

University of South Carolina

Profile 2008

National Resource Center

- **Mission** - Our mission is to support and advance the efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education.
- **Strategic Goal No. 1** - Advance and support a global community of educators who promote student success, learning, and development.
- **Relationship to Division Goals** - This goal is in direct support of the Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support's goal number 3.
 - **Initiative 1(a)** - Provide professional development and education opportunities for the campus, state, national, and international communities to support a global community of educators.
 - **Action Plan** - Plan and host events that provide professional development opportunities in support of the mission of the National Resource Center, including national and international conferences and institutes.
 - **KPI** - A summary report of four conferences and one institute hosted by the National Resource Center in 08-09, including event descriptions, number of conference presentations, summary of content topics, and featured speakers.
 - **Progress/status update:** The National Resource Center hosted five events 08-09. These events include: the 21st International Conference on The First-Year Experience on June 23-26 in Dublin, Ireland to 363 participants (117 sessions on the program); the 15th National Conference on Students in Transition on November 8-10, 2008, in Columbia, SC to 271 participants (62 sessions on the program); and the 28th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience on February 6-10, 2009, in Orlando, FL to 1,296 participants (252 sessions on the program). When compared to an average attendance rate calculated from the previous 5 years, 08-09 conference registrations are down by 12-20%; a sure sign of the challenging economic situation.

The NRC also offered the the National Conference on First-Year Assessment on October 12-14, 2008, in San Antonio, TX to 181 participants (20 invited sessions on the program) and the Institute for First-Year Seminar Leadership on April 19-21, 2009, in Asheville, North Carolina to 65 participants (12 invited sessions on the program). While registration for the Assessment Conference was strong, the numbers for the Institute on First-Year Seminar Leadership were dramatically lower than our inaugural offering of the event in 2008, which had 191 participants (another indicator of tight economic times). A full listing of programs as well as slides, handouts, and materials from the 08-09 conferences are available at the "Presentation Center" page of the NRC website at <http://www.sc.edu/fye/events/presentation/index.html>.

- **Action Plan** - Develop new ideas for professional development institutes to be sponsored by the National Resource Center.

March issue of the newsletter (see NRC website for more information on the program and current recipients <http://www.sc.edu/fye/centerinitiative/advocates/index.html>). This past year, the NRC also sponsored the 2nd annual Undergraduate Student Fellowship Award. Five recipients were selected from 35 applications and nominations and were acknowledged at the plenary session on February 9, 2009, of the 28th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience in Orlando, FL. Program guidelines, nominees, and recipients for both awards are available upon request.

We are currently in conversations with McGraw-Hill Publishing Company to establish an "Excellence in Teaching" award and work out a contractual partnership for their sponsorship of the award. Pearson Custom Publishing has also expressed their interest in partnering with the NRC to offer an Excellence in Teaching with Technology award, but these discussions are preliminary. The economy and lack of enough advance time to adequately plan delayed the introduction of the McGraw Hill award this year. The plan is to be able to announce it at next year's annual conference in February.

- **Action Plan** - Pilot and assess a revised online conference proposal review process to create a more effective and efficient review of proposals.
 - **KPI** - A summary report including data drawn from an evaluation that will be sent to reviewers regarding the review process and the results of an analysis of the reviewer timeline to set an efficiency benchmark for the revised processes.
 - *Progress/status update:* Fifteen past proposal reviewers were asked to respond to a questionnaire regarding the conference proposal review process, to which 8 reviewers responded. Based on this feedback, the NRC made plans for the following changes to the process: add additional selection criteria to proposal review form; instruct reviewers to provide more constructive feedback; inform reviewers of what we value in a proposal and how selections are made; provide feedback to rejected submitters; and have more reviewers read fewer proposals. This revised process was pilot-tested with the proposal review process for the 22nd International Conference on The First-Year Experience. After review, we have plans to fully implement the revised process for the 2009 Students in Transition conference in the fall.
- **Action Plan** - Promote day rate and student rates on conference registration forms and marketing materials.
 - **KPI** - Establishment of benchmark attendance rates of undergraduate and graduate students as well as participation rates among professionals within driving distance of the conference venue.
 - *Progress/status update:* There was an increased marketing emphasis toward undergraduate and graduate students (students pay half price) and to a group of two-year and four-year institutions within a 200-mile radius of Orlando, the location of the conference. Registration records for the Annual FYE Conference include 15 graduate students, 36 undergraduate students, and 122 attendees within driving distance. A complete marketing plan for this meeting and a list of Florida institutions that received marketing pieces and are available upon request. This marketing approach to

saturate the local markets will be adopted for all meetings in the future.

- **Initiative 1(b)** - Produce resources on student transition, learning, and success in a variety of print and online formats.
 - **Action Plan** - Hire and train a new full-time editor to support the work of the publications area.
 - **KPI** - Résumé, hiring documents, and EPMS planning document for new editor.
 - *Progress/status update:* After a comprehensive search, the NRC hired Toni Vakos as the new Editor. Ms. Vakos is a graduate of the Denver Publishing Institute and has experience in technical writing and editing as well as non-fiction book editing. She began work on September 22, 2008. The NRC Editorial Projects Coordinator completed an EPMS planning document for the new Editor in early October, which included a list of reading to familiarize her with higher education and students in transition, and conducted a mid-year review in early March.
 - **Action Plan** - Publish revised guide for families of first-year college student in both English and Spanish.
 - **KPI** - Final print copy and marketing piece for both versions of guide.
 - *Progress/status update:* The 2nd edition of *A Family Guide to Academic Advising* was completed and released in Fall 2008. Sales figures as of March 31, 2009 show that the Spanish version has sold 1,383 copies and the English version has sold 1,658 copies. Marketing information on the publications is available on the NRC website: <http://sc.edu/fye/publications/bb/ffys/index.html#OS008>.
 - **Action Plan** - Publish monographs that address topics related to the mission of the National Resource Center.
 - **KPI** - Final print copy and marketing piece for 3 to 4 new monographs.
 - *Progress/status update:* The NRC released three new monographs between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. *Residence Life Programs and the New Student Experience* (3rd edition) (#5) has sold 304 copies as of March 31, 2009. *Graduate Students in Transition* (#50) has sold 150 copies as of March 31, 2009. *The 2006 National Survey of First-Year Seminars* (#51) has sold 442 copies as of March 31, 2009 and broke even one month after its release. Marketing information on the publications is available on our website: <http://www.sc.edu/fye/publications/index.html>.
 - **Action Plan** - Advance ongoing projects toward publication in the editorial projects pipeline.
 - **KPI** - Status report on editing work and production schedule for all publications in process.
 - *Progress/status update:* Approximately 10 publications are currently in development from early planning to first drafts. The Editorial Projects Coordinator maintains a schedule of production through Feb. 28, 2011 and an extensive publication projects status database, which includes active projects and topics of interest. Reports from both sources are available upon request.
 - **Action Plan** - Initiate new publications projects related to the mission of the National Resource Center.
 - **KPI** - Draft table of contents and draft publishing agreement for 1 to 2 new book-length projects.

- **KPI** - Total subscriptions for *E-Source* will increase 15% over 2007- 2008 levels.
 - *Progress/status update: A full marketing plan for E-Source was developed and implemented including, the production of a hard copy of our "best articles" for distribution in the packet of all attendees at our Annual conference; revising the E-Source order form for NRC website; and the printing and distribution of 25,000 marketing pieces. The results of this marketing campaign have been positive. As of June 30, 2008, E-Source for College Transition had 138 subscribers, of which 33 were institutional subscribers. As of April 14, 2009, E-Source has 158 subscribers, representing a 13% increase over last year. Institutional subscriptions have increased to 39, representing a 15% increase.*

In addition to generating new subscriptions, the 08-09 marketing plan focused on getting current subscribers to renew. For example, in Fall, we began sending last chance renewal reminders via e-mail to subscribers who had received their last issue and launched a renewal incentive (2 free issues) to subscribers who renewed before the end of the grace period. To date, *E-Source* renewals have not increased as a result of these efforts.

- **Action Plan** - Increase number of downloads of *E-Source* issues by communicating regularly with subscribers about account activation and management and the availability of new content.
 - **KPI** – Total number of downloads of *E-Source* issues will increase by 15% and download of new issues will increase by 30%.
 - *Progress/status update: In May, 2008, we began sending subscribers e-mail notification about availability of new issue that included a direct link to the issue. The message also included contact information if they had trouble accessing the issue. We have fielded about a half dozen inquiries each time from people who are having trouble logging in and have been able to help them establish access. Downloads of new issues has been inconsistent, ranging from a decrease of 66% of the January 2009 issue (compared to January 2008 issue) to an increase of 65% for the November 2008 issue (compared to November 2007 issue). On average, downloads for new issues of E-Source have increased a modest 2.5% when compared to downloads of new issues in the previous year. Access to all issues of E-Source showed a more substantial increase (15%) over last year.*
- **Strategic Goal No. 2** - Develop and practice methods of research and assessment that guide improvements for student learning, success, and satisfaction as well as better understanding of student transitions into and through higher education.
- **Relationship to Division Goals** - This goal is in direct support of the Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support's goal number 4.
 - **Initiative 2(a)** - Increase the research reputation of the National Resource Center.
 - **Action Plan** - Administer National Survey of Sophomore Initiatives in fall 2008.
 - **KPI** - Executive summary of study results to include survey response rate and major findings.
 - *Progress/status update: The National Survey of Sophomore Initiatives was launched on 11/3/08 and closed on 12/12/08. The survey generated a comprehensive dataset of over 450 responses. Data files have been cleaned and organized for analysis. Analysis and report of major findings are in progress and scheduled for*

completion in May 2009. An executive summary of findings will be posted to NRC website June 2009.

- **Action Plan** - Conduct a pilot administration of the eighth triennial First-Year Seminar Survey.
 - **KPI** - Report of pilot study results and response rate as well as the production of a revised survey instrument for 2009 administration.
 - *Progress/status update: We chose not to conduct a pilot administration of the 2009 First-Year Seminar Survey, because changes to the instrument were minor. A draft of the revised instrument was reviewed by Director and Associate Director in January-March 2009. A final draft was completed in April 2009. The content for the web-based survey is currently being loaded into the online tool by Student Voice and will be tested in late May, 2009.*
- **Action Plan** - Promote and administer a national research grant to promote research on issues related to student transitions.
 - **KPI** - A summary of the proposal and selection process for the sixth cycle of the Paul P. Fidler national research grant competition. The number of submissions for the 2009 cycle will increase by 60% from 2008.
 - *Progress/status update: The sixth cycle of the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant is still in process and will not conclude until late summer 2009. A full marketing plan is in place leading up to the July 1, 2009 submission deadline in an effort to meet our goal to increase submissions for the Grant by 60%. These efforts include the design and production of a marketing brochure to publicize the grant; 6,000 of these brochures have been strategically distributed via conferences and direct mail. Information and application for the 2009-10 competition has been posted to the NRC website. Further, the NRC Director sent 94 personal letters to 2008 ASHE participants who presented on FYE&SIT-related topics inviting them to submit a proposal for the Fidler Research Grant. Finally, we are sending information to graduate program directors, the NRC Advisory Board, members of the NRC network, and over 30 electronic advertising outlets, including graduate student listservs, from April-June 2009.*
- **Action Plan** - Continue to support the professional development of Paul P. Fidler research grant recipients by providing feedback on quarterly grants activity reports and assisting in the development of NRC conference presentations and publications.
 - **KPI** - Report on grant recipients' research progress and activities, conference presentations, and publications resulting from the funded research.
 - *Progress/status update: We were unable to generate a comprehensive report of the research progress and activities of former Fidler Grant recipients because there was no regular process for tracking their research activities related to the grant. As such, the Coordinator of Research, Grants, and Assessment maintained informal communication with the Fidler winners in 08-09, developed a process to track the progress and activities of former Fidler Grant recipients, and will oversee this process in the future. This process asks former winners for quarterly updates of their research activities related to the grant. A form asking them about any presentations and publications related to their Fidler-funded research was developed and will be e-mailed to the former recipients asking for a response within two weeks. A report on the*

winners' activities will be created and marketing opportunities will be explored based on their activities.

Although a formal account of their activity is not available, we are able to report that former Fidler recipients had a large presence at the 2008 National Conference on Students in Transition sponsored by the NRC in November, 2008, in Columbia, SC. Barbara Hofer, the 2006-2007 Fidler winner and Associate Professor of Psychology at Middlebury College, was the keynote speaker; Eunyoung Kim, the 2007-2008 grant recipient, presented her Fidler-funded research in a concurrent session; and the 2008-2009 winner, Maryellen Mills, was announced at the SIT conference.

- **Initiative 2(b)** - Create systems to track and support current lines of research related to the mission of the National Resource Center.
 - **Action Plan** - Develop a regular cycle of NRC survey administration reflective of the research agenda of the Center.
 - **KPI** - Development of a database to track survey cycle, timeline, and progress and a draft of the NRC survey administration schedule for the next five years.
 - *Progress/status update:* A schedule for future survey administration has been established and includes approximately 2-3 research studies each year. More specifically, in the remainder of 2009, the NRC will administer the First-Year Seminar Survey (a triennial survey) in fall. In 2010, a follow-up survey on seminar learning outcomes will be administered in spring to those institutions that responded to the 2009 survey and the senior capstone survey (last administered in 1999) will be revised and administered in fall 2010. We also plan to administer the triennial National Survey of Sophomore Initiatives in fall 2011. At present, several other survey projects will be determined and scheduled based upon the acquisition of grant funding and the continuation of the Student Voice contract through the Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support.
 - **Action Plan** – Revise and make accessible a web-based data services and research request form to support educators in their own campus research efforts related to student development and success.
 - **KPI** - A record of the number and nature of data services and research requests and the resultant list of frequently asked questions and corresponding answers, which will be posted on the research page of NRC website.
 - *Progress/status update:* The NRC has fielded approximately 5 inquiries for data access and 10-15 data service requests in 08-09. A new research request form is being developed by the NRC Coordinator of Research, Grants, and Assessment in consultation with the NRC leadership and select members of the Advisory Board. The final form will be posted on the NRC website after review by Director in summer 2009. Drafts of newly proposed policies, procedures, and agreements for research and analysis requests as well as data sharing are in progress. The Center plans to introduce a Linux database and e-mail notification system as technological support for the new data request process, but it has not yet been instituted. The objective is to have it up and running before Fall 2009. At present, the few research requests are highly individual, so the development of FAQ has been postponed until the new Linux system is in place and it will be easier to track questions.

- **Initiative 2(c)** - Seek granting opportunities that support and expand NRC research agenda.
 - **Action Plan** - Identify funding opportunities that support the NRC mission and research agenda.
 - **KPI** - Development of a database of relevant funding opportunities, a report of funding priorities, and a draft of a grant application timeline.
 - *Progress/status update: A database of funding opportunities for research has been created and is being continuously updated. The report of funding priorities and application timeline is complete and also continues to be updated. In consultation with the USC Research Development Office, 154 potential funding organizations were identified. However, 144 (93.5%) of those 154 potential funding targets either are not a match for the NRC mission or do not offer funding at the present time for higher education topics because of the economic downturn.*
 - **Action Plan** - Develop relationships with funding agencies and program officers.
 - **KPI** - A summary report including a contact list, record of correspondence with funding agencies and program officers, and a record of grants training opportunities and meetings and partnerships.
 - *Progress/status update: A list of contacts has been updated and a record of new training opportunities, meetings, and partnerships is complete and is being continuously updated. At present, we have developed relationships with 22 contacts at various funding agencies and foundations. Of the 10 potential funders, only one has been confirmed as a funding match and has available funds at the present time. Investigations into the other nine organizations are ongoing. A full summary report is available upon request.*
- **Strategic Goal No. 3** - Engage in constituent outreach and foster the development of relationships between the Center and members of our international network.
- **Relationship to Division Goals** - This goal is in direct support of the Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support's goal number 6.
 - **Initiative 3(a)** - Develop and nurture relationships with for-profit and non-profit companies, national and regional organizations, and other educational institutions that help higher educators meet the needs of students.
 - **Action Plan** - Continue the exhibition and promotion of National Resource Center products and services at events that provide the most exposure, the greatest return on investment, and the most potential for future collaboration.
 - **KPI** - A report that includes a calendar of exhibits, associated marketing efforts and cost, an estimate of dissemination and impact (e.g., number of brochures distributes, number of business cards collected), and recommendations regarding future exhibition and collaboration opportunities.
 - *Progress/status update: The NRC Coordinator of Public Relations and Resource Development conducted a cost analysis of exhibits in which the NRC has participated over the past two years. This information used to determine our participation in 2008-2009 exhibiting opportunities. Additional data from three exhibits in 2009 have been added to the report. A memo outlining the decision process for exhibiting opportunities in the 2nd part of the 08-09 fiscal year and their mission-critical status was prepared and disseminated to Stuart Hunter, Rico Reed, Barbara Tobolowsky, and Stacey Bradley. Similar analyses will be used to determine the most cost-effective exhibition outlets in the coming year. We*

hoped that technological means would have been established to allow for tracking of marketing materials disseminated through exhibits, but we have not had the human and fiscal resources to implement this technology (another development negatively impacted by the economic situation). As such, we are not yet able to track the effectiveness of exhibits in terms of the sales and conference registration leads directly generated. We anticipate that the future implementation of such technology will allow us to better connect exhibits with the sales and registrations they generate.

- **Action Plan** - Continue to provide exhibition opportunities at National Resource Center conferences for non-profit and for-profit companies and organizations.
 - **KPI** - 100% of available exhibition space will be filled with new and returning exhibitors at each of the three conferences hosted by the NRC.
 - *Progress/status update:* The NRC developed an “Invitation to Exhibit” brochure to promote exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities at our major conferences and disseminated 400 pieces. Sales of exhibit space followed historical patterns. Of the space available at the 2008 International Conference on The First-Year Experience on June 23-26 in Dublin, Ireland only two exhibitors were present. At the 15th National Conference on Students in Transition on November 8-10, 2008, in Columbia, SC, 14 out of 34 booths were filled (approximately 40%). We suspect that the number of exhibitors was low at the International meeting due to costs and location and that the difficult economy had an impact on exhibitor participation at both meetings. Fortunately, the 28th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience on February 6-10, 2009, in Orlando, FL (our largest conference) yielded greater exhibitor participation than we expected. We had to add booth space from our original plan to accommodate requests for exhibits and we finished the meeting at 100% exhibitor occupancy (a total of 64 booths were filled).
- **Initiative 3(b)** - Reach out to our Students in Transition constituency base by being more inclusive of issues and professionals dedicated to students at points of transition other than the first-year in NRC programs, products, and services.
 - **Action Plan** - Increase ratio of SIT to FYE proposals and presentations at our Students in Transition conference.
 - **KPI** - Summary of findings from an analysis of the number of proposals and presentations on transfer, sophomore, and senior issues to the number of proposals and presentations on first-year experience topics from the 2008 Students in Transition conference, which will yield a benchmark for future assessments of this ratio.
 - *Progress/status update:* The Coordinator of Conferences and her Assistant analyzed the number of proposals submitted and conference session topics on transfer, sophomore and senior issues for the 15th National Conference on Students in Transition. Of the 100 SIT proposals submitted, 11 addressed transfer transitions, 9 were sophomore proposals, and 9 were on senior students and issues. A total of 58 of the 100 proposals were accepted for presentation at the conference. Of those 58, there were 8 sessions on transfer students (73% acceptance rate), 7 on sophomores (78% acceptance rate), and 7 on seniors (78% acceptance rate) on the conference program. These data will serve as a benchmark for future analyses of Students in Transition conference proposals and programs.

information available and submitted to the NRC. In fact, the NRC incorporated a new, ongoing HESA practicum student position dedicated to support such online resource development. Two HESA practicum students provided content and resources dedicated to students in transition topics on the NRC website during the Spring 2009 semester. A special emphasis was placed on the overhaul and expansion of the senior-year resource pages and the creation of transfer year pages. These pages are being loaded to the NRC website Summer, 2009. While overhauling the senior-year page, a new template was developed and applied to the other pages to enhance the usability and consistency of these web pages.

- **Action Plan** - Inclusion of Students in Transition topics and authors in the National Resource Center's publication catalog and ongoing editorial projects.
 - **KPI** - Final print copy and marketing piece for new SIT publications and a publication development plan with SIT projects highlighted.
 - *Progress/status update: Monograph #50 focusing on the transition to graduate school was published in Fall 2008 and a new listserv focusing on this transition was launched soon after its release. Several other book-length projects dedicated to transitions other than the first-year (i.e., transfer students and sophomores) are in the publication development pipeline. A final table of contents for the new monograph on transfer students has been approved and the editors are currently confirming authors. This monograph is slated for publication early in 2011. Results of the 2008 National Survey of Sophomore Initiatives will be published in monograph form; a draft table of contents will be available in June 2009. A full Publications Project list, including SIT-related projects, is available upon request.*
 - **Action Plan** - Analyze current coverage of Students in Transition (SIT) topics in the *Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition* and *E-Source for College Transitions* to provide a benchmark for future assessment of topic coverage in these publications.
 - **KPI** - A report detailing the percentage of SIT topics that appeared in these two publications over the past five years relative to the total number of articles published.
 - *Progress/status update: Approximately 200 articles have been published in E-Source for College Transitions since its launch in August 2003. The majority of the articles focus on the first college year (68%) or the transition from high school to college (12%). The sophomore year receives the next highest amount of coverage (4%), while 20% of the articles dealt with topics that affected students at multiple transition points. Between 1998 (issue 10.2) and 2008 (issue 20.2), 90 articles were published in the Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students and Transition. The vast majority of these (89.4%) focused on the first college year. Other transitions received substantially less coverage: senior year, 3 articles; sophomore year, 1 article; and transfer transition, 1 article. Tables detailing content analysis are available upon request.*
- **Strategic Goal No. 4 - Optimize the impact of the NRC organizational identity in communicating the vision, mission, and values of the Center.**
- **Relationship to Division Goals** - This goal is unique to the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
 - **Initiative 4(a)** - Update and enhance the National Resource Center's brand and organizational identity.

effectiveness of the meeting and to gather information about possible methods of improving the meeting content, flow, and structure. From the assessment, we have been able to gather that the meetings were found to be helpful, beneficial to the NRC workflow and to have positively affected the production timeline. Specific suggestions for improvements (e.g., begin the process earlier, hold the concepts review meetings more consistently) will be incorporated into future meetings. A full report of survey responses is available upon request.

- **Strategic Goal No. 5** - Engage in effective use of technology to strengthen our connection with our constituency and to streamline the delivery and support of editorial projects, research, and professional development events.
- **Relationship to Division Goals** - This goal is unique to the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
 - **Initiative 5(a)** - Include the technological priorities of the National Resource Center in the University 101 Programs and National Resource Center IT strategic planning process.
 - **Action Plan** - Align the IT strategic planning process with the goals of the NRC Blueprint.
 - **KPI** - Report that integrates the goals resulting from the IT strategic planning process with the goals of the departmental blueprint.
 - *Progress/status update: A departmental Information Technology strategic plan was developed and adopted by the NRC IT planning committee, which included representation from all areas of the department. The plan was updated on March 9, 2009 based on feedback. The plan lists 42 projects ranging from high priority to operational (standard updates, etc.). The top priorities are: Ecommerce, creation of a new database for U101 to handle registration processes of instructors and peer leaders, and SharePoint (intranet) implementation for internal communication. The full IT strategic plan is available upon request.*
 - **Action Plan** - Identify and prioritize current and future technology needs to support the mission of the National Resource Center.
 - **KPI** - Departmental IT plan with National Resource Center goals and priorities highlighted.
 - *Progress/status update: Several meetings were held with representatives from each area of the NRC to identify the goals and priorities for that area. This input helped inform the development of the IT Strategic Plan. Further, the IT Planning Committee that helped develop the Departmental IT Strategic Plan and the IT Advisory Committee, which provides input to its implementation, include NRC delegates. The full IT strategic plan is available upon request.*
 - **Action Plan** - Development of an action plan to meet the IT needs of the National Resource Center.
 - **KPI** - Draft of budget and timeline for IT updates and implementation.
 - *Progress/status update: The departmental IT Strategic Plan includes a timeline for each of the 42 project as well as budget information. However, it is important to note that current budget constraints impacted the establishment of priorities and the way they were addressed. For example, the Director of IT investigated software options for conference scheduling and support, but costs associated with those programs is prohibitive due to budget*

constraints. In the interim, free and low-cost alternatives (such as Linux) are being developed for use.