# ■ 2008-2009 Collegium Student Focus Group and Faculty Feedback Report

**Shannon M. Tinney Office of Institutional Research** 

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This report was prepared by the Office of First-Year Research, in the Office of Institutional Research, using data collected in a student focus group and from faculty written feedback.

# 2008-2009 Collegium Student Focus Group and Faculty Feedback Report

## Introduction

The Collegium Program is an academic living-learning community for first-year students at Loyola College. Students enrolled in the program live with each other on the eighth floor of Campion Tower. In their first semester, groups of students on the floor are coenrolled in two academic classes and a First-Year Experience (FE 100) course. The FE100 course is a non-graded, one-credit extended orientation course that reinforces much of the information and resources that students were introduced to during orientations. In 2008-2009 there were three Collegium course pairings available to students taught by six faculty members: Introduction to Psychology and History of Modern Western Civilization, Introduction to Cellular Biology and General Chemistry, and Art History and Effective Writing: The Essay. The goal of the Collegium Program is to build a social and academic community for students allowing them to feel "at home" quickly when they arrive at Loyola.<sup>1</sup>

In 2008-2009, there were 65 students (6% of the incoming class) who participated in Collegium.

In order to assess how well the first-year programs are functioning and what improvements could be made, focus group discussions were conducted with students in each of the programs in addition to a group of students who did not participate in one of the four programs and pursued the general academic program. In addition, faculty and instructors teaching in the programs were e-mailed a set of questions about their experiences in the programs and asked for written feedback. This report provides results from the study on Collegium students and faculty only. Results from the Alpha, FE 100, Honors, and General studies can be found in separate reports available from the Office of First-Year Research.<sup>2</sup>

## <u>Methodology</u>

The feedback from the Collegium students was collected by holding a discussion group towards the end of their first semester (fall 2008). The goal was to have between 8 and 10 participants. To achieve this objective, two sets of 25 students were randomly selected from the pool of eligible students and invited via e-mail to the session (See Appendix A for a sample invitation). Invitees were selected randomly from all Class of 2012 Collegium students who were not participating in the Educational Intentionality Study that began fall 2008.<sup>3</sup>

The focus group was held on December 9th from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. in Campion 115. Invitees were notified that dinner and two movie tickets would be provided to all participants. Twelve students responded to the invitation but only nine students attended the discussion. The focus group was facilitated by Shannon Tinney, Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year and Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research. Students were greeted upon arrival, offered to help themselves to dinner, and invited to get comfortable. Introductions were made. The facilitator explained the role of the Office of Institutional Research, as well as the nature of a focus group. It was

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> http://www.loyola.edu/fyp/collegium.html Accessed May 7, 2008.

http://www.loyola.edu/IR/Students/First-Year%20Research/First-Year%20Research%20Tools

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Students participating in the panel study on Educational Intentionality at Loyola College were excluded because they are being asked similar types of questions during those interviews. Also, we desired as diverse a group of respondents as possible without overlap between the two institutional research efforts.

explained that there were no right or wrong answers and that students should feel free to voice their opinions. It was explained that the discussion would be digitally recorded for purposes of writing the report only and that first names should be used during the discussion. Students were informed that all comments would remain anonymous by using fictitious names in the reports and that no one besides the primary investigators would listen to the recording. (See Appendix B for the discussion guide.)

Participants came from all three Collegium pairings; however, there were several students who enrolled in the Biology/Chemistry pairing that dropped either one or both of the courses. Five participants were enrolled in the Biology/Chemistry pairing: of these, one dropped both courses, one dropped Biology, and two students dropped Chemistry. Of the other participants, three were enrolled in Psychology/History and one student took the Art History/Effective Writing pairing. The group was disproportionately women as there was only one man participating.

Faculty feedback about the Collegium program in the first semester was collected with a survey distributed via e-mail. Prior to winter break (December 22, 2008), faculty were sent an invitation from Dr. Ilona McGuiness, Dean of First-Year Students and Academic Services, and Shannon Tinney, asking them to send in their responses to a select number of questions about their experiences in the program (see Appendix C). Three reminders were sent to faculty members to encourage participation. All instructors were given a month to respond (January 23, 2009), and they were assured that their written comments would be kept confidential. They had the option to mail in their comments anonymously if they did not feel comfortable using e-mail to submit their replies. Four of the six faculty members teaching the paired Collegium courses provided feedback.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Reminders were sent on January 7<sup>th</sup>, January 13<sup>th</sup>, and January 20<sup>th</sup> of 2009.

# **Executive Summary**

#### Motivations and Intentions

- While some students enrolled in Collegium because of the apartment-style living, many were attracted to the program by nature of its living-learning environment.
- One reason why Collegium was preferred over simply taking the FE 100 course was that students thought their Collegium peers would match them in terms of being academically-focused.

## Expectations and Outcomes

- Most students expected to live with and take classes with the same group of people, make friends easier, and find similar academic interests with floor mates.
   Many experienced these very things.
- Participants did express difficulties with classes, and some struggled with understanding themselves as students and how that fit into forming productive study groups.
- Students also struggled with developing good relationships with roommates and being able to share an apartment with those who may not have similar values in terms of cleanliness and other considerations.

## Characteristics of the Collegium Students

- Faculty thought the sense of community developed among Collegium students contributed positively to the classroom, as students were more comfortable with each other and more actively engaged in class discussion.
- Faculty members perceived one drawback of Collegium students' very social nature—they may not have understood or adequately respected the boundaries between in-class and out-of-class behavior.

# FE 100 and Collegium

- Some students found the program useful in their transition while others did not. In part, the degree to which the program was useful to students was related to whether or not the student had engaged in a pre-orientation program.
- Participants also had mixed sentiments about their student instructors. A couple of students relied more on their Evergreen orientation leader for advice than their FE 100 student instructor.
- Having one's FE 100 group as one's orientation group facilitated a familiar and comfortable feeling among students so that it was easy for them to meet people. However, students expressed a desire for more interaction with other Collegium students.
- ◆ There was a relatively similar amount of positive feedback about FE 100 as there were criticisms of the program.

#### The Jesuit Tradition

- Students were exposed to the Jesuit tradition through visits with the Jesuits where they learned about the their life experiences and passion for the work they do. Also, students were exposed to the Jesuit ideals through their community service experiences.
- ◆ There was the sentiment that the Jesuit ideals were not explicitly communicated in their classes for the most part.

### Advising and Student-Instructor Relationships

- Not all students had their FE 100 or Collegium professor as their advisor. Those
  who had their Collegium professor as their advisor expressed closer relationships
  with their advisors than those who did not.
- ◆ Faculty respondents expressed that Collegium was meeting their expectations in terms of advising students.

#### Activities and Social Experiences

- ♦ A recognized challenge was that not all students attended planned activities and events, but students who attended them found meaning in them or enjoyed what they engaged in.
- For some participants, out-of-class experiences helped to form stronger bonds with FE 100 instructors and peers. Several students discussed how open and supportive their FE 100 instructors were and how helpful this was during the first semester.

#### New Ideas

- Teaching assistants would be helpful in larger class sections, typical of the introductory sciences, to serve as someone else to learn from and to help students organize productive study groups.
- Students provided some suggestions in terms of student life issues, including single dorms rooms for first-year students, more affordable food options, and addressing community health concerns such as making condoms available for safe and protected sex.
- Faculty feedback suggested that the social nature of the Collegium program needed to be downgraded and the academic emphasized more. One faculty member encouraged an intentional linking of the two courses where faculty members could collaborate beyond what is currently done in the "paired" approach.

# **Detailed Findings**

#### Motivations and Intentions

Participants described Collegium as a "community," in that most of one's friends live on the same floor together, take classes together, and study together. This community fosters a social support system for students. A common sentiment among the discussion group members was that they always had someone to turn to, share with, or seek help from with regards to academics or other life issues.

The reasons for choosing the Collegium program were varied. One student indicated that s/he enrolled in Collegium because of parental influence, stating: "My mother made me sign up for it." A few students chose Collegium because they wanted to live in the apartments, while a couple of other students were attracted to the program because it is a living-learning community. Reasons offered for why the living-learning component was an attractive option included: one could connect with others who had a similar academic focus and common academic interests; one could take classes with peers who had similar interests in subsequent semesters; and one could become acquainted with others who may be in one's major later.

When participants were asked why they had not only chosen the FE 100 program, one student commented, "I thought it would be frustrating if I was roomed with people who would be like going out every night and stuff and, like, I figured people in Collegium would be, like, more focused." This reinforces a common theme among students choosing Collegium—they wanted a ready-made community of students who were perceived to be academically focused by nature of their program selection.

Participants also noted reasons why they chose Collegium instead of some of the other first-year programs. One student said she did not choose the Alpha program because she was uninterested in any of its course offerings. However, in hindsight, she though it may have been a better fit especially in terms of getting to know other students, as she preferred the types of activities that the Alpha students engaged in like the harbor cruise and crab feast.

## **Expectations and Outcomes**

When discussing participants' expectations for their Collegium experience, the conversation was focused on how Loyola "sold" the program to students at Open Houses and Summer Orientation. While some students heard the message that Collegium is a living-learning community where students who had similar academic interests would live, take classes, and study together, other students seemed to hear a more generic message—it is a first-year program and students are encouraged to take one. One student who heard the more generic message felt that answers to the following questions should be more clearly articulated to prospective and admitted students: What do you mean by a "living-learning program"? What should I expect out of this? What does it do for me?

One student noted that it met her/his expectations because s/he was able to live with and take classes with the same group of people, make friends easier, and hit it off with her/his roommates. While these sentiments were echoed by many in attendance, they did not completely resonate with everyone, as some expressed difficulties with classes, and some struggled with understanding themselves as students and how that fit into forming productive study groups, developing good relationships with roommates, and being able to share an apartment with those who did not have similar values in terms of cleanliness and other considerations.

Four of the five Biology/Chemistry focus group participants dropped either Biology or Chemistry, or both classes. These students dropped one of the elements of the Collegium program because they did not feel like they could perform to the standards that they desired given the structure of the class and the professor. One student stated that Biology/Chemistry was a "dangerous combination" for the first semester for some students and two other students agreed. Still, participants expressed benefits of the program, including having teachers who were really good and helpful, being able to have people around them who know what they were going through and who could help them, seeing familiar faces in classes, being part of a community, and being able to conveniently form study groups without having to walk across campus.

Participants expressed how study groups could work to one's advantage but also how an otherwise noble attempt can fail. From this discussion, a number of considerations to developing productive study groups arose. One must consider his/her personal studying methods in conjunction with the class for which one wants to form a group. In light of this, one should wisely choose others with whom s/he can best collaborate and study. A couple of students mentioned that it is easy for study groups to get derailed depending upon the group's motivation to get work done, as they had seen groups turn into "gossip" and "goof-off" sessions. The only participant who remained in the Biology/Chemistry pairing described her study group experience by stating:

It's me and there's [sic] four other boys and we really get stuff done. I personally do a lot more work by myself before I go to the study group. I sit and outline every single chapter—handwrite, basically, the entire chapter over again—so that I go in like that and then we're able to discuss what is going on in Bio.... It has helped me so much having that group. But I am the type of person that can study with other people but I also have to do it by myself. And that part of Collegium really helped me personally.... It has helped me in the same way that it has hurt other people.

This student's experience highlights how the study group aspect of Collegium was very helpful to her because she understood her study habits and how that fit into the process of the study group, and she found the right mix of students with whom to study. Learning how to study for Biology and Chemistry helped this student study for other courses and appreciate other people who study hard. Another student noted that because the Biology/Chemistry combination was so time consuming, she had to be more organized, and, in turn, this helped her in other classes.

The collegiality of study sessions was highlighted with an example from a member of the Psychology/Western Civilization group. One student described a color-coded timeline of historical terms developed by students from the Western Civilization course to study for their mid-term. Students mounted the timeline on a hallway wall for all to access on the floor. Another member of the focus group, who was not part of that effort, noted how it helped her study for her mid-term.

Participants compared the quality of learning in their Collegium and non-Collegium classes. For Biology/Chemistry participants, there was a difference in opinion among students based on who remained in or dropped one of these courses. Both students who were enrolled in the Psychology/Western Civilization pairing were positive about their

courses and enjoyed their professors because they were "interesting and engaging." For instance, their Psychology professor makes the material relevant with real life examples garnered through his professional experience.

Acclimating to roommates was a common theme, especially because of the apartment-style living arrangement. Aside from personality conflicts, roommate conflicts arose due to differing standards of cleanliness and perceived inequities in the division of household labor. While the focus group was disproportionately female, the one male participant did not experience these types of conflicts with his roommates. While students liked living in the apartments because of the amenities it afforded to them, one female participant commented that it was a lot to adjust to with six new first-year students being thrown into that living situation in addition to all of the other transitional issues that come along with starting college.

# Characteristics of the Collegium Students

Collegium students adopt a social group by nature of their academic selections, as their orientation group is their FE 100 group, they are in paired courses, and live together on the same floor. Faculty responses illustrate the pros and cons of this. On the one hand, students become academically and socially integrated, as noted by one faculty respondent:

I like the 'idea' of students picking classes and adopting a group. I think it helps the atmosphere in all sorts of ways. It creates an [sic] community of peers from which to share ideas, homework, get help, [and] discuss things. That is huge, [and] not to be under valued [sic].

Faculty thought the sense of community that developed among Collegium students contributed to a more actively engaged group of students in the classroom. Three of the four faculty respondents attributed the program to fostering comfortableness among students. Two of those three respondents noted that this was a positive aspect for class discussion. The class seemed more engaged and more likely to "venture questions," and less inhibited to express curiosity that fostered discussion. One respondent described the link between the sociability of students and its benefits to classroom interactions:

There were intangibles with regard to the students knowing each other—it worked as a true community, they talked more individually, participated in class discussion, [and] weren't shy. I thought the great class engagement was due to the fact that they knew each other [and] were comfortable.

On the other hand, there was the perception that by nature of forming these social groups, students may not have understood or adequately respected the boundaries between in-class and out-of-class behavior. Another faculty member commented:

The two most notable things, one positive and one negative, about the Collegium students both would seem to stem from the same cause, their very social nature. On the plus side, this made them a colorful, friendly, amusing and

outgoing bunch. Individually they were a pleasure to work with and were very receptive to my comments on their work in our meetings.... On the negative side, however, I found them to be the most disruptive class which I have ever taught at Loyola. Issues like talking, texting, leaving the classroom, which I have never encountered here previously were rampant in this class. Whether this is because they do not have sufficient exposure to proper classroom behavior because of a lack of upperclassmen in their classes or whether, as I suspect, it is a result of the social aspect of Collegium itself, this was an extremely troubling development. The students seemed to have a great deal of difficulty compartmentalizing eh [sic] social and intellectual aspects of the program and rather than the intellectual having a positive aspect on the social my sense was that the opposite was the case.

Common among both faculty and student responses are the pros and cons of the social nature of Collegium students and students' academic engagement as evidenced by the in-class and out-of-class experiences.

# FE 100 and Collegium

Among participants there were mixed sentiments about FE 100. Some students found the program useful in their transition while others did not. In part, the degree to which the program was useful to students was related to whether or not the student had engaged in a pre-orientation program. There were two participants who shared that they had engaged in a pre-orientation program and felt it contributed more to their knowledge about the College than FE 100.

One student expressed that having FE 100 group as one's orientation group really helped him/her to get to know others and be comfortable early on. However, since one's orientation group is the same as one's FE 100 group and one also had classes with the same people in the Collegium pairings, students expressed wanting more interaction with other Collegium students. Participants made reference to the harbor cruise and crab feast that all Alpha students engaged in at the beginning of the semester; they were envious of the Alpha students and thought it was a great idea for a social gathering. Aside from this, participants thought that more social gatherings that allowed all Collegium students to interact would have enhanced their experience and helped them to meet more people.

There was a similar amount of positive feedback about FE 100 as there were criticisms of the program. For instance, some students liked being introduced to various aspects of the College, attending lectures, and completing out-of-class assignments like the culminating photo journal assignment. On the other hand, there were students who felt that being exposed to every little aspect of the College was pedantic, that some of the departmental visits were boring, some of the lectures were not a good use of their time, and that there was too much work involved for a class where no grade was earned. In

particular, a couple of students commented that they did not see the point of having to write papers for the class since they were not receiving any credit for it.

Participants also had mixed sentiments about their student instructors. A couple of students relied more on their Evergreen orientation leader for advice than their FE 100 student instructor. A couple of other students who had the same student instructor, and who were in the Biology/Chemistry Collegium, commented that their instructor was very helpful in learning the "little things", like how to register for spring classes, where to find information about major requirements, and how to vote for one's Class President.

### The Jesuit Tradition

Students provided some examples of how the Jesuit tradition was woven into their FE 100 experience. Father Nash came in to talk about core values and how he has devoted his entire life to living these values and sharing them with others. Students engaged in community service, but not everyone showed up to help out. For one student, the community service component of FE 100 reconnected her to what was important to her. She stated:

At home I did community service a lot.... I didn't get as involved as maybe I hoped to right at the beginning of school and that [her FE100 community service experience] was in October, and it reminded me of why I enjoy community service so much. Like...through FE it helped me, like, it reminded me of what really is important to me.

Students were invited to consider how they experienced the Jesuit ideals in their Loyola experience. One student shared that she was not familiar with the Core values upon entrance to Loyola, but through her Psychology class she began to understand what they were because her professor would often make the connection between what they discussed in-class and the Core values. Another student thought that the Jesuit ideals were *not* explicitly communicated in classes but that through going to church she received them.

# Advising and Student-Instructor Relationships

Generally, participants expressed positive interactions and characteristics of a good relationship with their Collegium professors. Some participants expressed closer relationships with their Collegium professors than their non-Collegium professors while others did not. One student commented that developing a good relationship with a faculty member, regardless of the Collegium affiliation, depended upon if one got along with the faculty member, in terms of personality, interests, and mutual respect.

Not all students had their FE100 or Collegium professor as their advisor. For those who had their Collegium professor as their advisor, they expressed closer and more familiar relationships. For a couple of students who expressed that their Collegium professor was not their advisor, the advising experience was more of a formality—to sign off for classes.

Faculty respondents expressed that Collegium was meeting their expectations in terms of advising students. One respondent perceived no differences in the way s/he advised and interacted with Collegium and non-Collegium students. Two professors noted that they felt closer to their Collegium students. They also perceived their Collegium students as being more comfortable in approaching their professors because of being the Core

advisor and instructor. One of the two noticed students' stronger sense of wanting to be in class and respecting what the professor had to offer. This respondent also noted that s/he appreciated the casual banter between students and the professor.

# Activities and Social Experiences

Participants shared a variety of activities and events that they participated in as part of their Collegium experience. While a recognized challenge was that not all students attended these events, those in attendance did find meaning in or enjoyed what they engaged in. Several students discussed their community service experiences—Beans and Bread and a Halloween event for disabled individuals. Students found these experiences very meaningful by nature of the service in which they engaged. Participants also discussed how some of the events they engaged in with their FE 100 instructors and peers were good bonding experiences. For instance, a couple of students noted how open and supportive their FE 100 instructors were, such that they felt they could talk to them about anything. The only faculty critiques with regards to out-of-class activities were that there was not enough time spent out of the class with the students and that the out-of-class experiences were not as organized as they could have been.

#### New Ideas

Since the focus group comprised several students who had dropped or withdrew from either or both Biology and Chemistry, a recurring topic was the types of academic support services sought out prior to finally dropping or withdrawing from a course. This discussion led one student to offer the suggestion of having teaching assistants, as this would be more reliable than a tutor; she and another participant did not think their tutors were reliable resources. Some negative critiques of their tutors included that they had not taken the course recently or had not done so with the same professor as the student had. Plus, the tutors they worked with did not have good teaching skills. It was suggested that a teaching assistant could take notes, help organize study groups, review class notes, and develop study guides to assist students in studying for midterms and finals. Another student agreed that having a teaching assistant who could serve in those capacities would be helpful because:

...[A] professor can only [be] available so much.... For me, at least, if I can't learn it from you when you teach it to me twice, maybe it just takes someone who teaches differently for me to learn it. Maybe it's not the professor, maybe it's me and maybe that's why I need that, like, second party to explain it to me differently or teach it to me differently.

Students provided some input for the co-curricular elements of Collegium. One student who expressed having roommate issues would have liked a single dorm room option for students. To that point, another student elaborated by saying that if you have a problem with a roommate you should be able to move out so that you can adjust to college before having to readjust to a new roommate later on. Also, participants discussed a desire for cheaper food options and options representative of fast food chains, like Taco Bell<sup>®</sup> or Chik-fil-A<sup>®</sup>. Finally, students noted differences between Loyola and other institutions by nature of its Catholic affiliation. For example, students discussed how other colleges and universities have campus bars and locations where students can access free condoms so that they could engage in protected sex.

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In terms of faculty, two out of the four respondents provided no suggestions or new ideas for the program. One faculty member thought that the academic rather than the social aspects of a mandatory first-year experience should be emphasized, and that the "living" aspect should be abandoned. This same faculty member advocated for a real "linking" of the classes where professors collaborated. Another faculty member suggested that having more structured time outside of the class to engage in discussion regarding "celebrating the life of the mind" would be a welcomed added component.

# Summary

The Collegium program offers students a living-learning environment where they take classes together, study together, and live together. The academic and social support structures that develop through the integration of the living and learning components potentially have long-term benefits for participants and the campus community. For instance, students connect with others who have common academic interests, become acquainted with others who may be in one's major later, and know others in classes second semester by nature of having similar interests. Further, faculty recognized the relationship between students' sense of social integration and its positive impact on the classroom. While faculty and students recognized the positive impact of the program, they also recognized some of the drawbacks to the social nature of Collegium students in terms of forming productive study groups and better maintenance of in-class and out-of-class behavior.

Both faculty respondents' and students' feedback highlighted some considerations for forming living-learning communities. From the student perspective, there are challenging logistical issues to maintaining cohesive living-learning communities when students drop a course, or an entire pairing, and when roommate issues arise. Further, participants expressed a desire to have more social events that would facilitate a stronger sense of community among the entire Collegium program, beyond the sub-groups they belonged to by nature of their FE 100/orientation group and paired courses. From the faculty perspective, respondents focused on developing the academic aspects of the program by placing greater emphasis on them through the explicit linking of courses with faculty partnerships, and by providing more time for students and faculty to interact and carry on discussions outside of class.

# Appendix A: Collegium Focus Group Invitation

Subject Line: A Collegium Program Special Invitation from Dean McGuiness

The College is interested in what students think about their experiences in the Collegium Program. As your first semester comes to a close, we are hoping that you will help us by sharing your opinions about the program.

The Office of Institutional Research is holding a discussion group from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> in Campion 115.

You've been selected as one of only a small group of students invited to attend!

<u>Students who participate will be given a gift of two free movie tickets</u>. Pizza and refreshments will also be provided for dinner during the discussion.

This is an excellent opportunity for your voice to be heard at Loyola! Feedback about your experiences as a Collegium student will help the College know how to improve the program for future students.

Space in the group is limited to 10 students, so you must R.S.V.P. quickly!

You may contact Shannon Tinney, Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year and Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research, by e-mail (<a href="mailto:smtinney@loyola.edu">smtinney@loyola.edu</a> or <a href="mailto:ir@loyola.edu">ir@loyola.edu</a>) or by phone (410-617-2680) by Wednesday, November 26<sup>th</sup> to be a member of the discussion group.

Please join us! We look forward to seeing you on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ilona McGuiness
Dean of First-Year Students and Academic Services

Shannon M. Tinney Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year and Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research

# Appendix B: Collegium Student Focus Group Discussion Guide

- I. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME (5 min)
  - a. Who we are
  - b. Why we asked you here tonight
    - i. Focus on Collegium program
  - c. What is a focus group and ground rules
    - i. Enjoy the food
    - ii. Opinions, no right/wrong answers
    - iii. Digitally recorded (no full names used)

#### II. SELF-INTRODUCTIONS (3 min)

- a. Name
- b. Which Collegium classes they are in
- c. Which dorm they live in

### III. EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES (10 min)

- a. We're new to Loyola, describe the Collegium Program to us. How has the Program been this semester?
- b. Why did you register for the Collegium Program? Why Collegium and not one of the other first-year programs? Why not just FE 100?
- c. What were your expectations for the Collegium Program? (What did you hope to get out of it?) How has the program met those expectations?
- d. Ask follow-up questions about FE 100.

#### IV. OUTCOMES (10 min)

- a. How has participating in the Collegium Program helped you with other courses?
- b. How would you describe the quality and level of learning in your Collegium classes in comparison with other classes at Loyola?
- c. Describe the influence Collegium had on your academic performance this semester. Writing? Critical thinking/analytical skills? Discussion skills?
- d. How was the Jesuit tradition woven into your Collegium experience through your involvement in FE 100? How about your experience at Loyola in general? Ask follow-up questions about FE 100.

#### V. FACULTY/ADVISORS (15 min)

- a. Let's talk about your Collegium professors for a few minutes. How would you describe your relationship with your Collegium professors?
- b. Compare this relationship to your relationships with non-Collegium professors. Do you think the relationship was different than your non-Collegium friends' relationships with their professors?
- Tell us about your advising experience. (Probe: How have you worked with your advisor?)
- d. Tell us about your relationship with your FE 100 instructors.

### VI. ACTIVITIES/SOCIAL (15 min)

- a. What types of activities did you participate in outside of the classroom through involvement in the FE 100 component of Collegium? Which were the most meaningful? Which were not so meaningful? Why? (Probe: Community service)
- b. How did Collegium influence your transition to college life? Do you think this transition was different than what your non-Collegium friends experienced? How so? (Probe: Did it help you make connections with friends, the college, the larger community, etc.?)
- c. What has your experience been like living on the Collegium floor? What are the pros/cons of living on the floor?
- d. How has living on the same floor contributed to your academic experience?

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e. Tell us about FE 100's influence on your transition to college life.

### VII. CLOSING (15 min)

- a. When you talk with friends or relatives who are at other schools, what do you hear about that you would like to see at Loyola College? (Probe: Specifics for first-year students.)
- b. Now, before you leave, I want you to do one last thing. We're going to do a one-minute paper. You don't need to put your names on it. I'm going to pose a question, I want to you take a moment to think about it, and then you're going to write for one minute on that topic. Think back over your first semester. What have you learned about yourself and your academic interests? What are your educational goals?

# Appendix C: Collegium Faculty Questions

Subject Line: An important message from Dean Ilona McGuiness

Dear Collegium Faculty Member,

As a faculty member teaching a Collegium course, your feedback is important as we plan for a new cohort of Collegium students next year. In an effort to hear from the entire Collegium faculty, we'd like to get your written responses to a few focused questions. You can simply reply to this email with your comments. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Responses will remain confidential and no responses will be linked to any names. If you would prefer to submit your feedback anonymously, you can print your responses and send them via campus mail to Shannon M. Tinney, Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year and Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research. Xavier Hall 109.

Your comments to the following questions will be combined with the feedback that we have received from Collegium students during focus groups and will be used for program planning to ensure that the Collegium program is a distinctive high-quality, first-year experience for Loyola students. Thus, your participation is extremely important to us.

- 1. In what ways is the Collegium program meeting or not meeting the expectations that you have as a faculty member teaching in the program?
- 2. How would you describe the Collegium students in your class relative to non-Collegium firstyear students you may know?
  - a. Do you notice a different level of intellectual curiosity in your Collegium students as compared to students you teach in other first-year courses?
  - b. Do you notice a different level of intellectual growth in your Collegium students as compared to students you teach in other first-year courses?
- 3. In what ways, if any, is your relationship with the Collegium students you teach and advise different from your relationships with other first-year students?
- 4. In your conversations with colleagues at other institutions, have you learned about aspects of their first-year programs that Loyola should consider adopting?

Please submit your responses no later than Friday, January 23, 2009.

Thank you in advance for your participation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either one of us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ilona McGuiness Dean of First-Year Students and Academic Services imcguiness@loyola.edu x 5547

Shannon M. Tinney
Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year and Retention Studies
Office of Institutional Research
<a href="mailto:smtinney@loyola.edu">smtinney@loyola.edu</a>
x 2617