

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Extended orientation courses have been shown to be a valuable means of increasing student retention. However, little is known about the extent of their use, their form, their organization or their content. The purpose of this study was to determine what is being done in today's two-year college extended orientation courses, who has administrative responsibility for them, if the form, organization and content differs among two-year colleges, four-year private colleges, and four-year public colleges, and whether the content of these courses consists of activities conducive to retention.

The data from the 1988 National Center for the Study of the Freshman Year Experience survey was analyzed for two-year, four-year public, and four-year private college responses. Both descriptive and chi square analysis were used.

Results indicated that while there is broad use of extended orientation courses, there is little consensus in their form, organization or content. Results illustrated that course content does not emphasize activities which parallel retention-related variables.

**A Comparative Study of Extended Orientation Courses
in Two- and Four-year Colleges**

by

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSES IN TWO- AND FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES

CHAPTER 1

RATIONALE

Over the last few years college administrators have become aware that the traditional base of students is dwindling. The children of the 1960s baby boom have come and gone, and the graduating high school classes since 1977, and for the near future, will be much smaller. Additionally, colleges are seeing an increase in the number of older-than-average (OTAs) and part-time students (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1988). No longer will many colleges prosper by merely attracting their fair share of the high school senior population. Instead, many colleges must now attract more students from a non-traditional population and retain more of the students who do enroll. Changing demographics at all postsecondary institutions, limitations in funding, and a growing demand for accountability are forcing colleges to ascertain what is essential, what works, and what programs meet stated institutional goals and objectives. Given a finite number of prospective students, and the costs involved in recruiting them, colleges are now looking for ways to increase retention rates for those students who do enroll.

Community colleges in particular are faced with severe challenges in terms of student retention. As the epitome of open-access institutions, community colleges provide for

the needs of a wide range of student aptitudes, attitudes, and interests. They have traditionally been concerned with the needs of the whole student, not only in the area of cognitive skill-building but also in affective learning as it relates to personal, social, and career development.

Between 1970 and 1983 the number of students at four-year institutions grew 22%. During the same period, enrollment at two-year institutions grew 112%, partially due to an increase in nontraditional older and part-time students (Stern, 1988). Although two-year college enrollment is projected to remain fairly stable from 1987 to 1997, fluctuating by only 200,000 students, the stability in numbers is estimated to be a reflection of a continuing increase in part-time students, and students 35 years and older (U.S. Department of Education, 1988).

Two-year colleges account for 53% of the total first-time freshman enrollment (AACJC, 1988) and of all postsecondary students, including upperdivision and graduate students, 37% are in two-year colleges (Snyder, 1987). The student population at community colleges is extremely diverse. Proportionately, community colleges attract more than their share of minority students, part-timers, older students, and others who would not be considered traditional students. Forty-six percent of the minority enrollment is at two-year institutions (Snyder, 1987). Sixty-three percent of all two-year college students are part-time while only 30% of four-year undergraduates are part-time (AACJC, 1987).

One clear result of being open-access commuter institutions is that community colleges are attracting an increasingly diverse student body which is most at risk for withdrawal (Astin, 1977). Thus, community college retention rates are significantly lower than at four-year institutions (Astin, 1977; Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). They are clearly most in need of programs which enhance retention.

Orientation programs, especially extended orientation courses, are gaining acceptance as a means of fostering retention (Beal & Noel, 1980; Boyer, 1987, and; Tinto, 1987). Such programming is seen as particularly effective in enhancing retention for high risk populations (Beck, 1980; Rice, 1985). While much has been written about the general orientation process and philosophy, there is a paucity of research concerning the basic organization, methodology, and retention-related content of extended orientation courses, particularly at two-year colleges (Deegan & Tillery, 1987; Keyser, 1985; Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). To date there has been little comprehensive research to indicate the breadth of course use in the community colleges. Moreover, it is not known if the organization, methodology or content of community college extended orientation courses is influential in retaining students who are likely to attend those colleges.

Researchers such as Astin, Beal, Noel and Tinto have identified a number of key retention-related factors. Tinto's (1987) work, based both upon his earlier research studies and on a national review of retention research,

remains one of the most prominent theories. Tinto recognizes that students matriculate with differing academic abilities and levels of commitment to both education and the individual college. A student's goal commitment refers to the student's willingness to work towards a specific educational goal. Built as it is on the student's past experiences within school, family, and society, goal commitment is a strong predictor of whether the student will stay or withdraw. However, Tinto feels that the interactive academic and social experiences the student has after entry into college can be manipulated to enhance retention. He views academic skill-building, mentoring, group building, increased interaction with faculty, and involvement in campus activities as factors which are of value in facilitating the student's academic and social integration into the campus environment, and thus of increasing retention.

That Tinto's (1987) model of academic and social integration is equally applicable to all postsecondary institutions has been supported by research by Pascarella (1986). However, recent findings suggest that Tinto's model may not be equally applicable in differing college settings or with non-traditional student populations (Metzner & Bean, 1987 and, Shirley, 1986). These studies suggest that retention rates for the academically superior student are most influenced by increased social integration. Conversely, for moderate or low academic ability students, those most likely to be found at commuter or two-year institutions, (Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986),

retention is more significantly influenced by academic, rather than social, integration. If colleges are designing courses for their specific student populations, then extended orientation course content should differ among two-year colleges, four-year public institutions, and four-year private institutions. The least selective, most diverse two-year colleges would then stress academic integration over social integration. Depending upon their level of selectivity, four-year public colleges would stress academic or social factors. And four-year private colleges, the most highly homogenous academically, would stress social integration over academic integration. However, no information is available to ascertain whether this differentiation does exist.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To date, there are no national baseline data on the status of community college extended orientation courses. It is not known how common these courses are, how they are organized or funded, who administers or teaches them, or whether any staff development is offered for them. Moreover, it is not known whether such courses contain activities of known retention value, or whether courses at two-year colleges differ from those offered at four-year institutions.

Such information is needed if college administrators are to better utilize extended orientation courses as a means of enhancing student retention. The information generated by this study can supply college administrators,

particularly community college administrators, with a framework for designing and administering more effective courses.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This study has four main purposes. First, it will examine the form, organization and course content of two-year college extended orientation courses. Second, it will compare the form, organization and content of extended orientation programs in two- and four-year institutions. Third, it will examine extended orientation course content for factors known to be of value within retention theory. Finally, it will investigate whether two-year, four-year public and, four-year private college course content differs in such a way as to reflect their dissimilar student populations.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The central focus of this study is to determine what is being done in today's two-year college extended orientation courses, who has administrative responsibility for the course, if it differs from that of four-year colleges, and whether such courses include student-appropriate activities known to be of value in enhancing retention. The specific objectives to be addressed in the study include the following:

- I. To characterize extended orientation courses in two-year colleges:
 - a. How many colleges offer extended orientation courses?
 - b. What is their form?
 1. How far into the term do they extend?
 2. What is the average class size?
 3. What is the mean total enrollment per college?
 4. Are the classes required or elective?
 5. Are they offered for credit, or not?
 6. Are they offered each term?
 7. What is their budget allocation?
 8. Is faculty development provided for the course instructors?
 9. If faculty development is available, is it required?
 - c. How are the courses organized?
 1. What administrative unit oversees the course?
 2. What administrative unit is responsible for course content?
 3. What administrative unit has the primary coordinating responsibility for the course?
 - d. What is included in the course content?
- II. To compare the form, organization and content of extended orientation courses among two-year colleges, four-year private colleges, and four-year public colleges.
- III. To determine whether the content of two-year college extended orientation courses includes activities which are consistent with retention theory; i.e.

activities which increase academic and social integration such as mentoring, group building, campus involvement, and academic skill-building.

- IV. To determine whether two-year, four-year public and four-year private college course content differ in such a way as to reflect their dissimilar student populations.

LIMITATIONS

The survey design can not assess the relative weight given to any course content variable. Thus, the frequency or quality of its use within the course can not be determined. Nonetheless, an appreciation of course content can be obtained.

The survey's course content variables do not conform to any known theory or existing extended orientation course. General grouping of variables will still enable comparisons.

In general, there is no single accepted definition for extended orientation courses. Respondents may be referring to a one day general orientation or to a year-long seminar course.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

AACJC- The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE- "Any institution accredited to award the associate in arts or science as its highest degree" (Educational Resources Information Center, 1987). The term 'two-year college' can be considered interchangeable with the term 'community college'.

EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSE- A course which extends into the term, preferably for a whole term, in which course content is designed to help entering students make the transition into the college environment and to enhance their potential for success.

INTEGRATION- Tinto's (1987) use of the term integration refers to the end result of satisfying interactive experiences the student has after entry into the educational environment. This includes both academic and social integration.

Academic Integration: The combination of a student's academic performance and his informal faculty/staff interactions which leads to satisfaction with the academic system, and thus to academic integration. This must take into consideration the student's incoming academic ability and its compatibility with the academic demands of the institution, as well as the institution's ability to provide formal and informal opportunities to enhance the student's performance and sense of academic well-being.

Social Integration: The combination of a student's formal extracurricular activities and more informal peer-group interactions which leads to satisfaction with the social system, and thus to social integration. This must take into consideration the compatibility of the student's lifestyle and values with that of the peer group, and the frequency and quality of student/peer interactions.

CHAPTER 2

ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

Orientation programs were seen by Dannells and Kuh (1977) as an attempt

to provide a balanced introduction to the constraints imposed by, and the opportunities available in, the collegiate environment as well as to enable students to more clearly define their educational purpose (p.103).

Today's orientation programs generally fall into three categories: the summer program, the pre-enrollment program, and the extended orientation course. Despite the variety of forms and methods for delivering orientation programming the mission is consistent. The Council for the Advancement of Student Services/Development Programs (CAS, 1986) described the mission of student orientation as providing for

continuing service and assistance that will: aid new students in their transition to the institution; expose new students to the broad educational opportunities of the institution; and integrate new students into the life of the institution (p.97).

Goals for orientation programs were set forth in a 1969 address to the National Orientation Directors' Conference by Erik Erikson (Van Hecke, 1977, p.22). His goals included:

1. To minimize the anxiety of the incoming student;
2. To maximize the new student's contact with his peers;
3. To bring the student into contact with relevant parts of the system and all members of that system;
4. To make the uniqueness of that student an integral part of the program (individualization within the system);

5. To build a continuing feedback process into the system;
6. To leave the student with a favorable set toward learning; and
7. To enhance in the student positive feelings about his chances of success.

Summer and pre-enrollment programs do offer a means of introducing students to the institutional environment but do not offer the same level of ongoing support as the extended orientation course. The decision to withdraw from college usually occurs within the first six weeks of the freshman year (Moore, Higginson & White, 1981), and the largest dropout rate will occur between the freshman and sophomore year (Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). The extended course can address issues which are not of immediate concern to the students at entry, but which become apparent thereafter. It can also offer to students the continuing support necessary to enhance their chance of success, thus increasing retention.

Gordon and Grites (1984) reviewed student development theories and recognized that "the primary purposes of a freshman seminar course must be defined by the needs of the students attending a specific campus" (p.316). Thus, they suggested that the orientation course could be an important tool for stimulating student development. Gordon and Grites offered six areas within student development to consider. These areas included:

1. Understanding the maturational changes students will undergo during their college experience and the roles they will play as students;

2. Clarifying why they are in college, identifying personal and work values, and establishing realistic career and life goals;
3. Obtaining information about academic programs including course, major, and graduation requirements;
4. Understanding the occupational implications of their educational choices;
5. Developing or improving student study and time-management skills; and
6. Becoming familiar with their college's procedures, resources, and services (p. 316).

Within the context of student development, Gordon and Grites categorized extended orientation course content into three areas: academic concerns, personal-social concerns, and career information and planning.

Extended freshman orientation programs are not new. The first such program began at Boston University in 1888 in recognition of the need for providing guidance to entering college students. In 1911, Reed College was the first to offer credit for an orientation course. This course addressed issues ranging from study habits to social and religious concerns (Gardner, 1986). By 1928 there were over 100 institutions offering extended orientation courses (Gordon & Grites, 1984). Typically these courses were offered for a term and, according to Drake (1966)

attempted to introduce freshmen to broad social, economic, philosophical, political, and scientific issues rather than to assist freshmen with personal adjustment to college (p.2).

However, some courses did attempt to address a wider range of student development issues as well as offer assistance in such areas as study techniques, library use, and vocational choice (Drake, 1966).

Far from being the exception, extended orientation courses have become an indisputable presence in American higher education. A look at the journal articles or at the conference offerings listed in the Chronicle of Higher Education, demonstrates that there is a rapidly increasing awareness and development of such extended freshman orientation programs. The 1984 American Council on Education Survey of 2,623 institutions showed that 77.8 percent of the colleges and universities indicated they offered some course to help students cope with college (El-Khawas, 1984).

THE RETENTION/ORIENTATION CONNECTION

"Students are educated, not merely retained until degree completion. A commitment to that goal is the core about which successful retention programs are built" (Tinto, 1987, p.182). Orientation programs, based on the affective and cognitive needs of the students, afford institutions the opportunity to not only increase retention, but to also positively affect student development. Effective orientation programs can provide the means for establishing personal linkages for the student into the social and intellectual life of the institution. They can also be used to provide early forms of assistance to students, before the student develops significant academic or social problems, and enhance retention (Tinto, 1987). According to Drake (1966):

Orientation, then, is potentially a means of communicating to students the essential goals of the college experience and of enhancing the students'

clarification of their own goals. It can be a first step in the right direction towards successful academic involvement (p.18).

Retention rates vary from college to college, course to course, and year to year. Nonetheless, the limited research to date does support the retention/orientation connection. According to Titley (1986):

It is possible, then, to deduce from available research that orientation is a retention activity worthy of significant institutional attention. The primary stated purpose of orientation - to ease the transition to college and to aid students during the initial adjustment period - are mentioned time and again in retention literature as factors that contribute to the staying environment of an institution (p.222).

Heading the movement toward extended orientation courses is the University of South Carolina and their University 101 course. With their continuing assessment/evaluation of course content and structure and their highly successful international, national and regional conferences on the freshman year experience, they have become recognized leaders in the field of extended orientation programing.

Starting in 1972, ongoing outside evaluation of the University of South Carolina's University 101 course have shown that:

participation in University 101 is positively correlated [$p < .05$] with significantly higher retention of freshmen, even when the freshmen taking the course have been found to be initially less academically qualified than those students who do not take the course (Gardner, 1981, p.69).

Other extended orientation studies have shown similar outcomes (University of California, Berkeley, 1980; Jones, 1984).

John Gardner (1988) stated "there is increasing evidence that freshman seminars do increase retention." He could think of only two institutions which, having studied the question, did not find increased retention. The number that he'd heard of where increased retention has been documented is now so long even he couldn't enumerate the list. He further states that "it's very apparent that there's continual growth in the number of institutions that are launching and refining freshman seminar courses" (Convention address).

Orientation programs and advising have become essential to any retention plan (Boyer, 1987; Flynn, 1986; Gardner, 1981; University of California, Berkeley, 1980).

Many of today's students are older, come from different vocational backgrounds, attend part-time, or are not as well prepared as students in the past. The 'new' students need more initial contact and guidance if they are to survive (Gordon & Grites, 1984, p. 319).

For while it is true that only 30% of the variance in the academic performance of students can be attributed to background factors, well-planned orientation sessions and effective academic advising can have a significant impact on the other 70% (University of California, Berkeley, 1980, p. 47).

Extended orientation courses do work and can positively influence persistence rates and mean GPAs (Allen, 1986; Jones, 1984; Kester, 1980; University of California, Berkeley, 1980). Intrinsic to the design of successful programs are two factors: a block of time, either concentrated in the summer or, preferably, spread over the weeks of the first term; and the establishment of ties between the student and other students, or to faculty/staff

(Faughn, 1982; Gardner, 1981 & 1986; Jones, 1986; Kester, 1980). These two factors encourage the student to become involved with, and integrated into, the institutional environment thus increasing the potential for retention. Students gain a sense of belonging and acceptance which can encourage both increased institutional and personal goal commitment.

Orientation research to date has primarily been detailed descriptions of individual programs (Titley, 1986). Although this is of interest to the individual institution, it does not increase our knowledge of the retention/orientation connection or of the relative importance of retention-related factors to specific student populations.

Finding ways to increase retention is of prime importance due to the changing student demographics. Beginning in 1977, the number of high school graduates has declined each year, and this decline is projected to continue until 1991 (Snyder, 1987). The total number of students graduating from high school was at its highest in 1977 when 3,155,000 students graduated. It has dropped every year since then, with the figures for 1985 at 2,683,000 (Snyder). Projections in 1982 estimated 2,340,000 students will graduate from high school in 1991 (Baldridge, Kemerer & Green, 1982). More recent projections estimate that there will be 2,320,000 high school graduates in 1991 ((U.S. Department of Education, 1988)).

In addition to the problem of decreasing numbers of 18-24 year-olds, Baldridge, Kemerer and Green (1982) also cited a slight decline in the proportion of students completing high school as prime reasons for the projected 25% decline over the 12 years. Out of every 1000 students who were enrolled in school in the fifth grade in 1972, only 744 graduated from high school in 1980 (Ottinger, 1984). Other statistics show high school graduates from 1980 to 1985 as being from 71.8% to 73.9% of the 17-year-old population (Snyder, 1987) or 64.4% to 67.1% of the 17 to 18 year old population during those years (U.S. Department of Education, 1988).

Of those students who do graduate from high school, not all will matriculate. First-time freshman college enrollment in 1980 was at an all-time high of 2,588,000. However, of the original 1000 students cited by Ottinger (1984), only 463, or 46.3%, went on to college in 1980. Using the census figures cited by Snyder (1987), over one-half of those students, or 53%, entered two-year institutions.

Contributing to the present enrollment problem has been the increase in the cost of college. The average tuition and fees at four-year colleges in 1975 were \$599, but by 1985 they were \$1,278, an increase of 113%. The same period saw two-year college tuition rise from an average of \$277 to \$748- an increase of 170% (Mahoney, 1986). College tuition nationwide has outpaced inflation since 1980, and it is anticipated that this will continue (Evangelauf, 1989). The increase in the amount of student financial aid

has not offset increased costs since from 1981 to 1986 there has been only a 37% increase in aid (Snyder, 1987).

Some college administrators hope to make-up any shortfall in enrollment by attracting more non-traditional students. The adult learner, presently a growing portion of the postsecondary population, is unlikely to fill the gap left by declining traditional-aged enrollment. They are more likely to have commitments to family and/or work which preclude full-time attendance, or even continuous attendance (Baldridge, Kemerer & Green, 1982).

Minority student enrollment, which has decreased 6-10% among Black and Hispanic students from 1976 to 1986, may well be affected by the increasing costs and decreasing financial aid availability. Minority students are also affected by the quality of campus life and the values found therein (Wright, 1987). In addition, Black, Hispanic and Native American students are also likely to face academic difficulties because their level of academic preparedness and verbal skills is lower than whites' (Astin, 1982; Wright, 1987).

It may be difficult for two-year colleges, seeking to maintain enrollment levels, to attract a larger share of the existing traditional student pool or attract students who would not have previously attended college. Additionally, colleges must contend with the issue of retention. Statistics for 1981 indicate that one out of every three entering freshmen will not be enrolled at that institution the following year. For two-year colleges the first year attrition rate is 46%. (Noel, Levitz & Saluri,

1986). Retaining these students presents a challenge nationwide.

ATTRITION FACTORS

The literature offers some suggestions as to the reasons for attrition. These suggestions tend to fall into one of three categories: factors specific to the individual student, factors specific to the educational environment, and interactive factors between the student and the environment. Monroe (1972), viewed the problem as one which lies with the individual student. He cited poor academic ability, low levels of motivation, lack of adequate goals, and financial difficulties as the main reasons for dropping-out. Themes of attrition for Noel, Levitz and Saluri (1986), also primarily focused on the individual student, include feelings of academic boredom and uncertainty about what to study, transition/adjustment difficulties, limited and/or unrealistic expectations, and academic unpreparedness. These same areas were similarly singled out by Dannells (1986).

Retention factors may also be specific to the educational environment. Adequate counseling, advising, orientation and tutorial assistance, small classes, low costs, faculty interaction with students, and a campus environment which encourages student involvement were cited as positive factors by Beal and Noel (1980).

Involvement of the student in extra-curricular or co-curricular activities positively influences social integration (Astin, 1977; Jones, 1986; University of

California, Berkeley, 1980). Predictive factors such as socio-economic level and previous academic performance may not be as important as the quality of the student's involvement in the campus and the degree of commitment to the campus (University of California, Berkeley). In fact, other studies point to the fact that those who are involved in an extended orientation program may have lower potential academic skills (as seen by prior GPAs, ACT or SAT scores) and will have equal GPAs with their peers who were not involved in the program but who had higher potential academic skills (Chapman & Reed, 1987; Gardner, 1986; University of California, Berkeley).

The critical factor in retention appears to be the quality of the interaction between the environment and the student. The environment, and the student's involvement in it, are the key attrition factors according to Astin (1977). Persistence in college is seen as a result of the degree of harmony between the student and the institutional environment by Cope and Hannah (1975) and Tinto (1987). Tinto (1987), in his review of national research, did not conclude that academic and financial difficulties were of major importance; he viewed attrition as a result of the interactive experiences the student has with the environment after entry. This theory relies heavily on the environment to support the needs of the student.

Attrition is the result of an extremely intricate interaction among a large number of variables - not just academic....Most students who drop out of college are not in academic jeopardy. The literature suggests that community/junior college students are four times more likely to drop out for nonacademic reasons than for academic reasons (Jones, 1986, p. 15).

Tinto (1987) explored the causes of departure. Those which rest with the individual have to do with the student's intention to stay, and commitment to an educational goal or to the specific institution. Those causes which he feels rest with the institution are the student-environment fit, adjustment, and academic ability. Thirty to forty percent of entering freshmen to some degree have reading, writing, or math academic deficiencies. But, less than 15% of departures are due to academic dismissal. Colleges may not be able to address causes of departure which lie within the individual, but they can address those which lie within the institution.

"Very little has been written that prescribes specific activities that institutions can implement to successfully reduce student attrition" (Jones, 1986, p.14).

Retention is the result or by-product of improved programs and services in our classrooms and elsewhere on campus that contribute to student success....We are finding that what really encourages students to enter and persist is the institution giving them the chance to think through their futures, to discover their talents, to grow and develop (Noel, 1986, pp.1-2)

Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the factors necessary for an effective program. Tinto's study in 1975, as cited by Pascarella (1986) and Allen (1986), developed the premise that the fit between the student and the institution is the major factor influencing retention/attrition. This fit is both social and academic and can be demonstrated through the level of academic and social integration a student has within the institutional environment. In a study of a two-day summer orientation

program, Pascarella determined that the program positively influenced social integration and the subsequent commitment to the institution. Social integration and institutional commitment, in turn, positively influenced the rate of persistence of the students involved. This research was limited to a fairly homogenous cohort and persistence rates increased only for those students who developed increased social integration and institutional commitment.

Pascarella felt that this program's effectiveness was limited and hypothesized that a program extended into the freshman year would have an increased and more direct influence on persistence.

A study testing Pascarella's reconceptualization of Tinto's model of persistence/withdrawal concludes that the combination of academic and social integration, especially as it affects institutional commitment, is the cornerstone of reducing attrition (Allen, 1986). A highly homogeneous student body may lessen the need for academic interventions because of the already high integration of the students to institutional academic demands (University of California, Berkeley, 1980). A high correlation is also shown for the initial intention of the student to persist (Allen) though this may be nullified by a poor fit between the student and the institution.

Tinto's original regression analysis research, and most of the subsequent efforts to validate his model by others (Terezini & Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Munro, 1981), surveyed students from homogeneous student populations enrolled in primarily residential institutions.

No relationship was found between pre-college academic traits and persistence. However, in studies of commuter institutions, pre-college characteristics, such as academic preparedness and goal commitment, were found related to persistence/withdrawal decisions (Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Pascarella, Duby & Iverson, 1983, and; Shirley, 1986). Williamson and Creamer's study (1988) also found that academic integration at two-year colleges did impact retention decisions while social integration did not. Their research also adduced that goal commitment was the strongest predictor of persistence.

Although Tinto feels that pre-college characteristics can be mediated through a college's social environment, in none of these studies was social integration found to be a significant discriminator in a commuter institution. Possibly, students who are doing well academically and who blend into the academically homogenous educational setting at a residential institution do not withdraw if the social setting is satisfying. Conversely, perhaps students who do not integrate academically and whose academic skills are not adequate find that even the most satisfying social setting is not sufficient to offset their academic difficulties. Certainly, in commuter institutions, such as two-year colleges, the proportion of academically underprepared students is higher than at residential institutions (Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). At commuter colleges, then, academic integration needs to be addressed before social integration.

The need for academic integration correlates with

surveys of entering students. Prior to their attendance, students themselves cite academic concerns above social concerns (Harris, & Anttonen, 1985; Kramer & Washburn, 1983; Moore, Higginson & White, 1981, and; Sagaria, Higginson & White, 1980). Even after entry students cite academic concerns above social concerns (Kramer & Washburn, 1983; Moore, Higginson & White, 1981).

In looking specifically at whether social and academic integration are of equal importance, Shirley (1986) found that the greater a student's level of academic integration, the lower the probability the student will be a dropout. Social integration contributed little to the persistence decisions of students with low to medium academic integration, but did significantly contribute to the decisions in the high ability group. "It does appear that social integration only becomes important after academic integration has taken place "(Shirley, 1986, p. 92).

The retention literature has provided suggestions regarding programs designed to reduce attrition. Of those factors which may be controlled by the institution, as opposed to the individual, the findings conclude that: (1) students need to have the academic skills necessary to succeed; (2) they need to know what the institution expects of them; (3) they need to be familiar with the various support services available; (4) they need to develop clear educational goals, and; (5) they need to feel a part of the institution, and not feel as if they are merely part of a vast head count. (Astin, 1977; Boyer, 1987; Chickering, 1981; Jones, 1986; Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986 and; Tinto,

1987)). The fulfillment of these needs leads to the social and academic integration advocated by Tinto. According to Tinto (1987):

If we have learned anything over the years in our attempts to improve student retention, it is that the earlier one attends to a problem or potential problem, the easier it is to deal with that problem and the less likely it is that that problem will manifest itself in the form of student withdrawal (p.148).

RETENTION AND ORIENTATION IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The community colleges

There are 1,068 publicly supported community colleges, and 154 private two-year, or junior colleges, in the United States today. Approximately 53% of the first time freshmen in the U.S. enroll in a community college (AACJC, 1988). The median student age is approximately 24, and the average age is approximately 29. The modal student is 19. Women account for 53% of community college enrollments. Ethnically, the student population is made up of 10% black, 6% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 1% Native American, 1% nonresident aliens, and the rest are Caucasians (Educational Resource Information Center, 1987).

Historically, two-year colleges were seen as a way to emulate the German model of higher education of the last century. The universities could restrict themselves to those students who wanted advanced education while two-year colleges, as expansions of local high schools, could provide further general education to those students not wishing an advanced degree. The first public two-year college was formed in 1901 as Joliet Junior College

(Gleazer, 1968).

California became a major proponent of two-year colleges, first creating a junior college in Fresno in 1910, and then passing legislation providing for funding (1917) and the organization of independent junior college districts (1921).

Walter Eels (1931), the Executive Director of the American Association of Junior Colleges, defined the junior college as:

a more widely diffused opportunity for two years of college in smaller units... an institution where closer contact is possible with teachers more interested in teaching than in research...an institution making transition easier from high school restrictions to university freedom (p.6).

This placed the junior college between the high school and the university. Eels (1931) viewed its roles as providing a vocational component which could be completed in two years and providing an excellent preparation for later specialization at a university. This dual role continues today, with a division between those who would see community colleges as primarily collegiate institutions offering transfer credit and those who would see it as primarily providing technical/vocational education.

The report, The President's Commission on Higher Education for American Democracy (1947), stated that if we are truly democratic then education should be for all peoples, not the few. It popularized the term 'community colleges' and called for the formation of community colleges which would be free of cost, exist as community cultural centers, offer continuing education as well as

technical and general education, under local control.

By 1948 the enrollment at public community colleges finally exceeded that at private junior colleges (Monroe, 1972). Monroe stated that

The rapid growth...after 1945 can be attributed to several favorable factors such as the burgeoning number of high school graduates clamoring for a college education, the growing demands of business and industry for technically trained employees, the existence of local communities which had both sufficient taxable wealth and population willing to support a community college, and most important a body of parents and citizens who aspired to have their children enjoy the fulfillment of a dream for a college education but who were financially unable to afford the luxury of an education at a private college or state university (p. 13).

The mid-1950s to mid-1960s saw the baby boom, expanding dramatically both the number of potential students and the scope of offerings within the community colleges. States encouraged the growth in community colleges as a means of taking the enrollment pressure off the four-year institutions while allowing four-year colleges to maintain high admissions standards.

Significant at this time was the creation of a master plan for higher education in California. This landmark legislation of 1960 called for admittance to higher education of any high school graduate or person over 18 who would be capable of profiting from the educational experience. It delineated the relative roles of the three levels of post-secondary education in the state: the community colleges, the state colleges, and the universities. It set admission guidelines for the universities and state colleges while implying open access enrollment for the community colleges. This gave official

recognition of the community colleges' place in higher education.

The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1970) call for action is still shaping today's community colleges. The provision of options included "transfer education, general education, remedial courses, occupational programs, continuing education for adults, and cultural programs designed to enrich the community environment" (p.17).

The comprehensive education found at today's community college involves far more than merely offering credit classes. An increasing number of classes are neither university-parallel nor transfer courses. Occupational, remedial and community education classes outnumber the traditional transfer classes. Quick to respond to societal needs, the community college prides itself on its ability to provide programs of economic and social value to its community. Contract courses between the college and area employers to increase employee performance and satisfaction are one example. Community education courses designed to meet the expressed needs of the community are another. Courses to acquire a G.E.D. or adult high school diploma, honors chemistry programs, literacy and remedial classes, short and long-term vocational programs, programs designed to update job skills, and classes for pure enjoyment such as ceramics or conversational French are all available at the comprehensive community college.

"Education is ..the means of providing a learning climate in which the greatest possible development of potential and fulfillment can take place" (O'Bannion, 1971,

p.7). The open door policy gives a message quite different to the community from that of the limited access university. At the community college, designed for the needs of the community, controlled by the community through governance and funding, everyone is welcome to expand his/her horizons.

The 1988 AACJC Commission report, Building Communities, looked to the future of the community college and called for a global partnership which includes all two- and four-year colleges, junior and senior high schools, and state and regional employers. This partnership would strengthen transfer agreements and develop school/college consortiums to promote educational excellence. It would develop and use increased educational technology, including satellite classrooms and teleconferences, to promote accessibility and excellence. It would develop alliances with employers to promote economic development, determine future work place patterns, and play an integral part in the training and retraining of the community's work force.

Additionally, the report called for strong institutional leadership and advocacy, campus-wide assessment of institutional effectiveness, an aggressive outreach plan for disadvantaged students, increased support for faculty needs, strengthened curriculum, assessment and placement of students, and a comprehensive first year program with orientation for all students which would include advising, career counseling and mentoring. It called for the reaffirmation of equal educational opportunity as an essential goal for all community

colleges. And it urged each community college to serve all age and ethnic groups equally.

Despite the open-access and egalitarian philosophy of the community college, critics would point to the continuing stratification of the educational system and suggest that there is no equality of opportunity. Burton Clark (1960), one of the earliest critics, proposed that there was actually a 'cooling-out' function embedded in the community colleges which channeled students towards more 'realistic' goals, thus lowering their aspirations and getting them to settle for "terminal" or vocational education rather than encouraging them to complete a four year degree. Zwerling (1976) built on this to say that community colleges are not designed for, the purpose of equal educational opportunity for all. Rather, they serve a diametrically opposed function of maintaining the political, social, and educational status quo through a socializing function and the reproduction of the social order. The reproduction of the social order maintains static social mobility rather than increased mobility. Thus, the high drop out rate is really not a problem of the educational system but rather a function of it. Community colleges, in order to afford equal educational opportunity for all, would need to provide financially accessible education which would range from the most basic reading, writing and math skills to that of comparable four-year institutions. This has never been their intention, nor are community college resources sufficient to meet these broad needs.

Astin (1977) concluded in his longitudinal research that the student who enters a community college intended to transfer to a four-year college is less likely to complete a four-year program than had the same student enrolled directly in the four-year institution. Astin's longitudinal and multi-institutional study (1977) concluded that the institutions with the highest dropout rate, as high as 81 percent, were two-year colleges. Cope and Hannah (1975) stated:

Although reliable data on community colleges are difficult to find...nationally it appears that approximately one half of community college students do not return for a second year and only half of the remaining students go on to complete the requirements for the associate degree (p.2).

Retention in the community colleges

In looking at four different community colleges Jones (1986) reported totals ranging from \$800,000 to \$2.4 million a year in lost revenue attributable to student attrition. Problems relating to attrition are now getting attention from administrators who previously paid little attention to the issue (Baldrige, Kemerer & Green, 1982; Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). Citing two different studies conducted in 1980 Jones (1984) found that over 85% of college presidents were concerned about retention. Unfortunately, fewer than 10% of these colleges had designed programs to address this issue. Whether this discrepancy between concern and action was a result of low concern or lack of information regarding effective programming is not known.

The issue of retention must still be one of growing concern. Looking solely at two-year public institutions, statistics show a 46% attrition rate nationally from the freshman to sophomore year compared to the 33% attrition rate found in four-year public institutions (Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). AACJC (1987) figures show that community colleges enroll a higher number of students from the lowest socio-economic quartile than do four-year colleges (47% compared to 23%).

Coupled with the changing enrollment patterns, these figures project a discouraging picture for the near future. Two-year colleges, even with a projected stable enrollment, will still have to adjust to an increasingly diverse, predominately part-time student body. The students who fall into any of the following categories are less likely to persist than those who do not, regardless of whether they attend two- or four-year colleges: (1) low-income students; (2) academically underprepared students; (3) students with uncertain academic goals; (4) returning learners; (5) commuting students, and: (6) part-time students (Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). These are the students who comprise the majority of the community college student population, and the projected increase in part-time and returning students will add to their numbers. For a variety of reasons, including their level of academic integration, they are less likely to become involved in the campus environment and more likely to withdraw from the demands of education.

As open-access institutions, community colleges enroll

all students, regardless of their past academic performance. Community college students, faced with the need for remedial education find that financial aid will not cover the costs of remedial courses. They are likely to be involved in jobs and family concerns which may overshadow or conflict with their commitment to school. And as commuter students they may be less likely to become involved in campus life or utilize the support services available.

The AACJC Commission report (1988) urged community colleges to give more attention to student retention while encouraging the continued diversification of the student body and support for disadvantaged students. Offering these students traditional programs and services has in the past resulted in their appearing less able, less intellectually oriented, and less motivated to continue in higher education. New philosophies, goals, missions, approaches and services are required to assist these students in reaching their full developmental potential. Programs designed to increase retention need to be in place. Students who withdraw not only lose an opportunity to reach their developmental potential, but society as a whole loses the contributions they might have made, had they only had the opportunity to develop the necessary skills.

It would be helpful if institutions could look at the available research and find a model for their programs. But, Levitz and Noel (1987) stated, "retention research has often been narrowly conceived, both conceptually in the

literature and operationally on campuses" (p.350). The most extensive research has been the three year study of 28 northern California community colleges. The Nor-Cal study included a questionnaire to identify potential dropouts and then looked at various techniques for reducing attrition (Kester, 1980). Each college designed a different program and there were no pre-determined definitions for dropout or other program variables. None-the-less, all of the programs showing significant increases in retention have a common factor- increased involvement of the student, through mentoring, advising and campus activities. The attrition research carried out by Williamson and Creamer (1988) addressed the question of interacting variables on persistence decisions of commuter students. In referring to the definition of a persister, they concluded that it may be inappropriate to compare the outcomes of their study with any other since their variables may markedly differ from those used by other researchers. The lack of a generally accepted, operational definition of a dropout, the lack of specific recommendations needed by institutions with differing student populations, and flawed conception of much of the student retention work are cited by Tinto (1987) as arguments that the research has not gone far enough.

In the next decade, the greatest need of institutions with research capabilities may be not only to cope with change, but also to influence change through the systematic generation and presentation of data (Carter, 1986, p.85).

The call for further research at the two-year institutions has come from a broad spectrum of sources. Speaking to the student development professionals at community colleges, Keyser (Ed., 1985) said that at the local level they should "design and implement research strategies to track student progress from entry to post-enrollment to reentry"(p.36). At the national level they should "collect and disseminate information on comprehensive recruitment and retention plans" (p.36).

Deegan and Tillery (1987) also called for research at the local and national levels designed to answer which programs work, and why. Their first priority was "a need to consolidate and integrate knowledge about outcomes of a community college education" (p.37). And their sixth priority stated "there is a need for a major study of student services programs in community colleges" (p.39).

Orientation programs in community colleges

Speaking about the future, McNairy (Convention address, 1988) urged colleges

to examine if one's current mission prepares students to not only strengthen and enhance their skills and broaden their knowledge of the world around them, but also enables them to better understand themselves, their own values and culture, and the value and culture of others.

Recently the AACJC Commission Report (1988) urged every college to develop a comprehensive orientation program for all full-time, part-time, and evening students as a part of their retention efforts.

Though much has been written about orientation programs and their relationship to retention, most of the work has been done at four-year institutions. There are few studies of two-year institutions, or specifically of community colleges with their diverse student needs. The 1986 NODA (National Orientation Directors' Association) survey of member institutions showed 287 institutions responding, only 22 of which were two-year institutions. Two years later, the 1988 NODA survey showed a doubling of the two-year college response. It appears that many of these institutions have not yet become heavily involved in this issue, although the number is rising.

Of the literature generated by two-year institutions, the correlation between extended orientation courses and retention persists. Comparative studies, using control groups, such as those done by Beck (1980), Donnangelo and Santa Rita (1982), Duncan (1985), Jones (1984) and Rice (1984) reported increased retention rates of 9% to 22% for students enrolled in extended orientation courses.

Tinto (1987) stated that the person-environment fit is not as useful in describing the roots of student departure for students at two-year colleges as it is for those at four-year colleges. Tinto stated that students at community colleges are more likely to be influenced by forces external to the institution such as family, the demands of a job, and social norms and values. For these students their intentions/commitments are of more importance.

This is not to say that they can not be helped

utilizing the approaches stated above. Although colleges may not be able to change the level of goal commitment a student brings to college, outreach programs into the secondary schools may have some impact. Institutional commitment may be enhanced prior to entrance by similar outreach programs.

Research has shown that increased retention is a result of increased student involvement and integration in the educational environment. But for two- year students, members of a very heterogeneous population, who are likely to encounter some academic difficulty and who may have commitments outside of college to family and/or work, programs need to be designed to offer them the maximum level of support. Extended orientation courses, designed around the needs of the students, can supply the sense of well-being and belonging essential to retention as well as addressing academic and social integration needs.

Course content needs to be assessed in light of Shirley's (1986) theory. Shirley cited the strong need for academic integration, and a lesser need for social integration for the majority of the students at two-year institutions.

Community colleges, while not neglecting to address the personal-social needs of students, should provide a strong academic skill building component in their retention efforts.

It's apparently being concluded by many of us that it's not just enough to simply promote the intellectual development of students even though that is our primary mission in colleges and universities. Instead, we have to address all the developmental aspects that these students bring with [to] us (Gardner, Convention address, 1988)

To date, however, there is a paucity of research on the content, methodology and organization of extended orientation courses and their relationship to retention (Rice, 1984). Moreover, there is little research which indicates the scope of extended orientation programming in the community colleges. It is not known how widespread the practice is, how the courses are run, which administrative units oversee them, how much money is expended, the composition of course content, or whether these programs generally do increase retention. Specific questions need to be answered. Are community colleges designing course content which reflects retention theory? What kinds of budgets and staff development programs are found in community college extended orientation programs? How many students are being enrolled? Is there any difference between courses offered in two-year colleges and those offered in four-year public or private colleges? If so, does that difference reflect Shirley's (1986) contention that academic integration is of greater importance than social integration in commuter institutions? In order to plan for the future there must be a knowledge of what exists today, what works, and how the programs function.

CHAPTER 3

BACKGROUND

A recognized leader in the field of extended orientation programming, The University of South Carolina hosts international, national and regional conferences each year on The Freshman Year Experience. The faculty and staff of the University of South Carolina's University 101 course, now in its 17th year, have knowledge and skills acquired through years of working with students in the course and with professionals at the conferences. In 1988 the University of South Carolina conducted its first national survey under the auspices of the newly formed National Center for the Study of the Freshman Year Experience, which utilizes the talents and acknowledged expertise of the national authorities on student development. The Center sought to gather information on the extent, type, and variables associated with extended orientation courses in colleges throughout the country.

THE INSTRUMENT

The survey, entitled Survey on Freshman Seminar Programs, and accompanying letter (see Appendix), was designed by the faculty and staff of University 101, in conjunction with the National Center for the Study of the Freshman Year Experience. It consisted of 62 questions asking for both quantitative and qualitative data. It was sent in June 1988 to 3168 postsecondary institutions and was addressed to the chief academic officer of each

institution. There were a total of 1848 responses for a 58.3% response rate.

A major objective of the survey was to define the term 'freshman seminar course', which in this study is called an extended orientation course. The survey focused its inquiries on six major areas: (1) demographic data; (2) the existence or non-existence of an extended orientation course; (3) the content of such course; (4) the administrative responsibility and academic content of the course such as credit/non-credit and elective/required; (5) the goals, objectives, and assessment of the course; and (6) the existence and content of faculty development efforts associated with the course.

METHODS

The survey questionnaire allowed respondents to place their institution in one of eight institutional categories: public or private professional college; public or private university; public or private liberal arts college; two-year technical/community college; or, "other". For the purposes of this study the responses from the professional colleges and from those marking 'other' were not used. Public university and liberal arts college replies were combined into a category entitled 'public four-year', and private university and liberal arts college replies were combined into a category entitled 'private four-year'. The two-year technical/community college replies were assumed to be reflective of the full range of two-year colleges, and were labeled 'two-year'. Thus, this study examined the

replies from three categories of institutions: public four-year; private four-year; and, two-year institutions.

There were a total of 352 public four-year college responses, 539 private four-year college responses, and 489 two-year responses.

The information gathered from the survey was used to answer four basic questions: 1) What is the form, organization and course content of two-year college extended orientation courses?; 2) What differences are there among courses offered by two-year colleges and those offered by four-year public or private institutions?; 3) Does course content reflect activities of known retention value?, and; 4) Does two-year, four-year public, and four-year private college course content reflect Shirley's (1986) theory of differing academic and social integration needs?

For question #1, examining the form, organization and content of community college extended orientation programs, descriptive statistics of means and percentages were used to examine the following variables:

1. The size of the undergraduate enrollment of the respondents: <1000, 1-5000, 5-10000, or >10000, in percentages.
2. The percent of colleges having an extended orientation course.
3. The form of the courses.
 - a. The percent of the courses which are for credit, or non-credit.
 - b. The percent in which grading is pass/fail as opposed to letter grades.
 - c. The percent of the courses which are elective as opposed to required.

- d. The percent of colleges which offer their course every term.
 - e. The percent of colleges which have offered their course for < 2 years; for 2-5 years; or > 5 years.
 - f. The percent of colleges where the course length is 1 day-1 week; >1 week-1 month; >1 month-3 months; 1 term; 1 year; or other.
 - g. The mean total course enrollment per college.
 - h. The percent of colleges having an average class size of <20; 20-40; or >40 students.
 - i. The percent of colleges having budget allocations for the course of <\$25,000; \$25-50,000; \$50-75,000; \$75-100,000; or >\$100,000.
 - j. The percent of colleges offering faculty development to the course instructors.
 - k. Of those colleges which do offer faculty development, the percentage in which faculty development is required of the instructors.
4. The organization of these courses.
- a. The percent in which the organizational unit having coordinating responsibility for the course is faculty; academic administration; student affairs; or other.
 - b. The percent in which the administrative entity responsible for course content is faculty; academic administration; student affairs; or other.
 - c. The percent in which the organizational unit the course coordinator reports to is an academic department or college; academic administration; student affairs; or other.
5. For each content activity, the percent of colleges which include it in course content, and its ranking among the other content activities.

For question #2, examining any differences in form, organization or course content among courses offered by two-year, four-year public, and four-year private institutions, the same descriptive item analysis occurred

as for the previous question. Chi-square was used to determine if there were any significant differences at the .05 level among institutional types. The following null hypotheses were reviewed:

H_{0_1} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion of institutions offering an extended orientation course.

H_{0_2} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which offer the course for credit.

H_{0_3} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which offer the course for letter grades vs. pass/fail.

H_{0_4} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which view the course as required.

H_{0_5} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which require the course for freshmen.

H_{0_6} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the length of time they have offered an extended orientation course.

Ho₇: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which offer the course every term.

Ho₈: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the length of the extended course.

Ho₉: There will be no significant difference among the institutional types in average class size for the course.

Ho₁₀: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the allocated course budget.

Ho₁₁: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which have a faculty development program for the course.

Ho₁₂: Of those having a faculty development program, there will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which require participation in the faculty development program for the instructors of the course.

Ho₁₃: There will be no significant difference among institutional types as to which organizational unit has coordinating responsibility for the course: faculty; academic administration; student affairs; or other.

Ho₁₄: There will be no significant difference among institutional types as to which organizational unit has content responsibility for the course: faculty; academic administration; student affairs; or other.

Ho₁₅: There will be no significant difference among institutional types as to which organizational unit the course coordinator reports to: an academic department or college; academic administration; student affairs; or other.

Ho₁₆: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion of colleges which include any course content activity.

Question #3 addressed whether community college extended orientation course content is consistent with factors of known retention value as defined by Tinto (1987). Course content was assessed to determine the prevalence of the content activities in the list below. Since the course content activities were not taken from a universally accepted list, and there may be differences of opinion regarding item interpretation, thus there was the possibility of experimenter bias in choosing responses which accurately reflect student involvement. The items in this category have been chosen by the author to be compatible with Tinto's (1987) theory, leading to either social or academic integration (Tinto).

Course content was divided into three categories:

academic concerns; personal-social concerns; and career information and planning. The use of these variables is suggested by Gordon & Grites (1984). The category of academic concerns was further broken into general knowledge, skills, and affective development. All survey variables fall into one of these categories.

Academic concerns:

General knowledge-

- introduction to the liberal arts
- understanding professors
- general orientation to the campus
- general orientation to higher education problems
- introduction to instructor's discipline
- understanding the organization of academic disciplines
- understanding the "connections" of general education/core requirements

Academic skills-

- study skills
- reading
- consumer skills for the educational system
- academic planning
- library skills
- writing
- critical thinking

Affective concerns-

- stress management
- campus involvement
- managing test anxiety
- the value of college

Personal-social concerns:

group building	alcohol and drugs
human sexuality	community involvement
values clarification	sexism
money management	social skills
health and nutrition	relationships
leadership	spirituality

Career information and planning:

- career planning

Social integration factors include those content activities which influence the student's level of

involvement in the social environment of the campus. Academic integration factors include those which influence or enable the student's involvement in the academic environment of the college. Tinto (1987) suggests using a broad range of activities to increase both the academic and social integration of students.

Those activities which were included by 50% or more of the colleges comprise their core content activities. This core was reviewed to determine if it reflected this balance between academic and social concerns.

Question #4 addresses whether two-year, four-year public, and four-year private college extended orientation course content reflects Shirley's (1986) theory of differing academic and social integration needs. Course content was broken into the same categories, using the same items, as in question #3.

Course content for each institutional type was assessed to determine the types of activities commonly seen in their courses. If course content reflects Shirley's (1986) theory, two-year colleges should incorporate a broad range of academic activities while four-year private college courses should include more social activities. The four-year public colleges should reflect a balance between the two extremes.

CHAPTER 4

DATA COMPILATION

The focus of this study was to investigate what is being done in two-year college extended orientation courses, if their usage differs from that of the four-year colleges, and if their content is consistent with retention theory. Using data from The National Center for the Study of the Freshman Year Experience's national Survey on freshman seminar programs, four questions were addressed.

- 1) What is the form, organization and course content of two-year college extended orientation courses?
- 2) What differences are there, in terms of form, organization and course content, among courses offered by two-year colleges and those offered by four-year public and four-year private colleges?
- 3) Does two-year college course content include factors of known retention value as defined by Tinto (1987)?
- 4) Does course content found in two-year, four-year public, and four-year private colleges reflect Shirley's (1986) theory of differing academic and social integration needs?

This study included a total of 352 public four-year, 539 private four-year, and 489 two-year college responses. Descriptive statistics of mean, mode, percentages and ranks were used to express the data. In order to determine any significant differences among two-year, four-year public and, four-year private college responses a total of 46 chi square tests were done, 28 of which showed significance at

<.05. Significance was found in eight questions relating to course form, two questions relating to organizational administration, and 18 of the 31 content activities.

The population for each question was either the total number eligible to answer the question or the total number of question responses. For some questions, the number of responses exceeded the expected population. When this occurred it was indicated by () surrounding the totals.

INSTITUTIONAL SIZE OF TWO-YEAR COLLEGE RESPONDENTS

The size of the colleges responding was examined and compared to the total population of two-year colleges in America (Table 1). American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) figures were used to compare responding institutions with national size data. The AACJC figures given were compiled from the 1988 AACJC membership directory (Palmer, 1988).

TABLE 1

Two-year college institutional size
as defined by undergraduate FTEs

INSTITUTIONAL SIZE	Survey N	Percent Responding	AACJC N	Percent AACJC
<1000	115	23.5%	139	15.1%
1-5000	268	54.8%	493	53.5%
5-10000	61	12.5%	165	17.9%
>10000	38	7.8%	124	13.5%
Non-respondents	7	1.4%		
Total	489	100%	921	100%

A slightly higher percentage of respondents came from colleges having less than 1000 FTEs, and a slightly lower percentage came from colleges having more than 5000 FTEs than was found in the national population.

FREQUENCY OF USE OF EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSES IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

The frequency of use of extended orientation courses in two-year colleges is illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Frequency of use of extended orientation courses
in two-year colleges

<u>Offer freshman seminar</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
YES	332	67.9%
NO	144	29.4%
Non-respondents	13	2.7%
Total	489	100%

Nearly 68% of the two-year colleges responding indicated that they offered such a course. El-Khawas' 1984 national survey indicated that nearly 78% of all postsecondary institutions offer such a course. However, no specific data were available for two-year colleges in the El-Khawas survey.

THE FORM OF EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSES
IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

The form of community college extended orientation courses was seen in responses to 12 survey items as illustrated in Tables 3 to 14.

TABLE 3
Grading procedure for two-year college
extended orientation courses

<u>GRADING</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Pass/Fail	44	13.3%
Letter grades	113	34.0%
Non-respondents	175	52.7%
Total	332	100%

Over one-half of the institutions did not respond to this question, but of the 157 respondents 113, or 72%, use letter grades. The criteria used for determining grades is not known.

TABLE 4

Percentage of two-year colleges
offering their course for credit

<u>TYPE OF CREDIT</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
College credit	144	43.4%
Non-credit	13	3.9%
Non-respondents	175	52.7%
Total	332	100%

There was a high non-response rate to this question. Table 4 shows that, of the 157 respondents, 144, or nearly 92%, offer their course for credit. It is not known if courses offered for credit differ in form, organization, content, or student success from those not offered for credit.

TABLE 5

Percentage of two-year college extended orientation
credit courses which are elective

<u>COUNTED AS</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Elective	112	77.8%
Requirement	43	29.9%
Total	(157)	(107.6%)

Although only 144 colleges indicated that their course was for credit, 157 colleges responded to this question. Of the 144 respondents, 72% offer the course as an elective.

TABLE 6

Percentage of two-year colleges which required their extended orientation course for all freshmen

<u>REQUIRED FOR FRESHMEN</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
YES	106	31.9%
NO	214	64.5%
Non-respondents	12	3.6%
Total	332	100%

Table 6 shows that only 32% of the two-year college respondents require their extended orientation course for freshmen. Comparing Table 5 & 6, 43 respondents indicated that their course is a credit-bearing requirement while 106 respondents indicated their course is a freshman requirement. The difference presumably lies with those schools which require their course for freshmen but do not offer the course for credit.

TABLE 7

Length of time two-year colleges have been offering extended orientation courses

<u>LENGTH OF TIME</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
<2 years	99	29.8%
2-5 years	125	37.7%
>5 years	103	31.0%
Non-respondents	5	1.5%
Total	332	100%

There is a fairly even spread among responses, with a slightly greater percentage of two-year colleges

indicating that their courses have been offered for two to five years. Extended orientation courses have been offered for more than 80 years. The comparatively short time these courses have been offered at two-year colleges reflects either new course designs which have been in existence for less than five years, or recent inclusion of these courses in two-year college curriculum.

TABLE 8

Percentage of two-year colleges offering an extended orientation course every term

<u>COURSE OFFERED EVERY TERM</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
YES	276	83.1%
NO	51	15.4%
Non-respondents	5	1.5%
Total	332	100%

Eighty-three percent of all two-year respondents offer an extended orientation course every term, presumably in response to the enrollment of new students every term.

TABLE 9

The length of two-year college extended orientation courses

<u>COURSE LENGTH</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
1 day to 1 week	24	7.2%
> 1 week to 1 month	9	2.7%
> 1 month to 3 months	49	14.8%
1 quarter/semester/term	209	63.0%
2 semesters/3 quarters/ 2 terms	2	.6%
Other	6	1.8%
Non-respondents	33	9.9%
Total	332	100%

Of those colleges which responded to this question, 70% offer their extended orientation course for one term. Table 9 breaks down the other responses, with 27% of the two-year colleges responding to this question indicating they offer their course for less than one term, and 8% indicating their course lasts only one week or less.

TABLE 10

The total enrollment in two-year college
extended orientation courses

<u>TOTAL COURSE ENROLLMENT</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
1-50	45	13.6%
51-100	47	14.2%
101-200	45	13.6%
201-300	34	10.2%
301-500	42	12.6%
501-1000	33	9.9%
>1000	11	3.3%
Non-respondents	75	22.6%
Total	332	100%

Using Table 10 data, the mean two-year college total extended orientation course enrollment for the respondents is 101-200 students. The mean college size for the respondents, from the data in Table 1, is 1-5000 FTEs. Therefore, it appears that only a small proportion of the entering student population takes these courses.

TABLE 11

The average size of two-year college
extended orientation classes

<u>AVERAGE CLASS SIZE</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
<20	126	38.0%
20-40	31	9.3%
>40	162	48.8%
Non-respondents	13	3.9%
Total	332	100%

Responses indicate that the average extended orientation class size in nearly 50% of the colleges is

greater than 40 students, a large number of students for a developmental class. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents indicate a class size of less than 20 students.

TABLE 12

The budget allocation for two-year college extended orientation course programs

<u>BUDGET ALLOCATION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
<\$25,000	120	36.2%
\$25-50,000	11	3.3%
\$50-75,000	7	2.1%
\$75-100,000	5	1.5%
>\$100,000	7	2.1%
Non-respondents	182	54.8%
Total	332	100%

Nearly 55% of the institutions did not respond to this question. Of those who did respond, 80% have a budget allocation of less than \$25,000.

TABLE 13

Percentage of two-year colleges offering faculty/staff development for their extended orientation course

<u>FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OFFERED</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
YES	112	33.7%
NO	208	62.7%
Non-respondents	12	3.6%
Total	332	100%

A substantial majority of the two-year college respondents do not offer a faculty development program for their extended orientation course instructors.

TABLE 14

The percentage of two-year colleges offering and requiring faculty development for their extended orientation course

<u>FACULTY DEVELOPMENT REQUIRED</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
YES	98	87.5%
NO	51	45.5%
Total	(149)	(133%)

Although 37 more respondents answered this question than indicated they had a faculty development program, 87% of the respondents who presumably do offer faculty development indicated that they also required it.

Using the survey data a composite picture can be developed which depicts the average two-year college offering an extended orientation course every term for the last two to five years. A question arose looking at Tables 5, 7 & 8. It appears that generally the course is a credit-bearing graded elective. However, there were twice as many responses indicating its status as a freshman requirement as a credit-bearing requirement. Perhaps some colleges require their course for freshmen while not offering it for credit. Likewise, there were nearly twice as many respondents who indicated it was a freshman elective than counted it as a credit-bearing elective. Perhaps other colleges encourage freshmen to take their course, but do not offer it for credit.

The course lasts a term, is taken by only 101-200 students in groups of 40 or more students per class. Faculty development is seldom available, but when it is

offered it is usually required. The total budget allocation for the program is typically less than \$25,000.

THE ORGANIZATION OF TWO-YEAR COLLEGE EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSES

The administrative organization for these courses was determined in responses to three survey items as depicted in Tables 15 to 17.

TABLE 15

Frequency of organizational units coordinating
two-year college extended orientation courses

<u>COORDINATING ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Faculty	211	63.6%
Academic Administration	38	11.4%
Student Affairs Administration	58	17.5%
Other	34	10.2%
Total	(341)	(102.7%)

TABLE 16

Frequency of organizational unit being responsible for
two-year college extended orientation course content

<u>UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR COURSE CONTENT</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Faculty	188	56.6%
Academic Administration	36	10.8%
Student Affairs Administration	70	21.1%
Other	29	8.7%
Non-respondents	9	2.7%
Total	332	99.9%

Although there were nine extra responses to the question concerning coordinating responsibility, and nine non-responses to the question concerning content responsibility, Tables 15 & 16 indicate that faculty generally have coordinating and course content responsibility for two-year college extended orientation courses.

Table 17 illustrates the responses to the question asking to which organizational unit does their course report.

TABLE 17

Frequency of the course reporting to an organizational unit

<u>ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Academic department or college	72	21.7%
Academic Affairs	38	11.4%
Student Affairs	58	17.5%
Other	34	10.2%
Non-respondents	130	39.2%
Total	332	100%

Only 60% of the respondents answered this question. Of those who did respond, 36% indicate their course reports to an academic department or college, 28% to student affairs, and 19% to academic administration.

In general, faculty are responsible for both course content and for coordinating the course, reporting to either an academic department or to student affairs

administration. However, while 75% of the courses are coordinated by an academic entity and 69% of the respondents report an academic entity having content responsibility, only 54% of the courses report to an academic entity. This might create some conflict and confusion in terms of course goals, objectives, form and content. It is not known if form, content, or student success rates reflect these differing organizational structures. Student affairs administration does appear to play a role in the organization and administration of two-year college extended orientation courses, but from these data it is difficult to ascertain just what that role is.

TWO-YEAR COLLEGE EXTENDED ORIENTATION
COURSE CONTENT

The prevalence of use for each content activity is shown in Table 18. The items are in rank order and show the percentage of two-year college respondents which include each activity in their extended orientation course.

TABLE 18

Two-year college extended orientation course content activities by rank and percentage of respondents

<u>CONTENT ACTIVITY</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>Percentage of Colleges</u>
Academic planning	1	80%
Test anxiety	2	77%
Study skills	3	76%
Library skills	4	72%
Value of college	4	72%
Career planning	6	70%
Reading	7	68%
Higher ed. problems	8	61%
Campus orientation	9	59%
Stress management	10	51%
Social skills	11	50%
Values clarification	12	46%
Gen. ed./core requirements	13	43%
Campus involvement	14	42%
Community involvement	15	40%
Relationships	15	40%
Critical thinking	17	39%
Writing	18	35%
Group building	19	32%
Org. of academic disciplines	19	32%
Understanding professors	21	27%
Health and nutrition	21	27%
Sexism	23	26%
Alcohol and drugs	24	23%
Leadership	25	22%
Money management	25	22%
Consumer skills for education	27	21%
Intro. professor's discipline	28	19%
Intro. to liberal arts	29	16%
Human sexuality	30	14%
Spirituality	31	4%

Looking at the course content, the emphasis appears to be on basic study skills. Only three activities are included in at least 75% of the courses: academic planning, test anxiety, and study skills. Although reading is often included, writing is seldom incorporated into the course content. Other activities which may be considered basic to a 'coping with college' course also rate poorly. These include values clarification, understanding the general education/core requirement 'connections', critical thinking, understanding professors, and consumer skills for the educational system. Of note is the scant attention paid to spirituality in two-year college extended orientation courses.

COMPARISON OF DATA AMONG TWO-YEAR, FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC, AND FOUR-YEAR PRIVATE COLLEGES

Little is known about four-year college extended orientation courses nationwide, or if they differ from those at two-year colleges. Using a chi square analysis to test 18 null hypotheses, this study offers comparative data from two-year, four-year public, and four-year private colleges. Tables 19 to 34 depict the comparative data for the null hypotheses.

H_{01} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion of institutions offering an extended orientation course.

TABLE 19

Frequency of use of extended orientation courses,
among institutional types

<u>OFFER FRESHMAN SEMINAR</u>	<u>Public 4-yr.</u>		<u>Private 4-yr.</u>		<u>Two-year</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
YES	234	66.5%	374	69.4%	332	67.9%
NO	95	27.0%	147	27.3%	144	29.4%
Non-respondents	23	6.5%	18	3.3%	13	2.7%
Total	352	100%	539	100%	489	100%

Chi square 0.511900

d.f. 2

significance level 0.774181

Responses from all three institutional types indicate that 69-71% of all colleges surveyed do offer some form of extended orientation. The null hypothesis is not rejected.

THE FORM OF EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSES
AMONG INSTITUTIONAL TYPES

The data show significant differences in the form of extended orientation courses among the three institutional types. Responses to 11 survey items are illustrated in Tables 20 to 30.

H_0 : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which offer the course for credit.

TABLE 20

Percentage of colleges offering their course for credit, among institutional types

TYPE OF CREDIT	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
College credit	127	90.1%	151	83.0%	144	91.7%
Non-credit	14	9.9%	31	17.0%	13	8.3%
Total	141	100%	182	100%	157	100%
Non-respondents	117		192		175	

Chi square 6.95069 d.f. 2 significance level 0.0309511

Private four-year colleges appear less likely to offer credit than either four-year public or two-year colleges. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H_0 : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which offer the course for letter grades vs. pass/fail.

TABLE 21

Grading procedure for extended orientation courses,
among institutional types

<u>GRADING</u>	<u>Public 4-yr.</u>		<u>Private 4-yr.</u>		<u>Two-year</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Pass/Fail	58	42.6%	67	38.7%	44	28.0%
Letter Grades	78	57.4%	106	61.3%	113	72.0%
Total	136	100%	173	100%	157	100%
Non-respondents	98		201		175	

Chi square 7.46213

d.f. 2

significance level 0.0239673

Nearly 50% of all institutions did not respond to this question. However of the respondents, two-year colleges appear most likely and four-year private colleges least likely to use letter grades. The null hypothesis is rejected.

It is not known whether the differences found in Tables 20 & 21, concerning credit and grades, affect articulation. Perhaps two-year colleges courses, most likely to be for graded credit, are not accepted for transfer credit at institutions which do not offer a graded credit course.

Ho₄: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which view the course as required vs. elective.

TABLE 22

Percentage of elective extended orientation courses offered for credit, among institutional types

COUNTED AS AN	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Elective	94	66.4%	70	44.6%	112	72.3%
Requirement	29	23.6%	87	55.4%	43	27.7%
Total	123	100%	157	100%	155	100%
Non-respondents	26		13		2	

Chi square 38.2011

d.f. 2

significance level 0.00001

Private four-year colleges are most likely and four-year public colleges are least likely to require extended orientation when it is offered for credit. There is little difference between two-year college and four-year public college responses. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H_{05} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which require the course for freshmen.

TABLE 23

Percentage of colleges which required their extended orientation course for freshmen, among institutional types

REQUIRED FOR FRESHMEN	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
YES	177	76.0%	151	41.7%	106	33.1%
NO	56	24.0%	211	58.3%	214	66.9%
Total	233	100%	362	100%	320	100%
Non-respondents	1		157		12	
Chi square 107.100 d.f. 2 significance level 0.00001						

Even though there was a poor response from four-year private colleges, Table 23 shows that public four-year colleges were more likely to require the course for freshmen. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H_{06} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the length of time they have offered an extended orientation course.

TABLE 24

The length of time colleges have been offering extended orientation courses, among institutional types

LENGTH OF TIME	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<2 years	73	31.7%	112	29.7%	99	30.3%
2-5 years	80	34.8%	122	32.4%	125	38.2%
>5 years	77	33.5%	143	37.9%	103	31.5%
Total	230		377		327	
Non-respondents	4		(3)		5	

Chi square 4.12478

d.f. 4

significance level 0.389382

There is no difference among institutional types in their responses to this question. The null hypothesis is not rejected.

H_{07} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which offer the course every term.

TABLE 25

Percentage of colleges offering an extended orientation course every term, among institutional types

COURSE OFFERED EVERY TERM	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
YES	163	69.1%	193	51.2%	276	84.4%
NO	73	30.9%	184	48.8%	51	15.6%
Total	236		377		327	
Non-respondents	(2)		(2)		5	

Chi square 88.1494

d.f. 2

significance level 0.00001

Two-year colleges are most likely and four-year private colleges least likely to offer their course every term. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the length of the extended course.

TABLE 26

The length of extended orientation courses,
among institutional types

COURSE LENGTH	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 day to 1 week	3	1%	12	3%	24	8%
> 1 week to 1 month	3	1%	10	3%	9	3%
> 1 month to 3 months	35	15%	60	17%	49	16%
1 quarter/ semester/term	189	80%	253	70%	209	70%
2 semesters/3 quarters/2 terms	6	3%	24	7%	2	1%
Other	-	-	2	-	6	2%
Total	236	100%	361	100%	299	100%
Non-respondents	(2)		13		33	

Chi square 43.9610

d.f. 10

significance level 0.00001

The majority of all respondents indicated that their course length is one term. However, a greater proportion of four-year public colleges indicate the course length is one term. More two-year college respondents indicated course length of a week or less than either four-year college respondents. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H_0 : There will be no significant difference among the institutional types in average class size for the course.

TABLE 27

The average size of extended orientation classes,
among institutional types

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	I	N	I	N	I
<20	81	35.1%	224	60.2%	126	39.5%
20-40	17	7.3%	39	10.5%	31	9.7%
>40	133	57.6%	109	29.3%	162	50.8%
Total	231	100%	372	100%	319	100%
Non-respondents	3		2		13	

Chi square 57.6815

d.f. 4

significance level 0.00001

Four-year private colleges are far more likely to have classes with fewer than 20 students and less likely to have classes with more than 40 students than either four-year public or two-year colleges. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀₁₀: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the allocated course budget.

TABLE 28

The budget allocation for extended orientation course programs, among institutional types

BUDGET ALLOCATION	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<\$25,000	93	71.5%	152	76.4%	120	80.0%
\$25-50,000	18	13.8%	29	14.6%	11	7.3%
\$50-75,000	11	8.4%	10	5.0%	7	4.7%
\$75-100,000	3	2.3%	3	1.5%	5	3.3%
>\$100,000	5	3.8%	5	2.5%	7	4.7%
Total	130	100%	199	100%	150	100%
Non-respondents	104		175		182	

Chi square 9.31479 d.f. 8 significance level 0.316441

Of those institutions responding, a substantial majority allocated less than \$25,000 for the course budget. There is no significant difference among institutional types. The null hypothesis is not rejected.

H_{011} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which have a faculty development program for the course.

TABLE 29

Percentage of colleges offering faculty development for their extended orientation course, among institutional types

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OFFERED	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
YES	137	58.8%	190	52.1%	112	35.0%
NO	96	41.2%	175	47.9%	208	65.0%
Total	233	100%	365	100%	320	100%
Non-respondents	1		9		12	

Chi square 34.9545

d.f. 2

significance level 0.000001

Two-year colleges are less likely to offer faculty development for their extended orientation course than either the four-year public or private colleges. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H_{012} : Of those having a faculty development program there will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion which require participation in the faculty development program for the instructors of the course.

TABLE 30

The percentage of colleges offering, and requiring, faculty development for their extended orientation course, among institutional types

	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
(From Table 29)						
(Faculty Development Offered)	137		190		112	
<u>FACULTY DEVELOPMENT REQUIRED</u> - YES	111	81.0%	163	85.8%	98	87.5%
- NO	48		51		51	
Total	159		214		149	
Non-respondents	(22)		(24)		(37)	
Chi square 2.28596 d.f. 2 significance level 0.318867						

Apparently respondents who do not offer faculty development answered this question. Because of this disparity, percentages on this table refer to the number of colleges requiring faculty development compared to the number having faculty development. Chi square analysis was computed on the number of colleges offering faculty development compared to the number of colleges which require it. There is no significant difference among institutional types in the number of colleges which, offering faculty development, also require it of course instructors. The null hypothesis is not rejected.

An appreciation of the differences in the form of extended orientation courses among institutional types is seen through these analyses. Two-year colleges are most likely to offer their course each term. This is presumably connected to the likelihood of students entering at a time other than the beginning of the school year.

Four-year private colleges are far more apt to require the course when it is for credit than either four-year public or two-year institutions. Four-year public colleges are far more likely to require it for freshmen than the other institutional types. Two-year colleges are not apt to require their course in either case. A greater number of responses in all three institutional categories report their course is a freshman requirement than a credit-bearing requirement. This raises the question of whether colleges require a non-credit course for freshmen, and if so, why?

Private four-year institutions are least likely to offer it for credit, two-year colleges the most likely. Two-year institutions are most likely and four-year public institutions least likely to award letter grades.

Private four-year colleges have a greater proportion of classes with less than 20 students, while two-year colleges have a greater proportion of classes with more than 40 students. One term in length was most prevalent for all three institutional types.

Two-year colleges are far less apt to have a faculty development program than the four-year colleges. However, when faculty development is offered, all institutional

types are as likely to require it of course instructors.

THE ORGANIZATION OF EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSES,
AMONG INSTITUTIONAL TYPES

The administrative organization for these courses is illustrated in Tables 31 to 33.

H_{013} : There will be no significant difference among institutional types as to which organizational unit has coordinating responsibility for the course: faculty; academic administration; student affairs; or other.

TABLE 31

Frequency of organizational units coordinating extended orientation courses, among institutional types

ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Faculty	129	54.4%	236	60.5%	211	61.9%
Academic Administration	54	22.8%	71	18.2%	38	11.1%
Student Affairs Administration	35	14.8%	47	12.1%	58	17.0%
Other	19	8.0%	36	9.2%	34	10.0%
Total	237	100%	390	100%	341	100%
Non-respondents	(3)		(16)		(9)	

Chi square 17.0845 d.f. 6 significance level 0.00001

There were excess responses to this question. The significance of the differences to this question appear to lie with the distribution of responses for academic administration and student affairs administration. The four-year colleges appear more likely to have courses coordinated by academic administration while two-year

colleges appear more likely to be coordinated by student affairs administration. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho₁₄: There will be no significant difference among institutional types as to which organizational unit has content responsibility for the course: faculty; academic administration; student affairs; or other.

TABLE 32

Frequency of organizational unit being responsible for course content, among institutional types

UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR COURSE CONTENT	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Faculty	132	58.4%	210	56.5%	188	58.2%
Academic Administration	40	17.7%	72	19.3%	36	11.1%
Student Affairs Administration	35	15.5%	61	16.4%	70	21.7%
Other	19	8.4%	29	7.8%	29	9.0%
Total	226	100%	372	100%	323	100%
Non-respondents	8		2		9	

Chi square 11.9040

d.f. 6

significance level 0.0641439

Although differences in responses do appear, notably two-year college preference for student affairs administration versus academic administration, the differences are not significant. The null hypothesis is not rejected.

Ho₁₅: There will be no significant difference among institutional types as to which organizational unit the course coordinator reports to: an academic department or college; academic administration; student affairs; or other.

TABLE 33

Frequency of the course reporting to an organizational unit, among institutional types

ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT	Public 4-yr.		Private 4-yr.		Two-year	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Academic department or college	58	34.9%	51	24.9%	72	35.7%
Academic Affairs	54	32.4%	71	34.6%	38	18.8%
Student Affairs	35	21.1%	47	22.9%	58	28.7%
Other	19	11.5%	36	17.6%	34	16.8%
Total	166	100%	205	100%	202	100%
Non-respondents	68		169		130	

Chi square 19.9020

d.f. 6

significance level 0.000001

There was a 29-45% non-response rate for this question. Of the colleges responding, there appear to be two major differences. Private four-year colleges are less likely to have their extended orientation course report to an academic department or college than are four-year public or two-year colleges. Two-year colleges are less likely to report to Academic Affairs than are four-year public and private colleges. The null hypothesis is rejected.

The data show two-year college extended orientation courses connected to student affairs slightly more often than for four-year public or private colleges. Faculty are

likely to be responsible for course content as well as having the responsibility for course coordination in all institutional types. The difference seen in course coordination may reflect an internal organizational difference rather than a real preference.

The excess responses seen on Table 31, and the non-responses seen on Table 33, may reflect either confusion or an integration in responsibilities for the course.

DIFFERENCES IN EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSE CONTENT ACTIVITIES AMONG INSTITUTIONAL TYPES

The chi square and significance level for each content activity are illustrated in Table 34. Of 31 activities, significant differences at the .05 level were found in 18 activities.

Ho₁₆: There will be no significant difference among institutional types in the proportion of colleges which include any course content activity.

TABLE 34

Course content activities and their
statistical significance among
institutional types

<u>CONTENT ACTIVITY</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>D.F.</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL</u>
<u>ACADEMIC</u>			
-General knowledge-			
Intro. to the Liberal Arts	153.018	2	0.000001
Understanding professors	10.9145	2	0.004265
Campus orientation	1.68750	2	0.430095
Orientation to higher ed. problems	15.6709	2	0.000395
Intro. to professor's discipline	4.82821	2	0.089447
Org. of academic disciplines	4.96539	2	0.083517
Gen. Ed./core requirement 'connections'	24.1540	2	0.000005
- Skills -			
Academic planning	4.91638	2	0.085589
Library skills	4.81562	2	0.090012
Writing	43.8173	2	0.000001
Consumer skills for ed. system	12.7328	2	0.001718
Study skills	5.40575	2	0.067012
Reading	1.2591	2	0.523114
Critical thinking	5.19201	2	0.074570
- Affective -			
Test anxiety	26.1671	2	0.000002
Value of college	72.0360	2	0.000001
Stress management	1.37050	2	0.503965
Campus involvement	10.1066	2	0.006388
<u>PERSONAL-SOCIAL</u>			
Group building	64.6506	2	0.000001
Human sexuality	20.9662	2	0.000028
Values clarification	10.7359	2	0.004663
Money management	1.10149	2	0.576520
Health and nutrition	0.691832	2	0.707572
Leadership	10.0716	2	0.006501
Spirituality	119.876	2	0.000001
Relationships	19.5696	2	0.000056
Social skills	0.589941	2	0.744554
Sexism	9.53708	2	0.008492
Alcohol and drugs	5.60613	2	0.060624
Community involvement	6.30421	2	0.042762
<u>CAREER PLANNING/PLACEMENT</u>			
Career planning	21.6472	2	0.000019

For the following activities, two-year college responses are considerably lower than those of the four-year colleges: introduction to the liberal arts; general education/core requirement 'connections'; writing; campus involvement; group building; human sexuality; values clarification, and; relationships. Four-year public college responses are greater for understanding professors, consumer skills for the educational system and, community involvement. Four-year private colleges responded more to spirituality and less to general orientation to higher education problems, test anxiety and, value of college. The difference for sexism appears to lie with its spread, with two-year colleges having the lowest response rate. The difference for career planning appears to lie in its spread, with four-year private colleges having the lowest response rate. The difference for leadership appears to lie in the slightly greater response rate from four-year private colleges, and lesser response rate from two-year colleges. The null hypothesis is rejected.

TINTO'S RETENTION THEORY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO TWO-YEAR COLLEGE EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSE CONTENT

The study also examined retention theory and its relationship to the two-year extended orientation courses depicted by the survey. It examined the extended orientation course content for factors known to be of value within retention theory, specifically Tinto's (1987) retention theory.

In Tinto's (1987) theory, he proposes that, although each college will need to address its own student population needs, a balance between social and academic needs is sought. Although there is no single list of valuable activities, Tinto states that those formal and informal activities which promote academic performance and student/faculty interactions will lead to academic integration. Likewise, those formal and informal activities which lead to student involvement in extracurricular activities and peer-group interactions would result in social integration.

Table 35 illustrates two-year college course content activities by ranking and frequency of response.

TABLE 35

Two-year college course content activities by
ranking and frequency of response
(Activities included by at least 50% of the
respondents are marked with an asterisk (*))

ACTIVITY:	2-YEAR		Rank
	N	Percent	
<u>Academic- General Knowledge</u>			
Introduction to the liberal arts	54	16%	29
Understanding professors	90	27%	21
General orientation to campus	196	59%	9 *
Gen. orientation to higher ed. problems	202	61%	8 *
Intro. to professor's discipline	62	19%	28
Understand org. of academic disciplines	105	32%	19
Gen. Ed./core requirements "connections"	142	43%	13
- Skills			
Academic planning	264	80%	1 *
Library skills	239	72%	4 *
Writing	115	35%	18
Consumer skills for education system	71	21%	27
Study skills	252	76%	3 *
Reading	225	68%	7 *
Critical thinking	129	39%	17
-Affective			
Test anxiety	257	77%	2 *
Value of college	239	72%	4 *
Stress management	169	51%	10 *
Campus involvement	140	42%	14
<u>Personal-Social-</u>			
Group building	107	32%	19
Human sexuality	47	14%	30
Values clarification	152	46%	12
Money management	74	22%	25
Health and nutrition	89	27%	21
Leadership	74	22%	25
Spirituality	13	4%	31
Relationships	132	40%	15
Social skills	167	50%	11 *
Sexism	85	26%	23
Alcohol and drugs	75	23%	24
Community involvement	134	40%	15
<u>Career Planning/Placement-</u>			
Career planning	234	70%	6 *

Ten of the eleven top ranked activities, appearing in at least 50% of all responses, are academic activities encompassing all three academic areas. The eleventh ranked activity, social skills, is the only non-academic activity seen in at least 50% of the responses. Tinto's (1987) theory includes both formal and informal academic activities which lead to both increased academic performance and increased faculty/student interactions. The activities currently used in two-year college courses center upon academic performance rather than personal-social areas. Notably missing among the academic skills is writing, found in only 35% of the responses.

Missing also are academic activities of a broader nature such as critical thinking, campus involvement, and understanding the connections between general education and the core requirements.

'Social skills' might lend itself to either of Tinto's social categories: extracurricular activities or peer-group interactions. Missing from content was any specific extracurricular component such as campus involvement or activities to promote peer-group interaction. Clearly, the content within two-year college extended orientation courses does not reflect the full range of Tinto's theory and is heavily weighted toward basic academic skill-building.

EXTENDED ORIENTATION COURSE CONTENT AS A REFLECTION
OF SHIRLEY'S THEORY

Shirley's (1986) theory of differing social and academic integration needs among institutional types proposes that those colleges with the greatest academic selectivity, the four-year private colleges, have a greater academic homogeneity and thus need less institutionally generated academic integration activities. Thus, the four-year private colleges would be most likely to stress social integration activities to encourage student commitment to their individual college.

Conversely, since two-year colleges have low academic homogeneity and a high proportion of academically underprepared students, they need to stress academic integration activities. The four-year public colleges would balance academic and social integration activities based upon their individual level of academic homogeneity.

Table 36 illustrates the ranking and frequency of responses for content activities within two-year, four-year public, and four-year private colleges. The heading 'R' indicates that activity's ranking. The asterisk (*) indicates those activities which have a 50% or greater response rate for all three institutional types.

TABLE 36

Ranking and frequency of responses for content
activities, among institutional types

ACTIVITY:	PUBLIC 4-YR			PRIVATE 4-YR			2-YEAR		
	N	Z	R	N	Z	R	N	Z	R
<u>Academic- General Knowledge</u>									
Introduction to the liberal arts	105	45Z	20	232	62Z	6	54	16Z	29
Understanding professors	94	40Z	21	117	31Z	25	90	27Z	21
General orientation to campus	150	64Z	9	234	63Z	5	196	59Z	9 *
Gen. orientation to higher ed. problems	156	67Z	8	191	51Z	16	202	61Z	8 *
Intro. to professor's discipline	56	24Z	30	95	25Z	29	62	19Z	28
Understand org. of academic disciplines	94	40Z	21	123	33Z	21	105	32Z	19
Gen. Ed./core requirements "connections"	145	62Z	10	214	57Z	11	142	43Z	13
- Skills									
Academic planning	197	84Z	1	287	77Z	1	264	80Z	1 *
Library skills	184	79Z	2	265	71Z	2	239	72Z	4 *
Writing	129	55Z	4	218	58Z	10	115	35Z	18
Consumer skills for education system	68	29Z	26	63	17Z	31	71	21Z	27
Study skills	178	76Z	4	257	69Z	3	252	76Z	3 *
Reading	169	72Z	7	259	69Z	3	225	68Z	7 *
Critical thinking	110	47Z	19	173	46Z	19	129	39Z	17
-Affective									
Test anxiety	175	75Z	6	229	61Z	8	257	77Z	2 *
Value of college	179	76Z	4	177	47Z	18	239	72Z	4
Stress management	121	52Z	17	206	55Z	13	169	51Z	10 *
Campus involvement	123	53Z	14	196	52Z	15	140	42Z	14
<u>Personal-Social-</u>									
Group building	128	55Z	12	231	62Z	6	107	32Z	19
Human sexuality	66	28Z	27	99	26Z	28	47	14Z	30
Values clarification	138	59Z	11	205	55Z	13	152	46Z	12
Money management	59	25Z	29	81	22Z	30	74	22Z	25
Health and nutrition	71	30Z	25	104	28Z	27	89	27Z	21
Leadership	62	26Z	28	123	33Z	21	74	22Z	25
Spirituality	17	7Z	31	119	32Z	23	13	4Z	31
Relationships	123	53Z	14	209	56Z	12	132	40Z	15
Social skills	125	53Z	14	190	51Z	16	167	50Z	11 *
Sexism	88	38Z	23	121	32Z	23	85	26Z	23
Alcohol and drugs	72	31Z	24	108	29Z	26	75	23Z	24
Community involvement	119	51Z	18	162	43Z	20	134	40Z	15
<u>Career Planning/Placement-</u>									
Career planning	184	79Z	2	228	61Z	8	234	70Z	6 *

Looking at the core activities, those which are included in at least 50% of the responses, the lists from the four-year public and private colleges agree in all but one item. The private colleges include 'introduction to the liberal arts' while the public colleges include the 'value of college'.

The lists from the four-year colleges are more extensive than that of the two-year colleges. All items found on the list for the two-year colleges are also found on the four-year public college list. However, two-year colleges do not include the following:

- General education/core requirement connections
- Values clarification
- Writing
- Group building
- Campus involvement
- Relationships

Addressing Shirley's (1986) theory, two-year college course content should reflect a greater student need for academic integration in terms of general knowledge, academic skills, and affective content areas than either four-year private or public colleges. This does not appear to be the case. While two-year course content is proportionately more academic than that of the four-year colleges, significant differences occurred in only three of the nine academic activities which make up the two-year college content core. The significant difference in each case does not lie with a higher response rate for two-year colleges, but rather a decreased response rate for four-year private colleges. The two-year content core is quite similar to that of the four-year public colleges, except

that four-year public college courses offer a broader range of academic activities.

Four-year private college course content should reflect a greater need for social integration in terms of personal-social activities. This does not hold, for the same social integration activities are included in courses for both institutional types. The only difference between the two is one academic integration activity. Additionally, of the 12 personal-social activities, four-year private colleges have greater response rates than four-year public colleges in only four activities. Of these four activities, private four-year colleges showed a significantly higher response for only one- spirituality.

Course content does not appear to reflect the differing student population needs for academic and social integration as proposed by Shirley (1986).

CHAPTER 5

College administrators may feel caught between the proverbial 'rock and a hard spot'. They have limited resources to expend on student development and retention at a time when changing student demographics indicate that student retention must be a high institutional and educational priority. A decrease in the number of traditional students and an increase in the number of non-traditional students is prompting administrators to devise new ways to promote student success in their colleges. The need for increased retention is especially acute at two-year colleges which studies indicate have retention rates significantly lower than four-year institutions (Astin, 1977; Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986).

Extended orientation courses are recognized as having value in increasing student retention (Boyer, 1987; Gardner, 1981 & 1988; Tinto, 1987). However, little research has been conducted to determine the national scope of extended orientation courses or their relationship to retention theory.

This study was to provide information concerning the form, organization and content of extended orientation courses in two-year, four-year public, and four-year private colleges, and to investigate whether course content reflects activities shown to be of value in retention theory.

Results of data obtained from the 1988 survey from the National Center for the Study of the Freshman Year

Experience were analysed to develop the following conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS

- 1) Extended orientation courses are widely used in postsecondary institutions but there is little consensus in their form or organization.

An analysis of the 11 questions relating to course form shows there is significant difference in eight areas: (1) awarding of credit, (2) requiring the course when it is for credit, (3) grading procedures, (4) requiring the course for freshmen, (5) offering the course every term, (6) course length, (7) average class size, and (8) the use of faculty development. Only three areas show no significant differences: (1) annual budget, (2) the length of time the course has been offered, and (3) whether faculty development is required.

Four-year private college courses are inclined to be required, graded, credit classes with fewer than 20 students. However, some of these colleges apparently require their course for freshmen while not giving credit. Faculty development is offered in just over one-half of the four-year private colleges.

Four-year public college courses generally are likely to be elective, graded, offered for credit, have more than 40 students per class, and are likely to be required for freshmen. Faculty development is likely to be offered and required as often at four-year public colleges as at four-year private colleges.

Two-year colleges tend to offer their course as an elective, award credit, and have class size in excess of 40 students. They are most likely to award letter grades, to offer the course each term but are least likely to require it for freshmen. Faculty development is least likely to be offered at two-year colleges, but when available it is more likely to be required.

The administrative organization of extended orientation courses varies. While two-year colleges are most likely to involve student affairs in some aspect of the course, faculty are more likely to coordinate the course and have content responsibility in a majority of all colleges. However, the mix of responses to these administrative questions, coupled with the variable response rates, may indicate some confusion concerning course administration.

2) Extended orientation course content varies among two-year, four-year public and four-year private colleges.

Aside from their rankings, four-year colleges core content activities are highly congruent. Of the seventeen activities found in 50% or more of the responses, four-year private colleges included an introduction to the Liberal Arts while four-year public colleges included the value of college.

The most frequently cited activities of two-year college course content are also found in the four-year course content. However, two-year college content is less varied, particularly in its lack of personal-social activities.

Outside of their core content, two-year colleges are less likely than the four-year colleges to include such activities as: an introduction to the liberal arts, understanding professors, information about the general education/core requirement 'connections', writing, campus involvement, group building, values clarification, social skills, or sexism.

Four-year public colleges are more likely to include community involvement and consumer skills for the educational system, while private four-year colleges are more likely to include leadership and spirituality.

3) Two-year college extended orientation course content does not exemplify Tinto's theory of academic and social integration.

Tinto's (1987) theory proposes a range of academic and social activities, based upon the needs of the student population. The two-year college student population is extremely diverse, calling for the broadest range of academic and social activities. Two-year college extended orientation course content does not reflect this diversity but rather is quite narrow in its 'study skills' focus.

Two-year college course content is concentrated on academic skill building. However writing, a communication barrier to many students, is not included. Content does not include information about the general education/core requirement connections or consumer skills for the educational system. Critical thinking and values clarification activities are also lacking.

Little is apparently done in the formalized content to increase the interactions among students or with faculty. It would be difficult, but not impossible, to do so in classes with more than 40 students. Commuter students may not wish to be involved in campus activities, but course activities involving social skills, group building, understanding professors, and relationships would at least provide some increased interactions.

4) Shirley's theory of differing academic and social needs is not reflected in existing extended orientation course content.

In order to conform with Shirley's theory, two-year college courses would stress academic skill building which leads to academic integration, and four-year private college courses would stress social interactions leading to social integration. While two-year college course content does stress academic skills, they are basic study skills. Frequently not included in these courses are such activities as critical thinking, consumer skills or understanding the connections between general education and the core requirements. Individualized attention to ensure students are acquiring essential skills is difficult at best in the large classes found in four-year public and two-year colleges. The small proportion of two-year college students enrolled in these courses, and the slightly larger proportion of four-year students, presupposes that only a small number of students are in need of academic integration.

Four-year public colleges have large classes, limiting their ability to encourage student involvement. The range of content activities in four-year public college courses is slightly broader than that found at two-year colleges, but is not balanced within academic and social areas.

Four-year private college course content, while including some social integration activities, does not include more social than academic activities. Nor does their course content include more social activities than is found at four-year public colleges. Private four-year college classes are smaller, which should encourage interactions, but total course enrollment indicates that not all students are being involved.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

Two-year colleges, those with the greatest need for retention and the most diverse student population, can benefit the most from extended orientation courses. They have offered their courses as long as the four-year colleges, yet their retention rates remain poor. Their classes are large, their total course enrollment is low, and their use of faculty development is minimal.

With their great need for increased student retention, two-year colleges do not invest any more money on extended orientation than do the four-year colleges. Student affairs is more frequently responsible for two-year college courses, yet two-year course content is least likely to incorporate the broad range of activities associated with student retention theory.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Colleges need to offer more extended orientation courses.

As a retention tool, colleges should be offering extended orientation courses to all entering students.

2) Colleges should offer their courses every term.

Students enter at times other than the beginning of the school year. Courses should be offered each term in order to allow the enrollment of all students when they are first admitted to the college. This is particularly true for two-year colleges, where students frequently enter mid-year. The earlier students acquire the skills necessary for college survival the better equipped they will be to deal with demands of the college environment. Research shows that two-year college students are most at risk for withdrawal, and first-term students in all institutions are most at risk for withdrawal (Noel, Levitz & Saluri, 1986). In order for the potential of extended orientation courses to be achieved, such courses should be a part of the first-term curriculum for all college students.

3) Colleges should consider making their extended orientation courses first-term requirements.

Again, this is the time of greatest risk for student withdrawal. The benefits which can accrue from participation in an extended orientation course, for both the student and the institution, should not only make these courses a major retention tool, but also an essential student service.

4) Colleges should limit extended orientation course class size.

In order to reflect retention theory, and to benefit the most from these courses, colleges need to reduce class size. Smaller classes will enable more personalized attention to individual students, encourage greater faculty/student interaction, and enhance the development of peer relations. This is especially true for two-year colleges with their higher demonstrated need for retention.

5) Colleges should provide, and require, faculty development programs for their extended orientation course.

Concerned and knowledgeable faculty are essential to course design, and the success of the course. Faculty development should necessitate careful consideration of course goals and objectives, allow for faculty acquisition of student development and retention theory, and increase the instructors' understanding of the various learning styles/teaching styles which are needed when dealing with a diverse student population.

6) Two-year college extended orientation course content needs to include social activities as well as a broader range of academic activities.

The existing core course content for two-year colleges is limited and narrow. Although remedial skill-building should not be neglected, courses should contain more developmental academic activities such as critical thinking, values clarification, and communication skills including writing and speaking. It is important to not only know what to think, but also how to think and express oneself. Students should understand the connections between general education and the core requirements, understand what professors expect of them, and what they can expect of professors.

Activities which promote group building, leadership, campus and community involvement should be a part of the curriculum. College is a time for exploring relationships, redefining values, and developing self-awareness and goals. It is an exciting time, filled with potential, which can be enhanced and directed by a well designed holistic extended orientation course.

7) Colleges need to increase their extended orientation program budget.

Without an increased budget such recommendations as smaller classes, faculty development, increased course enrollment, and expanded course content are not possible. This valuable retention tool is severely compromised by its lack of funds.

8) Faculty and administrators need to become more knowledgeable about extended orientation programming.

The variable response rates to some questions, and the limited degree to which these courses reflect retention theory, suggests that administrators and faculty need to become more knowledgeable about the intent, design or implementation of extended orientation courses. Administrative support for extended orientation courses is necessary if they are to be effective. This support will come when administrators and faculty understand what is being proposed, how it will be accomplished, and what benefits should accrue. There are numerous workshops and conferences locally, regionally and nationally at which this information can be acquired.

9) Extended orientation courses should reflect retention theory.

If these courses are to be used as a retention tool, then their form and content should reflect retention theory. The course's goals and objectives should include including all incoming students in small classes offered every term. Faculty, having a faculty development program and ongoing administrative support, should be flexible enough to tailor course content to the needs of each class, thus covering a broad range of activities and interactive experiences which will enhance students' academic and social integration.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As is true of most research, this study suggests more questions than it answered. Although there is now a clearer picture of what is happening in colleges nationwide, it leaves unanswered the following questions. What are the interactions among form, organization and course content? How does administrative structure influence course form and content? Are student success rates influenced by course form and content? Does faculty development influence course content or student success rates? What type of faculty development should be offered?

Given the variety of responses to questions concerning course administration, future research might investigate the differences in form, organization and content between courses administered by student affairs and those administered by academic affairs or faculty. This is particularly true for two-year colleges which indicate a higher proportion of courses being administered by student affairs.

When looking at course content, future research should determine the relative weight given to content activities. Which content activities are most important for which types of students? When course form and content reflects retention theory are student success rates enhanced? Is retention theory adequate for designing effective extended orientation courses?

In order to examine more closely the interaction between the total student population and extended

orientation courses, research is needed which separates those courses taken only by high-risk students from those courses taken by the general student population. High-risk students present a unique challenge to educators and their needs may not reflect that of the average student.

Research is needed on all campuses to acquire quantitative and qualitative data concerning extended orientation courses. Colleges need to know their retention rates for defined student populations, and how those rates are affected by participation in extended orientation. What measurable skills have students acquired through their participation? Are their GPAs higher or lower than expected after participation?

Less easily defined qualitative data are also needed. How do students respond to the course, are they more likely to develop a peer support group if they participate, are they more likely to become involved in classroom activities, do they feel they now understand what is expected of them by their professors, and how would they change the course? How do course instructors feel about the course, what do they want to change?

These data can then be used in two ways. The form, organization and content of the course can be examined to ascertain if changes are needed at an institutional level. The data acquired can then be made available to other colleges with similar student populations to help them design their courses.

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APPENDICES

A. INFORMATIONAL LETTER SENT WITH THE SURVEY ON FRESHMAN SEMINAR PROGRAMS



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COLUMBIA, SC 29208 USA

UNIVERSITY 101
Conferences on The Freshman Year Experience
International Conference on The First Year Experience
National Center for the Study of The Freshman Year Experience
(803) 777-6029/3799

June 1988

Dear Chief Academic Officer:

We need your help. The National Center for the Study of The Freshman Year Experience at the University of South Carolina is attempting to establish a national database on the existence of so-called freshman seminar/freshman orientation courses. We are surveying 3168 institutions. The participation of your institution is vital even if you do not offer such courses. In that event, please complete the first 20 questions. That information, too, is important to us.

Once we obtain this data from institutions we can begin a "networking" and referral process designed to put colleges in touch with one another as resources for developing programs to enhance the freshman year experience and improve retention.

The University of South Carolina has long been known for its "University 101" course and has demonstrated its effectiveness in retaining freshmen. The course is semester long, three-credit (for elective purposes), and covers many of the topical areas found in question #41 of the survey.

If you are interested in initiating such a course the National Center will be in position to assist you in a number of ways. We will put you in touch with course directors at institutions similar to yours which already have a course. We will provide you with sample syllabi used at South Carolina and elsewhere. We offer regional, national, and international conferences on this topic. Workshops for faculty training are also available.

Please complete the questionnaire by July 15, 1988. We will acknowledge receipt of your completed questionnaire with a complimentary first-edition of our Freshman Year Experience Newsletter and also provide you with a summary of the findings of this study when completed.

As one of the busiest administrators on campus, we know that you are frequently called on to complete surveys. We hope that you will also recognize the important contribution that your information can have on a national scale in improving the freshman year experience for all our institutions. We trust that you will want your college represented in this study.

Thank you for helping us.

Sincerely,

John N. Gardner
Director

Raymond O. Murphy
Co-Director for the National
Center for the Study of
The Freshman Year Experience

Enclosures

B. SURVEY ON FRESHMAN SEMINAR PROGRAMS**Survey on
Freshman Seminar Programs****The National Center for the
Study of The Freshman Year Experience****The University of South Carolina****Columbia, South Carolina**

The information obtained from this survey will help provide the National Center for the Study of The Freshman Year Experience with a base of information on programs and activities designed to enhance the experience of the first year student. It will help American higher education institutions who wish to have access to this information. Through your participation, data will be available for yourself and other interested parties.

Answer the questions which apply to your institution. (Please type or print clearly)

A. Institutional Information:

-What is the name and complete mailing address of your institution?

1. Name: _____

2. Address: _____

3. City: _____

4. State: _____

5. Zip Code: _____

6. Phone Number: _____

7. Which of the following best describes your institution? Check one.

_____ Public University

_____ Four-year private professional college
(Business, Engineering, etc.)

_____ Private University

_____ Four-year public professional college
(Business, Engineering, etc.)

_____ Four-year private liberal
arts college

_____ Two-year Technical/Community College

_____ Four-year public liberal
arts college

_____ Other _____

8. What is your current undergraduate enrollment (FTE, as reported to HEGIS)?

☐ less than 1,000 ☐ 1,001 to 5,000
☐ 5,001 to 10,000 ☐ 10,001 - 20,000
☐ 20,001 or more (Please specify: _____)

9. Of that number, how many are on-campus housed students?

☐ less than 1,000 ☐ 1,001 to 5,000
☐ 5,001 to 10,000 ☐ 10,001 - 20,000
☐ 20,001 or more (Please specify: _____)

10. Under what type of academic calendar does your institution operate?

☐ quarter ☐ semester
☐ other (please specify _____)

11. What is the size of your freshman class?

☐ Less than 100 ☐ 2,001 - 3,000
☐ 100 - 500 ☐ 3,001 - 4,000
☐ 501 - 1,000 ☐ 4,001 - 5,000
☐ 1,001 - 2,000 ☐ More than 5,000 (please specify _____)

12. What is the average SAT/ACT score for your freshman class? _____

B. Freshman Year Retention:

- Who on your campus would be the best resource person to entertain questions from other schools regarding freshman year retention/intervention programs and courses?

13. Name: _____

14. Title: _____

15. Address: _____

16. City: _____

17. State: _____

18. Zip Code: _____

19. Phone Number: _____

20. Do you offer any special courses for freshmen that could be described as "survival", study skills, freshman seminars, freshman orientation, student success, "coping with college" type courses? (From here on we will refer to these courses generically as "freshman seminar courses".)

_____ yes (if yes, please continue.)

_____ no (if no, please complete as much of the rest of this survey as possible.)

21. What is the name and title of the person in charge of your freshman seminar course program?

A. Name: _____

B. Title: _____

22. Is this person:

_____ faculty

_____ student affairs administrator

_____ academic administrator

_____ other (please specify _____)

23. If faculty, at what rank?

_____ full professor

_____ assistant professor

_____ associate professor

_____ instructor

24. Is this person tenured?

_____ yes

_____ no

25. What are the person's other duties and titles (if any) at the institution?

26. Would you or this person be willing to receive inquiries from other schools about your freshman seminar program?

_____ yes

_____ no

27. Who has primary coordinating responsibility for the freshman seminar course at your institution?

_____ faculty who teach the course

_____ student affairs administrator

_____ academic administrator

_____ other (please specify _____)

28. Who has primary content responsibility for the freshman seminar course at your institution?

_____ faculty who teach the course

_____ student affairs administrator

_____ academic administrator

_____ other (please specify _____)

C. Freshman Seminar Questions:

29. What is (are) the name(s) of your freshman seminar ("survival") course(s)? (Identified in #20)

30. How long has(have) this (these) course(s) been offered?

_____ less than two years

_____ two to five years

_____ more than five years (please specify _____)

31. What is the length of the course?

How long?

_____ (i.e. 1 month/6 weeks/2 months/1 semester/1 quarter, etc. . .)

32. Is the course for college credit or non-credit? Check one.

_____ one semester hour credit

_____ quarter hours (indicate number of hours)

_____ two semester hours credit

_____ no credit

_____ three semester hours credit

_____ more than three semester hours credit

(please specify _____)

33. If the course is offered for credit, which of the following applies:

_____ Course counted as an elective

_____ Course counted as a requirement

34. How is the course graded?

_____ pass/fail

_____ letter grades

35. Is the course required for all freshmen?

_____ yes

_____ no

36. Briefly describe the goals of the freshman seminar course?

37. Do you offer a freshman seminar course every school term?

_____ yes

_____ no

38. How many sections of this course does your institution offer each semester/quarter?

39. What is the total enrollment in your freshman seminar course(s)? _____

40. What is your average class size?

_____ less than 20

_____ 20 to 40

_____ over 40 (Please specify: _____)

41. Check all items below that are included in your freshman seminar course.

_____ group building

_____ understanding professors

_____ career planning

_____ study skills

_____ academic planning

_____ reading

_____ library skills

_____ general orientation to the campus

_____ human sexuality

_____ general orientation to higher education problems

_____ writing

_____ critical thinking

_____ values clarification

_____ relationships

_____ managing test anxiety

_____ stress management

_____ money management

_____ social skills

_____ value of college

_____ sexism

_____ health and nutrition

_____ alcohol and drugs

_____ leadership

_____ campus involvement

_____ spirituality

_____ community involvement

_____ introduction to liberal arts

_____ introduction to instructor's discipline

_____ consumer skills for the
educational system

_____ understanding the organization
of academic disciplines

_____ understanding the "connections" of general education/core requirements

_____ other (please specify) _____

42. If a textbook is used, please list title(s) and author(s).

A. Title: _____ Author: _____

B. Title: _____ Author: _____

C. Title: _____ Author: _____

43. To which organizational unit does your freshman seminar course report?

_____ academic affairs _____ student affairs

_____ an academic department or college (please specify _____)

_____ other (please specify _____)

44. How much money is the freshman seminar program allocated (budgeted) each year?

_____ less than \$25,000 _____ \$25,000 to \$50,000

_____ \$50,000 to \$75,000 _____ \$75,000 to \$100,000

_____ over \$100,000 (please specify _____)

- What percentage of funding is:

45. State supported funds _____

46. Endowment funds _____

47. Auxiliary/local funds _____

48. Institutional funds _____

49. Grant funds _____

50. Other funds (please specify _____) _____

51. What is the sophomore return rate for students enrolled in your freshman seminar course?

52. What is the sophomore return rate for students not enrolled in your freshman seminar course?

53. What is the graduation rate for students who took the freshman seminar course?

54. What is the graduation rate for students who did not take the freshman seminar course?

55. If you evaluate/assess your freshman seminar course(s), what variables are examined?

56. Do you have written/published research information available? (If so, would you kindly share it with us?)

_____ yes

_____ no

D. Faculty/Staff Development Programs:

57. Do you offer a faculty/staff development program in conjunction with your freshman seminar course? (i.e. to train/prepare instructors to teach the course)

_____ yes

_____ no

58. If yes, is the program required of everyone who is teaching your freshman seminar course?

_____ yes

_____ no

59. What is the total number of hours in this training program for teaching the freshman seminar?

60. Who is eligible to teach your freshman seminar course? Check all that apply.

_____ faculty with completed doctorates

_____ student affairs professionals

_____ faculty with completed masters

_____ doctoral candidates

_____ academic affairs professionals (non-faculty)

_____ masters candidates

_____ students (undergraduate)

_____ administrators

_____ other (please specify _____)

61. Who conducts this training? (i.e. their professional background)

62. What are the specific goals of the faculty/staff development program for teaching the freshman seminar?

Would you be willing to share a copies of your syllabi or any other materials with us so that we could build a national file to be used by other institutions? If so, please enclose copies with this survey.

**Thank you for you participation !!!!! Please return this survey and
other materials in the enclosed, stamped envelope.**