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THE SUBJECTIVITY OF STUDENT SUCCESS: INSTRUCTOR'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE IDEAL

STUDENT IN A COMPENSATORY PROGRAM FOR MINORITY YOUTH

A Thesis Presented

by

YOLANDA MARIA WIGGINS

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
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Department of Sociology

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DEDICATION

To my family, Mildred Armstead, Katrina Blunt, April Dunlap, Marquis Watson, Madison Dunlap, and Boysie Jackson. To the teachers and mentors I have been blessed to cross paths with in my life that saw potential in me from the very beginning. Thank you all for always believing in my capabilities and encouraging me to excel beyond the stars. I hope to make you all proud someday. I love you.

ABSTRACT

THE SUBJECTIVITY OF STUDENT SUCCESS: INSTRUCTOR'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE IDEAL
STUDENT IN A COMPENSATORY PROGRAM FOR MINORITY YOUTH

September 2014

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Student success has been understood primarily in the context of conventional classroom settings. Yet, despite the prevalence of pre-college programs in the lives of disadvantaged students, few studies explore how notions of *success* are conceptualized within these spaces. This study explores what counts as student success in a pre-college program from the perspective of those facilitating the program. Using archival program data consisting of 524 student performance evaluations, this study asks, *In a program designed to remedy or level the playing field for historically disadvantaged students, what behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes count as success?* The findings of this study suggest that what counts as student success and who is considered an *ideal* student is constructed by instructor's perceptions and assessments of both student's cognitive abilities and non-cognitive qualities. This study also shows that mainstream and stereotypical judgments about effort, character, and success more broadly persist even in spaces intended to supplement and, in many ways, serve as an alternative to traditional academic settings.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

While there appears to be a smooth trajectory from high school to college for many students, for students from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds, this is less so. Pre-college programs are a critical step in the transition to post-secondary institutions for many students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Compensatory in nature, pre-college programs provide supplemental academic assistance and enrichment activities to high school students and are intended to help them develop skills, knowledge, and self-confidence (Erisman & McSwain, 2006). Most importantly, these programs introduce and expose youth to the prospects of college early on in their academic careers and aim to further cultivate their aspirations to attend college through college tours and, most commonly, a summer residential component where students live and take courses on a college campus. Student participation in college preparatory programs, particularly minority student participation, has largely been seen as a strong indicator of greater access to higher education (Tierney et al., 2005).

Even as American public policy has sought to make higher education more inclusive, particular groups of students, especially low-income and students of color, remain at a disadvantage as a result of poor academic preparation and limited financial resources. Research has found that it is more difficult for these students to not only enter college, but also to persist onto graduation (Duncan-Andrade, 2008; Braxton, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Kendrick, 1970). Accordingly, nationwide efforts have been made to provide access to pre-college programs, targeting low-income, first-

generation and minority students (Wang, 2005; Hexter, 1990). As a consequence, there are more than 2,800 programs designed to aid students in the high school to college transition (Trio Quick Facts, 2011).

Because researchers evaluate pre-college programs in relation to their participants' enrollment and future success in college (Domina, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), less is known about what makes a student successful in this context. The current study explores what counts as student success in a pre-college program from the perspective of those facilitating the program. Particular emphasis is placed on identifying the characteristics those teaching within the program believe *ideal* or *successful* students possess. To date, student success is primarily understood in the context of conventional K-12 classroom settings. Yet, despite the prevalence of pre-college programs in the lives of disadvantaged students, few studies have explored how notions of success are conceptualized here. Therefore, this study asks, in a program designed to remedy or level the playing field for historically disadvantaged students, what behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes count as success?

Bourdieu (1977) and other researchers in social reproduction (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Kauffman, 2001; Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999) view the educational system as having a gatekeeper function in society, as the dominant class has symbols through language and culture, which establish power. These scholars suggest that educational systems reward achievement not so much by merit, but through cultural signals determined by the background of the student and reinforced by institutions, like schools. Thus, teachers and schools tend to categorize students based on interactions

they observe. This is most evident in K-12 education, especially, as students who do not internalize dominant cultural repertoires are placed in lower level educational tracks that work to limit their future possibilities (Oakes, 1985). Today, modern day tracking is frequently based on a combination of earlier academic performance and student behavior. In Bourdieu's view, education is not a meritocracy, but rather a function of the skills and behaviors exhibited in order to navigate the system and the social networks used to advance. Students who display such mannerisms know the "right" things to say, how to behave, and how to take the right courses, for example. This knowledge often leads to increased opportunities and subsequently, positive outcomes.

Although the aim of formal education is thought to be achieved through cognitive mastery in practical subjects such as mathematics and writing, it is mainly achieved through the "hidden curriculum," which proves to be a subtler, but nonetheless powerful indoctrination of the norms and values of mainstream society. Michel Foucault's (1980) concepts of "normalization" and "normalizing judgments" also serve as theoretical starting points for grounding the larger discussion of how power relations operate and socialization occurs within educational settings. As used by Foucault, normalization involves the construction of an idealized norm of conduct. For example, there is a strong emphasis placed on students by instructors to conform to certain rules as outlined by the school. In most educational settings, student adherence to classroom rules is a precondition before any learning can take place (Ferguson, 2000). Serving as a normalizing method, student's violation of or conformity to school rules provide a platform for instructors to sort, evaluate, rank and even "weed out" certain

students on the basis of behavior. This results in the construction of certain identities imposed on the student, such as "good," "bad," "talented," "hardworking," "ideal," and "less ideal." For the most part, once these identities are imposed on students, it is extremely difficult for students to be viewed otherwise.

In many ways, pre-college programs have dual functions, serving at times as a gateway for select or ideal students and as a gatekeeper for the less ideal. Frequently, we see program officials citing non-academic, behavioral deficiencies as reasons why less ideal students are not fit for participation, such as being unfocused or displaying lack of motivation. On the other hand, as a gateway, these kinds of programs provide access to career opportunities and educational resources that at risk students may not otherwise have access to in their schools and within their social networks. As little research has explored if there is a consistency between meanings associated with certain behaviors and instructor's perceptions of ideal and less ideal students, we do not know the extent to which these types of alternative spaces promote and emphasize dominant standards of socially acceptable behaviors.

CHAPTER 2

EMPIRICAL SETTING AND METHODS

Summer Program *(SP)* is pre-college transitional program located in a

Midwestern city and sponsored by Technical College (TC). This program operates a six-

week summer institute for students interested in pursuing engineering and science-

related fields in college during the summer between their junior and senior years of high

school. *SP* intends to compensate for the lack of opportunity that exists within the K-12

system, particularly for advanced mathematics and science courses within many schools

through their summer program. At its core, *SP* strives to provide students with the

cognitive skills necessary to succeed in school, as its mission is to "aid participating

[minority] students in developing basic academic skills and knowledge required to be

successful in [college] engineering and management programs, and to help them change

affective characteristics which may have hindered their education previously" (*SP* Final

Report, 1984, p. 1). Beyond this, the program also works to ensure that its participants

acquire other non-cognitive skills, such as independence and teamwork by requiring

students to attend study skills courses in addition to other courses focused on

adolescent development, building support groups, and time management. Major

corporations sponsor participants and provide financial support to cover associated

program costs, such as books, supplies, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Prospective *SP* participants must have completed their junior year of high school,

a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.8 or better in their mathematics, science,

and English courses, already have taken two years of high school algebra and English,

and one year of geometry and chemistry (*SP* Final Report 1984, p. 1). Annually, an

average of 36 students are selected for participation into the program. The program has

since now expanded its efforts to recruit Latin@ and Native American students,

however, 95 percent of its participants identify as Black or African American. Summer

Program is divided into five major components: chemistry instruction, mathematics

instruction, computer instruction, communication instruction, and study skills.

Participants who fare well in *SP* are recommended for and offered admission to *TC,*

some even awarded scholarship aid based on their performance within the pre-college

program. Therefore, how *SP* evaluates participants as being *ideal* or *successful* within

the program has very real consequences.

This study uses archival program data to investigate the characteristics

associated with being an ideal student. *SP* compiled a summary report of each student's

performance during the summer session. At the conclusion of each session, this report

was forwarded to *TC's* admission office. In a one-paragraph statement, based on their

opinion and experience interacting with students, faculty documented each *SP*

participant's strengths and weaknesses in each subject area, final grades, and overall

thoughts on the student's likelihood of succeeding at *TC.* Though free to comment on

whatever element of a participant's performance that they would like, faculty

comments revealed a fairly consistent profile of descriptors for the ideal student. Most

importantly, the analyses indicate that faculty use moral judgments as much as

cognitive assessments to place students on two ends of a spectrum – ideal and less

ideal. This study's analysis will highlight the spectrum of characteristics that ideal and

less ideal students demonstrate. In the absence of a literature bearing on the notion of the ideal student in compensatory programs, this study finds that key aspects of ideal qualities are usually defined by instructors in terms of hard work, preparedness, ambition and well roundedness.

All available performance evaluations between 1984 and 2006 were included in this study, yielding a total of 524 students.[1] Because it enables researchers to preserve respondents' own language and narrative emphasis, while providing an additional vantage point from which to explore language meaning (Gilgun, 1992), qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the written student performance evaluations. Research using qualitative content analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to content or contextual meaning of text (Budd et al., 1967; McTavish & Pirro, 1990; Tesch, 1990). Using an inductive approach (Chinn & Kramer 1999), analyses moved from specific comments toward a general theory of the ideal student.

Evaluations were sorted by year. Next, all descriptions relevant to the topic of inquiry were marked and recorded. Relevant topics of inquiry included all descriptions related to a student's performance in a course (both positive and negative). From the highlighted areas, each distinct unit of meaning was marked. These "units of meanings" were separated by a break or change in the meaning. Units varied in text length, for example, while some units consisted of five words, others consisted of twenty-five words (e.g., Worked very hard in class; Allie entered the classroom with the necessary

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[1] During the data collection phase, student performance evaluations from years 1984-2006 were the only program data available.

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skills to understand advanced mathematics. I could tell that she had a great academic training). Units were then placed into smaller categories and labeled as initial themes by using recognizable key words and phrases. Categories continued to be revised as coding commenced. Revising codes consisted of identifying units, grouping and regrouping similar and dissimilar units, and relabeling categories as needed.

After a few days, the original documents were reread without looking at the categories. After reviewing the documents, the original categories were reconsidered. The coding process began again – redistributing codes when appropriate, considering carefully whether the established codes were too small, too large, or too vague. After determining this, codes were relabeled if necessary. The initial coding process resulted in too many categories. Upon determining this, a codebook was developed so as to reevaluate the codes and collapse them into smaller categories until saturation was reached.

To establish the reliability of the coding on which the empirical study is based, a substantial check coding process was used. Two reliability measures – reproducibility and stability – were assessed. Two years of student performance evaluations (1984 and 2006) were selected for check coding on the basis that reliability testing "is served best by the stratified sampling design that assumes that all categories of analysis, all decisions specified in the forms of instructions are indeed represented in the reliability data regardless of how frequently they may occur in the actual data" (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 146).

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS

Table 1: Themes and Example Themes

Theme	Frequency	Percentage	Examples
Go-Getter	253	22%	*Attacked the assignments very diligently.* *Angie is not afraid to ask questions during tutoring and office hours. Her questions always reflect a good and inquiring mind.*
Innovative	80	7%	*Marquis has a creative mind. He has the potential to be an excellent programmer. The way he tackles his work in a creative way, thinking through all steps involved will be beneficial in solving other problems in life.*
The Good Mannered	402	35%	*Friendly and polite; gets along with all her classmates. Her intellect in addition to her likeability will get her far.* *Raises her hand and waits to be called on. Hears and takes directions.*
The Intellectually Capable	127	11%	*Judy had the second highest chemistry grade in the class. She has a very strong background in chemistry and will succeed in any freshman chemistry course in the country. If she wanted to be a chemist, Judy could obtain an advanced degree (M.S. or Ph.D.) in chemistry*
Most Improved	58	5%	*With a poor background in chemistry, Travis spent a lot of time studying chemistry. He was a serious student who did not get the best grades, but Travis can be proud of his progress. With special academic help, he can pass chemistry.*
The Good Communicators	91	8%	*His absolute command of language and ability as a speaker was superior to the norm of TC freshmen*
Disruption	80	7%	Maurice had difficulty paying attention in class. At one time I had to ask him to leave class because he would not stop talking while I was lecturing. His lack of interest showed in his final rank in the class – 21/28 If Bianca continues to not follow directions in my class now, when she goes on to college, professors may not take her seriously
Failure to proofread	58	5%	It is clear that she had not used spellcheck or proofread her paper. Her argument was scattered. Words were spelled incorrectly
Total	1149	100%	

Though descriptive in nature, the analyses suggest that faculty within pre-college spaces evaluate students in a similar fashion as those within traditional, white academic settings. This is problematic as students of color are seen to have different cultural repertoires than their White counterparts (Carter, 2003). By reiterating dominant ideologies of success in the classroom in their written comments, Summer Program instructors are seen to place a high value on dominant cultural norms and value judgments, which encompass particular ways of speaking, thinking and behaving. Ideal students in this study were seen to mimic the tastes, habits, speaking styles, skills and mannerisms of the dominant class. As a result, these students were perceived as more likeable, and therefore better able to converse with instructors and have more intensive educational experiences, which, in turn, led to better grades and consequently positive performance evaluations. Students who had not mastered these mannerisms were placed at a disadvantage, as they not only received less favorable written comments but were also labeled as less ideal.

Instructors used both moral and cognitive assessments to characterize students as ideal. The frequencies of codes derived from the student performance evaluations were calculated as the number of times instructor's used various descriptions when discussing specific student behaviors and traits. For example, all instructor comments making reference to a student being capable of performing exceptionally well through practice and repetition were coded as *potential.* These included comments like, "His desire to do well, combined with his training, ability, and execution, should make him a

strong candidate for admission" or "Jarvis gives every evidence that he can make this adjustment" (Student Evaluation, 1984).

Moral assessments emphasized the students' personal and social characteristics. Sixty-six percent of the time, faculty praised students who were independent, creative, motivated, diligent, likeable, well organized, and inquisitive. On the other hand, cognitive assessments made by instructors emphasized students' intellectual ability thirty-four percent of the time. Faculty appreciated students who had strong mathematics, science and writing skills. However such skill assessments were always accompanied by moral judgments that further reinforced the personal and social characteristics of the ideal student.

This analysis suggests that moral characteristics are at the center of instructor's conception of the ideal student. As moral assessments made up the bulk of instructor comments, the findings reveal the importance of imputed characteristics like respect, responsibility, and role modeling for peers. In many cases, instructors use the term "responsible" for student conformity to program expectations. Likewise, encouraging students to be "respectful," "obedient," or praising them if they are being "good" means students are in compliance with whatever instructor's demand. The results show that the narrative of the ideal student is consistent across instructors regardless of the courses they teach. Evaluations of ideal and less ideal students mirrored each other in terms of descriptive observations based on perceived student behaviors.

The Go-Getters

Thirteen percent of instructor comments referred to instructor's perceptions of

student's demonstrations of ambition and diligence to succeed. In their written

evaluations, instructors mentioned students being actively engaged with their

coursework both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers took care to note that

students exerted what instructors believed to be a substantial amount of energy

towards their studies, strove to "better" their academic performance, or "attack[ed] the

assignments very diligently," as one instructor wrote (Student Evaluation, 1984). Though

students with great potential became discouraged at times, it was their willingness to

cope with discouragement, rather than give up in the face of adversity that classified

them in the minds of instructors as being "go-getters."

For example, Martrez (like other names, a pseudonym) was a student who had a

weak academic background, particularly in mathematics. Though he struggled

academically at the start of *SP* in nearly all of his courses, he showed perseverance by

making an effort to master material he initially found challenging by keeping a positive

mindset and soliciting the help of his instructors and program tutors. Martrez's

instructor noted that:

> Martrez became discouraged at times, but never turned back; I consider him a
> good student- he was a go-getter (Student Evaluation, 1986).

Martrez's instructor clearly defines a good student and a "go-getter" by his

persistence, his actively seeking ways to better his academic performance and never

giving up.

Similarly, Samia came to Summer Program with a strong academic background in mathematics and science. Her success in her courses seemed almost innate due to her ability to grasp difficult concepts before many of her peers in inorganic chemistry. But according to one teacher, she also displayed dedication to her studies by going beyond what was expected of her in assignments in addition to asking "good questions" (Student Evaluation, 1987). Samia's instructor describes her work ethic below:

> Samia received the highest grade I have given in four years of Summer Program. Her work was exceptional, both in speech and writing. She always went beyond the assignments and also asked good questions. When I offered conferences, she responded immediately. I would have no reservation in admitting this student (Student Evaluation, 1987).

Go-getters, in the minds of instructors, are self-disciplined. They understand that mastery of any academic skill entails daily practice and hard work. Thus, they put in time each day to move closer to their short-term and long-term goals. Instructor comments further describe go-getters as "passionate about what [they] do" and "show[ing] enthusiasm towards learning" (Student Evaluation, 2005). These types of students, as seen in the case of Martrez, also show that making mistakes are inevitable, however, they learn as much as possible from each mishap. As a result, go-getters will go the distance in any undertaking and will not stop until they have accomplished something worthwhile whether it be earning a high score on an exam or finally understanding a once obscure scientific concept. In Samia's case, for example, that something worthwhile was earning high grades in both her Summer Program and high school courses to increase her chances for admission into Technical College.

Accordingly, nine percent of instructor comments noted that ideal students took an initiative, be it through the solicitation of tutors for extra help or devising ways to organize assignments into smaller, more manageable parts in order to not be so overwhelmed with the volume of coursework each instructor assigned. Assuming the role as a self-advocate for one's own educational experience was a common theme that emerged among ideal students who instructors believed to be self-starters. The following instructor comments mention April and Angie's diligence in seeking help:

> April utilized myself and the tutors a great deal of the time. Her willingness to seek help to clarify points of confusion definitely reflected in her work, which increased tremendously by the end of my course (Student Evaluation, 1984).

> Angie is not afraid to ask questions during tutoring and office hours. Her questions always reflect a good and inquiring mind (Student Evaluation, 1985).

In these two examples, the instructor makes it clear that both April and Angie were self-advocates for their education. Further, instructors link each student's persistence to their gradual academic improvement. This finding is consistent with past literature, as scholars have linked student help-seeking behaviors to exceptional academic performance and overall success (Butler 1999; Hashim 2004; Butler 2006). These authors show that student success and learning, in general, require students to be active agents. Volet and Karabenick (2006) also highlight that help-seeking behavior is the opposite of dependence, and as a result, students "become less, rather than more reliant on others when future difficulties arise" (117). On this account, students who come to be known as "go-getters" are not only described by instructors as being "independent" and "self-motivated," they also are perceived as being able to perform

well on other designated tasks which require them to think, learn and work

independently (Winne 1995; Pintrich 2000; Schunk and Ertmer 2000).

The Innovators

In addition to being a go-getter, instructors viewed creativity and innovation as

central characteristic of an ideal student. Seven percent of instructor's comments made

reference to whether a student was creative. Instructors valued these characteristics

not only because of their academic usefulness, but also because they believed that

innovation could help students cope with all situations in life. Consequently, instructor

comments show that there does seem to be a genuine reward for creativity in a way

that suggests something more than simply discipline.

For example, Marquis was an *SP* participant who showed the promise of

becoming an excellent computer programmer. "With the right mentorship and

continued focus," his instructor noted, he had the potential to pursue a career in all

fields computer-related (Student Evaluation, 2005). Marquis' instructor emphasized that

his creativity went beyond the classroom, and would prove to be useful in other aspects

of life, especially in regard to situations that involved problem solving. She writes:

> Marquis has a creative mind. He has the potential to be an excellent
> programmer. The way he tackles his work in a creative way, thinking through all
> steps involved will be beneficial in solving other problems in life (Student
> Evaluation, 2005).

While it is less clear what "other problems in life" Marquis' instructor is referring

to. Nonetheless, this comment highlights that the instructor perceives creativity as

a valuable quality for academic and non-academic life.

Instructor comments noted that creativity involved intuition and critical thinking

reflective of student's ability to utilize learned material to produce and present new

forms of knowledge in unique ways, as exemplified by Katrina. Katrina was a participant

who "thought outside of the box" for her final project in her computer programming

class (Student Evaluation, 1989). She showcased her mastery of the material by

developing an alternative way to collect and analyze data for her final report. In her

evaluation, her instructor states:

> Katrina has a good mind for concept and design. To gather data for her last
> report, she interviewed various *TC* administrators (Student Evaluation, 1989).

Instructor comments speak to the changing role of educators in the classroom.

Whereas once, in many educational spaces, instructors were seen to play central roles

in transmitting ideas and knowledge while students were "passive receivers," innovators

break away from the conventional image of a student by drawing connections in books

to more practical, real-world situations. Instructors, in turn, guide students to develop

their own ideas and perspectives. Innovators, in the minds of instructors, are critical

thinkers who display creative problem-solving techniques by carefully analyzing

information, which shows an understanding of relationships. In addition, innovators are

risk takers with enough curiosity and self-confidence to try new experiences without the

fear of making mistakes. Finally, innovator's willingness to collaborate with their peers

contributes to the formulation of "original and unique" ideas and products of work

(Student Evaluation, 1989).

The Good Mannered

The profile of an ideal student is also marked by a general positive attitude and overall likeability. Twenty percent of instructor comments focused on likeability. Instructors appreciated students who were friendly and could get along with their classmates, work collaboratively in groups without hostility, and share. Instructors' comments revealed their belief that a student's positive demeanor was a clear predictor of their academic success not only in the program but in the future as well. General likeability was described in a variety of ways, consisting of a student's ability to get along with other students and a student possessing a specific "set" of manners which include "politeness," "attentiveness," and obedience (Student Evaluation, 1984; 1986; 2005). There appears to be confusion, on the teacher's parts, between qualities they like (such as good manners) and qualities that predict success, which very well might not include politeness.

Based on her performance evaluation, it is clear that Charnice was well liked by her peers, instructors and staff in the program. Described as having "the qualities of a leader," Charnice's "friendly and polite" demeanor was among the basis with which her instructors attributed her success in the program (Student Evaluation, 1998). Her performance evaluation suggests that she was not the likely student to make trouble, and thus, well –liked by her peers and instructor. Her economics instructor recounts:

> A good student. Takes her work seriously. Has the qualities of a leader. Has the ability to do college work. Diligently and meticulously compiles all her assignments. Friendly and polite; gets along with all her classmates. Her intellect in addition to her likeability will get her far (Student Evaluation, 1998).

Here, we see that Charnice's instructor has compounded her intellectual ability with her

likeability as she predicts her future success.

Proper classroom etiquette was mentioned by instructors in fifteen percent of the evaluations. Proper classroom etiquette was also coupled with instructor's discussions of student's display of a positive attitude. Instructors were very pointed in the ways in which they expected students to behave in the classroom and acceptable mannerisms. Acceptable forms of behaviors included arriving to class on time, raising hands, taking turns while speaking and "understand[ing] and follow[ing] directions" (Student Evaluation, 1992).

Each of Marvina's *SP* instructors commended her for "behaving well in class" (Student Evaluation, 1993). Perceived as "quiet and shy," yet "focused," Marvina was always punctual and followed all directions given to her (Student Evaluation, 1993). Each of her instructors took notice of these behaviors. Marvina was described as a "joy to teach" largely in part because of her ability to follow directions and complete all tasks without any reservation (Student Evaluation, 1993). Alluding to her obedient behavior, her instructor writes:

> She was prompt to class and did everything I asked. A joy to teach (Student Evaluation, 1993).

Another *SP* participant, Boysie, serves as a second example of the importance of proper classroom etiquette. "A determined student" who ranked number nine out of the incoming *SP* cohort of thirty-eight students, Boysie's instructors attributed his academic success to his attentiveness and capacity to listen and follow directions

effectively and, subsequently, transform them into best practices. His chemistry teacher

highlights these qualities by stating:

> Boysie is attentive. He hears and translates directions into a good performance.
> He is very successful in my course because of this (Student Evaluation, 1995).

These examples shed light on the ways in which schools transmit norms and

behavior patterns that are assumed to be valued in mainstream society. Though done in

less obvious ways, traits that are constantly being reinforced within the classroom are

punctuality, obedience to authority, tact, predictability and good behavior (Bowles and

Gintis 1976). The goal and expectations of such behavior, it appears, is so that the

classroom environment is conducive to learning and "serious work" (Student Evaluation,

2002). Many scholars have referred to this subtle transmission of norms, values and

behaviors encouraged in the classroom as the "hidden curriculum" Jackson 1990;

Bowles and Gintis 1976). Instructor's comments stress the importance of these norms

by means of explicit and implicit requests for certain kinds of student behavior. As a

result, students are expected to internalize specific rules and behaviors in every

classroom.

It is clear that ideal students have begun to internalize such behavioral norms as

they are cited by instructors as not engaging in any form of disruptive behavior, being

quiet and "getting [their] work done on time" (Student Evaluation, 1998). While

seemingly well intentioned, instructors are evaluating characteristics that they seem to

believe will help their students in college. Though they do not leave out creativity, the

bulk of instructor comments are about obedience, demeanor, politeness and the like.

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The data further highlights, that even with the best intentions, instructors wind up

rewarding a hidden curriculum of obedience and compliance with white, middle class

standards of behavior.

The Intellectually Capable

Eleven percent of instructor comments focus on the need for students to have

certain intellectual skills "in their toolkits" to be successful in the program and later on

in college (Student Evaluation, 1993). In all courses, instructors mention intellectual

skills such as basic knowledge of mathematical concepts and formulas and "good quality

of written work" (Student Evaluation, 1984; 1986; 1993; 2005). That the instructors'

care about intellectual ability and skill sets is not surprising. In general, participants who

had "strong" academic backgrounds were more likely to have better grades in their

mathematics and science courses than their peers who came from high schools with less

rigorous programs. Students who took rigorous high school courses were also more

likely to be ranked at the top of their *SP* cohort and were described by instructors as

having the ability to "handle college-level material" (Student Evaluation, 1989).

Underperforming students, on the other hand, were encouraged to revisit basic

concepts and seek assistance to become "college ready" (Student Evaluation, 1984). In

addition, instructors had a clearer vision of intellectually capable students' success

beyond high school and even college. Instructors describe intellectually capable

students as those whose skills and knowledge were the result of having been exposed to

a rigorous high school curriculum prior to coming to Summer Program or those who

were "naturally gifted," similar to participants Judy and Soney (Student Evaluation,

2005). Judy was an *SP* participant described by her pre-calculus instructor as being "the best of the bunch" (Student Evaluation, 1993). With the "background, attitude, and drive" otherwise known as having the "entire package," Judy's intellectual abilities were so polished that "she helped most of the students with their work during and after laboratory sessions" (Student Evaluation, 1993). Judy's instructors believed that due to her strong academic background in chemistry, she would not only succeed in her college courses, but would also be capable of obtaining an advanced degree upon receiving her bachelor's. Judy's chemistry instructor comments:

> Judy had the second highest chemistry grade in the class. She has a very strong background in chemistry and will succeed in any freshman chemistry course in the country. If she wanted to be a chemist, Judy could obtain an advanced degree (M.S. or Ph.D.) in chemistry (Student Evaluation, 1993).

If Judy was not at the top of class, it is less clear if her instructor would predict that she could obtain an advanced degree. This comment provides evidence that the instructor perceives high numeric grades as a predictor of a student's future intellectual capabilities and potential for career advancement.

Similarly, Soney came to Summer Program with a strong academic background that instantly put him ahead of his classmates. Ranked second overall in the program, Soney's instructors emphasized that he was not only "serious about learning," but possessed the necessary academic background which was reflected in his top ranking in each of his classes (Student Evaluation, 1987). His instructor noted:

> He is serious about learning. He was the number two student in the mathematics class, number three in computers, number two with Ernest Gibson in chemistry, and number one in communications. Soney was number two overall in the program (Student Evaluation, 1987).

In this case, the instructor's comment shows that because Soney was focused on learning or rather "serious," he was able to be one of the top students in each of his courses.

Instructors also commended students, who, in the face of adversity, made strides to improving their overall grade in each of their courses. Instructor comments revealed that even those students coming from "weak" academic backgrounds could still be seen as ideal if they put forth the effort to learn basic fundamental knowledge in mathematics and writing to "sharpen" their intellectual abilities. Thus, five percent of instructor comments attribute "improved" students' academic progress with an overall positive change in attitude and increased commitment toward learning. The following instructor comments mention Ja'Mel, Travis and Markiah's perseverance to improve their course grades:

> Ja'Mel asked the most questions in class. He was very much interested in knowing about the subject matter. In the end, James came from behind and surpassed the students who were laughing at him because he was asking too many questions. James applied himself in my class. He ranked 25/39 (Student Evaluation, 1988).

> With a poor background in chemistry, Travis spent a lot of time studying chemistry. He was a serious student who did not get the best grades, but Travis can be proud of his progress. With special academic help, he can pass chemistry (Student Evaluation, 1998).

> If we gave a Summer Program recognition award for the most improved, Markiah would win (Student Evaluation, 1984).

The Good Communicators

Possessing the ability to effectively communicate, a quality mentioned by all of the instructors was considered important for student development and being an asset in

the classroom. Eight percent of faculty comments focused on this aspect. Students who were considered more "articulate," defined by instructors as having control of language and an extensive vocabulary, were perceived as more self-confident and self-regulated. The ability to present oneself confidently in public and "speak well in front of people" was seen as essential quality to a student's future success, especially in college. Instructors spoke of providing both formal and informal opportunities to cultivate such skills, whether it be through randomly calling on students in class to respond to questions or asking for student volunteers to serve as the group speaker when "reporting out" to the larger class. Instructor comments also talked about reassuring students, that "it's okay to make mistakes," in an effort to help students achieve a level of comfort in their ability to speak in front of large groups (Student Evaluation, 1998).

Still, some students proved to be better public speakers than others, as speaking in front of large audiences appeared to be their second nature as they were "very personable and engaging" (Student Evaluation, 1989). *SP* participant, Chaun's eloquence was evident in the clarity of his voice and the vocabulary that he used. Chaun's oral communication skills were so sophisticated that he outshined many of his classmates and his instructors believed that he was more articulate than college freshmen at Technical College. His instructor characterizes his abilities below:

> His absolute command of language and ability as a speaker was superior to the norm of *TC* freshmen (Student Evaluation, 1984).

Here, the instructor makes mention not only of Chaun's ability to make a presentation in front of a large audience of his peers, but also the manner with which he demonstrated command over the English language through "proper pitch," "inflection"

and "vocabulary" (Student Evaluation, 1984).

Madison was another *SP* participant who possessed stellar oral communication skills. When describing her ability as an effective communicator, instructors further highlighted that Madison was "equipped" with the necessary skills needed to "navigate" institutional barriers that she, as a person of color and first-generation college student, would likely encounter during and after college. Her instructors had no doubt that she would fare well in college because she was articulate enough to utilize various strategies to identify avenues for academic support in addition to being able to interact with different groups of people in diverse social settings. Her instructor writes:

> Madison articulated herself so well in front of an audience that I have no doubt that she will be able to successfully navigate her way around campus when she enters college (Student Evaluation, 1986).

From the viewpoint of instructors, public speaking abilities are key to educational navigation. Instructor's comments showed that students who demonstrated strong communication skills were perceived to be stronger students academically. In fact, students like Madison, mentioned for her ability to communicate within and outside of the classroom were more likely to be considered "well-rounded" and "confident" (Student Evaluation, 1986). Past research has suggested that students' ability to speak publicly or "speak up" appropriately allows them to showcase what they have learned and allows them to practice communication skills necessary within the college classroom. At Summer Program, students are expected to ask and answer questions, formulate new ideas and present information in front of large audiences.

Instructor comments note that it is "not enough to memorize answers for a test," but

participants must also learn how to share this information with others (Student

Evaluation, 1993). Further, scholars have discussed that it is in the sharing of

information by means of communicating that "real learning" occurs (Browning 2001).

The Slackers

Comments about "slackers" were much more critical than the sets of comments

about students who were perceived as having intellectual or cognitive deficits. In fact,

instructors discussed deficits in intellectual skill sets as problems that could be solved,

whereas behavioral and character flaws were always presented as unacceptable and

needing to be fixed immediately. Ideal students were held in contrast to other students

whose lack of compliance led faculty to assume that the students were disinvested in

SP. Less ideal students were described as "difficult" or "disruptive." Three percent of

instructor comments discussed disruption. Instructors reprimanded students by giving

them verbal warnings to "stop talking" or "pay attention" or by sending students to the

program director's office for a formal meeting that would be documented and placed in

that student's file. Many instructors' comments complained about the general

misbehavior of less ideal students, stating that their "behavior deficiencies" proved to

be barriers to their success in the program, as is the case with Maurice and Janelle

(Student Evaluation, 1991).

Maurice was an *SP* participant who instructors believed "could do the work if he

could achieve more self discipline" (Student Evaluation, 1987) Disruptive on many

occasions, Maurice was asked to leave the classroom because he failed to stop talking.

His computer-programming instructor commented that Maurice's poor grades were a result of his misbehavior and lack of interest. She writes:

> Maurice had difficulty paying attention in class. At one time I had to ask him to leave class because he would not stop talking while I was lecturing. His lack of interest showed in his final rank in the class – 21/28 (Student Evaluation, 1987).

In this case, Maurice was perceived as less ideal due to his disruptive demeanor, which, for his instructor posed a barrier to his academic success.

Janelle was a participant who "had difficulty understanding many of the basic chemical concepts covered in class" (Student Evaluation, 1989). Rather than paying attention and "us[ing] class time wisely," Janelle engaged in disruptive behavior such as talking and "sleep[ing] in class a lot" (Student Evaluation, 1989). Her instructor commented that it was Janelle's disinvested demeanor that prevented her from performing better than she did academically: In short, a cognitive deficit is turned into a character deficit.

> Janelle's performance was about average. She talked entirely too much in class. Janelle could have done better, but she slept in class a lot (Student Evaluation, 1989).

This comment shows that mediocrity or simply being "average" was a flaw of less ideal students as they had no desire to fare better academically, as evidenced by their excessive inattention due to sleeping.

"Unacceptable" classroom etiquette was mentioned as being another major hindrance to student learning and engagement in the classroom. Four percent of instructor comments focused on "unacceptable" classroom etiquette. Instructors comments frequently mentioned that students who could not behave properly "would

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not be tolerated at the university level" and attempted to correct "wrongful

behavior[s]" through constant reminding of what proper classroom protocol should be

(Student Evaluation, 2006). Attributing "bad" behavior with lack of maturity, instructor's

commented that in order to persist on to college and be successful, students must

demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of how to behave and be mindful

that their behavior can have an effect on the way professors in college will perceive

them. Instructors also discussed that there were "right" and "wrong" places for students

to behave in certain ways (Student Evaluation, 2006). The following instructor

comments about Bianca and Jaron stress this:

> If Bianca continues to not follow directions in my class now, when she goes on to college, professors may not take her seriously (Student Evaluation, 2005).

> There's a right place to socialize with friends. The classroom is the wrong place to hold personal conversations (Student Evaluation, 2006).

> In turn, slackers also appeared to have pessimistic dispositions. Instructors

stated that students with negative attitudes were often "contagious" to the rest of their

classmates (Student Evaluation, 2005). Students who appeared unconcerned were not

receptive to directions and did not put effort in their studies. In attempts to redirect

slackers with negative attitudes onto better social and academic paths, instructors

suggested that they be paired up with more motivated students, like *SP* participant,

Daryl. His instructor writes:

> Negative attitudes like Daryl's are contagious. It is my hope that he works alongside a peer who has a positive outlook on learning so that he will improve (Student Evaluation, 2005).

Another student, Alisha, was a Summer Program participant characterized as "having an attitude problem" (Student Evaluation, 1988). Ranked as an "average student" in her courses, Alisha's instructors suggested that her negative attitude was jeopardizing her academic success. One instructor commented:

> Alisha has an attitude problem. She needs to work on dilution problems, and organic. I observed that she likes to call attention to herself – a show-off. Alisha must change her attitude if she wishes to be successful (Student Evaluation, 1988).

"Poor" communication skills, in the view of instructors, were largely a result of student's lack of self-confidence, either because they were fearful of speaking in front of large audiences or due to their unpreparedness. In groups, less ideal students were either *too* assertive or not assertive enough, showed little mastery of the English language and were either or strayed off topic. Despite less ideal students' failure to "properly" articulate themselves, instructor's comments treat poor oral communication skills as something that can be fixed.

Fear of speaking in public was considered a barrier to Brittney's performance in her communications class especially. Brittney lacked confidence even before going up to speak in front of large groups of people. Her increased shyness, according to her instructor, resulted in seemingly rushed performances that appeared to be disorganized and unrehearsed. Brittney's communications instructor points out her flaws by stating:

> She "scares" herself before going up front, and this shows in a hurried and incomplete performance (Student Evaluation, 1986).

Kimble was another *SP* participant who showed "little flair while speaking" (Student Evaluation, 1984). Instructor's comments made reference to the need for him

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to organize his thoughts and prevent talking about too many things. Instructors also

noted that if Kimble took the time to prepare a "solid speech," he could leave a

memorable impression on his audience (Student Evaluation, 1984). His instructor wrote:

> Did not show mastery and control of the English language. Must learn to
> formulate and craft speech so that he engages his audience (Student Evaluation,
> 1984).

Instructors felt less ideal students refused to revisit basic concepts to better

understand material presented to them in the classroom. Further, less ideal students

with limited academic training in various subjects were, in the minds of instructors,

unable to handle college-level material. Instructor comments expressed concern that

particular students, like Jeff and Tamia, did not possess the basic knowledge to handle

college-level work and therefore needed to enroll in foundational courses to sharpen

their skills. Instructors remarked:

> Jeff needs a very strong algebra class. He tried, but his background in algebra
> was not up to par (Student Evaluation, 1987).

> Tamia has a weak academic background. She will need to take solid refresher
> courses to fill the gaps (Student Evaluation, 1993).

Many slackers, like James, struggled with the inability to effectively

communicate their point-of-view while writing. James' instructor noted that he needed

improvement on persuasive writing, developing a thesis statement, explaining a concept

and conveying information. Even though students were encouraged to use a thesaurus,

dictionary and spellcheck, slackers, such as Nicole, continued to produce subpar written

work. Proofreading was seen by instructors as an essential part of the writing process

that less ideal students failed to do before turning in their assignments. Help with

writing, a response to a student coming from weak academic background, is seen to be very different from failure to proofread, which presents itself as a failure of effort. Thus, recommendations to augment poor writing skills were less concrete than failure to proofread that were regarded as "quick fixes". Failure to proofread was mentioned five percent of the time in instructor comments. James and Nicole's instructor indicated:

> It is clear that she had not used spellcheck or proofread her paper. Her argument was scattered. Words were spelled incorrectly (Student Evaluation, 1986).

> His first assignment had major problems in specific support for generalizations and verb/subject agreement (Student Evaluation, 1985).

Based on their moral and cognitive assessments, instructors believe ideal students have strong intellectual abilities or at least demonstrate the potential to fare well academically. But perhaps most important is that ideal students are perceived as being motivated, likeable, innovative, well-organized, good communicators and interested in learning. When an ideal student does not understand particular concepts, they seek assistance for clarification. In the written comments, instructors were not overly convinced that a student was ideal as indicated by grades alone. While some students with high numeric grades ranked at the top of their classes, they all were not seen as ideal if their behavioral cues and mannerisms coincided with those considered acceptable and reinforced by instructors in the classroom. These are instances in which cognitive deficits are converted to character deficits.

Ideal students attend classes regularly and are punctual. They listen and "train" themselves to pay attention, as they are not easily distracted by minor interruptions from peers or elsewhere. They do not talk at inappropriate times or talk about things

unrelated to class material during class, text on their cell phones or stare out windows.

In other words, they are polite and respectful and appear genuinely interested at all

times, though this may not be the case at all. These ideal students also participate in

class and ask, what instructors describe as "smart," "insightful" and "inquisitive

question[s]" (Student Evaluation, 1993; 1998; 2005). And thus, they ask many questions

that one instructor claimed that "other students may have, but are unwilling to ask"

(Student Evaluation, 1994).

In addition, if ideal students miss a class, they feel obligated to notify the

instructor beforehand. Thus, their excuses appear to be, at least, legitimate, reasonable

and most importantly, excusable. Ideal students are also described by instructors as

making it a priority to ensure that they have completed any and all missed assignments

(by contacting the instructor or another student), and understanding specifically what

was covered in class during their absence, so they will not fall behind. Ideal students

also were perceived as taking responsibility for themselves and their actions. Instructors

more commonly characterized these students as taking advantage of extra credit

opportunities and demonstrating care and concern about course grades through their

willingness to work and improve them. Ideal students were more likely than less ideal

students to attempt or complete optional (and frequently challenging) assignments that

many other students chose to avoid.

In the student evaluations, instructors commented that ideal participants had

the necessary "people skills" that would enable them to interact with Technical College

faculty, staff and other students upon college entry (Student Evaluation, 2006).

Instructors also spoke of the need for students to be able to empathize and connect with people from all walks of life and being able to "talk and listen when appropriate" (Student Evaluation, 1998). Finally, the data also indicates that ideal students schedule times to visit their instructors before class time or after during office hours to discuss grades, feedback given on papers, upcoming assignments and exams. In these instances, ideal students are perceived as being better able to navigate the larger educational system, as they have learned how to engage in meaningful conversations with instructors and staff both in and outside of the classroom. These students demonstrate to the instructor that they are "active participants in the learning process" and that they take the "job of being a student" seriously (Student Evaluation, 1993). Along the same lines, ideal students are driven to complete their assignments. They complete "good" assignments, free of grammatical and spelling errors, and turn in completed assignments that appear neat and are almost always typed. In terms of deliverables, ideal students take the time to produce a final product that looks good *and* reflects careful planning and pride in their work.

By comparison, less ideal students were described as often missing or being late for class. In some cases, these students put other priorities (i.e., "sleep") above their other academic obligations. As a result, the work of less ideal students was often described by instructors as being "carelessly-prepared," "incomplete," "inaccurate," "inconsistent," "late" or "not submitted at all" (Student Evaluation, 1993; 1995; 1998). Instructors also commented that less ideal student's lack of preparation clearly communicated that their education was of little importance to them.

The perceived study habits of less ideal students varied tremendously from those of ideal students based on instructor comments. According to the data, when less ideal students study, " it is clear that [they] concentrate more on memorizing rather than comprehending" (Student Evaluation, 1991). Thus, less ideal students as mentioned by instructors, have the idea that studying is only about memorizing terms and definitions "in the hope that [the instructor] will ask them to merely regurgitate information on the test" (Student Evaluation, 1993). When asked to comprehend, apply or analyze information, less ideal students are often unable or unwilling to do so. The regurgitation of information rather than the formulation of independent ideas could very well stem from the fact that students from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds are typically taught by their families to not question or challenge authority, but instead accept what is being taught or told to them (Lareau 2004).

Instructors also perceived less ideal students as not being visibly committed to their classes. Less ideal students were characterized as participating without enthusiasm, having body language that "communicates obvious boredom" (i.e., "slouch[ing] in [their] seats," "talk[ing] to their classmates during lecture," and "sleep[ing] during class") (Student Evaluation, 1993; 1998; 2005) Interestingly enough, however, less ideal students varied enormously in talent. Some less ideal students had very high cognitive abilities, which is apparent by the numeric grades they earned in their courses, but showed obvious signs of "poor self-management," "lack of motivation" and "bad attitude," based on instructor's observations (Student Evaluation, 2004). Less ideal students who did not perform well cognitively were perceived as

having a vague sense of what was going on in the classroom, as they had not demonstrated mastery of the course subject material. In addition, less ideal students were heavily criticized for being too solitary, seldom requesting, and at times even rejecting offers of assistance from instructors and tutors. In turn, less ideal students were seen as deliberately or unconsciously making "self-sabotaging" choices that led to habitual procrastination and sometimes failure (Student Evaluation, 1998).

Though descriptive in nature, the analyses suggest that faculty within pre-college spaces evaluate students in a similar fashion as those within traditional, white academic settings. This is problematic as students of color are seen to have different cultural repertoires than their White counterparts (Carter 2003). By reiterating dominant ideologies of success in the classroom in their written comments, Summer Program instructors are seen to place a high value on dominant cultural norms and value judgments, which encompass particular ways of speaking, thinking and behaving. Ideal students in this study were seen to mimic the tastes, habits, speaking styles, skills and mannerisms of the dominant class. As a result, these students were perceived as more likeable, and therefore better able to converse with instructors and have more intensive educational experiences, which, in turn, led to better grades and consequently positive performance evaluations. Students who had not mastered these mannerisms were placed at a disadvantage, as they not only received less favorable written comments but were also labeled as less ideal.

Bourdieu (1977) and other researchers in social reproduction (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Jencks et. al. 1994; Kauffman 2001; Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell 1999) view

the educational system as having a gatekeeper function in society, as the dominant class

has symbols through language and culture, which establish power. These scholars

suggest that educational systems reward achievement not so much by merit, but

through cultural signals determined by the background of the student and reinforced by

institutions, like schools. Thus, teachers and schools tend to categorize students based

on the interactions they observed. This is most evident in K-12 education, especially, as

students who do not internalize dominant cultural repertoires are placed in lower level

educational tracks that work to limit their future possibilities (Oakes 1985).

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Revisiting Summer Program's mission statement: to "aid participating [minority]

students in developing basic academic skills and knowledge required to be successful in

[college] engineering and management programs, and to help them change affective

characteristics which may have hindered their education previously," we see that there

are two very different objectives at play. First, not only is the program attempting to

provide capable students with an opportunity to cultivate their intellectual abilities and

therefore enhance academic proficiency particularly in mathematics and science-related

courses, *SP* also aims to change "affective characteristics," that is, attitudes, interests,

values, preferences and mannerisms. This is not, however, uncharacteristic of other

compensatory programs targeted toward at risk youth. Perhaps it is the case that

Summer Program instructors, who, in this case, are more likely to be of the same racial

background as the participants with which they service, hold higher standards, have

greater expectations, and reinforce certain behavioral cues because they know first

hand the likely discrimination and obstacles this particular group of students will face

upon entering the college setting. Therefore, it may be that these instructors feel the

need to teach participants dominant cultural scripts to assist them in navigating

educational spaces such as the college classroom and the larger campus bureaucracy. At

the same time, upholding mainstream narratives of the ideal student may also be to

students' detriment. More recent educational scholarship shows that whether willingly

or subconsciously, majority of instructors adhere to a Eurocentric curriculum and

traditional teaching techniques, as "whiteness persists as what is worth knowing and as an identification worth performing" (Schick, 2002, p. 101). Thus, the fusion of Whiteness with academic culture often means that student success carries with it an unspoken understanding between instructors and students that they must adopt the values of White mainstream culture. Some students of color, as in the case of ideal students, may see this as an acceptable bargain well worth the benefits, which ultimately translates to guaranteed college enrollment, college graduation and future employment for many disadvantaged students. Carol Schick (2002) notes in her work that some racial minority students are eager to fit into academic culture precisely because their culture was not applicable as currency towards gaining admittance, acceptance or achievement. Schick further explains how academia awards those students willing to assimilate by stating that "the speed with which participants are able to comply with normative values and requirements determines how well they are prepared to "fit in" with university life and performance" (Schick, 2002, p. 111).

Even in spaces for at-risk youth, education remains to be a setting in which Whiteness can be identified quite clearly. Academic culture, disciplinary actions, and norms of behavior all tend to be oriented to Whiteness. Additionally, students are rewarded based on the extent to which they assimilate and uphold the standards of Whiteness in education. It is important to note, that Whiteness is a standard in which White mainstream and people of color can be both invested in maintaining. Instructors and students can also do the racial work of maintaining or adhering to the status quo in

classrooms and resisting efforts to critically examine White mannerisms or socially

acceptable forms of speech and behavior (Hunter & Nettles, 1999).

It could be that seemingly less ideal students may view subscribing to particular

behaviors as a form of assimilation or "acting white" (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). As a

result, less ideal students may be struggling to find other ways of achieving academic

success rather than subscribing to the status quo. A richer, more complex discussion and

exploration of this phenomenon is needed when examining the effectiveness, objectives

and larger definition of success of compensatory programs.

The student-instructor relationship is a two-way process; therefore teacher's

perceptions and behaviors must be understood as fully as those of the student. This

study did not use any measures from the students themselves. It will be important to

gain more insight about students' perceptions of their instructors and student

perceptions of the pre-college programs in which they are a part of. Differences in how

students internalize the messages, both overt and covert, may have a significant effect

on the impact of teacher perceptions and expectations. More broadly, educators must

become more thoughtful about the cultural cues they are both reinforcing and ignoring

in educational spaces intended to serve as an alternative for at-risk youth.

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