and students were well-served by the center.

Here are some examples of the fellowships and grants provided through the ACS technology center:

- "The Human Voice – Computer Interface" – Dan Boye, Physics, Davidson College
- "The Pedagogy of Teaching On-line: A Hybrid Approach" – Monique Head, instructional technology consultant, education services, Morehouse College
- "Integrating Historical Archaeology Into the Curriculum" – Milton Moreland, co-director of the archaeology program and department of religious studies, Rhodes College
- "Using LED Technology to Teach Additive Color-mixing Theory" – John Ore, professor of theatre, Southwestern University
- "GIS in the classroom: Redistricting as a Politics Laboratory" – John Blackburn, assistant director of university computing and Mark Rush, professor of politics, Washington and Lee University
- "Interactive Web-base for Medicinal Chemistry Exercises" – Erland Stevens, chair, chemistry, Davidson College
- "Interactive Learning Tools and demonstrations for Behavioral Statistics Courses" – Matthew Weeks, associate professor of psychology, Centenary College
- "Teaching Limit Concept in Calculus with Technology" – Ting Wu, associate professor, Morehouse College

NITLE

The success of the center led the Mellon Foundation to combine it with Mellon-supported centers in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Middlebury, Vermont, to form a nationwide organization that came to be known as the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE). Supported by the Mellon Foundation at the outset and supplemented later by institutional fees, NITLE has offered a rich panoply of workshops and other opportunities, principally for faculty. Evaluations by faculty participants in these workshops have been quite positive.

In spring 2009, the national headquarters of NITLE moved from Michigan to Southwestern University, the site of the original ACS center. Joey King, a Southwestern graduate and trustee, was named the new executive director (following the move of Dr. Jo Ellen Parker from the directorship of NITLE to the residency of Sweet Briar College). He was also named vice president for innovation at Southwestern. In order to make the transition as effective as possible, the Mellon Foundation provided a substantial grant to Southwestern. At the end of 2009, King prepared a new business model, pointing toward substantially increased institutional membership.

In 2013, Michael Nanfito became executive director, emphasizing widespread collaboration and a set of desirable outcomes for NITLE:

- A body of case studies that demonstrate the collaborative process and elucidate the attributes, conditions, and measurements of successful collaboration;
- A reproducible, extensible program that additional institutions can use in subsequent years to achieve their strategic objectives via collaboration;
- A toolkit of action plans and other resources, such as recordings of virtual seminars and published reports that colleges and universities can use to guide their collaborative efforts well past the life of initial proposals; and
- A robust program of shared knowledge to increase the value of membership in the NITLE Network for liberal arts colleges and universities.

REALIA

With a grant of approximately \$200,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), we launched the REALIA (Rich Electronic Archive for Language Instruction Anywhere) project, providing a sustainable online archive of royalty-free materials for teaching foreign languages and cultures. The digital archive, providing support for faculty teaching French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic, included pictures and sounds of everyday life. The main responsibility for the project's vision and collection of items fell to faculty, librarians and technologists from the ACS, the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) and the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA).

Information Fluency

In winter 2000, and thanks to a \$600,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation, the consortium began a three-year initiative to enhance information fluency and training. The notion was to

extend beyond information literacy to an advanced level at which students would be able to put information resources to effective use. With strong leadership from faculty and chief information officers, the consortium gathered and shared lessons and insights into the information environment while developing specific training programs to enable faculty, staff and students to collaborate effectively in advancing information fluency.

During this three-year period, the consortium provided numerous grants through which students in particular could utilize technology. Here are some of the grants provided:

- Birmingham-Southern College– Integrating Information Fluency Standards Into the Curriculum
- Centenary College of Louisiana – First-year Experience and Information Technology Studies
- Centre College– Improving Information Fluency: Creating a Model Web Page Design Project for Use in Undergraduate Courses
- Davidson College– Looking Backward, Bringing Forward: Web-based Archival Analysis and Presentation in a First-Year Writing Classroom
- Furman University– Integrating Information Fluency into the Humanities
- Hendrix College – A Journey into Information Fluency: Integrating Information Fluency into the Hendrix College Journeys Course
- Millsaps College– Information Fluency: Where are We and Where Should We Go?
- Morehouse College– Web Activities for Intermediate Spanish: A Collaborative Project
- Rhodes College– Integrating GIS into the Liberal Arts Curriculum: A Cross-Campus Seminar
- Rollins College – Integrating Information Fluency into the Senior Honors Research Seminar
- Sewanee: The University of the South – Technology Tutors and the Development of a Technology Resource
- Southwestern University – Student-Designed Instructional Materials for Latin
- Trinity University – Implementation of a Curriculum-Centered Information Fluency Program
- University of Richmond – Training Student Research Fellows to Serve as Peer Tutors
- Washington and Lee University– Collaboration to Manage Spatial Information on ACS Campuses: Prototyping an

Information Infrastructure

One of the highlights of the initiative was the creation of an information fluency journal Transformations: Liberal Arts in the Digital Age. Thomas Allen, professor of computer science at Furman University and managing editor of the journal, stated that the journal would “examine digital information technology and its impact on liberal arts education.” The journal was discontinued after the ACS center was absorbed into NITLE, then recently was revived by NITLE.

Funding from The Mellon Foundation also helped ACS build a virtual art gallery. Professor Collin Asmus, art professor at Millsaps College, helped to develop the gallery and its first exhibit, hosted on the Middlebury College website. The gallery included exhibits of works by ACS faculty and students, and items from various institutional collections.

Blended Learning

A combination of computer-mediated and interactive instruction, blended learning became a principal focal point for the consortium in 2012. The Mellon Foundation made \$120,000 available, the Teagle Foundation provided \$150,000, and in 2013 the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation provided a gift of \$600,000 to create and refine blended learning efforts and enable the consortium to hire a full-time director for the program. These grants considerably broadened the disciplinary areas being addressed and heightened the number of faculty involved. Among the disciplines beginning blended learning initiatives were biology, environmental studies, physics, Chinese studies, voice, religion and mathematics.

In order to define and explain the blended learning or new paradigm initiative and allay faculty anxieties about it, the academic deans constructed a statement emphasizing that it should emerge from the faculty and attract faculty support. The statement is as follows:

Overview

The project focuses on a dynamic combination of face-to-face instruction and computer-mediated instruction across the sixteen ACS campuses, encompassing courses, webinars, modules and tutorials.

Goal of the Program

The New Paradigm initiative's goal is to broaden and enhance academic offerings for students such as upper level language courses and other specialized offerings not currently available at a number of the institutions. Taking advantage of the fact that the institutions are part of an alliance of 3,000 faculty and 30,000 students, New Paradigm students could have access to a variety of special academic opportunities at other institutions. Special lectures and speakers from other campuses could augment the regular course offerings on an existing campus, with either streaming or interactive technology.

The plan is to open up new possibilities for students – opportunities that would allow ACS institutions to offer options to our students that are not normally available at smaller liberal arts colleges and universities. The approach is considered “blended learning,” which utilizes technology for inter-institutional programs while maintaining the distinctive, interpersonal nature of our residential institutions. The initiative is not viewed as a cost-saving effort.

Process for Meeting this Goal

In order to meet these objectives, the consortium will work with interested faculty, recognizing that the success of this enterprise and the pace of its implementation will be determined by the interest, commitment and creativity of individual faculty and groups of faculty and the perceived institutional needs across the 16 campuses. The initiative must be a faculty-driven effort to succeed. Chief academic officers on each campus will be asked to encourage and work with faculty to explore appropriate new possibilities, working within curriculum approval structures and processes in place on the campuses. The effort will draw on expertise of instructional technology officers and their collaborative efforts across the 16 campuses.

ACS will follow a deliberate process to ensure that pertinent factors and questions are taken into account. These issues include support for faculty, orientation and preparation of faculty for

blended instruction, sensitivity to the role and position of pre-tenured faculty, processes for assessing results of inter-institutional courses or programs, technology on campuses, compatibility of technology systems, necessary bandwidth and foundation funding for the initiative.

Dr. Suzanne Bonefas and I reinforced the role of faculty in our article, “Technology Partnerships for Faculty: Case Studies and Lessons Learned” (in *Leveraging Resources Through Partnerships*, page 51): “Programs that have been successful are those that merged out of strong faculty interest. Faculty suggested ideas based on their real needs and on the opportunities that they hoped to create for themselves and their colleagues. Strong faculty leadership is critical to the success of the programs.” In the same publication, we noted that leadership drawn from within the consortium could enable the consortium to meet its technology goals. “From the start, ACS has been able to identify faculty at member institutions who could envision new programs, organize and lead workshops, create online courses and collaborate in various other ways. These individuals have become more influential and effective each year, building and learning from their ACS experiences” (page 52, in the same publication).

Here are a few examples of blended learning projects:

- KatieAnn Skogsberg (Centre College) and Dennis Ugolini (Trinity University)
Project Title: Training ACS Undergraduates in the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Jonathan King (Trinity University), Mary Miller (Rhodes College), Pamela Hanson (Birmingham-Southern College) and Renee Chosed (Furman University)
Project Title: General Education Cancer Biology Learning Module Development for ACS Institutions
- Li Wei (Rollins College) and Jay McDaniel (Hendrix College)
Project Title: Collaborative Online Teaching Module for Music and Religion Courses
- Tim Chartier (Davidson College), with interest from Birmingham-Southern College, Centre College, Furman University, Rhodes College and Spelman College
Project Title: Exploring Applications of Linear Algebra
- Mike Winiski (Furman University) and Jeremy Donald (Trinity University)
Project Title: Blended Learning –A Design-based Approach (GIS)
- David Wright (Furman University) and Joe Essid (University of Richmond)
Project Title: Beyond the (Online) Handbook: Writing Resources Designed for the Digital Environment

ACS also focused attention on technology—specifically, on technology that would facilitate inter-institutional collaboration. Led by chief information officers Pat Schoknecht at Rollins College and David Hinson at Hendrix College, the consortium experimented with high-definition telepresence as provided by the CISCO and Polycom companies, participating in demonstrations that brought together people from great distances into a single virtual setting.

At the same time, the consortium identified and utilized such lower-tech approaches as SKYPE, WebX and Adobe Connect, recognizing that these technologies are readily available and that it could be some time before the institutions purchased expensive telepresence systems. Discovery

of the Blue Jeans Company, which offers interoperability that does not require a common platform, proved a breakthrough; Hendrix College was the first ACS institution to engage with Blue Jeans.

At about this time, the Chronicle of Higher Education ran an article featuring the consortium's new online initiatives, triggering conversations among numerous consortia and institutions around the country. ACS received email inquiries from foundation heads, consortium leaders, and other higher education figures, all applauding our efforts and wanting to learn more about our blended learning mission.

Other Academic Efforts

A number of our other academic efforts—encompassing teaching, curriculum, and student learning—are not easily pigeonholed.

Engaged Learning

With funding from The Mellon Foundation, the consortium has underwritten numerous projects in engaged learning, connecting students and their academic programs to the outside community and wider world along with their multiple needs and problems. Prior to that, ACS had started discussions with directors of student learning, leaders in service learning, and institutional chaplains, leading to very little. It was not until 2012 that the consortium sprang into action, eliciting active response from its campuses. Here are a few examples of initiatives undertaken since:

- Emerging Issues Academy – Davidson College
- Engage Ghana: A Cross-Institutional Global Initiative – Birmingham-Southern College and Centre College
- Scholarly Conversations – Furman University
- Poverty Studies – the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty (SHECP), including Washington and Lee University, Furman University and Spelman College. (Hendrix College, Millsaps College and Centre College joined the others at a two-day poverty teaching symposium.)

We anticipate more activities in this area as directors of engaged learning examine various collaborative possibilities. They met with the Council of Deans in March 2014, exchanging experiences and identifying a number of future cooperative ventures.

Gender Studies

One of the most exciting venues for faculty presentations and discussions has been the biannual workshop on gender studies, attracting a substantial number of faculty and students each time. The group shifted its focus from women's studies to gender studies in order to consider more topics and attract additional faculty to its lively and stimulating forum. The latest workshop was held in April, 2014, at Furman University, the topic being "Intersections and Assemblages: Gender and Sexuality Across Cultures."

Professor Marsha Walton at Rhodes College deserves credit for establishing the gender studies initiative. In an initial conversation I had with her, she talked about her interest in women's studies and the value she would find in identifying and collaborating with peers from other ACS campuses. Following that conversation, the deans identified potential faculty collaborators for her and a planning group was brought together in Atlanta.

Those attending were Jane Archer, Birmingham-Southern College; Nicole Barenbaum, Sewanee: The University of the South; Susan Bernick, Furman University; Jane Chew, Furman University; Jane Dickie, Hope College; Mykol Hamilton, Centre College; Suzanne Jones, University of Richmond; Ann MacMaster, Millsaps College; Judith Page, Millsaps College; Anne Sharp, Furman University; Robin Visel, Furman University; Mary Visser, Southwestern University; Marsha Walton, Rhodes College; and Mary Young, Southwestern University. The group had a lively discussion of the salient issues facing women's studies before concluding that collaboration could enhance efforts on the individual campuses. As a result, they decided to hold a workshop in the next year, putting together a budget for thirty participants, which some thought was too high an expectation. In fact, 175 participated in the first meeting, hosted by Furman University, and the program has moved forward ever since.

Learning-Based Pedagogy

The Teagle Foundation provided a planning grant to bring together faculty to design a plan focused on “learning-based pedagogy.” The consortium’s faculty committee prepared a plan calling for on-campus workshops to which faculty would be invited along with outside experts in cognition and neuroscience. These individual campus discussions and seminars were expected to lead to new teaching approaches incorporating research findings related to meta-cognition, testing as a learning device, circadian rhythms, memory and other aspects of learning.

The Mellon Foundation responded to these plans by providing funding as part of a larger Faculty Advancement Grant. Among many projects initiated by this funding are these:

- An Interdisciplinary ACS Faculty Workshop: “Teaching the Animal”—Sewanee The University of the South and Southwestern University
- Creating a Clipped Applied Statistic Course—Washington and Lee University
- Creating Best Practices for Peer Tutor Training—Birmingham-Southern College
- Strengthening Undergraduate Learning: Six Research-based Principles and their Applications—Centre College and Trinity University
- Workshopping the Workshop: A Roundtable on Creative Writing Pedagogy—Millsaps College, Hendrix College and other ACS member institutions

Leaders who played an important role in the consortium’s approach were:

- Barbara Lom, chair of biology and Kristi Multhaup, professor of psychology, Davidson College
- Diane Persellin, professor of music education, Trinity University
- Paula Hertel, professor of biology, Trinity University
- Bill Blaker, professor of biology, Furman University

- Harvey Fisher, associate professor of business law, Millsaps College
- Gary Radice, associate professor of biology, University of Richmond

Library

Annual meetings of library directors led to preparation of a plan for a comprehensive electronic library project beginning in 1996, through which ACS compared the value and cost of subscribing to online and print materials. Tom Watson, the library director at Sewanee: The University of the South, was instrumental in bringing this project to the attention of the group, and Richard Meyer, library director at Trinity University, took the lead in overseeing the initiative and conducting extensive research on library transactions and the use of the newly available online materials. His research illuminated potential financial savings of using online materials, noting the high prices institutions pay publishers for printed material. The Mellon Foundation provided \$1,200,000 for this initiative.

Mathematics

Mathematics has also been an object of special interest to the consortium. Assisted by Robert Eslinger, former associate dean of academic affairs at Hendrix College and consultant to the Educational Advancement Foundation of Austin, Texas, the consortium began acquainting ACS mathematics faculty “Inquiry-Based Learning” Step one was a workshop held in Austin to which all ACS mathematics faculty were invited. Fourteen faculty learned new concepts promoted by R. L. Moore, a distinguished former professor of mathematics at the University of Texas.

During this effort, the consortium was in close communication with faculty at Berry College in Georgia, which has made extensive use of inquiry-based learning in mathematics, with applications in physics and chemistry as well. The ACS plan covers mathematics and expresses the hope that faculty in many areas will consider making use of these concepts.

Research University Cooperation

Following my discussions in May 2007 with David Shi, the president of Furman University, and Michael Adams, the president of the University of Georgia, the consortium forged plans for collaborative arrangements through which both the university and ACS institutions would benefit. The parties signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding in 2005 and reaffirmed it in 2010.

Under the agreement, University of Georgia graduate school representatives have visited numerous ACS campuses, explaining the process for applying to the University’s graduate and professional schools. UGA also arranged to accommodate associate professor of mathematics Greg Dresden of Washington and Lee University, who spent the winter term of 2008-2009 with colleagues in the University’s mathematics department, benefitting considerably in the process.

A joint faculty effort between UGA and Rollins College, focused on the condition of coral reefs, furnishes an excellent example of collaboration. Rollins associate professor of biology Kathryn

Sutherland worked closely with associate professor of environmental health science Erin Lipp and professor of ecology James Porter from UGA to identify the source of the coral-killing pathogen that causes white pox disease of Caribbean elkhorn coral—once the most common coral in the Caribbean. Meanwhile, ACS accepted two post-doctoral UGA graduates, both in environmental studies. They were given time to continue their research while teaching and receiving considerable mentoring at Rollins College and Millsaps College. The University also volunteered to appoint an ACS-institution graduate to become a graduate assistant/liaison to ACS from the University. Furman University graduate Alisha Wilson was the first to hold this assistantship and served admirably, scheduling meetings of UGA graduate school representatives on ACS campuses, meeting with ACS graduates after they started at UGA, and providing advisory and mentoring support.

Further collaboration with UGA is expected in the areas of blended learning, study abroad and environmental studies/sustainable development in the coming years.

The ACS staff has also initiated discussions with Emory University about a program through which special attention would be paid to undergraduates from minority groups looking ahead to graduate and professional school. Under the emerging plan, mentoring would be provided to undergraduate students; summer research opportunities and internships would be made available; and ongoing advising and mentoring would take place throughout the graduate- and professional-school years. Objectives of the program are to provide unusual opportunities and incentives for minority students to continue their education and to encourage them to think about returning to teach at their ACS alma maters after they receive their Ph.D. As described by some of the deans, this is a “grow your own” initiative to accompany a variety of institutional approaches to attract minority teachers.

The consortium received a planning grant in 2013 from The Mellon Foundation to explore cooperative possibilities with large research universities, and the grant has triggered numerous conversations among potential partners. Washington and Lee University has emerged with a collaborative effort in digital humanities with the University of Virginia—a program encompassing the sharing of information, faculty exchanges, and the development of joint programs. Birmingham-Southern College’s dialogue with the University of Alabama, Birmingham, has led to a joint undertaking in Latin American studies. Sewanee: The University of the South has generated a joint effort with Yale focused on Appalachia. Furman University, University of Richmond and other ACS institutions are pursuing collaborations as well, all pointed toward a consortium-wide plan to be presented to the Mellon Foundation.

Science for the Non-Major

In 2000, a grant of \$500,000 from the W.M. Keck Foundation helped launch a notable initiative, science for the non-major, led by a remarkable group of ACS science faculty. Numerous courses were reviewed, evaluated and refined as a result of this initiative. Professor Leo Pezzementi, professor of biology at Birmingham-Southern College, was a key leader in this effort, working closely with Beth Bowser and, later, Marcia White of the ACS staff. Academic Vice President

Ed Roy of Trinity University provided splendid leadership on behalf of the top academic officers.

The specific goals of the initiative were to:

- understand and appreciate the scientific role, including its limitations and how it differs from other perspectives;
- understand the increasing interrelationships among the disciplines of science;
- understand the connection between scientific concepts and technological developments, their impact on society, and the cultural and historical context in which they emerge; and
- use their understanding to rationally evaluate scientific controversies.

The Keck Foundation provided its splendid grant only after the institutions proved that they were exceedingly interested in the subject and were prepared to make substantial changes. Trinity University academic vice president Ed Roy and I made a presentation to the Keck Foundation staff in Los Angeles, but it failed to carry the day. Following that ill-fated trip, the consortium held a workshop at Trinity University, with a large faculty turnout attending at institutional expense. Participation in that initial workshop and the subsequent creation of a faculty network persuaded Keck Foundation officials that ACS was serious about this consortial initiative, and consequently they awarded the grant. The program focused on the non-science major and specific changes in courses and field experiences that would make the study of science more attractive and beneficial to students who do not major in the sciences.

Sociology

In spring 1994, ACS faculty and minority students participated in a program entitled Minority Opportunities through School Transformation (MOST), sponsored by the American Sociological Association. The program provided three years of summer institutes as well as workshops available during the school year. In the words of Allen Scarborough, professor of sociology–anthropology at Millsaps College, “This is a great opportunity for Millsaps and ACS. It will provide a framework for creating a department that stretches thirteen schools. It will combine the strengths of a large university faculty with the independent strengths of each school’s departments. It has already generated a great deal of interest to more students.” The program helped provide sociology training for students and valuable faculty development opportunities.

Undergraduate Research

Undergraduate research has also been given considerable attention. Students have been invited to conduct and present their research in a number of consortial forums, including gender studies, Latin American studies, British studies, classics, environmental studies, education and Chinese studies. In all of these cases, students had opportunities to learn from students and faculty presenters about the complicated and multi-dimensional conducting of effective and thorough research.

To broaden the effort, Hendrix College hosted a workshop in fall 2007 to begin shaping comprehensive plans for a consortium-wide emphasis on student research in the humanities, with

funding to be sought from major foundations. Although proposals were turned down by two foundations, the consortium has continued to stimulate student research; examples of undergraduate research projects include:

- Soundscapes: An Artistic and Musical Investigation into the Physics of Sound—Rollins College
- The Responsible Conduct of Research at Undergraduate Institutions—Centre College and Davidson College
- Undergraduate “Research Apprenticeship” Pilot Project—Sewanee: The University of the South
- Framing New Questions: From Place-based Learning to Undergraduate Research—Rhodes College
- Incorporating Community Service in Watershed Studies Across Disciplines and Institutions Through a Constructed Wetland—Sewanee: The University of the South and the University of Georgia
- Home Front, Warfront: Sewanee and Ft. Oglethorpe in WWI—Sewanee: The University of the South

* * *

ACS-sponsored collaboration has also included other disciplines such as music (opera, music composition, visiting artists), drama (a clearinghouse of information, workshops and a connection with Centre College’s “Trash Theatre”) and modern languages.

3. Administrative Benchmarking and Collaborative Projects

Since the founding of the consortium, many administrative groups have convened. Presidents and chief academic officers have met to plan and make policy decisions for the consortium. Like other ACS interest groups, they have discussed common issues affecting their campuses, exchanged information on attacking common problems, shared interpretations of national trends and issues, and identified areas in which collaboration would make good sense.

Chief Business Officers

The chief business officers have been particularly active over time, meeting annually. Attendance has been extremely high as participants exchanged data and perspectives on investments, investment managers, building projects, government reporting requirements, master planning, planning consultants, organizational structure, healthcare plans, legal issues, audit and accounting issues, campus architects, cost-containment strategies and many other topics.

The consortium also led an effective collaborative energy conservation initiative. With funding from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, it engaged an environmental engineering company to make an intensive study of energy use at Rollins College, using Rollins as a beta site or test case for the entire consortium. As energy usage in seventeen buildings was examined at Rollins, representatives from the other ACS institutions were invited to review the resulting information and apply recommendations on their campuses. Rollins reported that it saved \$250,000 on annual

energy costs after implementing many of the study's recommendations. Although the other institutions may not have saved as much money, they did engage in intensive examination of their own energy use and prepared various action plans.

Also of particular value to the chief financial officers were financial ratio analyses supplied over many years. The idea came from George Herbst, chief financial officer at Rollins College, who asked the firm of Millennium Advisory Services to undertake a study for the consortium. The business officers reported that this effort was particularly useful in establishing norms against which they could measure their own activities and financial performance.

Recent topics considered by the business officers include these, from the group's February 2014 agenda:

- Current bond market
- Debt capacity in today's capital markets
- Rating agencies: Will they be less gloomy?
- Benchmarking study
- Debt and investments
- Unrelated business income: A refresher and update

Chief Student Affairs Officers/Deans of Students

The deans of students have focused on a myriad of issues and problems in their annual meetings, learning from one another. They have brought in various experts to help examine, among other issues: alcohol abuse, drug use, student behavior problems, codes of conduct, psychological problems of students, vandalism, student organizations, the office structure for student affairs, campus events, the coordination or lack thereof between student affairs and academic affairs, living-learning centers, residential life, campus judicial systems, intramural and intercollegiate athletics, diversity and inter-relationships among various campus groups, and the creation of a sense of campus community on campus.

They also established an award in 2006, named for Leonard Goldberg, the long-time vice president for student affairs at University of Richmond, to honor exemplary service in the field of student affairs. The winners have been:

- Leonard Goldberg, vice president for student development, University of Richmond, 2006
- Harry Shucker, vice president for student services, Furman University, 2006
- Frances Lucas, president, Millsaps College, 2007
- Tom Shandley, vice president and dean of students and Patty Perillo, associate dean of student life, Davidson College, 2008
- Harold Holmes, associate vice president for student life and dean of student services, Wake Forest University, 2009
- Dudley Long, vice president for student affairs, Birmingham-Southern College, 2010
- Not awarded, 2011

- Steven Nielsen, special assistant to the president, Rollins College, 2012
- R. Brit Katz, vice president and dean of students, Millsaps College, 2013

Some of the agenda items from their fall 2013 meeting provide examples of topics considered by the group: mental health, retention, case management, academic support, Title IX, living and learning, communities, campus police and safety and career services.

Cost Containment

With funding from The Mellon foundation in 1995 and the Woodruff Foundation in 2000, the consortium has paid considerable attention to cost containment, extending beyond joint purchasing efforts to energy conservation, long-distance telephone service, joint use of consultant services, online library materials, administrative benchmarking and efficiencies, online academic programs, combined technology training and other initiatives.

Collaborative projects have emerged in a number of these areas, in some of which individual institutions took their own initiatives based on lessons learned from their ACS counterparts. For example, one institution dramatically reduced its long-distance telephone costs by renegotiating its expenses after discovering more favorable arrangements at other ACS institutions.

As it reviews costs in 2014, the consortium is looking at joint library collections, joint purchasing of software and many other collaborative efforts that reduce duplication and contain costs. Furthermore, the consortium is beginning to explore income-generating on-line certificate programs—that is, programs offered in the United States and abroad involving MOOCS, mini courses and/or full-scale courses.

Diversity and Multi-cultural Officers

The consortium's first conference on diversity for multi-cultural officers was held on September 19-20, 2008, at Southwestern University. Since that time the group has been quite active, sharing information on a wide variety of topics, benchmarking office operations and offering specific programs on the campuses such as those on prejudice reduction. The group began a planning process, which included a joint meeting with the academic deans in March 2012, at Trinity University. Since then, the officers have had further conversations and presented numerous ideas to the ACS deans in September 2013.

As part of an ACS diversity program, faculty members and students received mini-grants of up to \$2,500 for student-led collaboration with faculty and staff and up to \$2,000 for campus diversity leadership models. Grant funds, which were provided to the ACS New Models Program by the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, went to these and other efforts:

- Student-Led Collaboration with Faculty and Staff
 - o Kathleen Juhl, professor of theatre, and Lindsey Smith, education/technical assistant with AmeriCorps/VISTA at the Texas Conference of Churches, Southwestern University, “The Disabilities Project”

o John Richardson, Chaplain, and Johnny Croft, chemistry/religious life fellow, Birmingham-Southern College, “Religious Life Fellows”

- Campus Diversity Leadership Models

- o Burr Datz, director of leadership development and coordinator of religious life, Washington and Lee University, “Content of Character Workshop”

- o Darby Ray, associate director of religious studies, Millsaps College, “Faculty Diversity Workshop”

- o J. Carey Thompson, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Planning Services, Centre College, “Posse Student Leadership Retreat”

The chief academic officers have been keenly interested in diversity for many years and, with few exceptions, have held discussions with minority students from the host campus as part of their meetings—discussions the participants have found to be stimulating and fruitful.

In 2014, the diversity officers and the academic deans have prepared a planning grant proposal with these features:

- Gathering information and insights from the extensive scholarship on diversity

- Identifying ways to communicate information and lessons learned in diversity among the ACS campuses

- Identifying specific action projects to expand diversity and productively engage individuals and groups with different backgrounds

- Shaping an assessment framework through which the consortium can monitor and evaluate the impact of the action programs created

The consortium hopes that foundation support will enable ACS to shape the plan and carry it out to the benefit of all member institutions.

Human Resources Directors

No group has been more active at regularly exchanging information than the directors of human resources. While not meeting face-to-face as often as other groups, they have constantly exchanged questions and answers through their ACS e-mail list. Feedback from the directors indicates that the dialogue has been of short-term and long-term value, helping solve immediate problems, share different approaches to similar issues and provide useful data for planning and decision-making. Substantive matters have covered a vast array of topics, including retirement, health benefit plans, legal issues affecting personnel, staff compensation patterns, sick leave, vacation time, early retirement plans, deferred compensation, part-time and contract employees, unemployment compensation, whistle-blower policies, conflicts of interest, employee recruiting and termination, employee training programs, professional development and many more.

Hurricane Katrina

When Hurricane Katrina hit the southern coast of the U.S. in 2005, ACS institutions took an immediate interest, exploring ways to be helpful to students, faculty, and staff at institutions in the

affected areas. For example, they volunteered to relocate students, faculty, and staff to their unaffected campuses until the damaged institutions could reopen.

Soon after the hurricane struck, I called Dean Darrel Colson at Centenary College for advice on how to contact leaders at Dillard University, which had been badly impacted by the storm. I explained that I had tried various measures to no avail. He said that contacting them would be no problem at all because they were working down the hall from him at his office at Centenary College. The College had already invited campus leaders to Shreveport and a number of Dillard students were staying in his home.

The humanitarian efforts were so immediate and impressive that I felt they should be shared with Pat McPherson, vice president of the Mellon Foundation. We provided a detailed report on how institutions were opening their doors, making sure the academic year would not be interrupted.

The Mellon Foundation reviewed the materials I sent and decided to make grants of \$750,000 to ACS for distribution to Centenary College, Millsaps College and Rhodes College to support their extraordinary efforts in assisting the affected institutions.

Prepaid Tuition

Thomas Kepple, vice president for business and community affairs at Sewanee: The University of the South, took the initiative in 1997 to encourage the consortium to develop a prepaid tuition plan for private colleges and universities—a plan through which parents and grandparents could deposit funds to cover future tuition. After discussing the project within the consortium, the group concluded that a critical mass of institutions larger than the ACS membership was needed to move the program forward. Consequently, the ACS formed a broader group, which has continued to expand. Now called the Private College 529 Plan, it encompasses approximately three hundred institutions.

Purchasing Officers

The chief purchasing officers from our institutions met annually for a number of years, with funding provided by the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. After the funding ended, the meetings stopped, but the directors still periodically exchange information on-line. Working closely with ACS staff member Beth Bowser, the group arranged numerous joint contracts for office supplies, furniture and other products and services. Through the ACS Technology Center, they also arranged a joint contract with Adobe for computer purchases.

The group shared information on their individual institutional contracts and volunteered to add other institutions to them. They tried but were unsuccessful in arranging joint contracts for laboratory chemicals and computers following the end of the contract with Adobe.

At the behest of the presidents of the member institutions, they initiated a follow-up effort in 2009. Staff surveyed library directors, technology directors, chief business officers and purchasing directors about their needs and about goods and services that could be purchased

cooperatively. They also contacted numerous state associations and other consortia to identify items that were open to collaborative purchasing. Following this effort, they prepared a suggested list of collaborative purchases and volunteered to work with vendors to draw up appropriate contracts. The consortium also joined three cooperative buying groups that were deemed potentially helpful to the institutions and compared prices with the IIE group, with which almost all the member institutions have been affiliated. As this publication goes to press, these avenues are being explored further.

Tuition Exchange

The ACS Tuition Exchange Program—through which tuition was waived for faculty and staff dependents from the participating ACS institutions—was established in 1992-93, during the second year of the consortium. Eleven institutions participated at the outset. A few years into the program, we asked the participating student and his or her family to pay \$1,500, a total to be matched by the exporting or sending institution. These payments comprise a fund through which the consortium can make contributions to the net-importing institutions—those institutions that import more students than they export. The program in 2013-2014 has a total of thirty-five students enrolled on ACS campuses. The total since the inception of the program is 586.

Other Groups

Other administrative groups have met from time to time in person and exchanged information on conference calls or online. They have included registrars, directors of admissions, security directors, advancement officers, career planning officers, controllers, and residential living directors. ACS registrars, drawing on an outside consultant for assistance, met over a three-year period, exchanging information and benchmarking the various functions of their offices in an effort to improve and strengthen their various administrative services. The admissions directors also met for a short period of time, during which they identified technology as a key issue. With that in mind, funds were made available to send them to a conference on technology at Microsoft, where they learned about various applications that could be useful in marketing their institutions and recruiting students.

Beginning in 2008, Karen Foust, executive vice president for strategic initiatives and vice president for enrollment at Hendrix College, began gathering admissions information for the presidents and deans from our sixteen member institutions. This material, which was requested by the presidents, covered patterns and trends in the admissions applications, yields, deposits, demographic data and other features of the admissions process.

The security officers met via conference call in 2009 to discuss office organization, emergency plans, relations with local police departments, availability of guns for staff officers, training programs, communications systems and resources and other matters. Feedback was positive from the participating officers, all of whom expressed interest in exchanging ideas in the future.

The consortium also established a group to identify and explore ways the consortium could help brand their institutions and more effectively recruit capable students. This consortial discussion

paralleled comparable discussions on the campuses, and a number of communications directors weighed in on the subject. Following these discussions, the presidents seized on the idea of a book, focused on the individual institutions rather than the consortium that would appear in print and on-line. The intended audience was prospective students, their parents and high school counselors.

To get the ball rolling, the consortium identified its reserve account as a source of funding. The presidents had begun to tap the reserves for a matching grant in environmental programs and for funds to support fund-raising representation in Washington, D.C., and they felt that the book was another legitimate reason to utilize these funds, which had been built up year-to-year from the early years of the consortium.

Staff reviewed resumes and writing samples from various authors before narrowing down a list for consideration from a special presidents' task force. The task force carefully reviewed the materials and selected John Pulley, a former writer for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Mr. Pulley visited all of the ACS campuses, gathered considerable information, drafted opening and closing chapters, and devoted one chapter each to the sixteen individual institutions. In a several-months-long process, the institutions worked with Mr. Pulley on reviewing and editing their particular chapters. The consortium published the book February 2012, and the institutions have circulated approximately 2,000 copies to schools throughout the nation.

4. In Summary

In short, ACS has been on a roll for twenty-three years. Even during difficult economic times, it has created a number of innovative programs that have had a positive impact (judging from participants' feedback), and has established several collaborative program models.

Programs that did not work

The consortium has urged faculty, staff and students to work together, constantly sharing information on areas in which joint activity would make sense. For many, collaborating with others on their campus and with other ACS campuses has not come easily or naturally. I distinctly remember a faculty member who responded incredulously to the suggestion that he contact a faculty member with similar interests on another campus. It was something he simply was not comfortable doing. Providing incentives for collaboration, as the consortium has done with grant funds, has helped overcome the resistance of some faculty to reaching out to other faculty and exploring collaborative possibilities.

As a test laboratory, ACS has experimented with a number of initiatives, some of which have not panned out. One glaring example was a summer field study program for students in Costa Rica, for which the consortium prepared a very attractive brochure with "Hang out in the Tropics" emblazoned on the cover. That message succeeded in attracting a large number of students to a carefully planned and organized program; unfortunately, they enrolled not to study but to hang

out in the tropics. Ultimately, the consortium had to send a second faculty member down to help rescue the program.

We learned an important lesson about making sure that an academic program and its students are congruent, and that students are appropriate and qualified for the program. If the advertisement had emphasized the challenge and rigor of the program, a different type of student would have responded.

In 1992, the consortium mounted a summer program in Brazil that attracted no students, the enthusiasm and confidence of the originating faculty member notwithstanding. The courses were well planned and the connections in Brazil excellent, but students that year were not particularly interested in going there, and a colleague of the program leader offered an exceedingly attractive study-abroad program at the same time. Among the lessons learned was the importance of consulting more fully with the other institutions to determine the extent of potential student interest—and, for that matter, to ensure that students on one's own campus are interested enough not to be siphoned away by a competing program.

The consortium's semester in Central Europe—based in Budapest, Hungary—ended after five years, a development that could be considered either a failure for not being sustained over a longer time or a success for providing five years' worth of students with a good educational experience. The latter perspective suggests that a program's longevity is less a criterion for success than the number of students it effectively serves during its existence.

The consortium's learning-based pedagogy project, funded by a planning grant, did not enjoy immediate adoption, as originally hoped. Instead, it stalled after the planning grant period because the faculty committee's plan for a careful and methodical process did not mesh with a foundation's desire for more immediate action and results. While that was a setback, the consortium managed to secure other funds to offer workshops on new insights into learning, and widely disseminated that information to the campuses. A number of initiatives are currently underway.

The ACS has not made substantial joint purchases of goods and services during this timeframe, although our purchasing officers have made a yeoman's effort to gather and exchange information on prices and have realized savings in some areas. In short, low expectations have been met; the highest expectations have not. A key reason reported to ACS staff is that individual faculty and department heads prefer to purchase goods and services on their own rather than utilize a centralized campus system, let alone an ACS-wide one. A further difficulty was the inability of individual institutions and the consortium to interest potential vendors by promising a high volume of purchasing. The consortium, however, never gives up—current discussions are underway with other consortia to explore joint purchasing on a broad scale.

The earmark process in Congress also fell short of expectations. A specific \$6 million proposal for the study of critical languages and culture (Chinese, Arabic, Urdu and Farsi) was unsuccessful after three years of intermittent progress. At times, a House committee was supportive, but a Senate committee was not. On one occasion, the proposal moved forward in the

Senate but not in the House. The best prospect appeared in 2006 when the proposal made a preferred list and looked as though it would make it to a conference committee and possibly be negotiated into a final bill. But, the November election that year shifted power in Congress and delayed action. The change in leadership weakened the consortium's connections and prospects since many of the former committee chairs were well acquainted with the consortium's member institutions and new committee chairmen, mostly from other regions of the country, were not.

During the first three years of this initiative, the consortium contracted with the MWW Group in Washington, D.C., to coordinate the overall effort, which was complicated and demanding. While their efforts brought ACS to the attention of senators and representatives, they did not produce the sought-after earmarks, which would have made a tremendous difference in the consortium's effort to acquaint students with key parts of the world and their cultures. After terminating its arrangement with the MWW Group, consortium staff continued a less comprehensive effort, earning a "soft earmark" designation that put ACS on a list of institutions that Congress felt worthy of funding from U.S. State Department appropriations. As a result, ACS was able to submit a proposal, which was funded by the State Department, to send a group of faculty and staff to China to explore institutional and consortial programs. The trip was extremely fruitful, enabling the institutions to make excellent connections for future joint programs. The visits also enabled the consortium to narrow the choice of institutions with which to develop full-scale partnerships and through which to create a center in China for future initiatives involving faculty and students.

Unfortunately, we were unable to continue Global Partners—a collaborative arrangement among ACS, the Associated Colleges of the Midwest and the Great Lakes Colleges Association, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—beyond the life of its grant. The three consortia had come together in a collaborative international effort to open up study abroad opportunities overseas, benchmark the function of study abroad offices on individual campuses and engage in a series of strategic briefings through which presidents, deans, faculty and study abroad directors could gain insights into the salient challenges and opportunities related to overseas study. The four years of activity under the grant were extremely valuable; the regret is that they could not continue.

Ending were faculty seminars in Kenya, opportunities for students to study in Russia, workshops for study abroad staff and strategic briefings. Continuing were the study abroad program in Turkey, for which ACS took responsibility, and the informal sharing of information on a number of international topics. Furthermore, the three consortia subsequently worked together on a joint effort to identify ways of evaluating the impact and worth of study abroad. Funded by the Teagle Foundation, GLCA took the lead in producing a survey document that continues to be useful to faculty and study abroad staff.

At one point, the consortium came up with the creative idea of a study abroad program in three locations: Warsaw, Dresden in the former East Germany and Budapest. While feedback from students was generally positive, the program put tremendous pressure on the faculty director who was engaged in overseeing the program at one site while making sure everything was in place at the next site or sites. Moreover, considerable time was invested in preparing to travel to one site,

recovering from travel there and preparing for travel ahead—time that could have been devoted to classroom and field study opportunities. Finally, it should be said that the international partners were not as helpful as they might have been—a reminder that such partners must be chosen with considerable care. Even though the faculty director and ACS staff had visited the sites and had received favorable references on the partners from other U.S. institutions, the partnerships did not quite jell for ACS. This suggests that a potential program must be thoroughly evaluated in terms of its ability meet the specific plans, needs and demands of the consortium.

Although the consortium was disappointed when anticipated findings from a foundation did not materialize for a specific environmental initiative, it proved resilient: the ACS regrouped, found other funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and others, and kept the program going.

Key Roles for the Consortium

In serving its institutions, the consortium has played a number of key roles. First, it has provided a clearinghouse of information, gathering data and ideas from the various groups and from inside and outside the consortium and disseminating it to the various campuses. Information has been shared through numerous meetings and workshops, the Palladian newsletter, the ACS website, direct e-mail messages and announcements, conference calls, video conferences and webinars. It has been particularly beneficial to be able to communicate directly to faculty and staff, informing them of new grant opportunities, deadlines for proposals and other important developments.

A second role has been organizing and managing programs of genuine value to the institutions. Special acknowledgement should be given to the ACS staff for effectively managing a large number of extensive and complicated programs, many of them at the same time. Special applause is due all present and previous staff including those serving the longest in ACS: Suzanne Bonefas, Beth Bowser, Rebecca Davis, Barbara Halbert, Dara Hawkins, Elizabeth MacNabb, Cindy Reese, Marcia White, Christiane Williams and Teresa Wise.

For virtually all programs, representative consortial committees have been established to provide leadership, working in close concert with ACS staff members. They have been led by extraordinary individuals—consortial champions—such as Marcia Walton, professor at Rollins College, for gender studies; academic vice president Ed Roy of Trinity University and professor Leo Pezzementi of Birmingham-Southern College for the science program; provost and dean of the faculty Jim Hunt at Southwestern University, diversity director Idella Glenn at Furman University, and Ron Swain, special assistant to the president at Southwestern University, for the diversity program; provost Mark Schantz of Birmingham-Southern College for the initiative on undergraduate research in the humanities; professor Barry Allen of Rollins College for the efforts in environmental studies and sustainable development; professor Jack Lane of Rollins College, vice president for academic affairs, provost Roger Casey of Rollins College, professor Terry Goodrick of Birmingham-Southern College, and professor Barbara Lom of Davidson College for the Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop; professor Kenny Morrell of Rhodes College for the technology center and the Sunoikisis initiative; professors Lom and Kristi Multhaup of Davidson College for the learning-based pedagogy initiative; Richard Meyer, the

former director of the library at Trinity University, and Tom Watson, the past library director at Sewanee: The University of the South, for being the catalysts for a \$1 million Mellon Foundation grant to analyze the use of digital library materials; professor Hal Haskell of Southwestern University for overseeing student opportunities in Greece for many years; professor Karl Markgraf of Millsaps College for creating and leading the ACS semester program in Central Europe; and professors Ilan Alon of Rollins College and Jay McDaniel of Hendrix College for the China initiative. Many other champions could be mentioned.

The third role for the consortium has been to serve as an incubator for member institutions, providing a place where new ideas can be tested. The consortium has proved to be an effective, safe, and inexpensive place to try out new concepts and ideas without risking highly publicized failure that might be connected to an individual institution. For example, an idea for a tuition savings plan was considered by ACS presidents and chief business officers before it was enlarged and expanded on a national scale, becoming The Private College 529 Plan. The previously mentioned Sunoikisis virtual department in classics was tested, developed and implemented within ACS before being absorbed into the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE) and later into Harvard University's Center for Hellenic Studies, where it served seventy-two institutions in 2014.

Among other initiatives tested in the ACS incubator were the REALIA project—a successful program providing digital images for language instruction in numerous languages—and an Information Fluency initiative, which set new objectives and standards for the use of technology by students.

A fourth critical role is to evaluate programs. Naturally, all grant-supported programs have been evaluated; foundations have required no less. Evaluations have also been gathered from participants in workshops, seminars and other consortial events, the feedback used to refine and re-design programs.

In many cases, outside consultants have been engaged to serve as evaluators. For example, a consultant was hired to review the efforts made in the early years of the ACS environmental initiative, to determine whether a functional organization was in place and goals were being fulfilled. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, the consortium conducted a three-year in-depth evaluation of its virtual program in classics. As noted earlier in this publication, Dr. Susan Frost, a former vice president for research at Emory University, carried out the evaluation, pinpointing the various benefits of the program—namely, new and expanded courses for students, team-teaching, and the opportunity for faculty to teach courses in areas of their special expertise that ordinarily would not draw enough students on a single campus. At the same time, she noted the costs and the significant time investment required of the faculty participants.

Also mentioned earlier has been the partnership with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest and the Great Lakes Colleges Association, with funding from the Teagle Foundation, to develop criteria for evaluating overseas study. A final questionnaire was prepared by the Great Lakes Colleges Association and made available for use by interested institutions. The survey was a significant effort to identify the value-added impact of study abroad.

A fifth role: The presidents and deans want the consortium to serve as a leader in the world of higher education consortia.

The models drawing particular notoriety have been the summer teaching and learning workshop, the Sunoikisis program in classics, the REALIA Project in information fluency, the gender studies collaboration between the ACS and the Foundation for Tertiary Institutions in the Northern Metropolis of South Africa (FOTIM), the sustainable faculty development workshop in Costa Rica and the supra-consortial cooperative ventures in overseas study and evaluation of study-away programs with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest and the Great Lakes Colleges Association. Other consortia have also expressed interest in the ACS's multi-faceted environmental initiatives, and we have invited them to join us in broadening and intensifying our efforts.

We have offered enough models to persuade a leader of a major foundation to suggest that other consortia need to be "more like ACS." Hearing such a tribute has stimulated our staff to build even more productive models along the way.

To fulfill these roles, ACS must play yet another role: that of fundraiser. The consortium has worked assiduously in this front, raising over \$28 million to underwrite programs and services. All ACS staff have assisted in preparing proposals. Providing valuable help have been Frances Obrien, a fundraising consultant from Atlanta, and Judith Brown, the former provost at Wesleyan University. The ideas and the organization of ideas have come principally from faculty, with the presidents and deans weighing in heavily.

Evaluation of ACS

Believing that it would be useful to have an outside evaluation of the consortium's activities over time, in 2005 the board engaged the services of Dale Knobel, president of Denison University and former chief academic officer at Southwestern University. Over a year's time, president Knobel reviewed the numerous reports generated by the consortium and interviewed ACS presidents, chief academic officers and selected foundation officials. He generated a written report and made an oral presentation to the presidents on June 7, 2006. The presidents, who expressed gratitude to president Knobel for his extensive efforts, discussed various aspects of his work, acknowledging areas that needed to be shored up and taking pride in the advancements identified in the report.

In his review, president Knobel noted that each member institution, having its own needs for the consortium, has its own unique perspective on it as well. Institutional size, wealth, complexity and location all affect perception of the nature and the value of the consortium. Participation of institutions and institutional representatives change as needs and interests change.

On the positive side, president Knobel listed:

- Valuable deans' conversations and leadership
- Faculty development and grants

- Particularly effective programs: e.g., the summer teaching and learning workshop, the virtual classics department and environmental programs
- Staff leadership

On the negative side he listed:

- Varying participation of member institutions
- Different views about the value of seeking federal earmarks, being engaged with NITLE, sharing backroom operations, and joint marketing of prospective students
- Need to be more strategic in outlook (rather than “opportunity-driven”)
- Need to sunset some programs

For the future, he suggested expanding “internal marketing” to increase faculty familiarity with ACS programs, carefully evaluating existing programs and priorities in the context of the consortium’s five-year plan and promoting additional research opportunities for faculty and students.

ACS presidents and deans generally found this a useful exercise that compelled institutional leaders to reflect on the ambitious goals of the consortium and the progress made toward them. Where programs appeared to be falling short of their goals, the group identified improvements and considered new initiatives as well.

In 2008, Todd Rose wrote a Ph.D. dissertation entitled, *The Associated Colleges of the South: A Case Study Chronicling Program Development at the Consortium and the Significance of Consortium Membership Through the Experiences of Presidents of Member Institutions*. He reported that all of the ACS presidents he interviewed agreed that the ACS had benefitted their institutions, that faculty development had been a valuable asset, that the technology program had proven valuable to its membership and that the organization had hit a homerun in fundraising. Over half of the presidents indicated that various programs had enhanced programming offered on their campuses. One president remarked that faculty development was the most beneficial program offered, noting that the institution would have had fewer opportunities for faculty if not for the consortium.

The beneficial programs mentioned most often to Dr. Rose were technology, the added course offerings in classics, environmental programs and gender studies. He also noted that of the thirteen presidents interviewed, nine concluded that the ACS had benefitted them in a professional way. They commended the consortium for providing a forum for discussion of common interests and the opportunities to keep up with each other and compare notes on their institutional activities.

All thirteen presidents interviewed felt that ACS had achieved its original purposes. (One indicated, however, that although the consortium was successful, it was too early to “declare victory.”) Reasons suggested for the consortium’s success included the quality of its institutions, active involvement of the presidents, a clear vision of the organization’s objectives, the role of

the chief academic officers, effective management of ACS programs and the significant funding obtained from foundations.

Limitations or challenges mentioned by the presidents were unequal participation among the member institutions, the mixed support on campus for certain potential new programs, the geographical spread of the institutions, specific difficulties in connecting its libraries, and the difficulty of organizing a marketing effort for the member schools.

In his commentary at the end of the dissertation, Dr. Rose observed that the consortium is a very delicate entity that must add value to the engaged institutions if it is to continue to be successful.

Some Lessons Learned

1. Constantly keep in mind the overall goal of providing better education for students.

It is important never to lose sight of the overall imperative to serve students. That calls for a commitment of time, energy and resources undistracted by less compelling matters. Whether a faculty program or an administrative initiative, it is essential to ask how the effort will benefit students. If you don't ask the question, you risk becoming absorbed by matters of lesser consequence. Putting students first has helped ACS considerably in evaluating proposals submitted by faculty for consortium funding. For example, when a faculty member has proposed a new approach to teaching—perhaps by using technology in a novel way—a key evaluation criterion has been the extent to which the proposed approach will benefit students.

2. Be Relevant.

The consortium must be aware of and respond to the immediate issues with which its institutions are dealing. The consortium staff needs to be extremely alert, not waiting until they are summoned to participate. The consortium can gather additional information on specific issues being faced, identify ways in which other institutions may be responding to similar concerns, suggest experts who might provide necessary advice, assign staff to join with on-campus personnel to focus on possible solutions and think of fundraising opportunities that might be presented. In short, the consortium can engage with its institutions in a number of potentially valuable ways.

3. Hold the consortium to the highest level of quality.

Mediocrity will not suffice. In communications and programs, the consortium must strive for the highest level of professionalism and quality. Quality must be readily apparent across the board, from responses to e-mail inquiries to the management of complicated, long-term programs. If less than a superior effort is made, programs will be weakened, participants will be short-changed and they and their colleagues will not participate in future consortial activities.

The consortium must establish a record and tradition of success, offering programs that enable individual faculty, students and staff to learn lessons that can be applied in a concrete way: for faculty, heightening their knowledge and understanding of a specific area, making a class more engaging to students, or refining their teaching to make it more conducive to student learning. Staff need to acquire tools they can utilize to perform their responsibilities more effectively.

Students need to learn about the nature of leadership and be given opportunities to apply lessons learned. Students involved in an environmental initiative like the one in ACS, for example, should learn about sustainable development in order to make a significant difference on campus and in the community.

4. Innovate or close the shop.

Given the dynamic nature of our member institutions and the constant challenges confronting them, the consortium must keep pace and provide them with creative responses and solutions. Offering an imaginative response or program when they face complicated issues can persuade institutions to explore collaboration. If the consortium is not creative or present as member institutions confront tough problems, the members will quite naturally question the value of the dues they pay.

5. Assess everything.

It is crucial that programs be rigorously and regularly assessed, so as to ensure that the consortium can eradicate its weaknesses and enhance its strengths. The ACS has learned critical lessons from a variety of assessment mechanisms, each carefully tailored to the project in question. Because of thorough assessments conducted by highly competent assessors, communications have been improved, the focus of workshops has been sharpened, new consultants and advisors have been engaged, less effective programs have been terminated and funds have been used more effectively. In addition, solid assessments have helped to underscore the consortium's credibility, which in turn has attracted significant funding.

6. Planning must be comprehensive and multifaceted.

Key plans need to address the overarching mission of the consortium and define the means to fulfill it, and they must include a built-in assessment process that can identify necessary refinements or changes. Plans should be viewed as living documents, open and flexible enough to accommodate new and unforeseen opportunities. For example, ACS responded to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, generating funding to assist member institutions in accommodating students and faculty forced to leave impacted areas. The fall 2008 financial meltdown required the consortium to make considerable budget adjustments, and it did, while remaining faithful to its overall plan.

7. Quality programs require quality staff.

The ACS has benefitted enormously from a first-rate staff. If staff do not respond immediately to requests from the campuses, if they do not thoroughly and carefully organize a workshop, if they do not line up the best speakers and consultants for a consortial initiative, if they do not follow through on programs led by campus groups, if they fail to encourage and inspire the various interest groups, interest in the consortium will wane and active participation will diminish. ACS Staff need to understand that they are working with campus faculty and staff who have full-time jobs, making them volunteers in consortial efforts. As volunteers, campus faculty and staff need to be consulted extensively, treated respectfully and thanked profusely.

8. The consortium must find champions.

A consortium must identify and "capture" member institution faculty and staff to take the lead in its various initiatives. Faculty and staff can galvanize their peers and stimulate them to think

creatively and work in concert. As noted earlier, ACS has been blessed with many champions, such as Barbara Lom of Davidson College for the consortium's Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop, Lee Lines of Rollins College for the ACS environmental initiative, Ken Abernathy of Furman University for the consortium's technology effort, Carl Robertson for the China initiative, Jay McDaniel of Hendrix College for online courses...among many others.

9. Campus constituencies must be built.

It is crucial that campus constituencies be created for a program if it is to start well and sustain its success. A program needs a critical mass of committed faculty, staff and students. With such a solid constituency, a productive initiative can be sustained, even with limited staff support. Naturally, the constituency must feel that the benefits exceed the costs—and project champions must be in place.

10. Don't Wait to Intervene.

Consortium staff must listen to ACS member campuses, hearing directly from faculty, staff and students about issues and needs. At the same time, they must be prepared to introduce their own ideas and make their own recommendations. For example, being aware of critical national issues, they should identify and demonstrate ways in which the consortium could play a constructive role. Seeing the need to internationalize further, to cite another example, they can identify specific areas where students can be prepared and in which valuable programs can be established.

11. Demonstrate the value of an initiative.

Anecdotal commentary may not be sufficient to persuade campus leaders and others that collaborative activities are worth the commitment of their time and energy. Pinpointing and quantifying benefits can demonstrate value powerfully and persuasively. For example, one member campus added up dollars received by its faculty from ACS and presented the total to its board of trustees. It was a substantial figure that made a compelling case for the ongoing participation in ACS.

12. Observe and learn from other consortia.

ACS has benefitted considerably from partnering with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest and the Great Lakes Colleges Association. The group cooperated on joint international programs and joined together in developing criteria and measurements for assessing the study-away experience. The Association for Collaborative Leadership is also a splendid source of colleagues and ideas, its menu of conferences and workshops an invaluable resource.

It has been extremely valuable for ACS to observe events in the world of higher education and beyond, asking about the appropriate role for consortia. ACS staff asked this question during Hurricane Katrina and took steps that produced significant funding for the institutions involved. The staff looked at pressing national and international issues of sustainable development and, joining with campus faculty, became actively involved in energy conservation.

13. Think fundraising all the time.

It has been beneficial for ACS to think constantly about fundraising on every idea or project,

imagined or underway. Staff have been motivated to conduct necessary research on giving and to vigorously pursue funding opportunities. Not every proposal has generated funds, but the constant attention to fundraising possibilities has borne fruit on many occasions. A useful corollary is to make everyone on staff a fundraiser. All ACS staff members have offered creative fundraising ideas.

14. Share the credit.

This point has been alluded to earlier and cannot be over-emphasized. Campus-based faculty, staff, and students deserve recognition for their immersion in consortial activities and for their leadership roles. Appreciation should be shown publicly so that others will see active ACS participation and leadership being acknowledged. Over the years, many ACS faculty have indicated how important it is that their deans and presidents are made aware of the nature and extent of the role they play in ACS. They also hope that tenure and promotion committees will be made aware of the vital and catalytic roles they play for the consortium.

15. A little humility wouldn't hurt either.

The ACS has good reason to take pride in its accomplishments. A little bit of hubris can be understood and justified. Having said that, this consortium, like others, has offered programs that failed; nor will every future program succeed.

At an ACS environmental conference, it was a pleasure to see students wearing T-shirts that said "ACS Rocks," and it was joy to hear a major foundation president proclaim ACS as the finest consortium of its kind. But these euphoric moments pass. Consortia must not become overly confident and sure of themselves, recognizing that, unless they are imaginative and vigilant, they will miss opportunities to serve students—and member institutions will wonder whether their dues are worth the investment. It is necessary to acknowledge mistakes and learn from them, and to learn from the experiences of other institutions.

Major Challenges that have Faced ACS and Consortia

There are many challenges facing consortia in general, and they have not been lost on the ACS. Most noticeable is the difficulty of thinking consortially—that is, of overcoming one's usual focus on his or her own institution. This can mean thinking of one's own project or within one's own department or campus rather than on a wider scale. I recall a faculty member telling me that he really did not feel comfortable calling someone in his own discipline who was teaching at another ACS campus. (Fortunately, ACS has been successful in pulling people together.)

Another challenge confronting us at the creation of ACS was the notion that institutions would lose a degree of autonomy in taking on the broader cause. ACS institutions overcame that concern once they realized that the whole range of activities would be voluntary; we took care not to encroach on their autonomy or sovereignty.

A third early concern was the competition among individual institutions in admissions, marketing, athletics and other areas. We had to learn over time that cooperation can co-exist with competition, and that institutions can be made stronger by working together.

The geographical dispersion of the institutions, from Virginia to Texas, was raised as an early challenge to the idea of a consortium. But Dr. Tish Emerson, a vice president of the Mellon Foundation, put that concern to rest early in our history when she suggested that distance might in fact be an advantage, compelling us to discover imaginative ways to work together. And she was right: ACS quickly advanced productive cooperation through the use of technology. Joint classes, webinars and modules are examples of connections that successfully brought disparate faculty and students together.

Another challenge was funding. To respond to the eighty or so groups created over time in the consortium, some seed money, at a minimum, was needed to initiate, test and extend programs of common interest. Fortunately, fifteen major funding sources surfaced and provided the funds to stimulate faculty, student and staff collaborations, address common issues and problems, and in one instance provide consortial stability in the form of a major grant for endowment.

Another challenge, which emerged early in the consortium's life, was the difficulty of tapping into some three thousand faculty to discover their interests, needs and plans. This has been overcome in large measure by extensive communication involving personal visits of ACS staff to open meetings on the campuses, the consortium's announcements to faculty and staff and the Palladian newsletter. Moreover, the deans have been singularly helpful in communicating the interests of their campuses to the consortium staff and promoting consortium-wide dialogues through which new initiatives were undertaken.

Concerns were also raised about whether the presidents, deans, and chief academic officers would maintain their high level of interest and commitment over the years. This has not turned out to be an issue. Discerning the benefits to their campuses, they have committed enormous amounts of time, energy and brainpower, without which the consortium's progress would have stalled.

Sustaining effective programs over time, particularly those that have been funded by outside sources, is a significant, ongoing challenge. During its first nineteen years, the consortium was able to sustain all effective major initiatives beyond their original time periods by writing sustainable plans into original plans and proposals, obtaining commitments at the outset from institutions to sustain projects that work and attracting further outside funding.

Office Challenges – All Overcome

In its twenty-three years, the ACS has overcome a number of challenges, substantial and otherwise. The first challenges involved getting organized in the first place—running an office, opening a bank account, hiring an assistant—all accomplished only after the organization bought a corporate seal for \$11.99 from Office Depot. The seal was the “open sesame” persuading vendors that ACS was a legitimate organization. It did not matter to them that the group was not incorporated and that, in fact, its incorporation was being delayed because of concerns that ACS would be offering courses and competing with existing state colleges and universities in Georgia. Actually achieving incorporation was a second challenge, but it was handled beautifully and successfully by Tom Bertrand, secretary of Emory University.

The second office occupied by the organization posed an acute problem in the form of odd smells emanating from the air conditioning system. Experts from Emory and elsewhere confirmed that the air in our office was being made toxic by chemicals emitted from a nearby print shop. We handled that problem by moving out.

Less threatening was the ant invasion in our third office—repulsed by chemicals of our own. A snake made an appearance as well, but was quickly escorted from the premises. Such were the perils of leasing office space on a flood plain.

The office also encountered the more typical problems of fixing copiers, removing static from telephone lines, and dealing with the theft of a number of office laptops. The police determined that thieves broke a narrow window on one side of the office and sent a child through it to open the front door and give them access. Neighboring buildings were also robbed of their laptops. We bulked up our security system following the incident.

Immediately behind the ACS office is a drug testing center, and more than once a day someone has pounded on the door, insisting on coming in for tests or drugs or whatever. A large sign on our front window with an arrow pointing to the correct office does not seem to dissuade people from standing outside ours. We have often thought that the consortium could considerably enhance its revenue stream by opening up a drug testing center, which in all likelihood would be a very lucrative auxiliary enterprise.

Hackers and viruses have also come our way. Fortunately, Christiane Williams handles the computer issues with dispatch. A smoking copy machine was another matter; fortunately, we got rid of it before it exploded and/or burned down the building. Another distraction from next door—a pediatric service—is only an intermittent issue when children’s screams are heard through the walls.

However distracting and fascinating, these business-as-usual matters have not hindered the ongoing work of the consortium.

Where the Consortium Goes Next

As we leave the ACS in 2014, the consortium continues to pursue its latest five-year plan, entitled Vision 2015, which mirrors earlier plans in terms of the consortium’s mission and values. The ACS mission remains to strengthen and promote the institutional academic programs, enhance efficiencies and effectiveness of administrative operations and persist in adhering to these earlier values:

- Belief in collaboration as a value-added dimension to the unique character of each member institution and as an exemplary approach to improving the liberal arts educational experience.
- Commitment to high quality and rigor in all programming and services, including regular review and attention to fiscal and operational efficiencies.
- Promotion of diversity as an essential asset in all environments.
- Dedication to innovation, flexibility and responsiveness to institutional challenges and

emerging opportunities.

- Commitment to sustainability in consortial and institutional programs.

In the context of building academic programs and effecting administrative efficiencies and effectiveness, these objectives are uppermost:

- Strengthen and promote academic opportunities for students and faculty at and among the member institutions.
- Promote cost containment and administrative efficiency and effectiveness at and among the member institutions.
- Explore and experiment with major changes in academic programs and administrative operations.

As the consortium points toward 2020, it hopes to sustain current initiatives, such as the Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop that have worked well for many years. It also expects to extend support for faculty development in the high-priority, high-impact areas of interdisciplinary study, engaged learning, learning based pedagogy and undergraduate research. There is little doubt that the consortium will widen the circle of faculty and staff who are experimenting with blended learning, creatively using technology in courses, parts of courses, webinars, tutorials and MOOCS. The consortium will also pay special attention to collaborative efforts to create and extend engaged diversity efforts on its campuses, exchanging lessons and initiating collaborative efforts to bring together individuals and groups with different backgrounds into harmonious and productive communities.

As the consortium strives to fulfill Goal 3 of its current plan (namely, to think creatively and even audaciously about new ways to serve institutions and enhance learning experience for students), it will get many other constructive initiatives under way.

Conclusion

The history of the Associated Colleges of the South is the story of sixteen remarkable liberal arts colleges and universities, each very strong in its own right, which want to seize opportunities to become even better by collaborating with one another. It is a story of innovative collaboration, deemed worthy of emulation, through which services have been offered to faculty, students, staff and the broader community.

Credit for advances made should go principally to the presidents and chief academic officers of the institutions, and faculty, administrative and student leaders whose energy and brainpower have aligned consortial initiatives with the needs of our institutions. Consortium staff, performing their duties with real distinction, have worked closely with these individuals.

Particular credit must also be extended to our funding organizations, who have made possible programs that otherwise would not have existed. Small planning grants and larger grants have enabled the consortium to bring together faculty to plan exciting new initiatives and galvanize groups into action.

Naturally, the larger grants have been most memorable: for example, the \$3.5 million grant for post-doctoral fellows in environmental studies from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the \$2.5 million endowment grant from Mellon, the \$1.6 million grant for environmental programs from the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation, and the \$1 million grant for technology-assisted instruction, also provided by Mellon. These and other “blockbuster” grants have enabled the consortium to provide students with a myriad of services. The consortium is extremely grateful to these and all other funders for enabling us to meet our lofty goals and fulfill our overall mission.

The Power of One, by Bruce Courtenay, suggests the powerful influence that one individual can have on others. In ACS, we have seen numerous examples of this individual power at work. The real story here, however, is the power of many: faculty, staff and students from sixteen institutions spread across twelve states, laboring collectively to provide an optimal educational experience for students. They have made all the difference.

5. Appendix

Member Institutions of the Associated Colleges of the South

Birmingham-Southern College - Birmingham, AL
Centenary College of Louisiana – Shreveport, LA
Centre College – Danville, KY
Davidson College – Davidson, NC
Furman University – Greenville, SC
Hendrix College – Conway, AR
Millsaps College – Jackson, MS
Morehouse College – Atlanta, GA
Rhodes College – Memphis, TN
Rollins College – Winter Park, FL
Sewanee: The University of the South – Sewanee, TN
Southwestern University – Georgetown, TX
Spelman College – Atlanta, GA
Trinity University – San Antonio, TX
University of Richmond – Richmond, VA
Washington and Lee University – Lexington, VA

Financial Supporters

There would be no story of the Associated Colleges of the South without the extraordinary financial support made available by a number of organizations, foundations and government agencies. At every turn, they have provided funds to test a new plan and implement a new initiative. Consequently, the consortium pays tribute to them and wants to dedicate this book in their name.

Our special appreciation goes to:
American Sociological Association
BellSouth Foundation
Council for American Overseas Research Centers
Educational Advancement Foundation
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
The Henry Luce Foundation
The Jesse Ball DuPont Foundation
The Keck Foundation
The Lettie Pate Evans Foundation
The Robert W. Woodruff Foundation
The Teagle Foundation
The V. K. Rasmussen Foundation
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
U.S. State Department
Presidential Officers/Chairs of the Board of Directors

Dr. Samuel Williamson, President, Sewanee: The University of the South (1991-1993)
Dr. Richard Morrill, President, University of Richmond (1993-1995)
Dr. Ronald Calgaard, President, Trinity University (1995-1997)
Dr. Michael Adams, President, Centre College (1997)
Dr. Ann Die, President, Hendrix College (1997-1999)
Dr. Rita Bornstein, President, Rollins College (1999-2001)
Dr. Kenneth Schwab, President, Centenary College of Louisiana (2001-2003)
Dr. David Shi, President, Furman University (2003-2005)
Dr. Jake Schrum, President, Southwestern University (2005-2007)
Dr. Frances Lucas, President, Millsaps College (2007-2009)
Dr. John Roush, President, Centre College (2009-2011)
Dr. Lewis Duncan, President, Rollins College (2011-2013)
Dr. Beverly Tatum, President, Spelman College (2013-2015)

Chairs of the Council of Deans

Dr. Zeddie Bowen, University of Richmond (1991-1993)
Dr. Ed Roy, Trinity University (1993-1995)
Dr. Robert King, Millsaps College (1995-1997)
Dr. John Churchill, Hendrix College (1997-1999)
Dr. John Ward, Centre College (1999-2001)
Dr. A. V. Huff, Furman University (2001-2003)
Dr. James Hunt, Southwestern University (2003-2005)
Dr. Tom Kazee, Sewanee: The University of the South (2005-2007)
Dr. Darrell Colson, Centenary College of Louisiana (2007-2009)
Dr. Robert Entzminger, Hendrix College (2009-2011)

Dr. Stephanie Fabritius, Centre College (2011-2013)
Dr. John Beckford, Furman University (2013-2015)

ACS Staff Members (From 1991 to 2014)

Wayne Anderson
Deena Berg
Suzanne Bonefas
Beth Bowser
Jim Busby
Angelle Cooper
Deeanne Daly
Rebecca Davis
Chris Edwards
Patricia Gray
Amanda Hagood
Barbara Halbert
Dara Hawkins
Mary Hendley
Eric Jansson
Jason Jones
Leslie Lindsey
Harry Timothy Moore
Elizabeth Nitto
Irvin Penfield
Cindy Reese
Cindy Stokes
Noelle Sweany
Barbara Thompson
Kim Thurlow
Damon Waitt
Marcia White
Jennifer Whitman
Robert Whyte
Christiane Williams
Teresa Wise
Jinping Zhu

ACS Historical Timeline – Program Highlights

1989

- ACS was formed with nine institutions: Birmingham-Southern College, Centenary College of Louisiana, Centre College, Furman University, Millsaps College, Morehouse College, Rhodes College, University of Richmond and Sewanee: The University of the South

1990

- ACS began member schools database construction
- Presidential search was initiated

1991

- ACS moved from Birmingham to Atlanta
- Dr. Wayne Anderson was hired as President
- The consortium was incorporated
- A Central Europe study abroad program was planned

1992

- ACS Tuition Exchange program was established
- Four international programs were scheduled for students
- First women's studies conference was held at Furman University

1993

- First Summer Teaching Workshop was held
- The Oak Ridge Science Semester Program was announced

1994

- ACS institutions joined the MOST (Minority Opportunities Through Transformation) program
- A new science semester in Costa Rica was offered

1995

- ACS announced a small grants program for faculty development projects
- ACS revised the tuition exchange program for dependents
- ACS explored technology uses in campus classrooms
- ACS examined cost containment opportunities

1996

- Teaching workshop sparked projects on home campuses
- British Studies at Oxford summer program was announced
- Technology program took off
- Energy conservation study began
- ACS registrars began a cooperative project to collect and share information
- Carpathian leaders visited ACS campuses

1997

- Palladian alliance offered new vistas for libraries
- Four new pilot technology programs took flight
- Semester program in Central Europe was scheduled
- ACS explored joint purchasing
- ACS incubated the National Tuition Plan, Inc. for pre-paid tuition
- ACS established an environmental studies program committee
- Circuit riders visited campuses
- An ACS diversity group was formed

1998

- First student leadership conference was held
 - Technology fellows were named – 40 selected
 - Workshop kicked off environmental initiative
 - Foreign language instruction was expanded across the curriculum
- 1999 • Southwestern University named a new site for technology center
- Science education for non-science majors was expanded
 - Latin American conference focused on collaboration
 - Faculty prepared for study in Turkey

2000 • ACS faculty and students participated in online collaborative courses

- ACS guidelines and standards for information fluency were established
- ACS offered first class in Virtual Classics department

2001 • Global partners conference on best practices was announced

- ACS institutions participated in E-Books program
- Collaborative music-technology program was planned
- Global partners offered a faculty seminar in Russia

2002

- The ACS Fine Arts Collaborative Music Group (Orpheus Alliance) initiated two new programs
- Spirituality and sustainability environmental programs for Summer 2002 were announced
- ACS hosted first annual New Music Festival in July
- Hispanic American Periodicals Index was made available to ACS institutions
- Academic deans approved Faculty Exchange Guidelines
- Student Software Engineering Program was scheduled to debut in Summer of 2003

2003

- REALIA (Rich Electronic Archive for Language Instruction Anywhere) database was established
- ACS Virtual Art Gallery opened
- ACS drama initiative, called ad lib, started
- ACS announced Course Delivery System software

- ACS published new electronic journal - Transformations: Liberal Arts in the Digital Age

2004

- ACS science program for non-science majors began
- ACS hosted Inaugural Undergraduate Environmental Research and Faculty Development Conference
- ACS hosted Green Campus workshop
- Cuba Plástica: Recent Art from Cuba was made available to ACS Campuses

2005 • ACS explored collaboration in Chinese and international relations

- A Campus-Community Partnership Alliance was established
- New Models grant supported interdisciplinary studies, undergraduate research, community engagement and diversity opportunities

2006

- ACS institutions responded to Hurricane Katrina
- New Program: “South to South: Building Bridges between South Africa and the Southern U.S.”
- New partnership was developed with NITLE
- First ACS Student Government Conference held

2007 • Chinese language and culture collaboration began

- Conversations took place among minority faculty as part of Faculty Development for a Diverse Campus project
- ACS and the University of Georgia created a new partnership

2008

- ACS and the Environmental Protection Agency began conversations about a Memorandum of Understanding
- ACS held its first Chinese studies conference
- First ACS professor went to the University of Georgia for one semester

2009

- ACS faculty developed a China plan for the future
- Latin American symposium examined Cuba’s film industry
- ACS residence life directors held their first meeting
- ACS representatives visited Chinese universities
- Environmental postdoctoral fellows arrived on campus

2010

- ACS graduates began teaching English in China
- A multi-campus workshop was held on infusing diversity into the curriculum and the campus
- Students showcased research in Chinese studies
- ACS institutions participated in Rwanda program

- Presidents approved ACS Five-Year Plan
- ACS and Environmental Protection Agency signed Memorandum of Understanding

2011

- ACS explored online collaboration in Chinese studies
- Consortium described New Paradigm Initiative
- Faculty stipends were made available for blended teaching and learning pilot projects
- ACS held a symposium on strengthening the liberal arts
- ACS faculty explored online instruction

2012

- Collaborative online teaching modules were prepared for music and religion courses
- Consortium published book on member institutions [Sweet Sixteen]
- ACS-University of Georgia faculty collaborated: researchers discover what is killing coral
- Blended learning projects were announced
- The University of Georgia and ACS reaffirm their alliance for five additional years

2013

- ACS-India conference was held
- ACS provided blended learning and other grants to faculty
- Institutions developed plans for cooperation with large research universities
- ACS celebrated the 20th Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop

2014 • ACS-CIO Google Hangouts were offered

- New ACS webinars were offered on teaching and technology
- Diversity officers and deans prepared plan for collaboration
- Dr. Owen Williams was selected ACS president, effective July 1, 2014
- President Wayne Anderson retired on June 30, 2014

ACS Historical Timeline – Grants Received

1994

- Funding from the BellSouth Foundation for the Summer Teaching Workshop (two-year grant of \$100,000)
 - Technology planning grant of \$46,500 received from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
 - A \$46,000 library planning grant to examine electronic options from the Mellon Foundation
- 1995 • A \$1,150,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation for “effective teaching through technology”, providing fellowships for individual faculty wanting to use technology in imaginative ways

1996

- The Electronic Library: Creating an infrastructure for Liberal Arts Colleges – a \$1,200,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation

- Promoting efficiency and cost containment – a \$497,000 grant from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation
 - A \$149,000 grant from the Association Liaison Office (from Agency for International Development (AID) funds) for an international exchange with institutions from the Carpathian region of Central Europe
 - A \$47,500 Mellon Foundation planning grant for new models in international collaboration
- 1997 • A grant of \$1,695,000 from the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation to start the consortium's new environmental initiative, featuring environmental student interns and faculty environmental fellows

1998

- A faculty development grant from the Mellon Foundation – this time for \$1,250,000 to support preparation of faculty for the new millennium
 - Establishment of the ACS technology center at Southwestern University, funded by the Mellon Foundation
- 1999 • A \$500,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to develop new models for international collaboration (“Global Partners”)
- 2000 • A spin-off from the earlier electronic library program – namely, information fluency, which was funded by a \$600,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation
- A Mellon Foundation planning grant of \$146,500 – for expansion of the technology center
 - New Initiatives for Cost Containment – a \$650,000 grant from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation
 - A Mellon Foundation grant of \$500,000 for the “New Dimensions Initiative” (items in the ACS five-year plan)
- 2001 • Archaeology and Classics grant - \$695,000 from the Mellon Foundation
- The ACS Tech Center in the Context of the National Institute for Technology – a \$1,700,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation
 - Environmental studies – a \$1,164,500 grant from the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation
 - The Global Partners Initiative – a \$500,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation

2002

- Evaluation and assessment of the ACS collaborative online education program in Classics – a \$380,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation
 - A \$230,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation for Environmental Studies
- 2003 • Reform of introductory science courses – a \$500,000 grant from the W. M. Keck Foundation
- 2004 • South Africa collaboration in gender studies and environmental studies – a \$24,250 grant from the Mellon Foundation

2005

- Learning Outcomes and Study Abroad – a planning grant of \$25,000 from the Teagle Foundation

- Technology Infusion grant – \$400,000 from the Mellon Foundation
- New Models – a \$500,000 grant from the Woodruff Foundation
- Environmental Studies – a \$300,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation
- The REALIA Project – a \$199,874 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
- An environmental grant from the Jessie Ball DuPont Foundation of \$27,500
- A \$75,000 grant for assessing learning outcomes to improve program quality from the Teagle Foundation
- For basic ACS technology services – a \$400,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation
- Katrina Disaster Assistance/pass through support – \$750,000 from the Mellon Foundation
- 2006 • A Mellon Foundation planning grant of \$38,350 for faculty development
- An environmental grant of \$22,500 from the Jessie Ball DuPont Foundation
- 2007 • Assessing learning outcomes to improve program quality – a \$75,000 grant from the Teagle Foundation
- Chinese critical language program – a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC)/U.S. State Department for \$292,000
- Faculty and institutional enhancement and renewal – a \$648,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation
- 2008 • Advancing Chinese Studies at the ACS – a \$164,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation
- The Chinese critical language program – a \$1,145,000 grant from CAORC/U.S. State Department
- A \$10,000 student learning planning grant from the Teagle Foundation
- A State Department Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs travel grant of \$73,500 for China
- Environmental Studies postdoctoral program – supported by a \$3,500,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation

2009

- The Chinese critical language program – a \$1,110,000 grant from CAORC/U.S. State Department
- Advancing Chinese Studies at the ACS – a \$163,000 grant from the Luce Foundation
- A \$33,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation for an Educational Advancement Foundation conference
- One time discretionary grant – \$200,000 from the Mellon Foundation
- 2010 • Advancing Chinese Studies at the Associated Colleges of the South – a \$163,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation
- A Mellon Foundation spendable grant of \$200,000
- A \$2,500,000 endowment grant from the Mellon Foundation
- 2011 • A \$15,000 Teagle Foundation planning grant for the ACS New Paradigm program
- 2012 • A \$800,000 grant for faculty advancement from the Mellon Foundation
- 2013 • A planning grant of \$120,000 from the Mellon Foundation for collaboration with large research universities
- A blended learning grant of \$600,000 from the Woodruff Foundation
- A Teagle Foundation New Paradigm grant of \$150,000

2014

- A planning grant of \$34,800 from the Mellon Foundation for the consortium's diversity and inclusion program

Bylaws

June 15, 1989

Amended: 1991, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2001

Article I Name and Location

Section 1. The name of this corporation shall be the Associated Colleges of the South. Section 2. The principal office of the corporation shall be located in Atlanta, Georgia.

Section 3. Other offices for the transaction of the Corporation's business shall be located at such places as the Board of Directors may from time to time determine.

Article II Membership

Section 1. The membership in the Corporation shall be composed of:

Birmingham-Southern College Centenary College of Louisiana Centre College

Davidson College (1998)

Furman University Hendrix College (1991) Millsaps College Morehouse College

Rhodes College

Rollins College (1991) Trinity University (1991)

Southwestern University (1991) Spelman College (2001)

The University of Richmond The University of the South

Washington and Lee University (1997)

Section 2. Other institutions may hereafter be elected to membership in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws, but such election shall require the approval of not less than three fourths of the existing membership. Applications for membership will be received in the office of the President of the Corporation, where they will remain for ninety days. At the end of this period, the President of the Corporation may solicit the decision of the membership through mail ballots or at the next scheduled meeting of the membership.

Section 3. Membership in the Corporation shall in no way infringe upon the autonomy of any member institution. Similarly, membership in this Corporation shall not be regarded as conflicting with participation by member institutions in other state, regional, or national education and religious organizations.

Section 4. A member college may resign its membership in the Corporation upon written notice to all of the other member colleges, and termination of such membership shall be effective as of a date determined by the Board of Directors.

A resigning member college shall be responsible for its obligations and undertakings to the Corporation through the end of the fiscal year in which such resignation occurs, unless relieved of such obligations by the unanimous consent of the Board of Directors.

Article III Board of Directors

Section 1. The property and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed and governed by a Board of Directors (the "Board").

Section 2. The Board shall consist of the Presidents of the member institutions without substitution.

Section 3. The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. They shall be elected for two-year terms from among the members of the Board. Officers shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified. Terms of service shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they were elected. The President of the Corporation shall be an ex officio member of the Board without vote.

The Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, shall preside over all meetings of the Board. In the event of the absence of both, the Immediate Past Chair shall preside. In the event of the absence of these officers, a temporary presiding officer shall be elected from among those present. A quorum, the minimal number of Board members necessary to conduct business at a meeting, shall be achieved with the presence of one more than half of the Board members. Should a vacancy exist in the office of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer of the Board of Directors, a successor to fill the vacancy shall be elected at the next regular or special meeting of the Board. The successor shall serve for the balance of the unexpired term.

Section 4. The chair shall serve as the head of the Board of Directors. In this capacity, the Chair shall lead the Board in establishing the goals, policies, and mission of the Corporation.

Section 5. The Vice Chair shall, in the absence or disability of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair, and shall perform such other duties as the Board Directors shall prescribe.

Section 6. The Secretary shall cause the minutes to be taken and shall keep a complete record of all proceedings of the Board and shall perform all other duties usually pertaining to the office of Secretary.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall oversee the custody of the funds of the Corporation and shall assure the maintenance of a full and accurate account of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the Corporation and the deposit of all monies and other valuable effects to the credit of the Corporation in such depositories as may be designated by the Board. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the Corporation as may be ordered by the Board, taking the proper voucher for such disbursement, and shall render to the membership and the Board at regular meetings, or otherwise as may be ordered by the Board, taking the proper voucher for such disbursement, and shall render to the membership and the Board at regular meetings, or otherwise as may from time to time be required by the Board, an account of all transactions and of the financial condition of the Corporation. The Treasurer shall be bonded in such amount and in such a manner as the Board shall require.

Section 8. There shall be an Audit Committee, a standing committee of the Board, consisting of three members, exclusive of the Treasurer. The members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chair for three-year staggered terms. It shall be the responsibility of the Audit Committee to see that an audit is conducted annually and a report made to the Board within ninety days after the end of the fiscal year.

Section 9. The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as Counselor to the Chair and in the event that the Chair and Vice Chair are unable to perform the duties of the Chair, the Immediate Past Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair.

Section 10. Omitted 6/6/96

Section 11. Under no circumstances shall any member institution have more than one vote on the Board.

Section 12. The Board shall have responsibility for the qualification and election of the member institutions, for authorizing programs of the Corporation, for establishing an annual budget and setting annual membership dues, and for setting the general policies for the Corporation.

Section 13. The Board of Directors shall meet annually, usually in winter, to conduct necessary and appropriate corporate business. The time and place of the annual meeting shall be determined by the President of the Corporation, who shall provide the members with at least ninety days advanced written notice of the time and location of the meeting.

Special meetings of the Board shall be held upon call by the President, or upon the written request of three members of the Board. Notice of a special meeting must be given by telephone call and letter at least fourteen days prior to the meeting.

Section 14. The Officers of the Board and the President of the Corporation shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Board. The Executive Committee shall have authority to act for the Corporation during the interim between meetings of the Board of Directors, provided that no action shall be taken by the Executive Committee contrary to these Bylaws or to the policies or actions established or taken by the Board of Directors. All actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be recorded by the Secretary and shall be reported at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Article IV. Office of the Corporation

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall appoint, at a regular or special meeting of the Board, a President and other such officers of the Corporation as may be necessary to serve for such period of time and on such terms and with such authority as shall be prescribed by the Board. The Chair of the Board, with the assistance of the Executive Committee, exclusive of the President, shall conduct an annual review of the President's performance and report the results to the annual meeting of the Board.

Section 2. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation. The President shall see that all orders and resolutions of the membership and the Board are carried into effect, and shall execute bonds, mortgages, deed, and other contracts on behalf of the Corporation. He or she shall be an ex officio member of all committees and shall have the general powers and duties of supervision and management usually vested in the office of the President of a

corporation. The President shall manage and supervise the daily operations of the Corporation. He or she shall have and maintain control and possession of all corporate records.

Article V The Council of Deans

Section 1. The Council of Deans shall consist of the Chief Academic Officers of the member institutions. Should a member of the Council cease to be the Chief Academic Officer, the successor (or acting successor, where applicable) shall serve and be a member of the Council.

Section 2. The Council shall conduct the affairs of the Corporation within the policies set out by the Board. In particular, the Council is charged with the operation of the programs of the corporation within approved budgets and with recommending new programs or policies for the approval of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. The Council of Deans shall have a Chair elected by the members of the Council of Deans for a term of two years. The term of service shall begin at the close of the meeting at which the Chair is elected. The Chair of the Council shall preside over all meetings of the Council and direct the Council in its role as creator and manager of corporate programs.

Section 4. Each member institution shall have only one vote in the actions of the Council.

Section 5. The Council shall meet three times per year to conduct its affairs. Notice for the meetings shall be same as for those on the Board.

Section 6. A majority of the Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article VI. Salaries and Compensation

Section 1. The salary and other forms of compensation of the President and the Corporation will be determined by the Board. Other employees of the Corporation shall receive such compensation as the President may prescribe.

Section 2. Member institutions shall pay the expenses of their representatives to meetings of the Board and Council. However, individual members of these two bodies, or others travelling on specifically authorized assignments on which they are representing the Corporation, may receive reimbursement for their reasonable traveling expenses and subsistence upon certification thereof in writing of the amount due.

Article VII Disbursement of Funds

All checks or demand for money and notes of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer, officers, or employees of the Board of Directors may from time to time designate.

Article VIII Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall extend from July 1 through the following June 30 of each year.

Article IX Amendments

These Bylaws may be altered or amended by the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members entitled to vote in a regular or special meeting of the Board, if notice of the proposed alteration or amendment be contained in the notice of the meeting, provided such notice is duly deposited in the mail so that in the ordinary course it will be received by the members not less than thirty days prior to the time fixed for such meeting.
(bylaws) 2001