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**NEW REPORT REVEALS MOST EXPENSIVE COLLEGES WITH
HIGHEST PAID PRESIDENTS AND LARGEST GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES
SCORE THE WORST ON BASIC U.S. HISTORY TEST**

*Second Intercollegiate Studies Institute Study Includes 32 New Schools,
Introduces New Findings and Offers Latest Rankings of U.S. Colleges*

Washington, D.C., September 18, 2007 – The second in-depth study by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) reveals that some of the most expensive universities, with the highest paid presidents, are among the worst-performing in the country regarding the teaching of America’s history and institutions to their undergraduate students. These universities, which also receive some of the largest government subsidies, include the University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, Yale, Princeton, and Duke.

“Higher education is a \$325 billion business where at many prestigious universities presidents earn half-a-million dollars a year or more,” says Josiah Bunting, III, chairman of ISI’s National Civic Literacy Board. “Ironically, based on our research, the lowest gains in knowledge in America’s history and institutions are found at many of these elite universities where their presidents are simply not doing enough to help preserve our traditions of freedom and representative government. The time has come for higher education’s key decision-makers—state legislators, trustees, donors, alumni, faculty, students’ parents—to hold the nation’s colleges and their presidents accountable for teaching their students America’s history and institutions.”

Complete results from ISI’s second study are being released today in a report titled *Failing Our Students, Failing America: Holding Colleges Accountable for Teaching America’s History and Institutions*. The new study adds 32 universities not included in ISI’s landmark inaugural study, but the results remain the same. The nation’s college freshmen and seniors again scored just over 50 percent, or an F, on the exam, statistically corroborating and confirming the initial study’s findings that ISI released last September.

The study of more than 14,000 randomly selected college freshmen and seniors at 50 U.S. colleges and universities was conducted on behalf of ISI by the University of Connecticut’s Department of Public Policy (UConnDPP)—which administered a 60 multiple-choice question civic literacy test about America’s history, government, international relations and market economy. For the first time, ISI’s American civic literacy test is available in its entirety along with the full results at www.americancivilliteracy.org.

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“Virtually every institution of higher learning claims some form of citizenship, leadership, or national service in their mission statement,” adds Bunting. “However, the evidence from our ongoing research shows that colleges are failing to advance students’ knowledge of America’s history, government and free market economics and consequently not preparing their students to be informed and engaged citizens.”

Critics have long expressed their concern that the nation’s colleges are not teaching what students need to know to effectively participate in the American political process. ISI and its research partners at UConnDPP, a nationally and internationally recognized leader in the field of public policy and public opinion research, have now surveyed nearly 35,000 freshmen and seniors at 85 colleges. They have gathered and analyzed data that provides statistically valid evidence that institutions of higher learning, especially the most expensive and elite schools, are failing to effectively teach America’s history and founding principles.

Prestige Doesn’t Buy Knowledge

In contrast to the performance of students from high profile, elite schools, smaller regional institutions such as Concordia University in Nebraska and Marian College in Wisconsin scored among the highest for civic-knowledge gained (based on the differential between average scores of seniors and freshmen). Their presidents earn less than \$167,000 a year. The top college for teaching America’s history and founding principles is a public, liberal arts college, Eastern Connecticut State University—reaffirming that prestige doesn’t buy knowledge.

At the bottom of the civic-knowledge gain rankings are Cornell, Yale, Duke and Princeton—four prestigious colleges that cost more than \$30,000 per year. Their presidents earn at least \$500,000 a year. Rhodes College (Memphis, Tennessee), whose student scores topped the rankings last year, ranks first again among the 18 colleges included in both the 2005 and 2006 studies.

Overall, the average score for college seniors in the new study was 54.2 percent, which is consistent with the average of 53.2 percent posted by seniors in the findings released last year. Freshmen scored an average 50.4 percent, down from 51.7 percent. Therefore, both seniors and freshmen scored an “F” on the American civic literacy test and not one college surveyed can boast that its seniors scored, on average, even a “C” in American civic knowledge. Harvard seniors posted the highest score, 69.56 percent correct; however, it ranked 17th in knowledge gained by students as its freshmen score was 63.59 percent correct.

In an attempt to alleviate these failures, the new ISI report encourages students, parents, faculty, trustees and legislators to demand accountability. Five questions of accountability are offered in the report in hope that they will help inspire constructive engagement leading to positive changes in college curricula.

Questions of Accountability

1: Are parents and students getting their money's worth from college costs?

The College Board estimates the average out-of-state cost for a four-year public college is \$22,743. (The average out-of-state cost for the 50 colleges surveyed in the ISI study was \$21,986.) College costs continue to rise, yet the least expensive colleges increase civic knowledge more than the most expensive. If parents and students believe a college education ought to increase a student's knowledge of America, then clearly they are not getting their money's worth from most schools in the survey.

2: Are taxpayers and legislators getting their money's worth from college subsidies?

Colleges enjoying larger subsidies in the form of government-funded grants to students tend to increase civic knowledge less than colleges enjoying smaller such subsidies. For instance, The College Board reports that the average Yale freshman received \$11,102 in government grants to help defray the costs of attending Yale. Yale seniors, meanwhile, scored 3.09 points lower than Yale freshmen on the civic literacy exam.

3: Are alumni and philanthropists getting their money's worth from the donations they make to colleges?

In 2006, according to the Council for Aid to Education, individuals, foundations, corporations, religious groups and other organizations voluntarily contributed \$28 billion to American colleges. Some of the worst-performing colleges also have the largest, most rapidly growing endowments. These include Yale, Penn, Duke, Princeton, and Cornell.

4: Are college trustees getting their money's worth from college presidents?

The results from the study indicate that trustees are not getting their money's worth. The report states that while college presidents are increasingly compensated like top executives of leading corporations, there seems to be no linkage between their salaries and the civic knowledge students gain—or *lose*—at their schools.

“College presidents normally do not dictate their school's academic programs or initiate new faculty hires, but their public pronouncements can significantly impact the choices made by faculty,” says Mike Ratliff, ISI senior vice president.

5: Are colleges encouraging students to take enough courses about America's history and institutions and then assessing the quality of these courses?

The average senior had completed only four courses in the combined subject areas of history, political science and economics. At seven colleges, most seniors had not completed even one American history course. But more courses taken did not always mean more knowledge gained. While at some schools students' knowledge about America increased significantly with each seemingly relevant course completed, at others it increased little or decreased. The question might then be are colleges offering quality courses in these subject areas.

More Key Findings

Do College Students Learn More Than Elementary School Students?

According to ISI's report, a 5-year-old kindergartener would have scored about 20 percent on the American civic literacy exam simply by guessing. The average college freshman scored 50.4 percent. That means one can estimate that the average student's score increased 30.4 points—or 2.3 points per year—in the 13 years from kindergarten through 12th grade. After three years of college, however, the average senior scored 54.2 percent, a gain of only 3.8 points, or about 1.3 points per year. The college annual rate of gain was only about half the pre-college annual rate gain.

American Colleges Under-Serve Minority Students

On average, minority seniors (Asian, Black, Hispanic and Multi-racial) answered less than half the exam questions correctly and made no significant overall gain in civic knowledge during college. Civic-knowledge gain among whites was six times greater.

Higher Quality Family Life Contributes to More Learning about America

College seniors whose families engaged in frequent conversations about current events and history, whose parents were married and living together, and who came from homes where English was the primary language all tended to learn more than students who lacked these advantages. For example, students from families that frequently discussed current events and history gained 2.3 percentage points more on average than students from families that did not.

American Colleges Don't Teach their Foreign Students about America

The typical foreign senior had not taken a single course on American history. Additionally, the average foreign senior gained a statistically meaningless 0.2 points in knowledge about America's relations with the world and the overall average gain in civic knowledge for foreign students was a statistically meaningless one tenth of one point. Colleges thus squander an opportunity to foster greater understanding of America's institutions in an increasingly hostile world.

Working Toward Change

The news isn't all bad. At a number of campuses across the country, faculty are working to address the dearth of civic knowledge demonstrated by the American civic literacy survey by establishing new academic centers for the teaching of America's history and founding principles.

Established centers, such as Harvard University's Program in Constitutional Government, are invigorating efforts on their campuses. A new center was approved at Tufts University earlier this year, and other recently established centers are already operating at the University of Chicago; the University of Colorado-Boulder; Emory University; Georgetown University; the University of Texas-Austin; and the University of Virginia. ISI's Jack Miller Center for the Teaching of America's Founding Principles is dedicated to supporting the establishment of these academic centers of excellence.

“While ISI’s Jack Miller Center for the Teaching of America’s Founding Principles is beginning to make an impact, higher education’s key decision-makers must do so much more if we want to improve the teaching of America’s history and institutions,” says T. Kenneth Cribb, Jr., president of ISI. “American higher education, especially some of our most prestigious institutions, is not doing its duty to prepare the next generation to maintain our legacy of liberty.”

About the Intercollegiate Studies Institute

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) was founded in 1953 to further in successive generations of American college youth a better understanding of the economic, political, and ethical values that sustain a free and humane society. With ISI’s volunteer representatives at over 900 colleges, and with more than 50,000 ISI student and faculty members on virtually every campus in the country, ISI directs tens of thousands of young people each year to a wide array of educational programs that deepen their understanding of the American ideal of ordered liberty.

About ISI’s Jack Miller Center for the Teaching of America’s Founding Principles

The Jack Miller Center for the Teaching of America’s Founding Principles was established in 2004 at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute by Jack Miller, a successful Chicago businessman and philanthropist. Its mission is to strengthen on college and university campuses the teaching of America’s founding principles—limited government, individual liberty, free market economics, the rule of law, private property, and personal responsibility. The Jack Miller Center provides support for new academic centers of excellence and helps grow the number of professors teaching America’s heritage and founding principles through summer institutes, ongoing support, and networking efforts.

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Appendix

Intercollegiate Studies Institute's Ranking of Colleges by Learning Added to or Subtracted from Students' Knowledge of America's History and Its Institutions During the Baccalaureate

Rank by Value Added	College	Freshman Mean	Senior Mean	Value Added
1	Eastern Conn. State Univ.*	31.34%	40.99%	+9.65%
2	Marian College (WI)*	33.66	43.10	9.44
3	Murray State University* (KY)	40.63	49.75	9.12
4	Concordia University* (NE)	46.29	55.28	8.99
5	St. Cloud State Univ.* (MN)	35.67	44.26	8.59
6	Mississippi State University*	42.50	50.86	8.36
7	Pfeiffer University* (NC)	36.05	44.30	8.25
8	Illinois State University*	42.74	50.93	8.19
9	Iowa State University*	45.03	52.69	7.66
10	University of Mississippi	41.87	49.32	7.45
11	Smith College (MA)	52.63	60.07	7.44
12	Rhodes College (TN)	53.76	61.18	7.42
13	University of Montana*	45.54	52.16	6.62
14	Idaho State University*	41.76	48.15	6.39
15	University of Wisconsin	51.57	57.87	6.30
16	Univer. of Southern Maine*	37.48	43.58	6.10
17	Harvard University	63.59	69.56	5.97
18	University of Notre Dame	55.66	61.25	5.59
19	Mt. Vernon Nazarene Univ.* (OH)	40.04	44.60	4.56
20	Washington & Lee University	62.46	66.98	4.52
21	Calvin College (MI)	51.99	56.45	4.46
22	University of Florida	48.96	53.40	4.44
23	University of North Carolina	53.26	57.68	4.42
24	Univ. of Minnesota-Twin Cities*	49.18	53.50	4.32
25	University of Michigan	46.68	51.00	4.32
26	University of Washington	51.63	55.88	4.25
27	Gonzaga University (WA)	47.71	51.86	4.15
28	University of Rochester* (NY)	55.69	59.32	3.63
29	Grove City College (PA)	63.64	67.26	3.62
30	Georgia College and State Univ.*	40.28	43.68	3.40
31	Bowdoin College (ME)	59.50	62.86	3.36
32	University of Georgia*	54.48	57.76	3.28
33	Carnegie Mellon University*	54.06	56.90	2.84

34	St. Thomas University* (FL)	29.75	32.50	2.75
35	Texas State Univ.-San Marcos*	41.25	43.99	2.74
36	Texas A&M International Univ.*	38.43	41.14	2.71
37	George Mason University (VA)	47.28	49.96	2.68
38	University of Virginia	62.95	65.28	2.33
39	Brown University	63.42	65.64	2.22
40	Wheaton College (IL)	62.87	64.98	2.11
41	University of Pennsylvania	62.66	63.49	0.83
42	Univ. of Massachusetts-Amherst*	46.10	46.66	0.56
43	Oakwood College* (AL)	35.17	34.69	-0.48
44	Univ. of California-Berkeley	57.03	56.27	-0.76
45	Rutgers University*	50.93	49.99	-0.94
46	Princeton University	63.60	61.90	-1.70
47	St. John's University* (NY)	41.69	39.82	-1.87
48	Duke University	65.66	63.41	-2.25
49	Yale University	68.94	65.85	-3.09
50	Cornell University	61.90	56.95	-4.95

* *Randomly Selected School*