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The retention power of pre- and post-matriculated first semester student perspectives

Anthony Paul Pellegrini
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**The retention power of pre- and post- matriculated first
semester student perspectives**

Pellegrini, Anthony Paul, Sr., Ed.D.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1992

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THE RETENTION POWER OF PRE- AND POST- MATRICULATED FIRST
SEMESTER STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

by

Anthony Paul Pellegrini, Sr.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Educational Administration and Higher Education

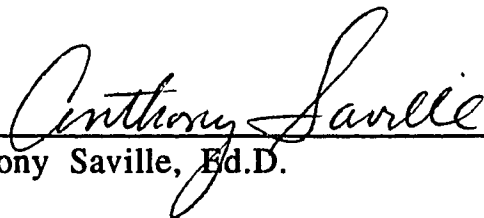
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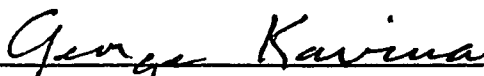
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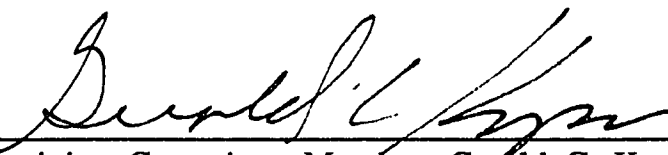
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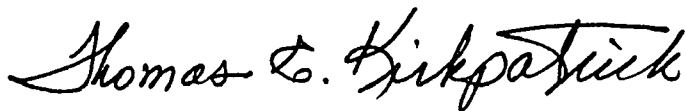
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University of Nevada, Las Vegas
April 1992

Abstract

The Retention Power of Pre- and Post- Matriculated First Semester Student Perspectives

by

**Anthony P. Pellegrini, Sr., Doctor of Education
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1992**

**Major Professor: Dr. Anthony Saville
Department: Educational Administration and Higher Education**

This research analyzed the first semester perspectives of university freshmen at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas during the Fall semester of 1991. This study employed the use of inferential and descriptive statistics on pre- and post- matriculated attitudes and perspectives of a power analyzed, randomly selected sample of freshmen students.

Chi square analysis was used to analyze responses to questions regarding student perceptions and goals, both during a period of prematriculation and at the completion of the first semester of university study at the UNLV.

Summary of Data and Conclusions

1. Some respondents were pleased with their visits to the university while they were still in high school. They perceived that the community was behind the university and that there were strong ties between the two entities. Comments regarding the positive

appearance of the University and its energetic qualities were noted.

2. Other students felt that there should be greater emphasis and advertisement of tutoring services for students who were representing the university in some official capacity. This would allow those representatives the opportunity of continued representation and participation in their endeavors with out an increased risk of academic failure.
3. A few students expressed anger and frustration that they didn't receive the necessary information to be admitted and registered on time. This necessitated waiting for a period of at least four months on the part of the students in their progress towards their academic goals.
4. Some students responded by suggesting that the process of admission, registration, and receipt of financial aid was extremely complex and chose to attend other institutions where institutional hyperrationalization and bureaucracy was less oppressive and confusing.
5. Respondents noted that when they approached Student Services representatives it seemed as if no one was really listening. Disappointment was voiced by respondents because support staff expressed that all was proceeding well because the student was enrolled. Sentiments expressed by the students contained apprehension and frustration. Respondents noted that when approaching the Minority Affairs Office it seemed

as if no one was really listening to them. The staff appeared helpful and facilitative, but didn't answer specific questions or concerns. Several of the respondents voiced concern regarding the absence of majors which they were aware of at other institutions of higher education and would like to see the offerings of majors expanded at UNLV.

6. Respondents noted anecdotally that they felt that they could get a very good education with a minimal cost by attending UNLV. They expressed a great deal of confidence in the value of their anticipated diploma.
7. Student expectations of success and involvement were found to be strong before arrival on campus. Although common experiences such as admission, registration, and the obtaining of financial aid disillusioned some.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Research in student attrition has been replete with a variety of studies attempting to achieve a myriad of results. Pascarella (1980) completed a meta-study summarizing all the student retention studies from Thistlewaite's studies in the early 1950's to the early Bean studies of the late 1970's. Bean (1982) organized this body of student attrition research into four types; Atheoretical, Prematriculated Characteristics, Person-Role Fit, and Longitudinal. Atheoretical Models (Descriptive Studies) were based on observable data. These generalizations were descriptive in nature and represented correlation among variables, but not the cause of the variables. With this model, one may describe attrition, but cannot say why a student is likely to dropout. Prematriculated characteristics attempted to predict the likelihood that a student would stay at a given institution given the background characteristics of that student prior to his university experience. The Person-Role fit model focused on the relationship between the individual's characteristics and the requirement of the student role at a particular institution. The fourth and final model defined was a longitudinal model. This was based on concepts of a process-centered approach to departure from an institution. Three longitudinal, model-building authors explained numerous factors, both pre- and post-matriculation, which affected student decisions to remain or depart from the university. All three authors came to similar conclusions that there existed two periods of time in which students form opinions on the individual and

institutional level which lead them to either persist or dropout, these times were just before matriculation when the student made plans and expectations, and sometime during their freshman year when they were able to formulate goals and participate in experiences.

Spady (1970) was one of the first researchers to propose a longitudinal, process-oriented model of student attrition. He selectively borrowed from Durkheim's (1951) idea that shared group values and friendship support reduced suicides, and by analogy, attrition. This theory of shared group values permeated Tinto's (1975) and Pascarella's (1980) longitudinal, process-oriented models and lead these authors to study group values and friendship support as they correlated with the dropout decision.

These three authors created models whose points of departure consisted of the decision making periods of prematriculation and the student's university experience. This encompassed basically the entire period of association between the student and the university. Porter's (1990) studies pinpointed the period of risk of attrition and greatest departure to be the first year of a student's university experience. Most students in Blane, Debuhr, and Martin's (1983) findings left the university very early in their college career, prior to the first grading period, within the first six to eight weeks of their first academic year.

Through the study of similar research, no previous attempts to investigate the correlation between the retention power of pre- and post-matriculated student attitudes were found. Logically the question arose, "which of these two variables possesses the greatest retention power during this critical first semester of university study?"

In an age of enrollment austerity and budget cutbacks, colleges and universities have had to concentrate more of their techniques and resources

towards tackling the attrition problem from within rather than relying on external solutions. These characteristics demonstrated that a need existed for the development of ongoing enrollment management techniques by institutions of higher education. Utilizing gathered retention data, faculty, administrators, and student affairs professionals could unite to jointly improve both recruitment and retention at colleges and universities.

The national dropout rate for public institutions for freshmen to their sophomore year at baccalaureate granting institutions was 29.9 percent. In a 1988 Nevada State System of Higher Education report on retention, the University of Nevada freshman attrition rate had dropped from 40.8 percent for the Fall of 1985 to 37.9 percent for the Fall of 1988. Though this particular system had experienced declining freshmen attrition rates during this period, system-wide statistics were 8 percent above the national average. If these figures were brought more in line with the national average, a possible increase in tuition of \$300,000 per year would be realized. Not taking into account the potential financial benefits enjoyed by the community, the cost/benefit ratio would merit this investigation. These figures confirm the existence of an attrition problem. With the University of Nevada, Las Vegas pool of captured graduating high seniors and out of state students having increased over the past ten year period, the pressure of the Nevada state system of higher education to meet the needs of these students during this critical period in the collegiate experience became acutely evident.

In another example of the cost/benefit perspective of attrition, Hossler (1990) demonstrated that in a baccalaureate program, students who drop out during their first year represented the loss of three or four years of tuition and not just one. It took four freshmen who quit after one year, to equal the income of one student who stayed for four years. Through studying this

phenomena with a formalized research process, identification of the retention power of the variables and the causes associated with attrition at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas during the Fall semester of 1991 was hoped to be gained.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine which had the greatest effect over a student's decision to dropout. Was it his prematriculated plans and expectations; or his exposure to university life during his first semester. In other words did a student's plans and expectations have more effect over his decision to dropout, than his first semester's actual experiences.

The research question dealt with the independent variable's power over the dependent variable. The dependent variable being attrition (failure to register for a consecutive second semester during the freshman year). The focus of this study was to determine which independent variable had greater influence on the retention of freshmen at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas during the Fall semester of 1991.

The following questions served as a basis for investigation of the problem:

1. Did a student's prematriculated plans and expectations of curricular and extra-curricular involvement or his first semester's actual experiences have greater retention power on first semester attrition?
2. Did a student's prematriculated curricular plans or extra-curricular expectations have greater retention power on first semester attrition?

3. Did a student's first semester's curricular experiences or his first semester's extra-curricular activities have greater retention power on first semester attrition?
4. Did a student's prematriculated curricular plans or his first semester curricular experiences have greater retention power on first semester attrition?
5. Did a student's prematriculated extra-curricular plans or his first semester actual extra-curricular experiences have greater retention power on first semester attrition?

HYPOTHESES

This study used inferential methods regarding the pre- and post-matriculation attitudes, activities, and expectations of a sample of freshman students. The relationships between the variables of prematriculated student's curricular plans and extra-curricular expectations with their first semester's curricular and actual extra-curricular experiences of university study was explored. In the course of this study the following relationships were tested:

1. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between prematriculated student curricular plans and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year.
2. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between prematriculated extra-curricular expectations and failure to maintain full-time

academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year.

3. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between the individual's first semester's curricular experiences and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year.
4. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 level between first semester's student participation in extra-curricular activities and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Porter's (1990) findings demonstrated that the greatest enrollment losses at the four-year baccalaureate granting institutions occurred during the first year of university study. Almost 20 percent of the students in his survey dropped out by the third semester. Morishita (1986) found from his study of student persistence that the timing of intervention to achieve retention program success must be made at an early stage of the withdrawal and decision-making process and would be most effective if initiated in the freshman year. This information, combined with Bean's (1982) assertions regarding the necessity of this type of study merited investigation of reasons why students chose to leave a particular institution, not just the student's characteristics and demographics. Since the need to understand why students leave existed and the greatest percentage of attrition occurred the first semester, it followed that it was necessary to study why students decided to leave during this attrition prone period.

DELIMITATIONS

The following delimitations affected the extent to which the results were generalized:

1. The study was limited to a sample of students registered as first time freshman at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas during the Fall Semester of 1991. Therefore, the results were not necessarily a representative sampling of institutions and students.
2. Limited statistical treatment of a portion of the study using correlation techniques indicated a covariation between the cause and effect thereby reducing the influence of other causes.
3. In this descriptive study of a sample of the freshman class at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, all that was reported was a description of how the particular group of subjects responded to the measurement of their attitudes, expectations, and activities. No particular generalization, characterization, or inference was made beyond this specific group of freshmen from whom the data were collected.
4. Since two surveys were utilized in the gathering of the data, the results were only as accurate as the sample of students surveyed.

LIMITATIONS

1. The factors of prematriculated curricular and extra-curricular expectations and actual curricular and extra-curricular experiences did not account for all of the

variables which influenced a student to pursue his studies to graduation.

2. To the degree that any of the assumptions set forth were not met, the internal and external validity of the investigation were limited.
3. Perceptions of the sample of students surveyed regarding their own attitudes and goals were biased according to their value perceptions on the survey instrument administered.
4. The absence of data on comparable institutions that could have provided a broader content within which the institution could view its own data.
5. Due to the fact that the entire population of Native American students attending the University of Nevada, Las Vegas was smaller than that which Warwick and Lininger (1975) suggested as a small sample size, the researcher chose not to include this population in the selection of the sample because it would skew the data and generate spurious results had it been included.
6. Data collected from the Registrar's Office contained an "unknown" category for ethnicity. This meant that the respondents did not complete the registration materials correctly, or simply weren't aware of their ethnicity. This fairly significant (20 percent of the total population) was also not included in the sample due to the fact the information gathered from this sub-

population would create spurious results and might contaminate the precision of the other data gathered.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Terms, words, or phrases as used in this study were defined as follows:

1. **Individual Curricular Plans:** Prior to actual matriculation, plans were formulated as to which course of study, classes, etc., that a student might pursue. These were imply plans without commitment to follow-through. Roney (1985) identified examples of background variables associated with individual plans that included, but were not limited to, high school rank, S.A.T. scores, size of high school graduating class.
2. **Individual Extra-Curricular Expectations:** Prior to actual matriculation, a student formulated in his mind a concept of what out-of-class activities were available for his participation.
3. **Goal Commitment to Graduation:** Once students had participated in class activities, their Individual Curricular Plans were modified by their experience and the student assumed to some degree a Goal Commitment to Graduation. According to Roney (1985) examples of measurable behavior that qualified as Goal Commitment included, but were not limited to, average credit hours completed per semester, number of times academic major was changed, evidence of college credit earned before full-time enrollment, pattern of enrollment as continuous or discontinuous; and if discontinuous, semesters completed before the student left, and elapsed

semesters before the student returned. Thomas (1988) described Institutional Characteristics associated with goal commitment to graduation as permanence of the institution, academic quality, the extent to which an institution enrolled students likely to fit into their environment.

4. **Extra-Curricular Activities:** Out of class activities in which the matriculated student participated providing him ancillary motives to remain in school. According to Roney (1985) examples of measurable behavior included, but were not be limited to, ratio of semesters for which academic distinction was awarded, ratio or semesters for which academic probation was earned, and cumulative grade point average.
5. **Attrition/Dropout:** For the purpose of this study these two words were synonymous and refer to the student's failure to register for a second consecutive semester of university study.
6. **Freshman Student:** Is defined as any student who has been admitted and has not yet attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas previously.
7. **Full-time/Part-time Student:** Full-time students were defined as those who took twelve (12) or more semester hours during the Fall semester 1991. Part-time students are defined as students who took eleven (11) semester hours or fewer during the Fall semester of 1991.

8. **Institutional Type:** When institutions were discussed in this study, the Carnegie Foundation (1986) descriptors were used. Research universities were defined as those whose primary focus was research and the dissemination of their results. Doctorate granting institutions were those who have as their goals; teaching, faculty publishing, and community service. Comprehensive universities may have had some master's and professional programs, but mainly had the focus of undergraduate preparation. Liberal arts colleges provided a basic and broad curriculum and preparation of its students.

CONCEPTUAL BASE

As a model of student attrition, the longitudinal model approach described in research by Spady (1970), Tinto (1975), and Pascarella (1980) was extremely complex and comprehensive in its description of the variables associated with and the process of dropping out.

These three authors had two central aspects in common. First, they described attrition as a process: The background characteristics of a student influenced the way in which he interacted with the college environment, which lead to educational and attitudinal results, which in turn culminated in a decision to stay in or dropout of school. Second, each model found as its theoretical base the social and academic integration of the student with the institution, an expansion of a theory developed by Durkheim (1951) to explain the differences in the rate of suicides among the various segments of European society.

This study proceeded from those foundations and built upon their research to add to the body of retention research literature a practical application of the questions regarding pre- and post- matriculation, and curricular and extra-curricular integration. The study, using descriptive methods and inferential statistics, surveyed a sample from a freshman class at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, during the Fall of 1991. The retention patterns of this sample were then studied.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The nature of this research was to provide a logical procedure and/or rules whereby the researcher made inferences or generalizations, with some probability of being wrong, about the larger group of freshmen students from the results obtained from a randomly selected and power-analyzed sample of the freshman class. Data were collected from this sample, and an attempt was made to determine how well these data characterized the general population of the freshman class.

The level of statistical significance was established to conform to the generally accepted standard of .05 level of confidence. The statistics used to report the data (mean, mode, standard deviation, variance, etc.) were evaluated from the parameter of the entire freshmen class population and reviewed from a random sample of the freshman class. These statistics were estimated to the corresponding, unknown parameter of the entire population of the freshman class.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter I presented the background of the problem including the purpose of the study, questions to be answered, delimitations, limitations, definition of terms and research design to be used. Chapter II contained a review of literature to acquaint the reader with existing studies relative to the

student attrition process and associated variables. Included in the review of literature, similar studies were examined with which to compare the findings of this study. Chapter III included an extended research design, a description of the subjects studied, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and statistical significance. Chapter IV contained a presentation, analysis, and a discussion of the data, and includes a listing of the findings of this study. Chapter V summarized the findings and presents conclusions and recommendations for further research. The study concluded with the references, appendixes, and a bibliography.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A selective review of the research associated with regards to student retention was completed. Only those titles which dealt specifically with student retention and in particular, student retention during the uniquely sensitive period of attrition, the student's first semester, were reviewed. Contemplation was afforded to other dissertations and research studies which did not focus on this period of student attendance were afforded citation as applicable.

Atheoretical Models were descriptive studies in studying attrition. Sewell and Shaw (1967) show that with family socioeconomic status and student intelligence simultaneously controlled, educational plans measured during the senior year in high school had by far the strongest independent influence on college graduation. Trent and Medsker (1968) found that graduation rates were strongly influenced by the importance that students attached to being in college. In a study of National Merit Scholars, Astin (1964) found that dropouts were less likely than eventual graduates to have plans for graduate or professional school. It seemed then that prematriculated educational plans had a meaningful relationship to student persistence through the first semester of university experience and even to graduation.

Initial descriptive studies attempted to predict which characteristics identified students as highly susceptible to dropout. Spady (1970) was the first researcher to identify a process-oriented model of student attrition. He

selectively borrowed from Durkheim's (1951) idea that shared group values and friendship support reduced suicide and, by analogy, attrition.

Durkheim's theory forms the basis for the Spady (1970), Tinto (1975), and Pascarella (1980) models, in which curricular and extra-curricular integration, which correspond to Durkheim's shared group values and friendship support, were both expected to influence the dropout decision.

First, Spady specified that dropout decision is the result of a process. Secondly, he identified the background characteristics important to this process; family background, academic potential, ability, and socio-economic status. Next, directly from Durkheim (1951), he identified normative congruence and friendship support as important variables in this model. To these he added the college-specific variables of grade performance and intellectual development. Social integration developed satisfaction, and satisfaction in turn augmented institutional commitment, the direct correlate of dropout. In addition, grade performance, (because a student can academically drop out of school) had a direct affect on attrition.

Tinto's (1975) work corresponded with Durkheim's (1951) and Spady's (1970). In his model, background characteristics: family background, individual attributes, and pre-college schooling, interacted with each other and influenced both goal commitment (to graduation) and institutional commitment (social extracurricular environment). In the academic system, goal commitment stimulated higher grade performance and intellectual development. This in turn lead to academic integration, which in circular fashion, increased higher grade performance and intellectual development and greater goal commitment to earn a degree. Goal commitment reduced the likelihood of dropping out. In the social system, institutional commitment produced peer group and faculty (out of class) interaction. This lead to

social integration, which in turn increased social interaction with peers, faculty, and institutional commitment. Institutional commitment then reduced the likelihood of dropping out.

Pascarella conceptualized the dropout process emphasizing the importance for students to have informal contact with faculty members. In his model, background characteristics interacted with institutional image, administrative policies and decisions, size, admissions, and academic standards. These institutional factors influenced informal contact with faculty members and other college experiences (for example, peer culture, classes, extra-curricular and leisure activities), and educational outcomes (for example, academic performance, intellectual development, personal development, educational and career aspirations, college satisfaction, and institutional integration). Educational results directly influenced persistence/withdrawal decisions. Background characteristics were expected to have a direct influence on institutional factors, informal contact with faculty, other college experiences, and educational outcome. Informal contact with faculty influenced other college experiences and was influenced by them. Informal contact with faculty influenced educational results and was influenced by these.

Durkheim (1951), in his study of suicide throughout various aspects of European society, attempted to understand that aspect of human behavior as a form of voluntary withdrawal from a local community. There were similarities between withdrawal from the university and the motives behind suicidal decisions. In *Suicide* (1951) Durkheim sought to demonstrate how an understanding of the character of the social environment, its social and intellectual or normative attributes, could be used to account for those variations in ways in which other disciplines could not.

He distinguished four types of suicide: altruistic, anomic, fatalistic, and egotistical. Altruistic suicide was that form of taking one's life in which a society may hold to be morally desirable in given situations. Anomic suicide was seen as reflecting the temporary disruption of the normal conditions of society and therefore the breakdown of the normal social and intellectual bonds which tie individuals to each other in society. Fatalistic suicide was the result of excessive normative control. It was the antithesis of anomic suicide. Egotistical suicide arose when individuals were unable to become integrated and establish membership within the communities of society. It is this final type of suicide on which Spady, Tinto, and Pascarella focused to explain attrition from the university.

Durkheim referred to two types of integration, social and intellectual, through which membership may be brought about. Though distinct, both were intimately related. An individual who possessed deviant value positions may have lead to his isolation. He may have withdrawn from the day-to-day interactions as a result of holding very different, if not opposing values. Conversely, insufficient personal affiliation may have lead a person to adopt and hold values which deviated from the wider community.

Though each of these forms may have produced a social press toward suicide, each alone is insufficient to explain high rates of suicide in society. Both were needed to account for the occurrence of egotistical suicide. In most societies there existed several deviant subcultures with which most members affiliated themselves.

In Astin's (1975) nationwide longitudinal study, expectations about college, self-predictions about dropping out temporarily or permanently were negative predictors regarding transfer to another college before graduation. That is those who thought they would transfer didn't.

His study showed that in the area of Academic Environmental Experiences the closest variable to associate with persistence were the cumulative undergraduate g.p.a. Other predictors studied were the average grade in the major field and if the students were ever on probation.

The only extra-curricular areas studied by Astin in association with student persistence were varsity athletics and fraternity membership. This data seemed a bit handicapped due to the fact that the longer a student stays at the university the greater the opportunity to participate in these extra-curricular activities.

Cope and Hannah's (1975) review of retention research lead them to believe that of all personal attributes studied, "personal commitment to either an occupational or academic goal is the single most important determinant of persistence in college." Among other studies they cited Abel's (1966) study of persistence to graduation in failing students (less than C average), which found that graduation rates were twice as high among students who were committed to "career specific" career goals as they were among students who were uncertain of their future.

Goal commitment was contingent upon the intervening effects of student ability. Hackman and Dysinger (1970) were able to distinguish between persistence, transfers, voluntary withdrawal, and academic dismissals as demonstrated in the following matrix.

	<u>High Competence</u>	<u>Low Competence</u>
<u>High Commitment</u>	Persisters	Persist until forced to leave by failing grades
<u>Low Commitment</u>	Transfer to other or enroll at a later time	Withdraw and not reenroll at any other college at a later date

Institutional commitment arose in a number of ways:

1. Family traditions upon college choice.
2. Perception that graduation from a specific institution enhanced chances for a successful occupation or career.
3. Integration integral to one's occupational career.

From Hackman and Dysinger's (1970) matrix, Tinto (1987) in his latest review of retention research demonstrated that what occurs following entry is more important to the process of student entry than what occurs prior to entry.

Forrest (1982) coined the phrase "campus centered life". When applied to a student, the phrase "campus centered life" inferred to a student who lived in campus sponsored housing, participated in college sponsored extra-curricular activities, and was enrolled full-time, and was employed. Forrest found no significant relationship between campus centeredness and the rate of persistence. He did, however, find a modest relationship between the degree of campus centeredness and the percentage of full-time freshmen returning for their sophomore year.

These findings led Forrest to believe that the dimension of college centeredness was probably helpful in integrating freshmen into the social and academic environment of the university, which in turn encouraged freshmen to return for their sophomore year. But the value of this feature diminished and disappeared after the first year.

Tinto (1987) in his most recent study on retention suggested that whether individual intentions were phrased in terms of educational or occupational goals, participation in higher education in general and attendance at a particular institution specifically were important predictors of the likelihood of degree completion. Comprehension of these individual

intentions in institutional departure, one must have determined their specificity, stability, and clarity. These individual intentions took two major forms: personal and institutional. Personal goal commitment referred a person's commitment to the educational and occupational goals held for himself. The individual was willing to work towards the attainment of his goals. Institutional commitment defined the person's commitment to the institution to which he was enrolled. It indicated the degree to which one was willing to work to one's goals within a given institution of higher education.

Personal goal commitment possessed two roots to departure: intentions and commitment. The disposition with which a person entered the institution of higher education was found to be most important. There were four forms of individual experience on the institutional level which affected departure: Adjustment, Difficulty, Incongruency, and Isolation. Each arose from the individual within the institution and were largely the result of events which took place within the institution following entry. They were also a reflection of the attributes, skills, and dispositions of the student prior to entry and the effect of external forces on individual participation in college.

Most students surveyed by Blane, DeBuhr, and Martin (1983), departed very early in their college career prior to the first grading period; that is, within the first six to eight weeks of the first academic year. Lofty goals, strong commitments, or both in the areas of academics and socialization did lead individuals in very difficult circumstances. Modest goals and weak commitment may lead people to withdraw. So college became a testing ground for social, as well as academic commitment.

Less than 15 percent of all institutional departures on the national average took the form of involuntary dismissal. The balance of these

departures, rather than mirror the academic difficulties, reflected the character of the individual's social and intellectual experiences with an institution following entry. Specifically they mirrored the degree to which the experiences served to integrate individuals into the social and intellectual life of the institution. The more integrative they were, the more satisfying and likely to influence persistence to completion.

The absence of integration arose from two sources: incongruence and isolation. Incongruence was the state where individuals perceive themselves as being substantially at odds with the institution. This arose from interaction and the individual's evaluation of the evaluation of the character of the interaction. Incongruence was an unavoidable phenomena within institutions of higher education. Isolation referred to the absence of sufficient interactions whereby integration might have been achieved. Persons found themselves largely isolated from the daily life of the institution. This resulted from the absence of interaction. Isolation need not have occurred in the higher education environment.

Individuals experienced the character of institutional life through a wide range of formal and informal interactions with other members of the institution, expressed by the institution through the formal academic rules and regulations which governed acceptable behavior. Formal academic requirements for degree programs and regulations which might have been rigid and inflexible were examples cited of this phenomena. Informally they might have been manifested through daily interactions in and out of the classroom.

Beuthin's (1989) research utilized Tinto's (1975) conceptual framework of student attrition in examining the withdrawal of freshmen from a private, church-affiliated, liberal arts college. His studies showed that social

integration during the first year of course work was significantly related to institutional commitment and retention for a consecutive, second year of study.

Shepard (1989), as a part of his research, completed an examination of two schools of thought associated with student attrition: Astin's Theory of Student Involvement and Tinto's Causal Model. In his study, Shepard showed that involvement was strongly associated with pre-college activities and behaviors, and integration and commitment proved to be largely attributable to student pre-college motivation. Results from his analyses indicated that, although predicted-proneness measures of involvement, integration, and commitment can be said to influence dropout, a large portion of this influence was attributable to high school G.P.A. This was true particularly for academic involvement and academic integration. Predicted-proneness for extra-curricular involvement was a strong predictor of dropout even after the high school G.P.A. was controlled.

In his exploration of student retention at the end of the freshman year, Mallette (1988) used an instrument called the Freshman Experience Survey. Integral to this instrument were its six main factors: peer-group relations, finance attitudes, interactions with faculty, academic and intellectual development, faculty concern for student development and teaching ending goal commitment, and ending institutional commitment. In this study he found that the ending institutional commitment and freshman grade- point average were the most important influences in the decision to return or to transfer.

CONCEPTUAL BASE

Various models for studying student attrition have been developed over the past few decades. This body of research has been divided into four

main groups by Bean (1982). The family of research which produced the idea for this study was the longitudinal studies initiated by Spady (1970), Tinto (1975), and Pascarella (1980). These authors described dropout as a process which was precipitated by various variables and factors. The type of persister/non-persister that will be investigated in this study will be those students who chose to either persist or depart during their first semester of their university experience at UNLV. Research has been gathered from all types of institutions in regards to what types of variables to study when measuring student attitudes and plans in regards to attrition.

All three of these longitudinal-process authors described two particularly attrition-prone periods. First, immediately prior to matriculation when a student builds academic plans and extra-curricular expectations of the freshman experience. And second, during the student's continued experience at the university as they operationalize their academic plans, these plans become goals to graduation and extra-curricular expectations become actual experiences. One aspect that still lacked investigation in this family of research was a comparison of the prematriculated plans and expectations to the goals and actual experiences of the same sample of students. To evaluate which of these two variables had greater retention power to influence enrollment through the critical first year of the university experience was important. The findings of this study proved helpful to professionals in the student service field by providing data to allow educational leadership to make decisions regarding the allocation of scarce educational resources. Which strategic plan possesses greater retention power? Should a greater percentage of these funds be spent to recruit students with goals and expectations more closely aligned with those of the institution? Or because the findings suggest that students return to the institution in direct relation to

the curricular and extra-curricular events that the student participates in, the institution should allocate a greater percentage of its resources to improving those programs in which students participate in during their first semester on campus?

Tinto (1987) put the question of retention in perspective when he placed it in the larger picture of institutional strategic planning. He believed that retention should not be a goal of institutional action or a long-term objective, but rather central to the university mission statement and strategic plan, should include a concern for the education of students, their social and intellectual growth. Only when these plans were being pursued can the goals of retention follow. Achieving greater retention is predicated upon the institution's strategic planning process. The first step in formulating a retention plan is to specify the institution's goals. The key that allows successful attainment of this continuing goal is the ability of the faculty and staff to apply research obtained from the numerous retention bases of knowledge and apply it to the specific institution and the specific circumstances in which the institution finds itself.

SIMILAR STUDIES

During the review of similar studies, numerous descriptive studies which dealt with the predictive power of certain variables in regards to student retention were found. Closest in scope and purpose to the research proposed in this study was Zinnerstrom's (1989) study concerned with examining the effects between college students' retention and their pre-enrollment (personal) characteristics and their college related perceptions at the State University of New York, Buffalo. His findings suggested that college cumulative grade-point average was the best predictor of student retention. More central to this study, his findings suggested that college-related

attributes were more strongly related to college retention than preenrollment characteristics. A major point to support the necessity of this study, was the fact that due to the varied nature of any entering student population, it would be important to consider other studies endeavoring to identify factors related to retention at specific institutions of higher education.

Shucker (1987) in his study of student involvement in certain extracurricular activities and their relation to retention and grade point average, determined whether participation in certain extracurricular activities, intercollegiate athletics, campus employment, fraternity/sorority participation, intramural, and student government had a relationship to student persistence into their sophomore year.

His study indicated that those who participated in extracurricular activities had a higher persistence rate into the sophomore year than those who did not participate. It was found that those who had the higher predicted and earned grade point averages, participated less than those who had the lower predicted and earned grade point averages. Participation therefore, in extracurricular activities had a positive relationship to persistence, but a negative relationship to predicted and earned grade point averages.

Three general constructs presented in the research of Astin (1975), Bean (1984), Pascarella and Terenzini (1980), and Tinto (1975) were the basis for the research conducted by Kolb (1987): "expectations", "involvement", and "integration".

The results of discriminant analysis according to correct classification of cases as persister or dropout at $p < .001$ were (1) "expectation" construct, 77 percent accuracy, (2) "involvement" construct, 84.4 percent accuracy, (3) "integration" construct, 77.4 percent accuracy, and (4) the combined subsets predicted the criterion outcome correctly at 99.08 percent of the cases. The

"involvement" construct was the best discriminator between persisters and dropouts and supported Astin's (1984) theoretical conceptualization that a student's psychological and physical environment in an institution was the single most important determinant of his or her development during college. Some of Kolb's implications drawn from this study dealt with the possibility of reviewing the individual case data to be used in a broader sense in developing a strategic planning agenda. By making continuing retention studies a part of the institution's strategic planning, higher education professionals were better able to meet the unique needs of those who were dropout prone.

In Rom's (1985) assessment of social integration variables and student retention he measured background characteristics, commitment (goal and institutional), academic integration, social integration (peer-group and faculty-student interaction), and perceived dropout decision. He focused his study on the social system integration variables and the student decision to dropout.

Taylor (1985) studied the levels of satisfaction between freshman persisters and dropouts. His findings reported significant mean differences between the two groups in their levels of satisfaction with the academic aspects of the university in general.

Freshmen students who had greater qualitative and quantitative involvement in their institution's clubs and organizations, and more frequently used the college library resources were more likely to persist than those freshmen students who were less involved in these activities. This conclusion drawn by Barram (1989) in his review of freshmen retention tendencies.

Findings from Loppnow's (1989) research demonstrated the primary construct which discriminated significantly between persisters and voluntary

dropouts among non-traditional students was social integration. Social integration did not discriminate between persisters and voluntary dropouts for these non-traditional students surveyed. For more traditional students, goal and institutional commitment, and social integration significantly discriminated between persisters and dropouts.

Students in Gonzales' (1987) study attended their university primarily for its location and academic reputation. The impression of the campus and the student body, size of the university, and the influence of high school teachers and counselors proved to be significant variables influencing retention with returning students. External forces were primary reasons why students did not return to the university.

There was a greater sense of commitment among the return group than for the non-return group of students. Both groups were significantly different with respect to the educational level of their parents, participation in religious activities, community service, and Greek organizations. Significant differences were found between both groups in the method of registration, receipt of repayable loans, and dropping of classes.

Gonzales suggested that the specific nature of extracurricular activities which were positively associated with persistence and student choices of extracurricular activities should be examined.

Gille's (1985) survey tested Tinto's model of social and intellectual integration through comparing the scores of freshmen persisters and voluntary dropouts and the campus student services utilization of the two groups. The study investigated whether items and scale dealing with student's background, extracurricular activities, faculty relationships, environment, academic and social life, and utilization of campus student services could predict persistence.

After regression analysis, only sex and mother's education among the demographic variables were found independently related to persistence. The institutional item "ability to solve problems" was found to predict persistence independently. This was in direct contrast to the Tinto model.

Mont (1985) studied relationships between several variables and persistence. Conclusions from his findings, pertinent to the researchers proposed study, were that students who tended to persist were sufficiently involved in the academic experience, not overly involved in the social experience, reported fewer F grades, reported parents (spouse, if married) who were proud of their university accomplishments, and were more committed to the institution. The findings of Pascarella and Terenzini, that interactions with faculty and faculty concern for student development and teaching were positively related to student persistence were not corroborated in this study.

Student's pre-enrollment expectations were compared to their impressions regarding numerous variables in Ripple's (1983) study. Pre- and post- enrollment instruments were applied to freshmen. Findings from his comparison maintained that respondents were less positive about the institution on the second questionnaire. The data suggest that the expectations of females were more closely aligned with their experiences and they were happier, performing better, and had a firmer intent to persist until graduation. Local students and students who had a difficult decision on choosing the studied institution had a higher index of dissimilarity between pre- and post-enrollment perceptions than those students coming from farther away or who had an easier choice.

Father's education and the index of dissimilarity were found to be inversely related. Alumni children brought expectations which were more

closely aligned with actual experience. Both satisfaction and intention to persist were inversely related to the index of dissimilarity.

Desler (1985) studied the explanatory power of Tinto's model on first-time transfer commuter students. Academic and social integration accounted for the largest percentage of variance in persistence tending to support Tinto's (1975) hypothesis.

Thomas (1985) studied the relationship between affiliation and retention during the students freshmen year. The areas of affiliation studied included: Personal/Social Affiliation, Extracurricular Participation, Contact Hours with University Personnel, Perception of Affiliation, and General Perception of Affiliation. Projected college participation in extracurricular activities yielded results that significantly distinguished between persisters and all other subgroups.

Jones (1985) studied the relationships among student involvement, satisfaction, and retention in higher education. Stepwise logistic regression analysis revealed that students with high satisfaction scores were more likely to re-enroll spring term of their first year of college than were students with low satisfaction. Cross-tabulations done on demographic items with retention reveal that on-campus residence and satisfactory grade point average were the best predictors of student reenrollment. Analyses revealed that involvement in activities does lead to student satisfaction.

Barton's (1988) study of sophomore persisters and non-persisters identified 10 pre-admission and 10 post-admissions variables. The following were found to be related to retention classification: high school grade point average, A.C.T. composite score, high school curriculum, student's expected level of educational attainment, on-campus and off-campus employment,

college grade point average, use of campus support services, and overall satisfaction with the institution.

Rather than variables, Brophy (1984) studied student development programs and their effects upon retention. Counseling, skill, and personal development were the programs studied for their effectiveness in retention.

Records of course enrollments, grades, and counseling appointments provided the data of the independent variable (counseling appointments, Skill and Personal courses), control variables (student demographic data, other courses taken, and educational objectives), and dependent variable (retention rate). His findings indicated that counseling-advising was the only main or interactive treatment variable having a consistent statistical significance on retention and results in increased number of units and courses attempted and completed. Also demonstrated, was that an increase of participation in the independent variable resulted in a commensurate increase in retention. In his study, 402 students who saw counselors completed 5.24 more units in a year increasing revenues by \$124,672, 46 percent of the total counseling budget

Spuhler (1983) conducted a survey to investigate attrition. He sent out questionnaires to a random sample of former students to request information. Unavailability of programs, employment conflict, personal/financial problems, and counseling/career indecisiveness were identified as major obstacles to continuation at the university. Forty-five percent of those surveyed replied that they entered the university with no clear career goals.

As a result of his research, Spuhler concluded that what was necessary was a comprehensive approach which would include an advising plan

emphasizing strong faculty/counselor interaction with students and a counseling center to act as a focal point for all student services.

Findings reported by Brendel (1985) in his longitudinal study of one cohort of students show that a concerted institutional effort aimed at influencing student retention can positively influence the retention rate at an institution. All analyses indicated that Student Aid provided a positive impact on student retention.

Hatch (1983) has created a procedure for analysis of freshman retention. This procedure utilized discriminant analysis to isolate significant variables in each of three groups. For the small colleges; likelihood of marriage, family income, locus of control, and financial concern were variables with the strongest relationship to retention. For females at large institutions, likelihood of marriage was also a strong predictor. For men at large institutions, the strongest variable was part-time employment.

In a statewide survey of student services and their affect on student retention, Matlock (1988) validated that student services which provided social integration increased the retention rate in minority populations; i.e., vocational students, females, and non-whites. Programs that improved retention for these groups were decentralized counseling, remediation, the composite involvement variable, mandatory academic advisement, student input, and faculty advisors. The majority students, academic, male, and white, appeared to benefit from programs that test their ability to increase standards. The results support the need for an integrated student services model that combined academic strengthening with social integration measures.

This research applied Spady's (1970), Tinto's (1975), and Pascarella's (1980) models of studying student attrition as a conceptual base with the

information divulged by Porter (1990) regarding the first semester of the freshman year as the most prone to attrition. After garnering data from these two periods, information was provided in Chapter Five which described the conclusions arrived at from the study.

CHAPTER THREE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter was to describe how the sample of the study was identified from the Fall 1991 semester contingent of freshman students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The student sample was asked to complete 2 surveys: (1) a prematriculated survey of student plans and expectations, and (2) a post-first semester survey of the student's actualized goals and experiences. These provided data from which the relationships between the retention power of these prematriculated plans and expectations and the first semester goals and experiences were studied. Responses were analyzed to determine the correlation between prematriculated characteristics, first semester characteristics, and persistence to the second semester of university study. The Chi Square Test of Independence was utilized to determine if student retention rates of the sample differed on these two variables. Tables of correlation were compiled to analyze those factors that were highly related to one another and which proved to be the factors responsible for increased retention.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The accessible population of this investigation was a power-analyzed, representative sample of freshmen students enrolled for the Fall 1991 semester at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The sample was delineated according to two mutually exclusive moderating variables: residency and ethnicity. The sample was stratified according to these two variables. This

provided eight exclusive subgroups. The data were gathered from information provided by the Registrar's Office. Due to the fact that the pre-matriculated survey of student perspectives needed to be issued prior to the student's arrival on campus and his participation in his day-to-day activities, students were selected from the pool of admitted students up to and including the second week of July 1991.

One of the points which arose from the study of this population was that it included a sub-population of two ethnic groups which needed to be dealt with, the Native American population and an amorphous population labeled "unknown". With the Native American population, the number of students who identified themselves as members of the Native American race for the Registrar was well below the small sample size suggested by Warwick and Leninger (1975). Although maybe not politically correct, this group was withdrawn from the group of sub-populations to be sampled due to the possibility that the results from this sub-population could contaminate the results of the other data gathered by documented processes.

Included in the data collected from the Registrar was a category of race "unknown." This group either didn't complete the UNLV registration materials correctly, or they were unaware of their own ethnicity. It was determined that this segment of respondents would not be surveyed as the resulting information would be useless and create spurious results.

The sample size per strata was suggested by Cohen (1969) to control for Type I and Type II error. To arrive at a sampling size of 240 students it was necessary to plan on surveying a greater number of student for two reasons. First, according to Warwick and Leninger (1975) an average return rate on surveys is slightly under 50 percent. Secondly, experience in the Admissions Office at UNLV, confirmed that approximately sixty percent of those admitted

students would actually register for courses at UNLV. Since these students needed to be surveyed prior to their arrival on campus, it was necessary to survey admitted, but not registered, students. The list of students wouldn't be available until three weeks into the semester when the final registration process had been completed. To attain a total sample size of 240, questionnaires were sent to 84 students per strata. These 242 samples were multiplied by two, to take into account the fifty percent which would not return the survey. This total was multiplied by 1.4 to account for those who wouldn't return the survey due to the fact that they wouldn't register. From these 672 students surveyed, 242 useable questionnaires were garnered to sample.

In each of these mutually exclusive strata, Babbie (1990) suggested a systematic sampling procedure with a random start to select the study sample. The sampling interval varied from strata to strata according to the respective size of each strata's population. Thus this sampling ratio varied from strata to strata according to the relationship of the size of the stratified sample to the survey population.

The two moderating variables merited employing these controlling techniques. The researcher wanted to be certain that in choosing a sample that was representative of both ethnicity and residency. Over the past ten years, there has existed a 80/20 percentage of in-state to out-of-state students. With the disparate percentages of the various races, it became necessary to control for the under-representation of these minority populations. These populations were represented in the sample chosen and an adequate sample size obtained from each of these subgroups.

QUESTIONNAIRE VALIDITY

The validity of the questionnaire was established by a panel of jurors (for names and addresses, please refer to Appendix C. They reviewed the content of the instrument to verify that it did measure that which the researcher has constructed it to measure. A pilot study of both instruments was completed to measure the ease of completion and general understandability of the survey. This was accomplished by having a small group of recent high school graduates who had been admitted to the university and attended the campus for a summer orientation workshop complete the survey and respond to any difficulties which they encountered in its construction and implementation.

IN DEPTH RESEARCH DESIGN

The nature of this research was inferential; therefore, a power-analyzed survey approach was utilized to diminish the potential for Type I and II error in this representative sample of the accessible population. The data produced by this research was nominal and the analysis involved the appropriate statistical tests.

There were four independent variables:

Prematriculated Student Plans,
Prematriculated Student Extra-Curricular Expectations,
First Semester Student Curricular Experiences, and
First Semester Extra-Curricular Experiences.

These variables were manipulated individually and categorically as prematriculated and first semester characteristics to evaluate the retention power of these characteristics individually and collectively over one semester.

The dependent variable of retention to the second semester was acted upon by the four individual independent variables. It was measured by the

percentage of the sample which return for the second semester of university study.

Moderating variables, potentially contaminating by their attitudinal effects on the results of the survey were residency and ethnicity. These were controlled through stratified and systematic sampling procedures which eliminated the variable, stratified and proportionally sampled, and statistically controlled the variables by use of analysis of covariance and regression analysis.

The Registrar's Office was contacted for a list of admitted freshmen one month prior to their matriculation. This list distinguished the students by their controlled categories of gender, ethnicity, and residency. Warwick and Lininger (1975) suggested that no more than a small sample (thirty) should be chosen from each of these particular strata. To obtain a sample size of thirty individuals, questionnaires were sent to a number of randomly selected students from each of these strata. This number was augmented by forty percent of the sample size to deal with the fact that these were admitted and not enrolled students. It was augmented another fifty percent to take into account a fifty percent return rate as suggested by Warwick and Lininger (1975). Populations of these strata were weighted according to the relationship that they had to the population as a whole.

The analysis of covariance model was utilized to determine the extent to which the group means of the independent variables differ, and to determine if the difference between, or among, group means were statistically significant, and not just due to sampling error or a chance occurrence.

DATA COLLECTION AND TREATMENT

A stratified and proportionally accurate sample of freshmen from an admitted pool of freshmen applicants to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

for Fall 1991 were surveyed regarding their expectations and academic plans prior to their matriculation during their first semester at the university. Tradition described by the Admission's Office, concluded that sixty percent of all those accepted, would attend UNLV within the first semester of admission. This same sample of freshmen were surveyed again immediately following the Fall semester of their freshman year. Questions regarding the sample's curricular plans and interactions between the student and the institution on both the curricular and extra-curricular levels were measured in this study.

The representative sample was obtained from a pool of admitted freshmen students from the Student Information System in the Registrar's Office. The sample received a letter approximately four weeks prior to the first day of classes of Fall semester containing the following (refer to the originals in Appendix B):

1. A cover letter, briefly explaining the purpose of the study and encouraging prompt participation,
2. The Prematriculated Student Attitude Survey,
3. A coded, stamped return envelope.

Subject participation was on a voluntary basis. Code numbers were written on each return envelope and were used to determine the necessity to follow-up according to set procedures. Coded envelopes were destroyed once the respondent has been identified as having returned his necessary packet of materials. The student's reference numbers were maintained until the follow-up, post-semester surveys were mailed out at the beginning of the second semester, after which participants were referred to by their code number only.

Non-participants were sent follow-up postcards and encouraged to reply. If the response fell below 75% of the randomly selected sample, another randomly selected sample of non-respondents was phoned or an interview time requested to administer the prematriculation survey on a one-to-one basis to determine if their responses differed from those responding. Only those surveys accurately and correctly completed, were used.

Data were collected from the respondents as previously described. The instrument used was the researcher developed prematriculated student plan and perception survey. The survey used as its foundation aspects of the Student Outcome Questionnaire developed by the College Board. These aspects were designed to measure prematriculated student perceptions and expectations, as well as, the responses of those currently enrolled students regarding their actual participation in campus curricular and extra-curricular activities. It was validated by a panel of eight jurors with professional student service experience. Within four weeks after the first semester finals, the researcher determined which members of the sample had registered to continue their university study for the second consecutive semester through the Registrar's Office. Those members of the sample who had registered for the second semester received a letter containing the following (refer to the originals in Appendix B):

1. A follow-up cover letter, briefly thanking the student for his participation in the first survey and his continued enrollment in the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The purpose of the follow-up survey was also explained. Prompt participation by completing this final survey was encouraged.

2. The first semester student Goal and Experience Survey,
3. A coded, stamped return envelope.

Code numbers written on each return envelope were used to determine the necessity to follow-up according to set procedures. Coded envelopes were destroyed once the respondent has been identified as having returned his necessary packet of materials. From that point on, participants were known by their code number only.

Non-participants were sent follow-up postcards and encouraged to reply. If the response fell below 75 percent of the power analyzed, randomly selected sample, another randomly selected sample of non-respondents were phoned or an interview time requested to administer the prematriculation survey on a one-to-one basis to determine if their responses differed from those responding. Only those surveys accurately and correctly completed, were used.

For those students of the sample who had chosen not to return to continue their association at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the researcher requested that they fill out a modified first semester student experience and goal survey. The modifications included an extension of questions to determine the variety and significance of each reason the student chose to leave the institution at that time.

Non-participants of the sample who chose not to return for a second semester of university study were sent follow-up postcards and encouraged to reply. If the response fell below 75 percent of the power analyzed randomly selected sample, another randomly selected sample of non-respondents were phoned or an interview time requested to administer the prematriculation survey on a one-to-one basis to determine if their responses differed from

those responding. Only those surveys accurately and correctly completed, were used.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT

Appropriate graphs and summary statistics were presented in Chapter 4. Correlation tables and cross tab Chi Square statistics were analyzed with SPSS-MAC.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of Chapter Four was to describe the results of data analysis relative to the survey instrument and hypotheses testing. Following the results, a discussion has been presented of the pertinent findings and their relationship to the questions listed in the statement of the problem.

PROCEDURE

Six hundred and forty two prematriculation surveys were sent out to a sample of freshmen students prior to their matriculation at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas of the Fall semester 1991. A total of four hundred and thirty eight surveys were received for a sixty eight percent response rate. Eighteen students failed to complete the instrument correctly, leaving four hundred and twenty useable responses.

The following variables were determined from response to the survey:

- 1.) Prematriculated Student Plans,
- 2.) Prematriculated Student Expectations,

In addition, respondents answered questions regarding perceptions and expectations of their university experience. Raw data were coded and two-way cross tabulation tables and relevant statistics were generated using SPSS-MAC to determine if differences or the difference in student responses to the questions concerning their prematriculated plans and expectations were significant to reject the null hypothesis.

RESULTS

The following summary of the findings has been presented in relation to the specific questions found on the survey instrument. Germane written comments from the participants have been noted. Following the survey results, the results testing the four hypothesis have been presented.

Admissions: (refer to Table 1) Students who used this service and were satisfied after having used it accounted for fifty-five percent of the total. Over twenty percent of the total were not aware that the service existed. One observation of this frustration was that over eighty percent of those who expressed dissatisfaction with the service continued attendance through a second semester of university study. The observation of another student validated this first, "I was going to attend UNLV, but I was informed that I had to attend Orientation for a second time. I have already attended Orientation and have registered for classes. I am currently attending Community College of Southern Nevada because the registration process is so much easier."

Table 1

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Experiences with the Admission's Office

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	38	5	18	10	71	29.3
	Yes	19	7	115	30	171	70.7
	Total	57	12	133	40	242	100.0
Percent		23.6	5.0	55.0	16.5	100.0	

Key
 0 = Didn't Know this Service Existed
 1 = Knew about this Service, but Didn't Use it
 2 = Used this Service and Was Satisfied
 3 = Used this Service and Was Dissatisfied

Advisement: (refer to Table 2) One-third of those surveyed were satisfied with the advisement which they received from the university-sanctioned office. In a two-to-one ratio, those students satisfied with the service pursued a second consecutive semester of university work. Another third of the population did not know that this service was provided. Twenty-five percent knew about the service but were confident enough in their abilities not need to use it. Some students responded by suggesting that the process of admission, registration, and receipt of financial aid was a "pain in the butt", and chose to attend other institutions where institutional hyperrationalization and bureaucracy was a little less oppressive and less confusing.

Table 2

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Experiences with the Advisement Process

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	43	0	20	8	71	29.3
	Yes	28	58	62	23	171	70.7
	Total	71	58	82	31	242	100.0
	Percent	29.3	24.0	33.9	12.8	100.0	
Key	0 = Didn't Know this Service Existed 1 = Knew about this Service, but Didn't Use it 2 = Used this Service and Was Satisfied 3 = Used this Service and Was Dissatisfied						

Campus Housing: (refer to Table 3) Sixteen percent of the sample had committed to using campus housing and were satisfied with their decision. Sixty percent were aware of the service, but didn't take advantage of it. Twenty percent of the sample didn't know that on-campus housing was available. There were no reports of dissatisfaction with the services provided.

Table 3

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Experiences with Campus Housing

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	30	28	13	0	71	29.3
	Yes	24	121	26	0	171	70.7
	Total	54	149	26	0	242	100.0
	Percent	22.3	61.6	16.1	0	100.0	
Key	0 = Didn't Know this Service Existed 1 = Knew about this Service, but Didn't Use it 2 = Used this Service and Was Satisfied 3 = Used this Service and Was Dissatisfied						

Financial Aid: (refer to Table 4) Forty percent of the respondents were aware of the services provided by the Office of Financial Aid, but refrained from using them. Twenty-five percent of the population didn't know that these services existed. Of this category, there were slightly more students who chose to depart from the university after one semester. Twenty percent used the service of Financial Aids and were dissatisfied with the results. Respondents noted that when approaching the Financial Aid Office it seemed as if no one was really listening to them. The staff was helpful by stating "Well, you should go see...". But the students felt as if they were going in circles. Disappointment was voiced because staff expressed that all was "O.K." simply because the student was admitted. But sentiments expressed anecdotally on the survey instrument by several of the the students were those of apprehension and frustration.

Table 4

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Experiences with the Financial Aid Office

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	35	10	5	21	71	29.3
	Yes	25	93	29	24	171	70.7
	Total	60	103	34	45	242	100.0
	Percent	24.8	42.6	14.0	18.6	100.0	

Key

- 0 = Didn't Know this Service Existed
- 1 = Knew about this Service, but Didn't Use it
- 2 = Used this Service and Was Satisfied
- 3 = Used this Service and Was Dissatisfied

Minority Affairs: (refer to Table 5) Fifty-three percent or one hundred and twenty eight of two hundred and forty two students were unaware that this office existed. Forty percent said that they were aware of its existence, but had not utilized its services. Respondents noted that when approaching the Minority Affairs Office it seemed as if no one was really listening to them. As an example of this, one student recounted, "When I went to both the Financial Aid and Minority Affairs Offices, it seemed that no one was really listening to me. What I needed was someone to listen to me who knew what was going on. But everyone was sending me in circles. As a result I was forced to attend the community college because I could afford it." The staff was helpful and facilitative, but didn't really answer the specific question or concern and just passed the proverbial buck. Students felt as if they were going in circles.

Table 5

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Experiences with the Minority Affairs Office

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	48	15	0	8	71	29.3
	Yes	80	82	9	0	171	70.7
	Total	128	97	9	0	242	100.0
	Percent	52.9	40.1	3.7	3.3	100.0	

Key
 0 = Didn't Know this Service Existed
 1 = Knew about this Service, but Didn't Use it
 2 = Used this Service and Was Satisfied
 3 = Used this Service and Was Dissatisfied

Hours of Employment: (refer to Table 6) One third of the sample said that they would not work at all either on- or off-campus. Another third said that they would work approximately twenty hours weekly either on- or off-campus. The balance of the respondents responded to various hours both on- and off-campus, but none exceeding ten percent.

Table 6

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after the First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Plans on the Number of Hours of Employment

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	35	21	8	5	71	29.3
	Yes	39	44	52	36	171	70.7
	Total	74	65	60	41	242	100.0
	Percent	30.5	26.8	24.7	16.9	100.0	
Key	0 = 0-8 Hours per Week						
	1 = 8-10 Hours per Week						
	2 = 10-12 Hours per Week						
	3 = 12-20 Hours per Week						

Anticipated Graduation Date: (refer to Table 7) One third of the sample anticipated graduation within four academic years. Twenty percent believed that it would take five years. Ten percent felt that it would take them longer than five years to achieve their goal of graduation. The survey question was not phrased in such a way to distinguish the reason for the differences in anticipated dates of graduation. A comment of one student was descriptive of the degree of strength of the goal he had set to graduate from UNLV, "I am sorry to say that I am not attending UNLV for Spring semester. I intend to enroll in 1993-4 at the completion of community college."

Table 7

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Plans of Anticipated Graduation

		93	94	95	96	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	0	23	18	10	71	29.3
	Yes	24	29	68	36	171	70.7
	Total	24	52	86	46	242	100.0
	Percent	9.9	21.5	35.5	19.0	100.0	
Key	93 = 1993 94 = 1994 95 = 1995 96 = 1996						

Table 8

**Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to
Questions Regarding the Student's Plans for the Types of Employment
Pursued during Fall Semester**

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	13	18	5	35	71	29.3
	Yes	36	84	0	51	171	70.7
	Total	49	102	5	86	242	100.0
	Percent	20.2	42.1	2.1	35.5	100.0	
Key		0 = No Employment 1 = Off-Campus Employment 2 = On-Campus Employment 3 = Combination of On-Campus and Off-Campus					

Types of Employment: (refer to Table 8) Forty percent said that they would seek off-campus or a combination of off- and on- campus employment during Fall semester to meet their needs. Twenty percent felt that they would seek only on-campus employment. The question identified only on- or off-campus types of employment. The purpose of the question was to identify the types of employment which the students preferred and might act as a stronger retention agent.

Table 9

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Choice of UNLV as Their First Choice

		0	1	2	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	46	25	0	71	29.3
	Yes	87	77	7	171	70.7
	Total	133	102	7	242	100.0
Percent		55.6	42.1	2.1	100.0	
Key		0 = UNLV as Their First Choice				
		1 = UNLV as Their Second Choice				
		2 = Unsure				

UNLV as University of First Choice: (refer to Table 9) Over half of the sample identified UNLV as their first choice of institution of higher education. Forty five percent stated that it was not their institution of first choice. The question was not stated in such a way to distinguish why other institutions were considered before UNLV or why UNLV was chosen. Several of the respondents voiced concern regarding the absence of majors which they had witnessed at other institutions of higher education that they had attended or investigated and would like to see the offerings of majors expanded.

Table 10
Cross Tabulation Table of Retention by First Plans as Identified by the
Individual Students

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	48	23	0	0	71	29.3
	Yes	124	20	5	22	171	70.7
	Total	162	43	5	22	242	100.0
	Percent	67.0	17.9	2.1	9.1	100.0	
Key	0 = Academic Plans 1 = Career Preparation 2 = Social or Cultural Participation 3 = Personal Development and Enrichment						

First Plans: (refer to Table 10) Over two-thirds of the sample declared academic plans of primary importance to their goals. Only one other plan, long-term career plans, garnered more than ten percent of the sample's response.

Table 11

**Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to
Questions Regarding the Student's Marital Plans**

		0	1	2	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	41	10	20	71	29.3
	Yes	135	17	19	171	70.7
	Total	176	27	39	242	100.0
	Percent	72.7	11.2	16.1	100.0	
Key	0 = Will not Marry during College Years 1 = Will Marry during College Years 2 = Unsure					

Marital Plans: (refer to Table 11) Seventy-five percent of those surveyed replied that they would not get married while at UNLV. Sixteen percent felt that they would get married.

Table 12

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to
Questions Regarding the Student's Time of Class Preference

		0	1	2	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	51	5	15	71	29.3
	Yes	76	72	23	171	70.7
	Total	127	77	38	242	100.0
	Percent	52.4	31.8	15.7	100.0	
Key	0 = Desired A.M. Classes					
	1 = Desired a Mix of A.M. and P.M. Classes					
	2 = Desired P.M. Classes					

Preference of Time of Courses Offered: (refer to Table 12) Over one-half of the respondents acknowledged that they preferred taking courses offered between eight a.m. and 3 p. m.

Table 13
Cross Tabulation Table of Retention by Secondary Plans As Identified by the
Individual Students

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	28	10	0	33	71	29.3
	Yes	41	63	4	63	171	70.7
	Total	69	73	4	96	242	100.0
	Percent	28.5	30.2	1.7	39.7	100.0	
Key	0 = Academic Plans 1 = Career Preparation 2 = Social or Cultural Participation 3 = Personal Development and Enrichment						

Secondary Plans: (refer to Table 13) Twenty percent of the population identified career planning as important as a secondary plan. Self-Confidence was listed by twenty-five percent as a secondary motive for attending the university.

Table 14

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Perception of His Potential for Transfer

		0	1	2	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	48	23	0	71	29.3
	Yes	106	56	9	171	70.7
	Total	154	79	9	242	100.0
	Percent	63.6	32.6	3.7	100.0	
Key	0 = Impossible 1 = Not Certain 2 = Considering Transfer					

Potential for Transfer: (refer to Table 14) Sixty-three percent of the sample said that they would not be transferring to another institution. One-third said that they were as yet uncertain. It is significant that a majority of students possessed a desire to remain at UNLV and not pursue the possibility for transfer.

Table 15
Cross Tabulation Table of Retention by Tertiary Plans as Identified by the
Individual Students

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	13	5	28	25	71	29.3
	Yes	15	20	61	75	171	70.7
	Total	28	25	89	100	242	100.0
	Percent	11.7	10.3	36.8	41.4	100.0	
Key		0 = Academic Plans 1 = Career Preparation 2 = Social or Cultural Participation 3 = Personal Development and Enrichment					

Tertiary Plans: (refer to Table 15) Listed as the most common response for the tertiary plans were Personal Development and Social Relationships. This accounted for over a third of the responses.

Table 16

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Perceptions of Affordability

		0	1	2	3	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	43	0	20	8	71	29.3
	Yes	28	58	62	23	171	70.7
	Total	71	58	82	31	242	100.0
	Percent	29.3	24.0	33.9	12.8	100.0	
Key	0 = Unaffordable 1 = Somewhat Unaffordable 2 = Somewhat Affordable 3 = Affordable						

Affordability: (refer to Table 16) The responses to this question were fairly evenly divided between those who felt that UNLV was affordable and those who didn't. Forty-five percent felt that it was and fifty-five percent felt that it was not.

Table 17

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Perception of Anticipated University Honor Roll

		0	1	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	28	43	71	29.3
	Yes	51	120	171	70.7
	Total	79	163	242	100.0
	Percent	32.6	67.4	100.0	
Key	0 = Won't Achieve the University Honor Roll 1 = Will Achieve the University Honor Roll				

Anticipated University Honor Roll: (refer to Table 17) Seventy percent of those surveyed believed that they would be able to achieve membership in the University Honor Roll by maintaining a 3.7 cumulative grade point average.

Table 18

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Perceptions about Consideration of All Costs

		0	1	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	25	46	71	29.3
	Yes	42	129	171	70.7
	Total	67	175	242	100.0
	Percent	27.7	72.3	100.0	
Key	0 = Did Not Consider All Costs 1 = Considered All Costs				

Consideration of All Costs: (refer to Table 18) Over seventy percent of the sample responded that they had considered all costs associated with university study. One-third stated that they hadn't considered all costs. Respondents noted anecdotally that they felt that they could get a very good education with a minimal cost.

Table 19

**Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to
Questions Regarding the Student's Perceptions about Continued Attendance
Through Spring '92**

		0	1	2	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	33	33	5	71	29.3
	Yes	19	152		171	70.7
	Total	52	185	5	242	100.0
	Percent	21.5	76.4	2.1	100.0	
Key	0 = Won't Attend Spring Semester 1 = Will Attend Spring Semester 2 = Unsure					

Continuing Attendance through Spring 1992: (refer to Table 19) Over three quarters of those surveyed reported that they were uncertain whether they would attend a consecutive semester at UNLV during the Spring of 1992. Twenty percent said that they would not be attending. Only two percent had firm plans on attending the Spring 1992 semester before they entered their Fall semester.

Table 20

Cross Tabulation Table of Retention after First Semester by Response to Questions Regarding the Student's Perceptions of the Degree Sought

		0	1	2	Row Total	Percent
Retention After First Semester	No	0	51	20	71	29.3
	Yes	5	146	20	171	70.7
	Total	5	197	40	242	100.0
Percent		2.1	81.4	16.5	100.0	
Key	0 = Associate Degree 1 = Bachelor's Degree 2 = Graduate Degree					

Degree Sought: (refer to Table 20) Eighty percent of those surveyed claimed that they were seeking a baccalaureate degree at UNLV. Fifteen percent had goals set towards a graduate degree. Only two percent were considering associate or certification programs.

Some respondents were pleased with their visits to the university while they were still in high school. They perceived that the community was behind the university and that there were strong ties between the two entities. Comments regarding the positive appearance of the University and its "energetic" qualities were noted.

Other students felt that there should be greater emphasis and advertisement for tutoring of students who were representing the university in some official function. This would allow those representatives the opportunity of continued representation and participation in their endeavors without a greater risk of academic failure.

A few students expressed anger and frustration that they didn't receive the necessary information to be admitted and registered on time. This necessitated a further waiting period of at least four months on the part of the students in their progress towards their academic goals. Symptomatic of this concern was the request verbalized by one student, "I was accepted but never received any information on how to enroll. Can I transfer at Spring '92?"

The data were next examined to test the four hypotheses presented in Chapter One.

Hypothesis 1. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between prematriculated student curricular plans and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. The chi square statistic was used to determine significant differences at the .05 level between expected and observed cell frequencies. Chi square analysis revealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among the respondents based on prematriculated curricular plans.

Admissions	chi square=55.57	df=3	p=.00
Advisement	chi square=58.62	df=3	p=.00
Campus Housing	chi square=26.19	df=2	p=.00
Financial Aid	chi square=54.50	df=3	p=.00
Minority Affairs	chi square=36.12	df=3	p=.00

Hypothesis 2. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between prematriculated extra-curricular expectations and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. Chi square analysis revealed no statistically

significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among respondents based on prematriculated extracurricular expectations. The chi square statistic was used to determine significant differences at the 0.05 level between expected and observed cell frequencies.

Employment Hours	chi square=91.16	df=9	p=.00
Employment Type	chi square=24.30	df=3	p=.00
Marital Status	chi square=2.99	df=1	p=.00
Living Arrangements	chi square=14.66	df=3	p=.00
Marital Plans	chi square=12.93	df=2	p=.00

Hypothesis 3. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between the individual's first semester curricular experiences and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. Chi square statistics revealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among the respondents based on the individual's first semester's curricular experiences. The chi square statistic was used to determine significant differences at the .05 level between expected and observed cell frequencies.

Plan 1	chi square=106.98	df=9	p=.00
Plan 2	chi square=40.45	df=8	p=.00
Plan 3	chi square=44.91	df=12	p=.00

Hypothesis 4. There was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between first semester student participation in extra-curricular activities and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the

second semester of the student's freshman year. Chi square analysis revealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among the respondents based on student participation in first semester extra-curricular activities. The chi square statistic was used to determine significant differences at the .05 level between expected and observed cell frequencies.

Affordability	chi square=20.66	df=1	p=.00
Ant. Date of Grad.	chi square=54.42	df=5	p=.00
Ant. University Honors	chi square=52.1	df=5	p=.15
Considered all Costs	chi square=2.84	df=1	p=.09
Degree Sought	chi square=11.44	df=2	p=.00
Enrollment Status	chi square=2.23	df=1	p=.13
Spring Attendance	chi square=53.05	df=2	p=.00
Pref. of Class Times	chi square=56.59	df=6	p=.00
UNLV as First Choice	chi square=5.82	df=2	p=.05

This data reveals that no statistically significant variables were identified to disprove the null hypotheses. Conclusions regarding the data collected were discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter was to summarize the information garnered through the study. Conclusions were drawn from the data gathered and presented in a systematic and organized matter. The general purpose of this study and questions associated with it were presented. A summary of the research procedures was included. Key data gleaned from the responses to the questionnaire have been included. Recommendations for future research were presented as they relate to this study and the entire body of student retention research described in Chapter Two.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine which series of variables had the greatest effect over a student's decision to dropout after one semester of university study. Was it his prematriculated plans and expectations; or his exposure to university life during his first semester? In other words did a student's plans and expectations had more effect over his decision to dropout, than his first semester's actual experiences?

The research questions dealt with the independent variable's power over the dependent variable. The dependent variable being attrition (failure to register for a consecutive second semester during the freshman year). The focus of this study was to determine which independent variable had greater influence on the retention of freshmen at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas during the Fall semester of 1991.

The following questions served as a basis for investigation of the problem:

1. Did a student's prematriculated plans and expectations of curricular and extra-curricular involvement or his first semester's actual experiences had a greater retention power on first semester attrition?
2. Did a student's prematriculated curricular plans or extra-curricular expectations had a greater retention power on first semester attrition?
3. Did a student's first semester's curricular experiences or his first semester's extra-curricular activities had a greater retention power on first semester attrition?
4. Did a student's prematriculated curricular plans or his first semester curricular experiences had a greater retention power on first semester attrition?

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The nature of this research was to provide a logical procedure and/or rules whereby inferences or generalizations were made, with some probability of being wrong; about the larger group of freshmen students from the results obtained from a randomly selected and power-analyzed sample of the freshman class. Data were collected from this sample, and an attempt was made to determine how well these data characterized the general population of the freshman class.

The level of statistical significance was established to conform to the generally accepted standard of .05 level of confidence. The statistics used to report the data (mean, mode, standard deviation, variance, etc.) were evaluated from the parameter of the entire freshmen class population and

reviewed from a random sample of the freshman class. These statistics were estimated to the corresponding, unknown parameter of the entire population of the freshman class.

SUMMARY OF KEY DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Some respondents were pleased with their visits to the university while they were still in high school. They perceived that the community was behind the university and that there were strong ties between the two entities. Comments regarding the positive appearance of the University and its "energetic" qualities were noted.
2. Other students felt that there should be greater emphasis and advertisement for tutoring of students who were representing the university in some official function. This would allow those representatives the opportunity of continued representation and participation in their endeavors without a greater risk of academic failure.
3. A few students expressed anger and frustration that they didn't receive the necessary information to be admitted and registered on time. This necessitated further waiting for a period of at least four months on the part of the students in their progress towards their academic goals.
4. Some students responded by suggesting that the process of admission, registration, and receipt of financial aid was a "pain in the butt", and chose to attend other institutions where institutional hyper-rationalization and

bureaucracy was a little less oppressive and less confusing.

5. Respondents noted that when approaching the Financial Aid Office it seemed as if no one was really listening to them. The staff was helpful by stating "Well, you should go see...". But the students felt as if they were going in circles. Disappointment was voiced because staff expressed that all was "O.K." because the student was enrolled. But sentiments expressed by the students contained apprehension and frustration.
6. Respondents noted that when approaching the Minority Affairs Office it seemed as if no one was really listening to them. The staff was helpful and facilitative, but didn't really answer the specific question or concern and just passed the proverbial buck. Students felt as if they were going in circles. Several of the respondents voiced concern regarding the absence of majors which they had witnessed at other institutions of higher education that they had attended or investigated and would like to see the offerings of majors expanded.
7. Respondents noted anecdotally that they felt that they could get a very good education with a minimal cost by attending UNLV. They expressed a great deal of confidence in the value of their anticipated diploma.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS, HYPOTHESES, AND OTHER CONCLUSIONS

Hypothesis Number 1 as investigated through this study indicated that there was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between prematriculated student curricular plans and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. The chi square statistic was used to determine significant differences at the 0.05 level between expected and observed cell frequencies. Chi square analysis revealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among the respondents based on prematriculated curricular plans. This meant that there was no statistically purposeful reason to reject the null hypothesis that a significant relationship existed between the individual student's prematriculated curricular plans and failure to maintain a second semester of full-time enrollment.

Hypothesis Number 2 demonstrated that there was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between prematriculated extra-curricular expectations and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. Chi square analysis revealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among respondents. This meant that there was no statistically purposeful reason to reject the null hypothesis that a significant relationship existed between the individual student's prematriculated extra-curricular expectations and failure to maintain a second semester of full-time enrollment.

With Hypothesis Number 3, there was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between the individual's first semester's curricular experiences and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. Chi square statistics re-

vealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among the respondents. This meant that there was no statistically purposeful reason to reject the null hypothesis that a significant relationship existed between the individual student's first semester's curricular experiences and failure to maintain a second semester of full-time enrollment.

In conclusion, Hypothesis Number 4, added that there was no significant relationship or difference at the .05 confidence level between first semesters student participation in extra-curricular activities and failure to maintain full-time academic status for the second semester of the student's freshman year. Chi square analysis revealed no statistically significant response differences at the .05 confidence level among the respondents. This meant that there was no statistically purposeful reason to reject the null hypothesis that a significant relationship existed between the individual student's participation in extra-curricular activities and failure to maintain a second semester of full-time enrollment.

RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON DATA

Although no significant relationships were demonstrated through the investigation of the various hypothesis tested, the data collected did demonstrate that students who had strong goals and objectives prior to their matriculation in college course work consistently outperformed their counterparts who had less rigorous goals in continuing their education through the second semester of university study.

These findings would lead to encouragement of the university leadership of the development of a University image and the recruitment of students with goals and interests in harmony with that image. Any one institution cannot be all things to all people. It follows that according to the

findings presented in this study, UNLV should focus on those individuals prior to their having made a decision to attend. Counseling and recruiting information should be provided in an attempt to aid in their making an informed decision.

With the continued double digit expansion in student population over the past few years, more emphasis should be placed on student support staff and programming to attempt to retain those students who may fall through the cracks when left to their own means to attempt this maze of cafeteria-style approach to student services. A tangible example of this being the arbitrary and capricious location of the varied student service offices. This has occurred due to rapid and unforeseen student population growth, but the time may have arrived to consolidate the location of these services and fund professional staff positions to meet the needs of this diverse student population. Another non-resident student expressed her concern regarding this professional counseling, "It was very difficult to get in touch with counselors of a specific field. I needed to talk to a counselor that could help me with my schedule. The only counselor that I could speak to about the field that I was interested in was not available."

Perhaps something as simple as instituting a student-fee supported 800 or even 900 number line staffed with academic counselors who were familiar with the requirements and opportunities for students would do much in towards the retention and increased public image of the university.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

With a larger budget and influence, the recommendations that this study would suggest would be to further study this phenomena. It would be useful to replicate this study at various institutions of varying size, geographical location, and financial requirements. The University of

Nevada, Las Vegas is unique in many factors which could relegate it to a position distant in relationship to the goals and interests of the entering freshmen at other institutions of higher education throughout the United States.

In addition, since none of the null hypotheses were disproved, it would be efficacious for further study to be conducted to search out more statistically significant motives and reasons for this attrition. This could be accomplished by replicating the study again on UNLV's campus but attempting to focus on one of the two periods of time studied in this dissertation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES

The initial questionnaire was developed in such a manner to allow the survey to be completed from the randomly selected sample. The two follow-up surveys were written for both persisters and non-persisters of the initial semester to the second semester.

Names and addresses of a panel of jurors of questionnaire content were included in the appendix. These judges evaluated the surveys for internal and external reliability and validity.

Every attempt was made to include questions on student's reasons for dropping out. Such data provided clues for causal factors. Each student did not have to pick a single reason from a list, since the decision to leave college is likely to depend on a number of considerations. The student had a maximum of three options to choose. The students was asked to indicate the degree of importance of each possible reason and at the same time to permit, but not require, them to select as the most important.

Code # _____

Prematriculation Student Plan and Perception Survey

Instructions:

Specific directions are given for completing many of the questions in this questionnaire. Where no directions are given, please circle the number or the letter of the most appropriate response, such as the sample question below.

Sample:
4. Are you currently married?
0 No
1 Yes
If you are not currently married, you would circle number zero.

1. What is your sex?

- 0 Female
- 1 Male

2. How do you culturally describe yourself?

- 0 American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 1 Asian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino
- 2 Black
- 3 Hispanic
- 4 White
- 5 Other _____

3. How old are you?

4. Are you currently married?

- 0 No
- 1 Yes

5. What degree will you be seeking when you attend UNLV?
- 0 Not seeking a certificate or a degree
 - 1 Associate Degree
 - 2 At least a Bachelor's Degree
 - 3 Graduate Degree
6. Do you feel that you have a permanent disability? Circle all that apply.
- 0 No
 - 1 Yes, restricted mobility
 - 2 Yes, restricted hearing
 - 3 Yes, restricted vision
 - 4 Yes, learning disability
 - 5 Yes, terminally brain injured
 - 6 Other -----
 - 7 Yes, but I prefer not to record it on this form
7. Was UNLV your first choice to pursue your higher education degree?
- 0 Yes
 - 1 No
8. If No, what kind of college was your first choice?
- 0 A public two-year college
 - 1 A public four-year college
 - 2 A private college or university
 - 3 A vocational/technical school, hospital school of nursing, trade school or business school
 - 4 Other -----
9. What is the name of the college that was your first choice?
-
10. What was your overall high school grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
-
11. What will be your primary enrollment status when you attend UNLV this Fall?
- 0 Primarily for credit Full-time (12 or more hours enrolled)
 - 1 Primarily for credit Part-time (less than 12 hours)
 - 2 Primarily not for credit

12. During school this Fall, how many hours a week do you plan on working to support yourself when classes are being held?

13. Will these hours of employment be

0 On-Campus
1 Off-Campus
2 Both

14. The following statements reflect the plans of many college students. Please circle the letter of those intentions that are important to you now as you choose to attend UNLV.

Academic Plans

- A To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field
B To obtain a certificate or degree
C To complete courses necessary to transfer to another institution
D Other -----

Career-Preparation Plans

- E To discover my career opportunities and abilities
F To formulate long-term career plans
G To prepare for a new career
H Other -----

Job- or Career-Improvement Plans

- I To improve my knowledge, technical skills and/or competencies in my job or career
J To increase my chances for a raise and/or promotion in/from my present job
K Other -----

Social- and Cultural-Participation Plans

- L To become actively involved in student life and campus activities
M To increase my participation in cultural and social events
N To meet people
O Other -----

Personal-Development and Enrichment Plans

- P To increase my self-confidence
- Q To improve my leadership skills
- R To improve my ability to get along with others
- S To learn skills that will enrich my daily life or make me a more complete person
- T To develop my ability to be independent, self-reliant, and adaptable
- U Other _____

15. From the list of plans in Question 14, select the three that were most important to you when you chose to attend UNLV. For example, if your most important plan was "Too obtain a certificate or degree", enter the letter B in the first space.

1st Important ____ 2nd Important ____ 3rd Important ____

16. In what year do you plan on obtaining your degree?

17. Following are services provided by UNLV: How would you evaluate each service? Circle the number of the response that is most appropriate.

Note: Because you have registered, but have not yet attended, you may not have used these services.

I didn't know this service was offered

	I knew about this service, but haven't used it			
		I used this service and was satisfied with it		
			I used this service but was not satisfied with it	
0	1	2	3	Admissions
0	1	2	3	Registration
0	1	2	3	Academic Advising
0	1	2	3	Guidance, Counseling, and Testing
0	1	2	3	Reading, Writing, Math, and Study Skills
0	1	2	3	Minority Affairs
0	1	2	3	Scholarships
0	1	2	3	Financial Aid/Student Employment
0	1	2	3	Student Activities
0	1	2	3	Student Government
0	1	2	3	Student Union
0	1	2	3	On-Campus Housing

0	1	2	3	Food Services
0	1	2	3	Library
0	1	2	3	Child Care
0	1	2	3	Bookstore
0	1	2	3	Parking
0	1	2	3	Other _____

18. Do you plan to attend UNLV during the Spring 1992 semester?

0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes

19. Do you plan to transfer to another college or university before graduating?

0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes

20. If you do plan to transfer, why would you transfer?

21. If you plan to transfer, where do you plan to transfer to?

22. Do you plan on getting married while in college?

0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes

23. Do you plan on obtaining an overall g.p.a. of A- or better?

0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes

24. Do you plan on graduating with honors (3.5 g.p.a.)?

0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes

25. Do you plan being elected to an academic honor society?
- 0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes
26. If all courses required for your program or major were offered evenings as well as days, would you prefer
- 0 to take all your courses 8 am to 3 pm?
1 to take most of your courses 8 am to 3 pm?
2 to take some of your courses 8 am to 3 pm?
3 to take an equal mix of classes between 8 am to 10 pm?
4 to take some of your courses between 3 pm and 10 pm?
5 to take most of your courses between 3 pm and 10 pm?
6 to take all of your courses between 3 pm and 10 pm?
27. While attending UNLV will you
- 0 be living at home with your family?
1 be living by yourself or with roommates off-campus?
2 be living in on-campus housing?
28. Do you feel that you can afford attending UNLV?
- 0 No
1 Yes
29. Did you consider all the costs associated with attendance?
- 0 No
1 Yes
30. Briefly estimate how much you feel it will cost to pay for the following during the academic year 1991-92:
- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Tuition and Fees | ----- |
| Books and Supplies | ----- |
| Room and Board | ----- |
| Transportation | ----- |

31. How much would you be willing to pay for tuition per year to attend UNLV?

32. How much would you be willing to borrow to attend UNLV?

33. Look at Majors and Areas of Study and enter on the line your planned major area of study at UNLV.

34. If you have other questions or comments which would be helpful to us about your experiences with UNLV, please write those on the bottom of this page. Please do not hesitate to use the back of the page if necessary.

Returning Student Educational Goal and Experience Survey**Instructions:**

Specific directions are given for completing many of the questions in this questionnaire. Where no directions are given, please circle the number or the letter of the most appropriate response, such as the sample question below.

Sample:
2. Are you currently married?
0 No
1 Yes
If you are not currently married, you would circle number zero.

1. How old are you?

2. Are you currently married?
0 No
1 Yes
3. Do you have a permanent disability? Circle all that apply.
0 No
1 Yes, restricted mobility
2 Yes, restricted hearing
3 Yes, restricted vision
4 Yes, learning disability
5 Yes, terminally brain damaged
6 Other -----
7 Yes, but I prefer not to record it on this form

4. What degree are you seeking at UNLV?

- 0 Not seeking a certificate or a degree (Personal Enrichment)
- 1 Associate Degree
- 2 At least a Bachelor's Degree
- 3 Graduate Degree

5. The following statements reflect the plans of many college students. On the prior survey that you completed you indicated why you planned to attend UNLV. These plans are identified in the first column. In the second column, indicate yes or no whether you feel you are achieving or have achieved these plans as a result of your experiences this Fall at UNLV.

These were important to me prior to attending UNLV

I am achieving or have achieved these while attending UNLV

Academic Goals

- A Y N To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field
- B Y N To obtain a certificate or degree
- C Y N To complete courses necessary to transfer to another institution
- D Y N Other _____

Career-Preparation Goals

- E Y N To discover my career opportunities and abilities
- F Y N To formulate long-term career plans
- G Y N To prepare for a new career
- H Y N Other _____

Job- or Career-Improvement Goals

- I Y N To improve my knowledge, technical skills and/or competencies in my job or career
- J Y N To increase my chances for a raise and/or promotion in/from my present job
- K Y N Other _____

Social- and Cultural-Participation Goals

- L Y N To become actively involved in student life and campus activities

- M Y N To increase my participation in cultural and social events
 N Y N To meet people
 O Y N Other _____

Personal-Development and Enrichment Goals

- P Y N To increase my self-confidence
 Q Y N To improve my leadership skills
 R Y N To improve my ability to get along with others
 S Y N To learn skills that will enrich my daily life or make me
 a more complete person
 T Y N To develop my ability to be independent, self-reliant, and
 adaptable
 U Y N Other _____

6. Have your plans changed since you chose to attend UNLV? From the list of plans in question 6, please select the three that are most important to you now. For example, if your most important plan was "Too obtain a certificate or degree", enter the letter B in the first space.

Pre-Fall 1st ____ 2nd ____ 3rd ____
 Post-Fall 1st ____ 2nd ____ 3rd ____

7. What was your overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale during your first semester at UNLV?

8. What was your enrollment status when you attend UNLV this Fall?

0 Full-time (12 or more hours enrolled)
 1 Part-time (less than 12 hours)
 2 Not for credit

9. During school this Fall, how many hours a week did you work to support yourself when classes are being held?

10. These hours of employment were

0 On-Campus
 1 Off-Campus
 2 Both

11. In what year do you plan on obtaining your degree?

12. Do you plan to get married while in college?

0 No

1 Uncertain

2 Yes

13. Do you plan to obtain an overall g.p.a. of A- or better?

0 No

1 Uncertain

2 Yes

4. Following are services provided by UNLV: How would you evaluate each service? Circle the number of the response that is most appropriate.

I didn't know this service was offered

1 I knew about this service, but haven't used it

1 1 I used this service and was satisfied with it

1 1 1 I used this service but was not satisfied with it

1 1 1 1

0 1 2 3 Admissions

0 1 2 3 Registration

0 1 2 3 Academic Advising

0 1 2 3 Guidance, Counseling, and Testing

0 1 2 3 Reading, Writing, Math, and Study Skills

0 1 2 3 Tutoring

0 1 2 3 Minority Affairs

0 1 2 3 College Cultural Programs

0 1 2 3 Recreation and Athletic Programs

0 1 2 3 Financial Aid/Student Employment

0 1 2 3 Student Activities

0 1 2 3 Student Government

0 1 2 3 Student Union

0 1 2 3 On-Campus Housing

0 1 2 3 Food Services

0 1 2 3 Student Health Services

0 1 2 3 Library

0 1 2 3 Child Care

0 1 2 3 Bookstore

0 1 2 3 Parking

0 1 2 3 Campus Security

0 1 2 3 Other -----

15. Do you plan to attend UNLV during the Fall 1992 semester?
- 0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes
16. Do you have plans to transfer to another college or university before graduating?
- 0 No
1 Uncertain
2 Yes
17. If you plan to transfer, why will you transfer?

18. If you plan to transfer, where will you transfer to?

19. If all courses required for your program or major were offered evenings as well as days, would you prefer
- 0 to take some of your courses 8 am to 3 pm?
1 to take an equal mix of classes between 8 am to 10 pm?
2 to take some of your courses between 3 pm and 10 pm?
20. While attending UNLV this semester did you
- 0 live at home with your family?
1 live by yourself or with roommates off-campus?
2 live in on-campus housing?
21. Do you feel that you can afford attending UNLV?
- 0 No
1 Yes
22. Did you consider all the costs associated with attendance?
- 0 No
1 Yes

23. Briefly estimate how much you feel it will cost to pay for the following during the academic year 1991-92:

Tuition and Fees -----

Books and Supplies -----

Room and Board -----

Transportation -----

24. Is it costing you more than you originally anticipated to attend UNLV?

0 No

1 Yes

2 It's costing me less

25. How much do you think you will need to borrow each year in order to attend UNLV?

26. Look at the Majors and Areas of Study List and on the line enter the two digit number assigned to your planned major area of study at UNLV.

27. If you have other questions or comments which would be helpful to us about your experiences with UNLV, please write those on the bottom of this page. Please do not hesitate to use the back of the page if necessary.

Non-Returning Student Plans and Expectations Survey**Instructions:**

Specific directions are given for completing many of the questions in this questionnaire. Where no directions are given, please circle the number or the letter of the most appropriate response, such as the sample question below.

Sample:
2. Are you currently married?
0 No
1 Yes
If you are not currently married, you would circle number zero.

1. How old are you?

2 Are you currently married?

0 No

1 Yes

3. Do you have a permanent disability? Circle all that apply.

0 No

1 Yes, restricted mobility

2 Yes, restricted hearing

3 Yes, restricted vision

4 Yes, learning disability

5 Yes, terminally brain damaged

6 Other

7 Yes, but I prefer not to record it on this form

4. What degree were you seeking when you attend UNLV?

0 Not seeking a certificate or a degree

1 Associate Degree

2 At least a Bachelor's Degree

3 Graduate Degree

5. The following statements reflect the plans of many college students. I have identified the letter of those intentions that you identified as important to you as you chose to attend UNLV. Please circle the letter of those intentions that were important to you as you chose to attend UNLV. In the second column, indicate yes or no whether you feel that you are achieving or have achieved as a result of your experiences at UNLV. In the third column, identify those goals which you had difficulty achieving at UNLV.

These were important to me when I chose to go to UNLV

			I was achieving or have achieved while attending UNLV
			I would have difficulty achieving at UNLV
			Academic Goals
A	Y N	A	To increase my knowledge and understanding in an Academic field
B	Y N	B	To obtain a certificate or degree
C	Y N	C	To complete courses necessary to transfer to an other institution
D	Y N	D	Other _____
			Career-Preparation Goals
E	Y N	E	To discover my career opportunities and abilities
F	Y N	F	To formulate long-term career plans
G	Y N	G	To prepare for a new career
H	Y N	H	Other _____
			Job- or Career-Improvement Goals
I	Y N	I	To improve my knowledge, technical skills and/or competencies in my job or career
J	Y N	J	To increase my chances for a raise and/or promotion
K	Y N	K	Other _____

Social- and Cultural-Participation Goals

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---|---|
| L | Y N | L | To become actively involved in student life and campus activities |
| M | Y N | M | To increase my participation in cultural and social events |
| N | Y N | N | To meet people |
| O | Y N | O | Other _____ |

Personal-Development and Enrichment Goals

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---|--|
| P | Y N | P | To increase my self-confidence |
| Q | Y N | Q | To improve my leadership skills |
| R | Y N | R | To improve my ability to get along with others |
| S | Y N | S | To learn skills that will enrich my daily life or make me a more complete person |
| T | Y N | T | To develop my ability to be independent, self-reliant, and adaptable |
| U | Y N | U | Other _____ |

6. I have identified the letter of those intentions that you identified were most important to you as you chose UNLV. From the list of plans in Question 6, select the three that were most important to you when you chose to attend UNLV. For example, if your most important plan was "To obtain a certificate or degree", enter the letter B in the first space.

Pre-Fall	1st ____	2nd ____	3rd ____
Post-Fall	1st ____	2nd ____	3rd ____

7. From the list of plans in Question 6, select the three most important goals you feel that were difficult for you to attain while enrolled at UNLV. For example, if the goal you felt would be most difficult to achieve would be "To obtain a degree," enter the letter B in the first space.

Most Difficult ____ 2nd Difficult ____ 3rd Difficult ____

8. What was your overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale during your first semester at UNLV?

9. What was your primary enrollment status when you attend UNLV this Fall?
- 0 Primarily for credit Full-time (12 or more hours enrolled)
 1 Primarily for credit Part-time (less than 12 hours)
 2 Primarily not for credit
10. During school this Fall, how many hours a week did you work to support yourself when classes are being held?

11. These hours of employment were
- 0 On-Campus
 1 Off-Campus
 2 Both
12. If you still have plans to finish a degree, in what year do you plan on obtaining that degree?

13. Following are services provided by UNLV. How would you evaluate each service? Circle the number of the response that is most appropriate.

I didn't know this service was offered

	I knew about this service, but haven't used it			
		I used this service and was satisfied with it		
			I used this service but was not satisfied with it	
0	1	2	3	Admissions
0	1	2	3	Registration
0	1	2	3	Business Office
0	1	2	3	Academic Advising
0	1	2	3	Guidance, Counseling, and Testing
0	1	2	3	Reading, Writing, Math, and Study Skills
0	1	2	3	Tutoring
0	1	2	3	Minority Affairs
0	1	2	3	College Cultural Programs
0	1	2	3	Recreation and Athletic Programs
0	1	2	3	Financial Aid/Student Employment
0	1	2	3	Student Activities
0	1	2	3	Student Government
0	1	2	3	Student Union
0	1	2	3	On-Campus Housing
0	1	2	3	Food Services

0	1	2	3	Student Health Services
0	1	2	3	Library
0	1	2	3	Child Care
0	1	2	3	Bookstore
0	1	2	3	Parking
0	1	2	3	Campus Security
0	1	2	3	Other _____

14. While attending UNLV did you

- 0 live at home with your family?
- 1 live by yourself or with roommates off-campus?
- 2 live in on-campus housing?

15. How many weeks has it been since you decided to leave UNLV?

16. Did you change your major during Fall semester?

- 0 No
- 1 Yes

17. From what major to which major did you change?

18. If you do not plan to attend UNLV during the next 12 months, what do you plan to do?

- 0 Enter or plan to enter military service
- 1 Look for a job
- 2 Work in a job
- 3 Care for a home/family
- 4 Travel
- 5 Volunteer Service
- 6 Not doing anything
- 7 Other _____

19. Did you feel that you could afford to attend UNLV?

- 0 No
- 1 Yes

20. Did you consider all the costs associated with attendance at UNLV?

0 No

1 Yes

21. If no, did you consider what costs did you not consider?

Supplies	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____
Transportation	\$ _____
Insurance	\$ _____
Auto Maintenance	\$ _____
Child Care	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____

22. In order of importance (1 being the most importance from all four categories) rank all the reasons that influenced your decision not to enroll for a second, consecutive semester at UNLV.

Academic

___ Unsure about my choice of academic major
___ Dissatisfied with academic advisement
___ Possibility of academic probation/suspension due to low grades
___ Found university study too difficult
___ Dissatisfied with instructor(s)
___ Transferring to another institution
___ Other (please list) _____

Employment

___ Scheduling conflict between job and studies
___ Accepted full-time employment
___ Too difficult to work and go to school at the same time
___ Other (please list) _____

Financial

___ Unable to find a job to finance my education while at UNLV
___ Not enough money to attend UNLV
___ Request for financial aid denied
___ Request for Financial Aid resulted with too much loan money, not enough grant money.
___ Other (please list) _____

Personal Circumstances

- Home responsibilities too hard to balance with school work
- Unsatisfactory child care arrangements
- Personal illness
- Experienced difficulty in fitting in socially
- Living accommodations were not compatible with my needs and lifestyle
- Distance from my family/support group is just too great.
- Lack of time
- Transportation
- Other (please list)_____

23. Look at the Majors and Areas of Study List and enter the two digit number of your planned major area of study at UNLV on this line.

24. If you have other questions or comments which would be helpful to us about your experiences with UNLV, please write those on the bottom of this page. Please do not hesitate to use the back of the page if necessary.

Majors and Programs of Study List

College of Business and Economics

- 1 **Accounting**
- 2 **Economics**
- 3 **Finance**
- 4 **Management**
- 5 **Management Information Systems**
- 6 **Marketing**

College of Education

- 7 **Elementary Education**
- 8 **Secondary Education**
- 9 **Special Education**
- 10 **Vocational**

Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering

- 11 **Architecture**
- 12 **Civil Engineering**
- 13 **Computer Science**
- 14 **Electrical Engineering**
- 15 **Mechanical Engineering**

College of Fine and Performing Arts

- 16 **Art**
- 17 **Dance**
- 18 **Music**
- 19 **Theater Arts**

School of Health, P.E., and Recreation

- 20 **Athletic Training**
- 21 **Health Education**
- 22 **Physical Education**
- 23 **Recreation**

College of Health Sciences

- 24 **Clinical Lab Sciences**
- 25 **Health Care Administration**
- 26 **Nursing**
- 27 **Radiologic Technology**

William H. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

28 Hotel Administration

College of Liberal Arts

- 29 Anthropology**
- 30 Communication Studies**
- 31 Criminal Justice**
- 32 English**
- 33 French**
- 34 German**
- 35 History**
- 36 Interdisciplinary**
- 37 Liberal Studies**
- 38 Philosophy**
- 39 Political Science**
- 40 Psychology**
- 41 Romance Languages**
- 42 Sociology**
- 43 Spanish**
- 44 Social Work**

College of Science and Mathematics

- 45 Animal Biology**
- 46 Biology**
- 47 Plant Biology**
- 48 Chemistry**
- 49 Geology**
- 50 Applied Mathematics**
- 51 Mathematics**
- 52 Statistical Mathematics**
- 53 Pre-Professional Chemistry**
- 54 Pre-Professional Biology**
- 55 Applied Physics**
- 56 Physics**

Student Development Center

- 57 Undeclared**

APPENDIX B
COVER LETTERS



VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT SERVICES

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
4505 MARYLAND PARKWAY • LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89154-2019
(702) 739-3656 • FAX 597-4148

July 25, 1991

Welcome Rebel Freshman:

This survey has been sent to you to assist the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in obtaining information regarding your academic plans and extra-curricular expectations during your first semester. This information will be used to further meet student needs and interests.

It is our intent to gather information from this initial survey and a second follow-up survey to discover what experiences and/or attitudes have influenced you to remain at the University or to pursue other interests. The results of this survey will help us compare these various aspects of retention. At no time will information about any individual student be released.

Since we are sampling only a small fraction of your class, your help in completing these questionnaires is essential to it' success. We wish you every success in your studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script.

Anthony P. Pellegrini
Doctoral Student, UNLV Educational Administration,
and Higher Education Department

enclosure

Approval

A handwritten signature in cursive script.

Robert L. Ackerman, Vice President, Student ServicesA handwritten signature in cursive script.

Anthony Saville, Professor, Educational Administration
and Higher Education Department

Survey Cover Letter for Students Enrolled for a Consecutive Semester.

Dear Rebel Freshman:

We hope that your first semester at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas has proved to be a beneficial and exciting experience for you. We appreciate your having completed and returned the prematriculation survey prior to your arrival on campus. With your completion of the first semester at the University, we must again ask your assistance one last time to complete this study. We are asking you to complete the enclosed post-first semester survey and return it to us at your earliest possible convenience. We have already given direction to our staff to commence compiling the information garnered from the results received from your initial survey.

Enclosed with this letter you will find a follow-up survey on post-first semester activity and goals which you agreed to complete for this study. The format is very similar to the initial survey and should be easy for you to follow.

Should you have further questions or concerns prior to that contact, please don't hesitate to contact me at the enclosed address.

Warmest regards,

Anthony P. Pellegrini

enclosures

**Follow-up Survey Cover Letter for Students Choosing not to Enroll for
a Consecutive Semester.**

Dear Rebel Freshman:

We hope that your first semester at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas has proved to be a beneficial and exciting experience for you. We hope that you are pursuing endeavors that are meaningful to you and your future. We are sorry that you have chosen not to continue your association with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

We appreciate your having completed and returned the prematriculation survey prior to your first few days on campus. With your completion of the first semester at the University, we have to complete this study by asking you to complete the enclosed post-first semester survey and return it to me at your earliest possible convenience. We would appreciate you honest and forthright reasons for your departure. Again these data will only be used to improve our efforts to meet the needs of students at the University.

Enclosed with this letter you will find a follow-up survey on post-first semester activities and goals which you agreed to complete for this study. The format is very similar to the initial survey and should be easy for you to follow.

Should you have further questions or concerns prior to that contact, please don't hesitate to contact me at the enclosed address.

Warmest regards,

Anthony P. Pellegrini

enclosures

APPENDIX D

PANEL OF JURORS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENT

PANEL OF JURORS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENT

Dr. Robert Ackerman, Vice President for Student Services, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

Liz Baldizan, Assistant to the Vice President for Student Services, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

Judy Belanger, Director of Student Financial Services, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, 89154.

Dr. Sterling R. Church, Vice President for Student Services, Southern Utah University, 351 W. Center, Cedar City, UT 84720.

Bill Fowler, Dean of Students, Dixie College, 225 S. 700 E., St. George, UT 84770.

Dr. Jim Kitchen, Associate Dean of Students, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

Dr. Terry Piper, Director of Resident Life, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

Anita Stockbauer, Director, Student Support Services, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

APPENDIX D
STUDENT RECORDS REQUESTS
AND
HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE WAIVERS



UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

4505 Maryland Parkway

Las Vegas, Nevada 89154

Office of the Registrar (703) 739-3371

REQUEST TO EXAMINE STUDENT ACADEMIC RECORDS

Institutions may disclose educational records or components thereof without written consent of students to personnel within the institution determined by the institution to have legitimate educational interest. Legitimate educational interest is defined as the demonstrated need to know by those officials of an institution who act in the student's educational interests, including faculty, administrative, clerical and professional employees, and other persons who manage student record information.

1. Person(s) making request:

Anthony P. Pellegrini

EDA

Doctoral Student

Dr. Anthony Saville

EDA

Professor

Name

Dept.

Title

2. Records requested

Names, addresses, telephone numbers of admitted freshmen for Fall of 1991.

3. Research Proposal (attach additional sheets if needed)

A. Purpose or need

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is any significant difference between Freshman student prematriculated perceptions and their first semester actual experiences on their retention for a second semester of university study.

B. Methodology

I propose to survey a stratified, representative sample of the Fall 1991 Freshman class. I will assess their perceptions just prior to their attendance to UNLV and again after their first semester. I will compare these deviations from the mean scores of both instruments by means of a t - and f -test.

C. Objective or goal

My goal is to study this period of a student's life to see if his own perceptions of his academic environment has a greater power of retention in higher education.

4. For whom are you conducting the research?

5. For whom are the results of the research intended?

The results of this study will augment the body of literature in the fields of student services and student retention. The information will also prove useful to some individual student service departments and the division as a whole at UNLV.

6. How are the results of the research to be presented?

The results will be presented in a published form as my dissertation. Copies of which will be placed in the Graduate College, the Department of Educational Administration, and the Library.

7. Other information relative to this request.

At no time will any information regarding a particular student be divulged. All information presented will be presented in terms of the sample and in reference to the parameter of the whole population.

I am familiar with the family educational rights and privacy act of 1974 as amended and understand that no personally identifiable information may be disclosed from the educational record of students without their specific written consent. I further understand that I am responsible for complying with the "Act" in regard to all educational records released to me as a result of this request.

Signature(s)



Date

7/17/91

Date

Date

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA-LAS VEGASSTATEMENT OF EXEMPTION
from review by
Human Subject Committees

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) published in the Federal Register of January 26, 1981, its amended regulations governing research involving human subjects, altering the scope of previous Department regulations by exempting categories of research which present little or no risk or harm to human beings. At UNLV the Human Subject Institutional Review Board accepted the exempted research categories. Exemption from Human Subject Committee review and approval must be based on the exemptions specified in the Federal Regulations of January 26, 1981. The responsibility for claiming the exemption can rest at the departmental level, if the department files a departmental assurance with the Office of the Graduate Dean (option 1). Otherwise, the responsibility will rest in the Graduate Dean's Office, either with the Graduate Dean or the Chairman of the appropriate Human Subject Committee (option 2).

This form will assist researchers and departments who have chosen option 1 in certifying proposed research as exempt and specifying under which of five categories listed in the Federal Register the exemption occurs (see reverse). In questionable cases, investigators and/or department chairs are strongly urged to consult the appropriate Human Subjects Committee. This completed and signed form is to be retained in the department. In addition:

- 1) For extramurally funded research projects, a copy must be forwarded to the Office of the Graduate Dean so that an institutional certification (DHHS 596) may accompany the application when mailed to the funding agency.
- 2) Originals or copies of this form must be forwarded by department chairmen to the Graduate Dean's Office, along with the informed consent form.

The above stated policy is effective as of January 1, 1982.

INVESTIGATOR Anthony P. Pellegrini DEPARTMENT OF Unit Ed. Adm. & Higher Ed.

TITLE of Study Retention Power of Pre- and Post-First Semester Student Perspective

DURATION of Study Aug. 1, 1991- Feb. 1, 1992 SPONSOR Dr. Anthony Saville

CITATION of Exempt Category (identify by number as shown on back of page) 2

DESCRIPTION of Study and REASON for including it in the exempt category cited:
(attache sheet if more space is needed)

[Signature] 1/22/1992
Signature of Investigator Date

[Signature] 1/27/92
Signature of Investigator's/Departmental
Chairman or Graduate Dean, or Human
Subjects Committee Chairman Date

EXEMPTION CATEGORIES (45 CFR 46.101(b))

Research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories:

(1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special educational instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests, (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), if information taken from these sources is recorded in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

(3) Research involving survey or interview procedures, except where all of the following conditions exist: (i) responses are recorded in such a manner that the human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, (ii) the subject's responses, if they became known outside the research, could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability, and (iii) the research deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol. All research involving survey or interview procedure is exempt, without exception, when the respondents are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office.

(4) Research involving the observation (including observation by participants) of public behavior, except where all of the following conditions exist: (i) observations are recorded in such a manner that the human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, (ii) the observations recorded about the individual, if they became known outside the research, could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability, and (iii) the research deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol.

(5) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

The purpose of this study was to determine which had the greatest effect over a student's decision to dropout during his first semester at the university. Was it his prematriculated plans and expectations: or his exposure to university life? In other words, did a student's plans and expectations have greater retention power than his first semester's actual experiences?

The research question dealt with the independent variable's power over the dependent variable. The dependent variable being attrition (failure to register for a consecutive second semester during the freshman year). This focus of this study was to determine which independent variable had greater influence on the retention of freshman at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas during the Fall semester of 1991.

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