

A Positive Move

Colleges increase maintenance and operations spending as a percentage of total budget in the current school year.

by Joe Agron

Colleges placed more of an emphasis on maintenance and operations (M&O) this school year by increasing the amount spent on M&O as a percentage of total budget. While still short of percentage-spending amounts from years past, the upward move is welcome as higher-education institutions attempt to address a backlog of deferred maintenance and rapidly deteriorating facilities.

According to *American School*

& University's 12th annual College Maintenance and Operations Cost Study, spending on M&O as a percentage of total college budget increased to 11 percent from 10 percent last year. School district spending on

M&O remained fairly constant at 7.5 percent of total budget.

Crunching the numbers

Data for the annual M&O Cost

Gas and electricity account for approximately 85 percent of the cost for all utilities.

TABLE 1

Maintenance & Operations Costs

(Expressed in **median** dollars per FTE student)

	All Colleges	%	Two-Year	%	Four-Year	%
Salaries	\$393.44	38%	\$288.19	40%	\$765.02	36%
Benefits (based on full-time only)	\$100.65	10%	\$68.03	10%	\$216.31	10%
Total Utilities	\$360.40	35%	\$235.53	33%	\$691.19	32%
Gas**	\$67.25		\$50.75		\$186.60	
Electricity**	\$214.68		\$146.23		\$292.29	
Gas & Electricity (subtotal)	\$295.97		\$216.07		\$454.23	
Other Utilities**	\$29.30		\$14.99		\$89.84	
Total Equipment & Supplies	\$58.50	6%	\$45.00	6%	\$148.20	7%
Custodial/Maint. Equip. & Supplies**	\$35.00		\$30.77		\$67.85	
Grounds Equip. & Supplies**	\$10.66		\$9.24		\$14.29	
Vehicle Maintenance	\$9.09	1%	\$6.63	1%	\$19.29	1%
Other	\$100.32	10%	\$69.63	10%	\$290.63	14%
Total M&O Budget*	\$1,022.40	100%	\$713.01	100%	\$2,130.64	100%
% M&O of Total College Budget	11.0%		11.0%		10.5%	

*Calculated from sub-totals (in bold).

**Based on fewer responses than the total due to schools that combine some of these categories.

TABLE 2

Maintenance & Operations Costs

(Expressed in **median** dollars per square foot)

	All Colleges	Two-Year	Four-Year
Salaries	\$1.70	\$1.89	\$1.54
Benefits (based on full-time only)	\$0.48	\$0.49	\$0.46
Total Utilities	\$1.78	\$1.78	\$1.77
Gas**	\$0.36	\$0.33	\$0.41
Electricity**	\$0.91	\$1.01	\$0.73
Gas & Electricity (subtotal)	\$1.40	\$1.48	\$1.26
Other Utilities**	\$0.26	\$0.24	\$0.29
Total Equipment & Supplies	\$0.35	\$0.32	\$0.35
Custodial/Maint. Equip. & Supplies**	\$0.18	\$0.18	\$0.18
Grounds Equip. & Supplies**	\$0.08	\$0.08	\$0.10
Vehicle Maintenance	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.04
Other	\$0.80	\$0.96	\$0.43
Total M&O Budget*	\$5.16	\$5.49	\$4.59
SF of bldg. maint. per FTE student	197	142	401

*Calculated from subtotals (in bold).

**Based on fewer responses than the total due to schools that combine some of these categories.

Study was collected via an in-depth questionnaire mailed in October to physical plant directors at two-year colleges and four-year institutions with no significant graduate programs. Recipients were asked to document various M&O costs for the 2005-06 school year.

The survey only targets two-year colleges and four-year institutions with no significant graduate programs in order to provide useful comparative data. Larger four-year universities with significant graduate programs are not surveyed because their costs and activities typically are so varied

The amount of square feet maintained per custodian jumped to 35,326 from 30,960 last year.

TABLE 3

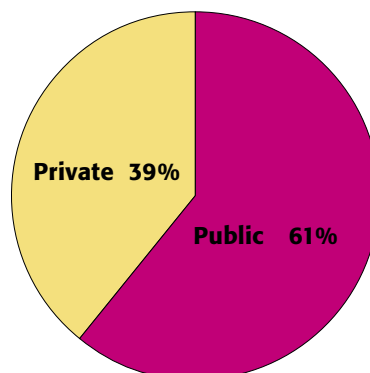
Median M&O salaries and number of employees at colleges

(Full-time employees)

Function	Salary	# of Employees
Administrative	\$51,060	2
Custodial/Housekeeping	\$24,000	13
Grounds	\$29,777	4
Maintenance	\$33,425	7
Secretarial/Clerical	\$26,583	1

Type of institution

(of survey respondents)



that results would be less useful.

The M&O Cost Study breaks out data by two-year, four-year and all colleges. The tables and charts found throughout the report detail median M&O expenditures per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student and per square foot, as well as the incidence of various maintenance practices.

Table 1 outlines median M&O expenditures per FTE student for categories such as salaries, benefits, gas, electricity, other utilities, custodial/maintenance and grounds equipment and supplies, vehicle maintenance and total M&O, and identifies the percentage of total budget colleges direct to M&O.

Table 2 details median M&O expenditures per square foot of building maintained for categories such as salaries, benefits, gas, electricity,

other utilities, custodial/maintenance and grounds equipment and supplies, vehicle maintenance and total M&O, and lists the square footage of building maintained per FTE student.

Table 3 highlights salary data for a variety of M&O job functions at two-year, four-year and all colleges, as well as the median number of employees for those functions. Among the titles included:

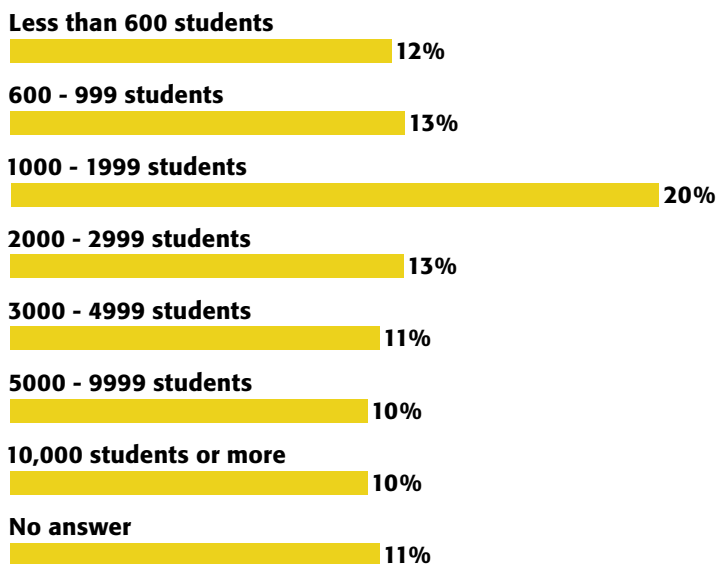
- Administrative:** Those individuals who have managerial or supervisory duties (does not include the overall director of physical plant).

- Custodial:** Those individuals responsible for building upkeep and cleaning.

Both two-year and four-year colleges increased their practice of outsourcing M&O services.

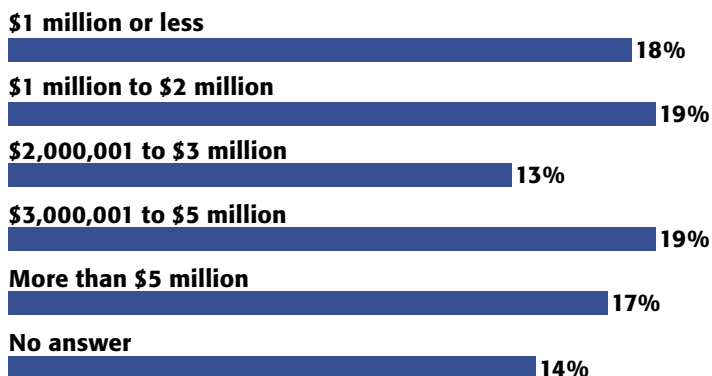
FTE enrollment

(of responding institutions)



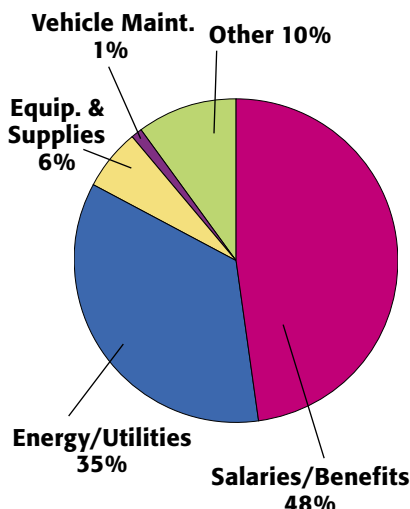
M&O budget

(of survey respondents)

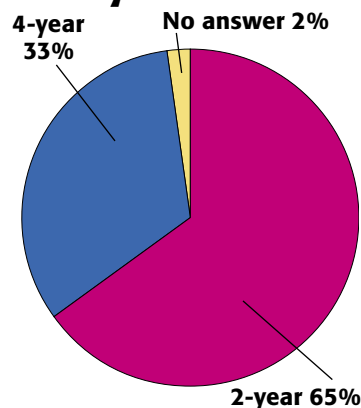


How the M&O budget is split

(median dollars per FTE student)



Type of institution responding to survey



Number of buildings at institution

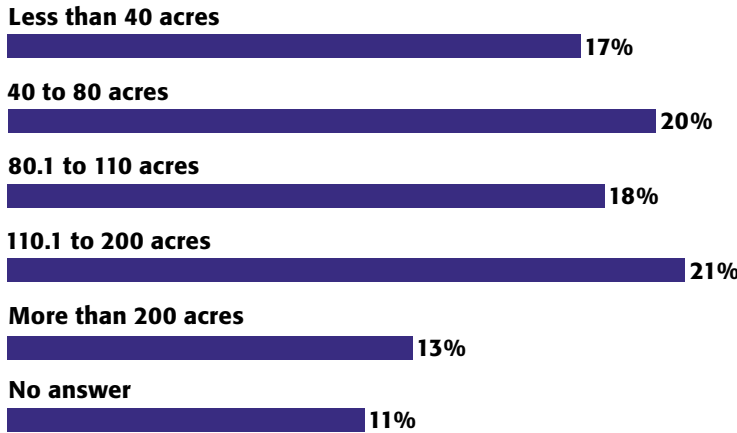
1 to 4 buildings	16%
5 to 10 buildings	20%
11 to 15 buildings	14%
16 to 25 buildings	22%
26 to 40 buildings	13%
More than 40 buildings	13%
No answer	2%





Total grounds acreage maintained

(by survey respondents)



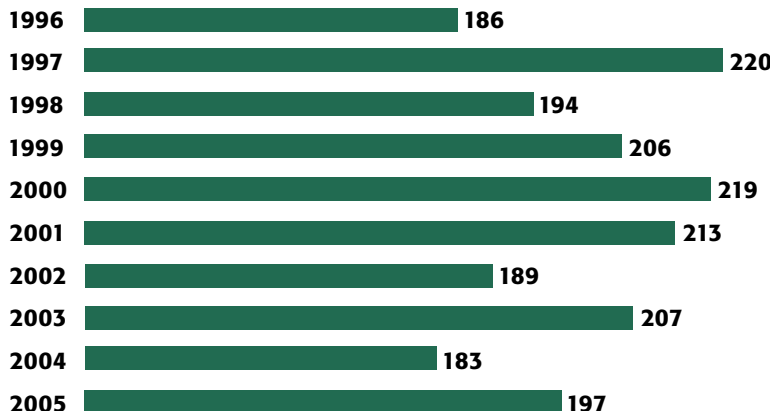
Square-footage details

Medians by institution type:

Category	All Colleges	Two-Year	Four-Year
SF of bldg. maintained per student	197	142	401
SF maintained per custodial employee	35,326	35,326	36,354
SF maintained per maintenance employee	74,714	74,714	75,418
Acres maintained per grounds employee	25	28	22
Total reported 2005-06 M&O Budget	\$2.37 million	\$2.19 million	\$3.01 million

Space maintained

Square feet of building maintained per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student at colleges over the past decade (in median square feet):



•**Grounds:** Those individuals responsible for landscape maintenance and upkeep.

•**Maintenance:** Those individuals who perform skilled jobs, such as plumbing, electrical or HVAC repair.

•**Secretarial/Clerical:** Those individuals who perform secretarial duties.

Additional highlights of this year's survey:

•The median M&O budget for all colleges is \$2.4 million (\$2.2 million at two-year colleges and \$3.0 million at four-year institutions).

•The median FTE enrollment

The median number of buildings on a two-year college campus is 13; the median number of buildings on a four-year campus is 23.

of survey respondents is 1,865 (2,500 at two-year colleges and 1,405 at four-year institutions).

•The amount of square feet maintained per custodian jumped to 35,326 from 30,960 last year. At two-year colleges, the number of square feet maintained per custodian is 35,326; at four-year institutions, it is 36,354.

•Square feet maintained per maintenance worker increased this year to 74,714 from 70,062 last year.

•The number of acres maintained per grounds employee remained constant at 25.

•The median total utilities

cost for all colleges is \$740,000. Gas and electricity account for approximately 85 percent of the cost for all utilities.

•The median number of buildings on a two-year college campus is 13; the median number of buildings on a four-year campus is 23.

•Both two-year and four-year colleges increased their practice of outsourcing M&O services. Twenty-seven percent of two-year colleges and 26 percent of four-year colleges use privatized services (20 and 22 percent, respectively, last year). ■

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Total gross area maintained of all buildings

(including corridors and other common and office areas)

(by responding institutions)

Less than 150,000 sq. ft.	12%
150,000 to 299,999 sq. ft.	14%
300,000 to 449,999 sq. ft.	17%
450,000 to 599,999 sq. ft.	13%
600,000 to 749,999 sq. ft.	13%
750,000 to 999,999 sq. ft.	10%
1 million sq. ft. or more	13%
No answer	8%

Square feet of building maintained (per FTE student)

All Colleges  197

Two-Year  142

Four-Year  401

The Original
Soap Free
Odor Free



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