

Abstract

The Humanities in the Business University

Bentley University (formerly Bentley College), a small to mid-sized school located in Waltham, Massachusetts, requests matching funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities to build an endowment for innovative humanities programming within a business-oriented institution.

Since the 1970s, Bentley has pioneered the integration of liberal learning in our business curriculum. Recent initiatives that enhance the role of the humanities in the university include an honors program, a second major in liberal studies for business students (created with support from an NEH Humanities Focus Grant), a transdisciplinary Ph.D. program, and the Valente Center for Arts and Sciences.

The endowment created with the help of the NEH Challenge Grant will fund three activities directed by the Valente Center for Arts and Sciences: 1) a research seminar that brings Bentley and non-Bentley humanities scholars together to investigate topics of common interest; 2) a program that welcomes humanities scholars to Bentley for multi-day visits; and 3) an intensive reading seminar to give undergraduates and faculty opportunities to rigorously engage and discuss great books together.

These initiatives capitalize on Bentley's unique ability to shape the education and outlook of business professionals. Endowing the Valente Center for Arts and Sciences will advance Bentley's evolution since the 1970s toward creative integration of the humanities into a business college/university, an evolution that has been supported at critical junctures by the NEH. Moreover, the initiatives proposed here may provide a national model for making the humanities integral to the education of career-minded students.

Budget

Budget Details

Total NEH funds requested:	
Year 1:	\$98,750
Year 2:	\$98,750
Year 3:	\$98,750
Year 4:	\$98,750
Total nonfederal contributions:	\$1,185,000
Total Grant Funds (NEH plus Match):	\$1,580,000
Planned Expenditures:	
Invested in Endowment	\$1,580,000
Annual expendable endowment income (5%)	\$79,000
Research Seminar and Affiliated Fellowships	(\$49,000)
Visiting Humanities Scholars Program	(\$10,000)
Undergraduate Fellows Seminar	(\$20,000)

Bentley University's Investment Objective and Asset Allocation

The primary investment objective is to earn an average annual real return above the Fund's spending rate to support the university (currently 5%) over rolling five-year periods. This secondary objective is to outperform the benchmark returns derived from its asset allocation guidelines. The accomplishment of this primary objective should be sufficient to, at minimum, maintain the purchasing power of the assets by generating returns that equate the Fund's spending rate, the rate of inflation and the cost of administering the Fund.

In structuring the Fund, assets under stewardship are afforded a long-term horizon with emphasis placed on capital appreciation. In order to attempt to limit volatility, reasonable diversification across asset classes, economic sectors, geographic location, style and market capitalization should be pursued as a means to enhance overall return.

Recognizing that asset allocation is a critical determinant in meeting the primary objective, investment committee members review overall allocation periodically in their effort to provide adequate diversification and acceptable levels of risk.

At December 31, 2010 the endowment's balance was approximately \$197.3M.

The Humanities in the Business University

Introduction. Bentley University, located in Waltham, Massachusetts, seeks to educate students who will go on to become reflective and conscientious business professionals. Though best known for its accounting, marketing, and finance programs, the university also requires a demanding course of liberal arts study and enrolls roughly one-quarter of undergraduates in arts and sciences majors. Because of a determined effort to incorporate the humanities, mathematics, and social and natural sciences into the curriculum over the last two decades, our students now enjoy an educational experience that places their core business courses in social and political context and buttresses their professional training with rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis. Bentley's administration and faculty are acutely aware of the shallow vocationalism that sometimes afflicts business education, as well as the urgent need to connect liberal learning with postgraduate professional opportunities. We are not yet close to squaring the higher educational circle. Nonetheless, we are diligently experimenting with approaches to help ensure that the "practical" and the "true" can be joined in rough harmony, and see robust support for the humanities at this traditionally business-oriented university as a promising route to that end. We are requesting a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in the amount of \$395,000 to help us expand humanities programming and research support here at Bentley.

Historical Overview. Bentley was founded in 1917, when an accountant named Harry Bentley, respected for his teaching skills, established a two-year school in rented rooms in downtown Boston. Bentley remained a successful downtown school for a number of decades. Only in the late 1960's did it move to its current location atop a sprawling hill in nearby Waltham. By then, Bentley had become a residential institution offering Bachelor of Science degrees in business disciplines and a smaller number of Bachelor of Arts degrees. Just a few years later, master's level degrees were conferred through the newly opened graduate school of business. Until 2007 Bentley operated as a college. But with the introduction of two

small doctoral programs that year, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognized Bentley as a university. Long accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and AACSB-International (the chief accrediting body of business education among American schools), Bentley was honored in 2008 when it gained accreditation by EQUIS, the prestigious European Quality Improvement System, one of two only schools in the U.S. to receive this distinction.

Emergence of a Business University with a Conscience. *The Princeton Review* recently recognized Bentley's strength in fostering social responsibility within professional education by including the university among a select group of institutions of higher education "with a conscience." Our shift toward the model of a conscientious professional school was well underway in 1976, when a curriculum planning grant was awarded to Bentley on behalf of group of faculty members from our philosophy, English and management departments. This grant was critical in fostering the development of Bentley's well regarded Center for Business Ethics. At the time, business ethics was a virtually unknown field. The Gadfly Project that grew out of this grant exemplified a new approach to professional education by substantively integrating the humanities into a business curriculum. Today, one-on-one mentoring of business faculty is still provided and ethics are regularly inculcated (and interrogated) in both business and philosophy courses. *Business and Society Review*, a CBE journal, is published by Blackwell. With this NEH grant leverage, ethics and corporate social responsibility earned a privileged place at Bentley which has not since been relinquished.

Another turning-point in the teaching of responsible business practices came after the establishment of the CBE, when a member of the English Department received funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the Corporation for National and Community Service to launch the first ever service-learning program in an American business school. Bentley's service learning center (BLSC) achieved very rapid success in enrolling students and partnering with community organizations. For over two decades, Bentley's BLSC has maintained its status as a national leader, and recently has been ranked by *US News* among the top twenty service-learning programs in American higher education. Each semester,

hundreds of undergraduate students complete service learning credits offered via courses that are marbled throughout our curriculum. Experiential learning is understood as a domain of excellence at Bentley, integral to the educational experience.

Bentley has been able to promote a more reflective and conscientious kind of professional education in additional ways. Recognizing a number of concrete steps taken in the last decade, the prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for Teaching (located at Stanford University) recently invited Bentley to participate in its Business, Entrepreneurship, and Liberal Learning (BELL) project, focused on how the goals of liberal education can best be achieved for undergraduate business majors. In their letter of invitation, the BELL directors stated that, “[a]fter reviewing dozens of undergraduate business programs, [we] are convinced that Bentley College offers one of the strongest and most interesting examples of integrating business education and liberal learning.” The fact that we were able to attract acclaimed linguist Daniel Everett to the Dean of Arts and Sciences position is a testament to both the solid foundation and still unmet potential of liberal arts education at this business university.

While quantitative measures cannot fully account for educational quality, they do provide some confirmation of the university’s rapid evolution. In a little over a decade, Bentley was transformed in the eyes of *BusinessWeek* from an unranked specialty school (1997) to a position among the nation’s top thirty undergraduate business programs (2010). During this period Bentley *remained a small to mid-size institution* enrolling approximately 4,000 undergraduate students and 1,400 graduate students; however, our full-time faculty grew from 192 in 1996, to 289 in 2010. During the same period, our undergraduate acceptance rate fell very dramatically from 66% to 46%. In our greatly increased pool of applicants, median SAT scores for entering students jumped from 1070 to 1220, even as the student body grew from 3,489 undergraduates to nearly 4,100. Department of Education data from 2004 (mined by *USA Today*) show that in terms of selectivity, Bentley is positioned within the top 10% of four-year colleges nationally. Retention rates, which rose from 81% (1998) to nearly 90% in recent years, also reflect these changes, as do Bentley’s comparatively stellar rates of graduation within four years. There has been no loss of diversity among our student body during this statistical upswing: International students currently

comprise 8% of our undergraduates while African American, Latino, Asian, and Native American students represent 15%.

One major cause of this transformation is Bentley's commitment to experiment with initiatives that engage students for whom the transcendental value of a humanistic education is not necessarily a given. Compared to students at non-professional universities, our students are typically more determined to leave college with identifiably "marketable" skills. They also sometimes display a pragmatic reticence regarding the learning that takes place in history, philosophy, English and modern language classes. But our curricular programming and teaching strategies employ inventive approaches to readings, discussions, group projects, papers and exams that encourage students to make creative connections between the humanities and their sometimes instrumental goals and interests (attachment 10, part 2). Our latest effort in this regard, the Complex Problems/Creative Solutions initiative (more details below) helped students to capitalize on the insights of subjects as diverse as accounting and environmental history in addressing the linked problems of consumption and technological waste. Deep appreciation for liberal learning also extends itself into our graduate offerings which are self-consciously interdisciplinary. In May 2011, the faculty voted approval of a one-year Global MBA, which seeks to develop business leaders who are equipped to collaborate across cultural divides and manage organizations in a socially conscientious way.

Today, the typical Bentley student is highly motivated and markedly better prepared to benefit from a broader and more substantive educational experience. In fact, we now attract a very significant percentage of students *because* we offer a business-focused education that is inseparable from the ethical, analytical, and aesthetic insights of the liberal arts. At a moment when business stands as the nation's most popular undergraduate major, as well as a conspicuous symbol of some of higher education's failings, we see an especially favorable occasion for the vigorous injection of the humanities into this professional school's culture.

Several key initiatives have contributed to Bentley's transformation from a specialized business college to a distinctly conscientious business university. These include:

The Introduction of an Honors Program. An Honors Program launched in 2001 attracts and retains exceptional students; and the humanistic context that business courses may less often provide is now underscored in Honors sections, whether taught in newly created or continuing courses. Our Honors courses emphasize original scholarship and primary sources, and are taught in small classes conducted as seminars, giving emphasis to the oral and written contributions of each student. The benefit of this initiative extends well beyond the Honors Program itself. Many courses developed or revised for Honors designation contributed to the transformation of corresponding non-honors sections, percolating Honors Program rigor throughout our undergraduate coursework (attachment 11, part 1).

The Reorganization of Academic Leadership. To underscore the essential role that the arts and sciences play in preparing 21st century business leaders, Bentley created a new position, Dean of Arts and Sciences, which is administratively parallel to the Dean for Business and the Graduate School. Last summer, Daniel Everett joined Bentley as our third Arts and Sciences dean. Formally trained in religious studies and linguistics, Dean Everett has revived the field of descriptive linguistics through his groundbreaking mastery of a unique Amazon River Basin language (Pirahã). An internationally renowned linguistic, anthropologist, and popular author, Everett was previously chair of Illinois State's Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. In recognition of his research achievements, he was named that institution's first University Professor. Since joining Bentley, Dean Everett has extended the achievements of his predecessors by building an Arts and Sciences advisory board, spearheading a collaborative book project highlighting the benefits of rigorous, humanistically informed business education, and laying the foundation for an institute that would lead in the development of innovative curricula integrating Arts and Sciences with Business.

The Introduction of an Optional Second Major in Liberal Studies. A 2003 Humanities Focus Grant received from NEH provided support for groundbreaking humanities programming. As a result, an interdisciplinary freshman seminar was developed (See attachment 11, part 2) and a capstone seminar was incorporated into the fledgling Honors program. This seed money provided immediate impetus for the

introduction of Bentley's extremely popular Liberal Studies Major (LSM). The LSM is an interdisciplinary second major in the arts and sciences designed for students pursuing a business major. It uses a combination of required and elective courses from the general education curriculum to form a second major. Growing at a rapid clip since piloted with ten students in 2004, the LSM now stands as a defining feature of Bentley's curriculum and attracts an intellectually curious cohort of applicants to the university. Over 700 of roughly our 4,100 undergraduates are currently enrolled in LSM concentrations such as Media Arts and Society, Global Perspectives, American Perspectives, Diversity and (In)equality, and Ethics and Social Responsibility (See attachment 11, part 2). History, English, and philosophy courses are heavily represented across LSM concentrations. Moreover, LSM majors use an iterative process to discuss and write about meaningful connections within and across both these disciplines and their business majors.

Receipt of the Davis Foundation Grant to Integrate Perspectives and Methods of Liberal Learning.

The Davis Foundation's 2004 award to Bentley provided support to incorporate methods of liberal learning into all of the business disciplines and strongly emphasized the humanities. Four one-week workshops were held in 2005 and 2006 to bring together 74 faculty members from business and the liberal arts in intensive sessions that many described as transformative. These workshops inspired a substantial reworking of syllabi in fields as distinct as accounting and composition, while a host of new collaborative research projects were initiated. The implementation of this grant created unprecedented respect for what colleagues across all of the Bentley disciplines do in the classroom (attachment 11, part 3).

Receipt of the Davis Foundation Grant to Support Complex Problems/Creative Solutions Initiative.

The Davis Foundation's 2008 award supported a three-year initiative focused on enhancing undergraduate understanding of how different disciplinary approaches can be used to understand "complex problems" and on appreciating the mutually reinforcing benefits of their creative application. Students enrolled in the program have directed their attention specifically to the unintended consequences of consumer choices. They have examined what we do with our purchased products/services while they are useful and what we

do with them once they have outlived their usefulness, as well as the more universal ethical consequences of these transactions. The initiative is based on two guiding principles: first, that business must be at the forefront—along with government agencies and NGOs—in addressing current global issues; second, that today’s undergraduates must be better prepared to address these thorny issues once they assume leadership roles. In addition to classwork and discussions oriented toward subjects such as American environmental history, the ethics of consumer choice, and sustainable business practices, students are engaged in complementary service projects, such as conducting a campus-wide used book drive, repairing and recycling aging computers for the Waltham Public Schools, and making blankets from recycled fabric for a local shelter.

Opening of the Jeanne and Dan Valente Center for Arts and Sciences. An unmistakable sign of the arts and sciences’ ascendance at Bentley was an anonymous bequest received in 2004 to create a center for arts and sciences. Initial programming caught the attention of additional donors, and in 2006 Jeanne and Dan Valente began to direct an annual donation of \$20,000 to the center and established a remainder trust that will eventually bequeath a substantial permanent endowment. The Valente Center for Arts and Sciences is charged with promoting research and teaching in the departments of History, Philosophy, English and Media Studies, Modern Languages, Global Studies, Mathematics, Sociology, and Natural and Applied Sciences, as well as interdisciplinary research.

The Jeanne and Dan Valente Center for Arts and Sciences. The Valente Center is a hub of intellectual ferment on the Bentley campus. In just a few years of operation, the center has:

- Organized a non-credit humanities seminar for faculty and students to discuss *Common Sense*, the *Communist Manifesto*, and the book of Genesis;
- Sponsored an intensive, for-credit interdisciplinary Undergraduate Fellows (Great Books) Seminar (described more fully below);
- Through a student assistantship program, given talented, industrious students a chance to work closely with arts and sciences faculty members in their area of expertise;

- Coordinated a nascent interdisciplinary project tentatively titled The Bentley Civic Reader
- Developed a discussion series (the LSM Speaker Series) to promote understanding of the value of liberal arts, that has featured speakers such as a television producer and a CEO/published historian;
- Under the guidance of an enthusiastic alumni advisory board launched BASH (Bentley Alumni Series in the Humanities) to introduce business professionals to Bentley faculty research. BASH (admittedly employing a very broad definition of the humanities) aims to bring intellectually curious alumni together with students and faculty to discuss research ongoing at Bentley in the Arts and Sciences. Typical BASH events have featured a philosopher who provided an accessible and compelling introduction to the philosophy of mind and an historian who introduced his research on forced labor and the origins of modern capitalism;
- Organized “The Efficient Humanist” workshop to help busy scholars better use the latest electronic tools;
- Created an internal fellowship program so active research faculty are able to concentrate on work that leads to significant journal and book publications. Beginning with the latest round of applications, Valente Faculty Research Fellowships may be used to support a broad range of Arts and Sciences-focused scholarly activities, including disciplinary and interdisciplinary conferences, regular faculty-led seminars that include Bentley and/or non-Bentley scholars, collaborative research projects involving multiple Bentley faculty, and tenure-track faculty completing significant individual research projects. Among those who have received internal faculty research fellowships are:
 - an historian studying the modernization of Chinese medicine during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries;
 - a literary scholar investigating identity in Hindi cinema in the context of globalization;
 - a philosopher researching non-liberal concepts of democracy in the developing world;
 - a specialist in media studies exploring consumer citizenship during the New Deal, and
 - (for AY 2011-2012) a literary scholar who is completing an edited collection of original essays on classical rhetoric.

The Valente Center has found several ways to bring Arts and Sciences scholars to Bentley:

- For three academic years, beginning in 2006, the Center piloted a postdoctoral fellows program that brought a student of Korean film, an Italian philosopher of mind, and a Canadian political scientist to Bentley for two semesters of intensive research and engagement with the Bentley community;
- Since fall 2009 (through a grant from the National Biomedical Research Foundation), postdoctoral fellow and natural scientist Dr. Laura McNamee has partnered with Natural Sciences professor Fred Ledley to conduct research on the biotechnology industry;
- Since fall 2009, Visiting Research Fellow Dr. Victor Lo, Vice-President at Fidelity Investments, has worked with Mathematics professor Dominique Haughton and assisted with the organization of a virtual analytics seminar;
- Our Senior Research Associate, Alastair McPherson, is in his fourth-year of researching state-led economic development assessment with Global Studies professor Sean MacDonald;
- In AY 2010-2011, Visiting Research Fellow Tristan Thielmann (University of Siegen, Germany) conducted research with Sociology professor Anne Rawls on how ethnomethodology influenced the graphical conversation theory that was developed at MIT in the 1970s.

Recent Valente Center events and speakers include:

- a workshop on book publishing with Harvard University Press's Elizabeth Knoll;
- a workshop on op-ed writing with New York University's Jonathan Zimmerman. Professor Zimmerman also spoke to Bentley on race and religion in the history of American education;
- community discussions of (1) Nicholas Carr's *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains* and (2) Stephen Prothero's *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World- and Why Their Differences Matter*;
- a week-long visit by Laila Iskander, a Cairo-based social entrepreneur;
- Harvard's Orlando Patterson, discussing race and diversity in the age of Obama;

- Brandeis' Jane Kamensky, recounting recent experiences in conducting both historical and literary research on early America;
- New York University's Barbara Weinstein offering an assessment of cultural approaches to economic development questions, and
- Trinity College's Louis Masur, detailing the implications of Stanley Forman's infamous photograph, "The Soiling of Old Glory," shot amid Boston's school desegregation controversy;

The Valente Center has also organized interdisciplinary panels which have attracted large audiences of students, faculty, and staff to examine:

- the current state, and likely future, of interdisciplinarity;
- the 2008-2009 economic crisis from an historical perspective;
- the business, politics, and culture of social networking;
- interfaith perspectives on *Constantine's Sword*, James Carroll's documentary on the history of the Catholic Church's treatment of Jews;
- the meaning and sense of "place"; and,
- the 2011 political revolutions in the Arab world

The Valente Center's Future. The Valente Center is now well positioned to attract support from a widening circle of enthusiastic alumni and successfully reach out to other external sponsors who see the liberal arts as vital to the future of professional education. The Dean of Arts and Sciences and the center's Director work hand-in-hand with Bentley's University Advancement Division to match compelling initiatives with prospective donors. Over the last few months, Dean Everett has been assembling an Arts and Sciences advisory board of potential alumni donors who possess a high-level of interest in the liberal arts.

Exciting progress has been made in connecting alumni families with our center's intellectual activity. A generous \$25,000 gift from Diane and Dennis Albano supports undergraduates (with up to \$5,000/year) who develop their own self-directed, eight-ten student, not-for-credit seminars that foster

exploration of topics clearly related to the arts and sciences. Thanks to the funds provided by this grant, a group interested in academic freedom read several books that explore the university's place in American society, as well as its origins and traditions; another read fiction, memoirs and histories related to the Cold War; and still another sought to deepen students' understanding of different cultures and global issues through the reading and discussion of recent international literary works, such as Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies* and Uwem Akpan's *Say You're One of Them*.

Administration of the Valente Center has been—and will likely remain—rooted in the humanities. Like his predecessor, the director, Chris Beneke, is an historian. Beneke holds a Ph.D. from Northwestern University and specializes in early U.S. intellectual and religious history. He has published a monograph with Oxford University Press (2006) and a co-edited collection of original scholarly essays with the University of Pennsylvania Press in (2011). The center's staff also includes a half-time assistant director (an historian of the British Empire with a Ph.D. from Brandeis University) and a three-quarters time administrative assistant. The director consults regularly with an advisory board made up of faculty members from each arts and sciences department. In 2005 the Valente Center became the first business institution to join the Consortium for Humanities Centers and Institutes, and has since caucused with humanities centers at a group of smaller colleges including Clark, Grinnell, Haverford, Scripps, Smith, Wellesley, and Wesleyan to share best practices. On a regular basis we invite faculty from Brandeis, Tufts, and Boston University and other institutions to participate in the Working Seminar Series.

Proposed Humanities Initiatives. The Endowment first provided critical support to Bentley in 1977—just six years after receiving approval to grant the Bachelor of Arts degree—when a challenge grant award recognized that “career training alone” did not prepare students “for an increasingly complex society.” NEH support helped expand the library's humanities collection and funds to provide professional development sabbaticals to faculty in humanities departments. Humanities titles now represent 48% of our total book budget and our humanities faculty receive research support on par with their counterparts in business disciplines. Fully half of the classwork completed by undergraduate

business majors is in non-business disciplines, and humanities courses comprise roughly 34% of all current undergraduate course offerings. An award from the Humanities Focus Grant program at the Endowment was critical in steering Bentley toward to the end goal of graduating liberally educated business professionals.

Bentley's ability to develop intellectually ambitious programs in the humanities depends above all on the quality of our faculty in the disciplines of English, history, philosophy, modern languages, and the humanistic social sciences. The humanities faculty members have been especially productive contributors to Bentley's research activity. In the past eight years single-author works have been published with such major academic presses as Cambridge, Columbia, Harvard, Indiana, Oxford, and Palgrave Macmillan; and fellowships have been received from Harvard's Charles Warren Center, the NEH, the Whiting Foundation, and the Fulbright committee (for humanities faculty publications, see attachment 10, part 1.)

A non-replenishable, non-interest-bearing gift comprised most of the Valente Center's initial funding. We believe that the challenge grant we now seek will provide significant impetus for additional fundraising so that when our financial goals are met, we will be well prepared to sustain the following initiatives.

I. Humanities Research Seminar and Affiliated Fellowships. Bentley proposes to foster an ongoing series of humanities research seminars in which designated NEH fellows will discuss and advance their scholarship. This program will be designed to attract internal and external scholars with the goal of providing a lasting impact on Bentley faculty and students. The Center's Director will work with the Dean of Arts and Sciences and two senior members of the Bentley faculty to solicit and evaluate applications. Fellows will be selected on the basis of scholarly merit and demonstrated interest in enhancing interdisciplinary learning communities. Three different types of fellows are envisioned.

A single Organizing Fellowship will be offered to a Bentley humanist with a well-established research record. This Fellow will propose an interdisciplinary topic to be pursued over the course of one year and together with Participating Fellows from inside and outside Bentley, will identify specific

themes to be explored. He or she will have responsibility for inviting other scholars to assist with the articulation and refinement of the overarching themes and individual session topics, to ensure that the seminar both speaks to a broad constituency and provides sufficient focus to cultivate publishable humanities research. The Organizing Fellow will be charged with responsibility for practical management of seminar activities, including preliminary planning group meetings, selection of participating scholars, and publicity for the seminar's events. The Organizing Fellow will also manage the seminar's logistical details, including space, food, and guest speaker arrangements and make periodic reports on his or her activity to the Valente Center Director. This Fellow may also supervise Student Fellows (see below). The annual Organizing Fellow will be appointed at the beginning of each spring semester, and after making preliminary arrangements throughout the remainder of that semester, will receive a stipend of \$8,000 per year to develop and implement the seminar.

Applications for Participating Fellows will be sought from the deep pool of faculty and doctoral students in the greater Boston area, as well as faculty in Bentley humanities departments. Bentley's convenient location, near Brandeis, a 20-minute shuttle ride from Harvard Square, and a comparable drive from Wellesley, Tufts, Boston University, and Boston College, will make it feasible to attract many external candidates. The Valente Center Director anticipates that approximately 11 of these appointments will be made per year. Each Participating Fellow will be expected to participate actively in all the seminar sessions and to either present a paper or give a lecture at Bentley during the term of their fellowship. These Fellows, who will receive \$3,500 stipends, will also be expected to work with Student Fellows when possible and appropriate. Given the breadth of humanistic inquiry at Bentley, early topics might include interdisciplinary approaches to "place," the philosophy, history, and literature of empathy, the philosophy, history, and literature of religious tolerance, and the theoretical foundations of business ethics.

Each year, up to five Bentley undergraduates will receive appointments as Student Fellows. Student Fellows will be encouraged to develop related research topics and to attend all the seminar meetings and associated lectures, participating in this community in parallel with the Participating Fellows. Students

developing Honors capstone topics or Liberal Studies Major culminating projects will be excellent Fellows candidates and may, with the approval of the Organizing Fellow, present their research questions and findings in a more condensed form (most likely in a combined end-of-year presentation) at the seminar meetings. The flourishing state of the Honors Program and the Liberal Studies Major at Bentley creates especially rich opportunities for connecting student and faculty research on the chosen seminar topic. Participating Fellows will be paired to mentor Student Fellows who share similar research interests, helping them develop questions and strategies that provide the students with critical points of access to their scholarship. Through this process, undergraduates should gain a new appreciation for the intellectual discipline and careful attention to detail required to sustain viable scholarly arguments.

Bentley offers a fertile environment for an ongoing seminar of this nature. Liberal arts disciplines feature many active researchers in history, philosophy, literary studies, and modern languages. In addition, the fact that Bentley's humanities faculty do not oversee a Ph.D. program makes them keen to interact with scholars conducting cutting-edge research in their fields and forge new connections to the area's larger research universities. Bentley provides a lively interdisciplinary environment in which a Chaucer scholar travels regularly to Ghana with a management professor and a Shakespeare expert teaches a course on the literature of the mind in conjunction with a neuroscience course taught by a member of our Natural and Applied Sciences department. While firmly anchored in the research traditions of their own disciplines, Bentley's humanists are accustomed to active collaboration with experts in other fields.

Given its experience in vetting fellowship applications, hosting visiting scholars, and organizing both large and extended events, the Valente Center is well positioned to coordinate an NEH-supported research seminar. Meetings and intellectual outcomes of the seminar will be reported on the web and via electronic communications to Bentley faculty, staff, students, targeted groups of alumni, and relevant programs and scholars in the Boston metropolitan area. Invitations to participate in the seminar will be extended to faculty and graduate students as far away as Amherst, Providence, and Lowell, though most of our applicants will likely emerge from within a 10-mile radius. The annual sponsored cost of the NEH

Research Seminar will be \$49,000. In addition to the stipends specified above, this figures includes \$2,500 annually for publicity and other costs related to the seminar.

II. Visiting Humanities Scholars Program. To bolster humanities scholarship and teaching on campus and to forge active connections between Bentley humanities faculty and their counterparts across the globe, the Valente Center will invite two leading humanities scholars to campus each year. The Visiting Humanities Scholars Program will introduce Bentley faculty and students to the latest humanities scholarship. The Valente Center will work closely with Bentley humanities faculty to identify candidates who employ innovative methodologies or investigate topics of intrinsic interest to our humanities faculty. We might, for instance, invite Aaron James, who is developing a theory of fairness in global trade; or James H. Sweet, who has written about the methodological challenges faced by students of the African Diaspora, and could easily make common cause with our scholars of Brazil and the Caribbean. The relative brevity of the stay means that even scholars with teaching obligations will be able to participate in the program and that the time between the invitation and the visit can be relatively short. Someone who publishes a groundbreaking article in a top humanities journal in the spring could be invited to speak on campus the following fall. Visiting Humanities Scholars will remain in residence at Bentley for four to five weekdays, offering a public (alumni-accessible) lecture, leading seminar and workshop discussions, speaking with our internal faculty and postdoctoral fellows, addressing undergraduates as a guest lecturer, and meeting informally with students, faculty, and alumni. A main objective will be to persuade the whole Bentley community that humanities education is a dynamic, research-driven enterprise which requires constant cultivation. Finally, we will engage in a Boston-area outreach campaign to ensure that our Visiting Humanities Scholars address the largest possible audience.

While a busy week of intellectual engagement with an innovative visiting scholar will deliver some of the benefits of the longer-term fellows that the Valente Center has traditionally hosted, in this much more concentrated span the cost will be substantially lower. By sharing their work and exchanging ideas, two visitors per year should provide the stimulation and disciplinary coverage to invigorate humanistic

research and teaching at Bentley, and strengthen humanistic outreach on campus and across the Boston metropolitan area. In addition to their internal circulation, notices of public lectures will be publicized on local list-servs, mailed to Boston-area deans, humanities department chairs, local libraries, community centers, cafes, bookstores, high schools, and nearby alumni. To maximize the impact of each visit, priority will be given to scholars whose interests align with our humanities faculty and even, when possible, the theme of the Undergraduate Fellows Seminar (see below). Humanities faculty members will be designated as hosts for the visitor, ensuring that each is well integrated into the university's academic life.

The visiting fellow will be reimbursed for travel expenses of up to \$2,000 and paid an honorarium of \$2,500. Together with publicity expenses of roughly \$500 per visitor, the total annual cost of this program should amount to \$10,000.

III. Undergraduate (“Great Books”) Fellows Seminar. Report after dismal report has made it clear that this generation of undergraduates reads fewer books, and the ability to read closely and carefully seems to have diminished. Our students are no different. As academically gifted as they are now, they evince discomfort with long, nuanced books. To introduce our student population to the joys of great books and their careful reading, the Valente Center launched the Undergraduate (“Great Books”) Fellows Seminar in fall 2009.

In preparation for the seminar, four faculty members from different disciplines choose three books of broad and enduring interest for a semester long course enrolling 12-15 undergraduate students and taught jointly by all of them. The students are selected by the seminar instructors. In all cases, at least two of the instructors (including the coordinator, English professor Michael Frank) are humanities faculty. While the humanities faculty is able to best teach a humanistic perspective, those from other disciplines are chosen for several reasons. One is to broaden the understanding of humanities learning among faculty who may have foregone such exposure early in their academic careers. A second reason is that students are thus able to see faculty who do not teach humanities model approaches to critical reading of great

books. Selected students are designated Valente Center Undergraduate Fellows and are required to attend at least two center events per semester. Books and tickets to related external cultural events are provided. The seminar meets approximately 12 times for two hours each. Faculty do not “teach” the classes so much as assume responsibility for leading the discussion (each faculty member leads approximately three sessions, with the remaining faculty joining the discussion as participants). Students are required to write an extended, research-based paper developing out of the issues raised in the course. Grades are based on class participation and the research paper, with each faculty member advising three students.

A chief goal of the Undergraduate Fellows Seminar is to inculcate the idea that the most intellectually rewarding reading derives from an engagement with the ideas in a text, entering into a conversation with people who have thought carefully about related matters, and taking the ideas of others not as true, but as a challenge to one’s own thinking. By earnestly grappling with unfamiliar books and ideas, faculty far removed from their own disciplines model the ideal toward which we encourage students to strive.

A second major goal of the seminar is to continue shifting Bentley’s campus culture so that the rigorous and creative qualitative work being done in the humanities is recognized as valuable and interesting in its own right. When there are humanities-centered activities around which some “buzz” is generated, students begin to think about this type of enterprise as a defining feature of a university education. To this same end, we are seeking (somewhat presumptuously) to introduce business faculty to the rigors of sustained textual analysis and to enlist them in making the case for the humanities. Our hope is that they will return to their research with a better sense of how the humanities can enrich their own disciplinary perspectives, in addition to adopting new habits of thought that will inform their teaching. An initial call issued for potential instructors elicited responses from thirty individuals in eleven different departments. Student applications for the first three iterations of the seminar have poured in as well. In fall 2009, instructors (drawn from the departments of English, Global Studies, Marketing, and Management) read and discussed books on the theme of representation with an ambitious group of 13 undergraduates, most of whom were business majors (see syllabus in attachment 12, part 3). The seminar

discussed Stuart Hall's *Representation*, E.H. Gombrich's *Art and Illusion*, and Hanna F. Pitkin's *The Concept of Representation*. Student evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. One called it "the most stimulating course I have taken because of its open communication and challenging material." Another noted that the class was "more valuable than any other course I have taken at Bentley."

Evaluations of the 2010 seminar were no less enthusiastic. This time, the instructor cohort included three senior faculty members from the departments of History, Accounting, and Information and Process Management, and one political scientist from the department of Global Studies. The seminar probed the science of human nature and engaged seminal works by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Edward O. Wilson, and Steven Pinker. Students were particularly impressed by the contingency of arguments about human nature. One student professed: "To say I loved the Valente Seminar class is an understatement - it was easily my favorite class at Bentley ... I learned a lot about the subject of our class, Human Nature. The faculty members of the class were very helpful in guiding our discussion, but they also challenged us on an individual level to think critically about our opinions." Students are already meeting with faculty ahead of the fall 2011 seminar on the "Good Life," which will concentrate on the writings of Epicurus, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and Hesse's *Siddhartha*.

Participating actively in every seminar is English Professor Michael Frank, the coordinator of the program. Frank is a literary critic with interests ranging from narrative strategies in the Pentateuch to the place of Alfred Hitchcock in American cultural history. The idea for the Undergraduate Fellows Seminar originated with him and he oversees each iteration from start to finish. Frank is an unapologetic proponent of close reading and both he and the Valente Center Director can be relied upon to guarantee both the intellectual rigor and the humanistic orientation of the program.

The popularity of the Undergraduate Fellows Seminar among faculty and students alike suggests that the seminar could easily be offered twice a year (currently, because of cost constraints we can only offer the seminar in the fall semester) at a total annual cost of \$20,000, of which \$4,000 will support the seminar coordinator stipend, \$12,000 will be used for eight faculty stipends of \$1,500 each, and \$4,000 will be used to purchase books. By increasing the number of seminar sections from one to two, we see a

strong possibility for significantly enlarging the impact of humanistic inquiry on this business-oriented campus.

Program Budget. The total cost of the four initiatives to be supported by interest on the endowment created by the NEH challenge grant will be \$49,000 per year for the fellowship program, \$10,000 for the Visiting Humanities Scholar program; and \$20,000 for the Undergraduate Fellows Seminar. Estimating that interest income on a \$1.58 million endowment will average 5% annually, the Valente Center will receive income of roughly \$79,000 per year, sufficient to cover proposed programs once the challenge is met.

Significance of Activities. Taken together, our initiatives will (1) strengthen humanities research through the creation of a community of NEH research seminar scholars involving Bentley faculty, external faculty and graduate students, and Bentley students who gather often during the course of one year; (2) enliven the study of the humanities at Bentley and broaden the reach of humanities scholarship by introducing short-term programs featuring innovative scholars, open to all of Bentley and the larger Boston community; and (3) engage students and faculty in the Undergraduate (“Great Books”) Fellows Seminar, notably those who might not be well practiced in the discipline of careful, critical reading.

Our multi-faceted strategy underscores the strong desire to carry the themes and perspectives of the humanities beyond the subset of students predisposed to make history, philosophy, literature, and languages the main focus of their education, while more deeply engaging a different subset of students who are more inclined to humanistic inquiry and wish to extend their involvement and understanding even while attending a business institution. By involving current students and alumni in the center’s activities, we believe that career-oriented pragmatists will find greater meaning in humanities subjects, see clearer connections between humanistic thinking and their professional lives, and look on the arts and sciences generally as essential to business education. The remarkable growth of the NEH-funded Liberal Studies Major and the success of the Undergraduate Fellows (“Great Books”) Seminar indeed suggest that

Bentley students can be persuaded to pursue such sustained work. Responding to the Carnegie Foundation's interest in exploring Bentley's approach to liberal learning and the consistent support we have received from institutions such as the Davis Foundation, we are confident that our inventive approaches to the humanities will provide a useful example for other colleges and universities struggling to inject humanistic rigor into the academic world of pre-professional students.

Sustainability. Bentley possesses the infrastructure, staff, and energy needed to carry out the broad and ambitious activities of this program once funding is in place. Receiving a challenge grant from the NEH will bring faculty, trustees, and alumni together in celebration of the humanities in our community. The steady growth of Bentley's humanities faculty, course offerings, and library holdings in the past three decades, the blossoming of our Center for Business Ethics into a national leader in the field, and our success in developing a Liberal Studies second major for business students—all developments supported by NEH project and program grants—provide tangible evidence that NEH support for new initiatives at Bentley University will be money well invested. The consistency of Bentley's long-term evolution toward greater depth and breadth in the humanities should give NEH panelists confidence in our ability to muster the resources, intellectual and institutional, to achieve what we have set forth in this proposal. In future years, it is likely that students who have more deeply grasped the significance of liberal learning to the conduct of their personal and professional lives, will further support the humanities at Bentley.

Assessment. Responsibility for assessment of the three activities will fall to the Valente Center Director.

A preliminary plan of evaluation includes:

1. The **Humanities Research Seminar and Affiliated Fellowships** will be evaluated each year based on
 - a. the number and quality of the applications received each year;
 - b. the intellectual quality of the work produced and presented by both faculty and student fellows;
 - c. the impact on students and faculty, in the humanities and beyond, of the development of the community of scholars;

- d. exit interviews with fellows and written evaluations about the quality of their experience; and
- e. the extent to which this program is recognized and/or adopted by other professional schools.

2. The **Visiting Humanities Scholar Program** will be regularly evaluated based on

- a. the ability of Bentley faculty to identify and recruit leading humanities scholars from a variety of disciplines;
- b. the number and quality of events involving visiting scholars;
- c. the extent of visiting scholar interaction with faculty, students, and alumni;
- d. qualitative and quantitative surveys collected during and after each visit;
- e. media attention devoted to visiting scholar events.

3. The **Undergraduate Fellows Seminars** will be assessed according to

- a. written evaluations by undergraduate fellows of their experience in the seminar;
- b. written evaluations by seminar instructors of their experience in the seminar;
- c. the quality of the final essays written by undergraduate fellows;
- d. willingness of faculty to participate in future seminars.
- e. the extent to which this program is recognized and/or adopted by other professional schools.

Fiscal Stability of Bentley University. The university has achieved an operating gain every year since it became a non-profit institution in 1948. In July 2010, its rating was maintained at Moody's Investment Services, which cited Bentley's consistently positive operating performance, healthy investment in campus facilities, and good liquidity. The university ended fiscal year 2010 with a very positive performance, reporting an operating surplus of \$4.3million and operating highlights that included a 3.8% (\$6.4 million) increase in tuition and fee revenue over the preceding year. Financial aid to students increased by 7.2% (\$3.8 million) over 2009, due to growth in enrollment and higher need due to the economic downturn. The university's total operating expenses were kept virtually flat from the previous year as the university undertook cost-cutting measures in response to the worldwide financial crisis.

Fundraising Plans. Bentley is well prepared to undertake an NEH challenge grant. Since the conclusion of Bentley's last major capital campaign in 2005, the university's development division has undergone a thorough reorganization and refocused its objectives. New staff have been added and many of the division's policies, procedures, and practices have been reviewed and aligned with industry standards. This effort was led by a new Vice President of University Advancement who brings to Bentley decades of experience gained at Cornell, Bucknell, and SUNY-Cortland. Among the structural changes implemented since 2009 are the creation of new positions in annual giving, major gifts, parent giving and planned giving; a new and more strategic approach to events, with more of them targeted to high-capacity prospects; a more sophisticated analysis and revision of high capacity prospect pools, including the discovery of many new major gift prospects; new programs to secure the financial support of parents; and the conversion to a new alumni database that will make the collection and analysis of new prospect information more effective.

These changes have begun to yield impressive gains in fundraising, paced by several leadership commitments. These include:

- \$2 million from a trustee and his wife to support one of the president's key initiatives: programs to enhance business leadership opportunities for women;
- \$1.1 million from a current parent couple, to support the same women's leadership initiatives;
- \$500,000 from an alumnus to create an annual prize recognizing a leading faculty researcher; and
- Several commitments from alumni to create scholarships at the \$100,000 level.

Recent Challenge Campaigns. Bentley has enjoyed considerable success in previous challenge campaigns. Alumni respond favorably to a clear, specific goal that will result in an immediately realized achievement or tangible advance for their alma mater. The external validation provided by challenges is a powerful motivator at Bentley. The table below shows the university's experience with challenge grants.

Bentley University Challenge Campaigns

Challenge Funder	Objective	Period	Challenge Amount	Total Raised*
Kresge Foundation	Residence Hall	1975 – 1976	\$100,000	\$542,000
Kresge Foundation	Student Center Addition	1977 – 1978	\$100,000	\$495,000
Kresge Foundation	Library Addition	1980 – 1981	\$150,000	\$950,000
Kresge Foundation	Graduate Center Addition	1986 – 1987	\$200,000	\$418,400
Davis Educational Foundation	Bentley Information Resource Project	1992 – 1993	\$210,000	\$769,000
Fidelity Investments	Trading Room	1997	\$50,000	\$100,000
Board Member	Baseball Field	2002 – 2003	\$400,000	\$875,000

* *Philanthropy only, excludes institutional funds committed to the projects*

Past Capital Campaigns. Bentley University has enjoyed significant success with comprehensive fundraising efforts as well. In the last 29 years, Bentley has undertaken three major capital campaigns. Each was more ambitious than the last and all exceeded their original goals.

Name	Priorities	Goal	Total raised
The Bentley Challenge 1982-1987	Capital, Scholarships	\$12.5 million	\$13.9 million
The Business of the Future 1992-1997	Scholarships, Centers for Excellence, Faculty Development	\$25 million	\$33.5 million
The Campaign for Bentley 2001- 2005	Professorships, Curriculum Development, Technology, Scholarships	\$100 million	\$103 million

Strategies for a successful NEH challenge. New dynamics should contribute significantly to the success of an NEH challenge. The university is entering an accelerated period of planning for a new capital campaign. Campaign counsel is about to be engaged to gauge the feasibility for a campaign of approximately \$150 million to \$200 million with a tentative concluding date of 2017, to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the university’s founding. This effort will soon enter a quiet phase. The NEH challenge will offer an excellent opportunity to drive engagement and financial commitment during this quiet phase and into the initial years of the public phase.

Working vigorously since his arrival, Dean Everett has articulated an exciting vision for the role of the arts and sciences within a business university. His evolving agenda will promote interdisciplinary pedagogy and research. Assisting Dean Everett in this effort is a newly convened Dean's Advisory Board for the Arts and Sciences. It currently consists of eight alumni and parents, all of whom have demonstrated a keen interest in the role of arts and sciences at Bentley; one member is one of the parents who made the seven-figure commitment to women's leadership. The Advisory Board will hold its initial meeting in the spring of 2011 and its leadership will become critical to an NEH challenge drive.

Potential donors to an NEH challenge campaign fall into several categories to be approached in the following ways:

- Reengaging previous donors - An NEH challenge to fully establish humanities programming will excite established and potential donors because of its central importance to the university's strategic goals. This group is in the \$50,000+ range.
- Raising the sights of current major prospects – as described above, Bentley has enjoyed great recent success in securing leadership gifts. Other such gifts are in negotiation or the final stages of cultivation. The possibility of contributing to a successful challenge from the NEH should provide a powerful incentive to increase the gifts they are considering. These donors fall into the \$25,000 to \$50,000 group.
- Converting annual donors to major donors - Bentley has approximately 500 donors who contribute between \$1,000 and \$10,000 annually. This group may be converted to \$25,000 major donors by the prospect of contributing to an NEH challenge

There are other key groups likely to support this effort:

- Trustees and Trustees Emeriti: the Board of Trustees expresses its strong support for the challenge. Current trustees and the trustees emeriti understand that enhancing the arts and sciences, including a deepening of humanities offerings, is critical to the university's future.
- Parents: this group should appreciate the student-focus of many of our programs. To help achieve this, we will rely on the newly launched Parents Fund and Family Programs, the primary goal of

which is to build a peer solicitation program conducted by the members of The Parents Committee with other Bentley parents. The program has recruited new parent volunteers and oversees the assignment of new parents to the Major Gift, Leadership Annual Gift, or Participation Level Gift Cultivation Programs.

- Foundations: our recent history of fundraising suggests that at this point in time it will be feasible to seek one foundation request for \$150,000, in addition to five smaller requests of \$20,000 (totaling \$250,000). This may yield \$150,000 in awards and we expect to raise the remainder from a number of individuals who are enthusiastic about the kinds of offerings we propose.

Conclusion. Approaches developed at Bentley University could very well point to new formats that emphasize the vital relevance of humanistic inquiry to career-focused undergraduates and thus expand the base of support for humanistic teaching and scholarship. The prospect of undertaking an NEH challenge comes at a propitious moment in the university's history. An NEH-inspired endowment within the Valente Center for the Arts and Sciences will represent an unprecedented contribution to our intellectual life while simultaneously testifying to the humanities' indispensable place in professional education.