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Profiling first-year university students in an academic transition course.

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PROFILING FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
IN AN ACADEMIC TRANSITION COURSE

By

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ABSTRACT

First-year student characteristics relating to demographics (age, gender, major, etc.) were examined. Specifically, characteristics were examined relating to students'desire to attend university, their academic preparedness, perceived level of skills, use of campus resources, perception about social support, time spent on various activities and use of time management strategies. Age differences, interaction effects and responses at Time 1 (T2) and Time 2 (T2) were examined. Responses to key questions with regard to expectations of university and actual experiences were examined along with students' end of first-year grade point average (GPA).

Key findings included differences in responses by Age with regard to note taking skills, end of first year GPA, and the likelihood of seeking academic counselling. Differences in responses between Time 1 and Time 2 were noted with regard to expected GPA, expected time spent on preparatory work, use of campus resources and activities, achievement, involvement and confidence levels.

Based on the findings of this research, implications and recommendations include the need for universities to conduct ongoing research to obtain an accurate profile of first-year students, especially with regard to the potential for different levels of maturity. Furthermore, universities require a better understanding about the support programs that would most benefit first-year students and the need to provide transition programming throughout their entire first year of university.

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DEDICATION

While pursing my Masters degree, I received a tremendous amount of support and encouragement from advisors, colleagues, friends and family members. First, I must thank my advisor Dr. Larry Morton. His support, patient demeanour and intellectual guidance were instrumental in helping me to reach this goal.

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Critical to the completion of this degree has been the tremendous love and support given to me by my family. My husband Jim never lost faith in me and supported me from start to finish in his words and by his actions. My daughters Kelly and Lauren are my inspiration and motivators, and are as much role models to me as I hope I am to them. My parents-in-law, Alfred and Diane Oakley, my father James O'Neill and step-father Sandy Bruce always showed interest and concern with my progress. There is, however, no greater role model for me than my mother, Patricia O'Neill. The memories of watching her study at the kitchen table must have somehow rubbed off on me.

The one true lesson that I have learned from everyone is that anything is possible if you have strength, determination, dedication and a love of learning.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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Over the past several years, a great deal of research has been conducted to address concerns regarding the academic preparedness of first-year university students. In an effort to improve student retention and in the interest of increasing students' academic success, universities have implemented many strategies to improve first-year student performance and retention. Some of these programs include orientation days, academic advising, mentorship programs, first-year transition courses, and extensive student service initiatives offered through student affairs offices.

First-year transition courses are now offered in many North American universities and colleges and have become an important and increasingly common initiative among academic institutions (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989). These courses, usually offered for academic credit, are designed to assist first-year students with developing skills essential to their post-secondary education. These skills help students cope successfully with the academic and social transitions from high school to post-secondary education. Topics may include time management, information literacy, reading, note taking and writing skills, critical thinking, research writing and more. The course typically enables integration into the university community and allows for a better understanding of its culture and skills required to be a successful student.

Since the early 1970s, the University of South Carolina (USC) has been the leading authority for student affairs professionals and institutions committed to the

establishment of transitional programming for first-year students, including first-year

transition courses (Jewler, 1989). The purpose of the transition course is to assist

students with the academic and social adjustment to university and to introduce them to

the importance and value of student involvement (Noel, 1985; Tinto, 1987). In order to

determine if the first-year transition course is valuable and effective at helping new

students to meet with academic, social and emotional competence, periodic assessment is

needed (Fidler & Hunter, 1989).

The National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in

Transition (http://www.sc.edu/fye/) provides institutions with information about research,

conferences, publications, resources and listservs. USC has been strongly committed to

the success of first-year students and provides a clearinghouse of information to all post-

secondary educators.

More information needs to be gathered about the characteristics of new university

students (e.g., background, demographics, gender, expectations, experiences and so on) to

determine the best practices for helping them to make a more successful transition to

university. Inability to adjust to university is common for many first year students and

can lead to negative consequences including increased stress, depression, or academic

failure (Banning, 1989). If students successfully complete the first year, and return for

the second year, the attrition rate (drop-out rate) begins to decline by almost 50% for each

succeeding year (Noel, 1985). Students' chances of succeeding in first-year positively

correlate with their sense of involvement and connectedness to the institution (Astin,

1975, 1993, Brower, 1994). Students who are fully involved in all aspects of university

stand to benefit the most in terms of their academic success (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1995).

The purpose of this research was to investigate the gap between the expected and actual practices and behaviours of students in a first-year transition course at a mid-sized, comprehensive Ontario university. To accomplish this task, a profile of these students was created to determine how these students perform in university.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theories of Student Development

Student Development Theory

Developmental psychologists have long understood the important role that personal development plays young people's lives. Gaining an awareness and understanding of student development might help student affairs professionals anticipate the challenges facing first-year students. Chickering (1990) reported on seven vectors of personal development pertinent to university students. They were: achieving competence, managing emotions, becoming autonomous, establishing identity, freeing relationships, that is, developing a tolerance for others, clarifying purpose and developing integrity. Competence is achieved in three domains – intellectual, physical/manual and social/personal. Intellectual development includes (1) acquiring information (2) changes in critical thinking skills, and (3) developing the ability to synthesize and integrate information from diverse sources. Social/interpersonal competence enables students to live and work cooperatively with others. Developing competence in these three domains is very important to student success because it enables them to maintain equilibrium when facing challenging situations.

Chickering (1990) further suggested that achieving emotional independence is essential because it allows students to break away from family who, up to now, may have provided reassurance, affection and approval. To be successful, students must learn self-reliance. Managing emotions means that students must respond appropriately and

independently to new situations that may arise. Autonomy is said to occur when students establish emotional independence from family and peers so that the constant need for reassurance, affection or approval from others becomes minimal. The establishment of identity requires that students develop a sense of physical needs, characteristics, personal appearance, sexual identity, roles and behaviours. As they begin university, students may experience a loss of identity as they work to establish new friendships and relationships in an environment that is much larger than that to which they were previously accustomed.

Chickering (1990) also explained that freeing relationships (developing tolerance) is essential for young adults to appreciate others who are different from them. This in turn allows them to establish intimacy in their relationships based on trust, individuality and independence. Students develop a sense of purpose in their lives as they establish their interests and career options. They must be able to establish meaningful goals. Finally, students must develop a personal set of values and beliefs. One of the most important goals of a university education is to provide students with personal growth opportunities to enable them to become good citizens and hence contributing members of society.

Perry's Stage Theory

Perry (1981) advanced a theory of intellectual and ethical development that emerges in young adults. New students first enter the 'dualism' stage where they perceive that ideas are either right or wrong. Tasks requiring consideration of multiple options or points of view are confusing. In this stage, students expect the answer can and should be ascertained from people that they perceive to be in positions of authority, and

they feel that their lives are still controlled by external factors. As the students progress, they proceed through the stage known as 'multiplicity' (Perry, 1981). In this stage, they begin to understand that various opinions exist and they begin to believe that individuals are entitled to their own opinion. Being exposed to the diversity of their peers helps them to comprehend that the world is a bigger place than they once understood. Eventually, students' diversity of opinions, values and judgments are gathered from valid sources. Evidence and research provide support for differing points of view, and they begin to understand that there may be more than one approach or solution to a problem. This stage is known as 'relativism'. Students who successfully navigate through these stages are likely to have a more enriched university experience and be more academically and socially mature.

Theory of Involvement

Astin's (1977, 1985) theory of involvement outlined the idea that students' commitment to embracing opportunities for physical and psychological involvement was essential for enhancing their learning and personal development in the university setting. Students embrace involvement at varying degrees and at various times. Opportunities arise through studying, participation in student organizations and interaction with faculty. Astin explained that involvement is measured both quantitatively (amount of time spent studying), and qualitatively (the extent to which the student retains and comprehends new material). The amount that the student learns and gains is directly proportional to the effort expended.

This theory places the responsibility for involvement on both the student and the

institution and outlines the importance of maximizing student involvement inside and outside of the classroom (Astin, 1977, 1985). Course content is regarded as secondary in importance to the students' needs to become actively involved in the learning experience. Institutions should devote additional attention to the passive, under-prepared student since such characteristics can be a warning sign for lack of involvement.

Involvement theory (Astin, 1977, 1985) is essential to good teaching because it emphasizes the importance of motivation and investigates whether students' time and energy are focussed on the intended outcomes. Astin, (1977, 1985) concluded that maximizing learning through student involvement is necessary to achieve pedagogical outcomes. The basis of the theory suggests developing and testing involvement by evaluating aspects such as time logs for academic and social activities, frequency of peer and faculty interaction, time spent on extracurricular activities, and internal and external locus of control. The quality of student involvement is more important than the quantity of the individual experiences.

Astin's (1977, 1985) research supported the idea that student involvement increased student retention. A number of factors indicated that there was an effect on students' persistence in college. Positive factors tended to increase student retention while negative factors were often responsible for reducing student involvement. Students living in campus residences, who naturally had more time to get involved in campus life, were more likely to be retained regardless of type of institution or individual characteristics of students. These studies (Astin, 1977, 1985) also showed that students who joined fraternities, sororities, athletic groups or other activities were less likely to

drop out. Enrolment in an honours program, working with professors on research projects, or having an on-campus part-time job was also shown to increase retention.

Students who were more academically involved exhibited fewer changes in terms of personality and behaviour that normally occur during the university transition. Astin (1975) found that students who were more heavily involved in their studies tended to be more isolated from their peers and as a result were less susceptible to certain peer group influences such as political liberalism, hedonism and changes in religious beliefs. They also experienced a greater satisfaction with good academic performance.

Out-of-Class Involvement

More recently, other researchers provided additional support for the importance of out-of-class experiences and the positive influence these experiences have on student learning and personal development (Kuh, 1995). Kuh explained that students must take an active role in their own education. Although universities and colleges cannot force students to participate in out-of-class experiences, they should provide opportunities for them to interact in different settings with different groups. Institutions that blend curricular and out-of-class learning opportunities for their students provide the most value to their students. These students were not only more positive about their post-secondary experience, but were also able to enhance their leadership skills, their ability to work as a team, and establish more personally meaningful relationships (Kuh, 1991).

The benefits of out-of-class experiences most frequently included interaction with peers and leadership opportunities (Kuh, 1995). Students reported that these experiences were a more realistic reflection of the real world (Kuh, 1991). They felt they benefited

most from tasks that required planning, decision-making and interaction with people from different groups. They also reported that these experiences provided them with opportunities for personal and social challenges and a chance to put into practice those academic skills acquired in the classroom.

By seeking practical experience, students gain opportunities to become more competent to develop practical experience of the theories learned within the classroom (Kuh, 1995). Today's job market requires individuals to be able to communicate and co-operate. The leadership skills obtained through these out-of-class experiences are what employers are seeking. These are not just advantageous, but are essential to their future careers (Kuh, 1995). Acquiring practical experiences also provides for a more satisfying and rewarding learning environment for students. Out-of-class participation in extra-curricular activities, residence living and interaction with faculty and peers have been positively related to persistence and satisfaction (Kuh, 1995).

Student Retention

Having a better picture of first-year students enables universities to understand the needs of students to help them to succeed and persist to graduation. Retaining students is beneficial to institutions as well as students (Astin, 1993, Levitz & Noel, 1989; Tinto, 1987). First-year students are particularly vulnerable to failure or to experiencing difficulties and especially during the first few weeks (Levitz & Noel, 1989; Tinto, 1987). Erickson and Strommer (1991) reported that students who withdrew from university usually did so as a result of experiencing feelings of inadequacy and performing poorly in their first semester. Of those who drop out of university, some eventually return and

approximately 65% of the original drop-outs will eventually obtain a four-year degree (Tinto, 1985).

There are many reasons why students drop out of university in first year (Tinto, 1985). Some students are unable to cope with common transitional stressors such as homesickness, and roommate difficulties. Others may have unrealistic expectations about the demands of university or lack basic study skills and habits required to be successful. Still others are simply unwilling or unmotivated to meet the requirements necessary to complete a degree. Others may be unable to meet the financial obligations associated with tuition, books and living expenses. Some may be unable to adjust to the social changes that accompany university life. All of these can be factors in the decision to voluntarily withdraw during the first few weeks or months.

Involvement is essential at every stage in a student's academic career (Astin, 1985, 1993; Kuh 1991, 1995), but assimilation into the campus community is especially critical when students first arrive on campus. Noel (1985) suggested that helping students to connect from the beginning should be the responsibility of the entire campus community rather than only faculty or student affairs professionals. It is the responsibility of the institution to help students develop both socially and intellectually in all stages of their student development. Students who are more integrated into university or college, re less likely to drop out (Tinto, 1987). Establishing a sense of connectedness with at least one person at the institution is an essential factor in retention (Levitz & Noel, 1989).

Astin's (1975) research examined four academic background measures believed to significantly increase the chances of dropping out. Although consideration was given to

how they ranked within their high school classes, their college admissions test scores and their academic rating of the high school, Astin reported that the students' high school grades were the most effective predictor of college attrition. This research indicated that students' chances of dropping out of university increased consistently as their high school grades decreased.

<div align="center">Student Support Services and Programs</div>

Students have increased their expectations for the provision of student services, as they pay more and more for a post-secondary education (Levine, 1998). That is, they expect more educational support for their money. As a result of the high percentage of students who drop out after first year, post-secondary institutions recognized their obligation to establish support services and programs that would help to retain students (Tinto, 1987) while simultaneously addressing institutional interests in retention (Saluri, 1985). In an attempt to increase students' chances for success, universities have implemented programs such as summer orientation, campus tours, fall orientation, academic advising, mentor opportunities, residence programming, health and wellness workshops and more (Levitz & Noel, 1989; Upcraft & Gardner, 1989).

Students frequently arrive at university with underdeveloped academic skills. In the past two decades, universities enrolled more under prepared students who lacked basic learning skills (Astin, 1993). Levine (1998) reported that, as a result of the greater number of under prepared students, there was an increased need to provide additional support.

Since many first-year students have overestimated their perceived success, it has

been suggested by Smith et al (1992) that it is in the best interest of institutions to take an

active role in facilitating students' awareness of their skill level and to implement support

programs accordingly. The researchers investigated whether participation in an academic

support program would have an effect on first-year students' first semester performance

and self-efficacy. They also investigated whether an accurate assessment of students'

need for academic assistance could be determined based on their participation in a first-

year academic support program.

Smith et al (1992) examined 46 students subdivided into four groups. Three of

the groups participated in different forms of academic support provided by graduate

students, and one group received no required academic support. Measures were collected

using a self-report instrument based on motivational variables reflecting students'

perceptions of academic self-efficacy and self-determination. Students answered

questions about their confidence in understanding, learning, and skill mastery as well as

control beliefs, perceived competence, expectancy for success, and willingness to seek

assistance. They were also asked to estimate their final grades and compare their abilities

to other first-year students. Furthermore, they indicated their level of willingness to seek

academic assistance, their ability to read, manage time, and take notes. Two surveys were

administered during the first semester. The first survey was conducted at the beginning

of the semester and asked students to predict their final grades based on their participation

in academic support programs. They were also asked to estimate their academic abilities

compared to other first-year students.

This research showed significant differences between the three groups that received support and the group that received no support. The results of the second survey revealed that students receiving the support had lower estimates for the prediction of their final GPA and yet their estimation of their academic abilities improved compared to the students receiving no support. In actuality, the experimental groups obtained higher grades in the end and were more likely to seek out the assistance of campus resources. Students who initially overestimated their abilities and did not receive any support eventually suffered a decrease in self-efficacy, perceived abilities, and study skills. These results suggest that the unsupported group was less likely to accurately estimate the adjustments necessary to the new academic environment. Thus, it was concluded that this evidence strengthened support for improved self-efficacy available through campus support services.

<div align="center">First-Year Transition Courses</div>

Rationale

Tinto (1990) suggested that it is critical for institutions to ensure connectedness from the onset of students' arrival to campus to prevent high rates of attrition. One way to achieve this is by offering a first-year transition course to integrate students into social and academic campus communities and provide them with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed (Levitz & Noel, 1989). In addition to helping students cope with the transition, first-year transition courses have been strongly associated with improvements in first-year rates of retention (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Green & Miller, 1998; Hoff, Cook, & Price, 1996) regardless of a student's entering GPA (Fidler, 1991).

First-year transition courses are increasing in popularity across North America. Seventy-three percent of the 749 institutions that responded to the National Survey of Freshman Seminar Programming (2000) reported that they offered a special course for first-year students called a first-year seminar or first-year transition course. Many of these courses were administered in conjunction with student affairs professional staff. When student affairs staff and faculty coordinated their efforts, the course had its best chance at being credible and gaining campus-wide support (Murphy, 1989).

Some of the more common areas for growth in knowledge and skills for new students include the need to think critically, utilize analytical and problem-solving skills, develop interpersonal skills, leadership ability and job skills (Astin, 1993). Strong academic writing skills and the ability to make effective decisions about practical issues such as health and wellness were also important factors in determining first-year student success (Jewler, 1989). Jewler emphasized that developing these skills was not the only goal of a first-year transition course, but that the course should be embedded in the philosophy that reflected the idea that education should be exciting and rewarding for the student to be able to invoke a sense of eagerness for learning. To understand the full value of the first-year transition course, the institution should consider the overall student development that is achieved.

Proponents in favour of the transition course (Gardner, 1989; Jewler, 1989) argue against critics who say that such a course stifles student independence. By providing this kind of course, universities encourage students to develop skills, talents and enthusiasm to help motivate them to maximize their learning potential (Levitz & Noel, 1989).

Gardner (1989) argued that as long as the first year transition course contained legitimate academic work and assisted students, then it would be viewed as a viable addition to the first-year experience.

It is important that the effectiveness of these courses be monitored to increase the integrity of the course. Reassessment and ongoing training should be provided to all involved in teaching it (Gardner, 1989). It should not only actively involve students and address their attitudes, behaviours and goals but should also be combined with legitimate academic work (Gardner, 1989; Jewler, 1989).

Many researchers have provided evidence to support the value of the first-year transition course. At a Midwest U.S. university, Wright-Sidle and McReynolds (1999) examined the relationship between participation in the first-year transition course, and student retention and success. Differences were examined between the group of students who chose to participate and those who did not (Wright-Sidle & McReynolds, 1999). Sixty-three percent of seminar course participants enrolled in second year compared to 56% of students who did not participate in the course. Students who participated in the course were more likely to return for the second semester of the first academic year than students who did not choose to participate in the course $(p< .05)$. Students who participated in the course also earned higher cumulative GPAs than the control group $(p< .05)$ and were less likely to be suspended and more likely to be in good academic standing.

Because students were given the option of selecting the course, those who elected to do so may have been more self-motivated and thus may have been more successful as a

result of their previous level of motivation. Evidence supports the idea that even the most academically prepared students can increase their success by enrolling in a first-year transition course (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Wilkie & Kuckuck, 1989).

Benefits

Much of the literature supports the notion that almost every first-year university student can benefit from the opportunities offered by a first-year transition course (Astin, 1993; Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Green & Miller, 1998; Hoff et al., 1996), some of which include: developing study, writing and research skills, enhancing critical thinking, and coping with stress. The institution also stands to benefit (Astin, 1993; Gordon, 1985; Noel, 1985) because the evidence suggests that transition courses help to retain students, especially students belonging to groups that might otherwise experience a higher rate of attrition (Tinto, 1987).

One of the positive features of a first-year transition course is the limited number of students in each class. This allows for a more personalized atmosphere than the traditionally larger first-year class (Gordon, 1989). These courses enable in-class collegiality, out-of-class faculty interaction, and provide information to students about campus support services. All of these factors assist with retention and allow students to establish a sense of involvement (Jewler, 1989). Students enrolled in a first-year success course interacted more with faculty outside of class, and this interaction was found to be critical to the student's overall success (Starke, Harth, & Sirianni, 2001).

The first-year transition course has been shown to be highly effective at helping students form a sense of connectedness to their university or college (Brower, 1994). As

a result of this connection, they are more likely to be committed to the institution and to the goal of graduating (Astin, 1993; Tinto, 1987). Another benefit of the first-year transition course is that it allows for the implementation of innovative teaching strategies to address topics such as diversity issues, learning strategies, and critical thinking. These opportunities may not exist in the traditional, larger first-year course. Stoecker (1990) explained the importance of implementing innovative teaching methods in introductory type classes to fully involve students in the learning process.

Stoecker (1990) suggested that course content should be relevant to the students' lives and should even invoke a sense of emotion for learning. Course content should be as diverse as the student body and address different lifestyles, cultures and current social issues so that students can relate to the content and learn from others in the classroom. Further, students might actually benefit from contributing to the structure and content of the course and proposing alternative grading practices, cooperative group work and student self-evaluation. Writing is considered to be an essential component of first-year course curriculum to allow students to explore topics with personal interest rather than simply recite information and facts. Many of the first-year transition courses offer a curriculum with some or all of these elements.

A study from the University of South Carolina (Fidler, 1991) examined the relationship between voluntary enrolment in a first-year transition course and sophomore (second year) return rates for 16 consecutive years. Input variables were considered that might have had an effect on the return rates of the participants. This enabled the researchers to determine if the variables accounted for the differences in return rates or

the course itself was associated with increased return rates. These variables included: academic ability, race, gender, course load and motivation to complete a degree (input variables), creating a peer support group, providing a faculty mentor (process variables) and student services and extra-class activities (content variables). Questionnaires were administered to students each year that asked about motivation and enrolment in the first-year transition course.

Fidler's (1991) results showed that first-year transition course participants achieved significantly higher sophomore (second year) return rates in 11 of the 16 years despite lower academic ability. This was measured by predicted GPAs and actual GPAs and higher course loads. In the remaining five years, the return rates were still more favourable than for students who did not enrol, but not significantly so. It was explained that process and content variables are more likely than input variables to account for higher return rates. Regardless of academic ability, race, gender, course load and motivation to complete a degree, students who felt well supported by peers, faculty or student services were more likely to return to university. Participants also reported significantly higher usage of student services and a greater involvement in campus activities than non-participants.

First-year transition courses reportedly helped students succeed in university regardless of their academic ability (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Wilkie & Kuckuck, 1989). It has also been suggested that the course should not be promoted as remedial since all students can benefit from the individualized or group support offered by the first-year transition course (Smith et al., 1992). First-year transition courses have also been

effective at providing direction to students whose academic goals were less certain and who were therefore at greater risk of dropping out (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Noel, 1985; Tinto, 1987).

In addition to providing enhanced study skills, the first-year transition course contributed to an increase in GPA among high-risk first-year students at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Wilkie & Kuckuck, 1989). The longitudinal study consisted of 183 high-risk first-year students divided into two groups and tracked over a three-year period. The experimental group was randomly assigned to the course. The control group did not participate in the transition course. Although the mean predicted GPAs of both groups were initially equal, the mean cumulative GPAs of the students who successfully completed the course were significantly higher $(p<.01)$ at each point in the analysis over the three-year period. Further, the transition course participants had consistently higher rates of retention and utilized campus resources, including tutorial services, at a higher rate than the non-participants.

Consideration must be given to the fact that Wilkie and Kuckuck (1989) selected the high-risk freshmen to participate in the course. Further research might examine whether the course would be equally beneficial to students with a strong entering GPA or those who self-select into the course. It would be worthwhile to know more about the course content, grading schemes and structure of the course offered in this study. Additional studies might include those that look at students in two differently structured first-year seminar courses that vary the topics, or order of topics, or teaching methods. One limitation to the Wilkie and Kuckuck (1989) study might be that success was

measured over a three-year period. Participation in additional campus support services over that time period may have partially contributed to the success of these students.

A significant amount of literature supports the usefulness of first-year transition courses in terms of retention. For instance, students who successfully completed a first-year transition course not only achieved significantly higher GPAs than those who did not, but they were also more likely to return to university after first year (Wilkie & Kuckuck, 1989; Wright-Sidle & McReynolds, 1999).

Keenan and Gabovitch (1995) measured the effectiveness of a student success course on student retention, knowledge and use of campus resources, and academic support services, increases in learning skills, and career maturity over a four-year period. Data were collected from both course participants and non-participants before and after the course. The questionnaire addressed student performance and asked questions related to their knowledge of support services. Students were also asked to rate their college learning skills in a number of areas. The study suggested positive effects of the course on all measures including those related to rates of retention.

First-year transition courses had positive effects on both student retention and academic achievement, and students' academic performance in the first-year transition course has been, in some cases, predictive of their overall academic success during their first year of college (Cuseo, 1999). Cuseo summarized research from several colleges that showed that participation in a first-year transition course increased the likelihood of persistence. At one college, course participants were 50% more likely to complete their first term than students who did not participate in the course. Community College

participants were retained after first year at a rate of 67% compared to a non-participant rate of 46%.

In a five-year analysis that examined the success of a first-year seminar course (Hoff et al., 1996), researchers revealed that when compared to a similar control group, students who completed the course completed significantly more course hours than students who did not enrol in the course. The group that completed the course experienced a higher retention rate after first year (69.5% for seminar participants compared to 55.8% for non-participants) and a higher retention rate beyond that point. Participants also obtained a higher rate of academic hours required for graduation.

At a New Jersey college, at-risk students who enrolled in the course were retained and graduated in significantly higher numbers over a 5-year period than the students admitted with a higher GPA who did not enrol in the course (Starke et al., 2001). A longitudinal study examining persistence, retention, and graduation rates of transition course participants over seven years at the University of South Carolina confirmed the existence of a strong positive relationship between successful completion of a first-year transition course and increased success, despite the fact that many of the course participants arrived with a lower entering GPA (Shanley & Witten, 1990).

<div align="center">Assessment of Students' First-Year Success</div>

Predictors of Success

Pre-enrolment variables are said to be the most critical for predicting first-year student success (Astin, 1975; Upcraft & Gardner, 1986). Students' background and cultural characteristics, pre-university experiences and demographics are the most

influential determinants of what happens to students once they arrive on campus.

Students' previous levels of motivation, personal values and the degree of family support are all essential for success (Astin, 1975). However, the single most important predictor of success is a student's previous level of academic achievement (Upcraft & Gardner, 1986).

Many universities utilize assessment tools to understand and predict first-year students' characteristics to gauge their university readiness or progress during first year. The College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) (Pace, 1979) is one widely used instrument for assessing first-year students and the changes that they undergo during their university years. Students indicate their experiences and involvement based on their background, effort, and willingness to use campus services, their feelings about the campus climate, and their estimate of their progress toward goals. Pace believed that the outcomes of college experiences were largely based on the investment made by students.

Davis and Murrell (1993) investigated students' responses to the CSEQ (Pace, 1992) based on previous research (Kuh, Shuh, & Whitt, 1991) at 11 selected universities and colleges. By examining the outcomes of the results of the CSEQs from these institutions, it was concluded that the social and academic effort put forth by students was most beneficial, and allowed for growth in aspects of the students' lives outside of the classroom. The researchers explained that the variable most influential on students' academic effort was their perception of the institutions' scholarly and academic emphasis. There was a strong influence on social effort and its relationship to academic effort. Students who perceived faculty and staff to be supportive and accessible developed

stronger social connections and in turn developed a greater awareness of alternate

perspectives and philosophies.

Intervention Programs

The more opportunities students have for intervention and interaction, the more

successful they are likely to be. Academic advising (Kramer & Spencer, 1989), first-year

seminar courses (Jewler, 1989), and social support intervention programs (Pratt, et al.,

2000) have all been shown to be effective at involving students and increasing the

likelihood for success. Students involved in first-year transition courses, or some other

forms of individualized instruction, were found to have a greater sense of self-efficacy

and were more successful after their first semester (Smith et al., 1992).

Pratt et al. (2000) examined the effects of a social support discussion intervention

program on first-year students. Their study was conducted at a small Canadian university

and involved 96 students (66 females and 30 males) randomly selected to participate in

either a regularly scheduled discussion group (10 students per group) or a similar sized

questionnaire-only group. Measures were collected from both groups and included

variables related to demographics, social support, depression, loneliness, adjustment to

university, perceived stress, disposition optimism and behavioural problems.

In August (Pratt et al., 2000), all students were required to answer a pre-

questionnaire based on the above measures. Beginning the first week of the first semester,

the discussion groups were required to attend seven sessions throughout the semester

conducted by trained group facilitators. In these sessions, students discussed issues that

dealt with getting acquainted, developing new social ties, balancing work and social life,

peer pressure and personal values and other issues related to student transition. Two additional sessions were held in the second semester. The final session in March was intended to collect the final post-test data. The post-test was administered to all participants in both groups in early March and included measures similar to those on the August pre-test.

Participants in the control group did not differ significantly from the experimental group on the demographic variables collected in August, nor was there a significant difference in the adjustment measures in November (Pratt et al., 2000). The analysis did however reveal that by March, there were significant group differences and the experimental group scored higher on adjustment to university on five of the nine measures. The participants involved in the discussion groups on average scored higher on adjustment to university and were less likely to skip class and report smoking. For the females only, members of the discussion group were also less likely to be depressed and reported higher levels of social support than the control group. This research supports the positive effects of group intervention for students in transition, but reveals that the benefits may not be fully realized until several months after implementation of the program.

One limitation to this study (Pratt et al., 2000) is that a pilot project such as this would likely require a great deal of resources, staffing and training, and may be impractical in terms of cost and implementation for other institutions. Such a program might be easier to implement on smaller campuses or if specifically targeted for at-risk students. If further studies proved to increase students' sense of connectedness and

student retention, then it might be valuable and cost effective to implement similar support programs. Results from Pratt et al. (2000) may have been favourable due to the fact that the research was conducted on a smaller campus where students may have felt less alienated than they would have on a larger campus. Pilot projects similar to this might be useful for commuter students who traditionally experience a greater sense of isolation and a higher level of stress (Astin, 1993) compared to students living in residence.

Mentor programs have also been shown to improve students' chances for success in first year (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Salinitri, 2004). In Salinitri's (2004) study, of three groups of first-year students, (1) students enrolled in the first-year transition course, (2) students in the mentor program and (3) students receiving no support, the mentored students were shown to achieve the highest levels of success. The students who participated in the mentor program failed fewer courses in the first semester and achieved a higher first-year GPA in their major average and overall GPA. Specifically, the program had a positive impact on students' adjustment, time management strategies and the development of skills associated with academic success. Overall, the program provided positive social integration to the first-year students through the relationship developed with the mentor and allowed them to connect to campus resources, faculty and advisors.

Dimensions of Success

Students need to have input into what they believe to be important to their own success. Brower's (1994) research considered factors that are not directly related to

academics. Brower focussed on identifying sources of stress and coping strategies used to transition to university. The College Life Task Assessment Instrument (CLT) (Brower, 1990) assessed student performances within seven life task domains including: making friends, getting good grades, establishing future goals, managing time, being on your own without family and friends, establishing an identity, and maintaining physical self. Evaluation of student success was viewed as being multidimensional, and all seven domains were important to consider for student success. Brower (1994) explained that previous literature only measured student success in one or two areas (grades and social factors) and was based on the institution's views of what was important to student success. Thus it was asserted that outcomes should be measured while students are engaged in activities and should be based on what the students believe to be most important to success.

Involvement was not the only factor in the success of the students. Students should also engage in personally meaningful routines that address the seven basic life-task domains based on basic living needs, social activities and academic demands (Brower, 1990). In addition to making a connection to the campus and their peers, students must establish a unique niche specific to their individual needs.

<div align="center">Academic Achievement</div>

Students may perceive that they will achieve higher grades in first year than what they actually do (Gilbert, Chapman, & Dietsche, 1997). Grayson (1994) asked incoming students at two Canadian universities about their level of confidence in their ability to achieve desired first-year grades. The majority of students believed that they would

achieve their target grades. These researchers also examined the expected first-year marks of entering students at another Canadian university. Although 36% of the entering first-year students expected a first-year mark of A or better, only 11% of the students actually achieved this grade. Only 37% of the students expected a B or less and yet 73% of the students ended up with this mark (Grayson, 1994). Students are clearly not attaining their desired outcomes with regard to their first-year marks. This suggests that students may overestimate their success in the first year perhaps because they may fail to anticipate difficulties associated with the transition to university. Although achieving good high school grades may make students better prepared for university without university transitional support, it will not guarantee their success (Astin, 1975).

Another research team (Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrun, & Pelletier, 2001) examined students at a large mid-western Canadian university to try to determine why students bright enough to gain admission to university sometimes failed. Their group consisted of students from various sections of a two-semester Introductory Psychology course comprised of 2,500 students. The students completed two surveys. One survey was conducted in October and the second in March of their first year. Measures included academic control, causal attributions, anxiety and boredom related to course work, motivation, self-monitoring, perceived control over performance in the course and in life, and achievement in the course up to that point. With the consent of the students, final grades were obtained at the end of the academic year.

The purpose of this study was to examine the students' perceived academic control, meaning their conceptions about what makes them succeed or fail, and action

control, meaning their preoccupation with failure. The students in the study with higher academic control and higher failure preoccupation consistently obtained the best grades. Students with lower academic control demonstrated a greater chance for failure than students who were more preoccupied by thoughts of failing.

There is no one set strategy that leads to academic achievement in university, but it has been shown that expectations can influence success. A group of researchers (Cantor, Norem, Niedenthal, Langston & Brower, 1987) studied the cognitive strategies that individuals use to cope with life tasks associated with transitional situations. They investigated the transition from high school life to university life and examined how students cope with anxieties related to achievement and life tasks in their own individual ways. Students' estimations of their life tasks upon entering college were compared with their actual performance and satisfaction after obtaining some experience.

It was concluded that there was more than one strategy for meeting with academic success. Some students used defensive pessimism to attempt to gain control, manage their anxieties and motivate them. That is, at times, their outlook on how they thought they would succeed was less than positive. Although they frequently underestimated their ability, this group was nevertheless successful in achieving positive end of first-year outcomes. The second group of students exhibited optimism and provided positive estimations of their performance and in turn also met with positive end of year results. Both groups of students had clearly different strategies for coping and differing perceptions of their performance, but both were equally successful at the end of first year. Therefore, students might successfully develop individualized processes and strategies

for coping with life tasks and academic demands.

Student Characteristics

Diversity of Students

Currently, university campuses are more diverse than they were even two decades ago (Astin, 1993), and there is the increased need to be more adaptable to so many distinct groups. In addition to being exposed to an increasingly diverse culture, students are less likely to be solely focussed on their academic pursuits. For many, work and family are at the forefront of their concerns. As a result, their time is divided among an increasing number of responsibilities (Levine, 1998). Many students report that their main reason for pursuing a post-secondary education is to obtain a career that pays well (Erickson & Strommer, 1991; Levine, 1998). No matter how diverse students' backgrounds and experiences before arriving at university, the experiences gained while enrolled are more critical to their future development (Pace, 1979).

Personality

If universities and colleges learn more about the personality traits of their first-year students, they might be in a better position to facilitate first-year student learning. Likewise, if students become more aware of their own identities and how their outlook affects or inhibits their ability to learn, they may be able to make more appropriate choices to be more academically and socially successful.

Several factors should be considered when determining the likelihood of academic success of a first-year student. In addition to high school GPA and SAT scores, personality characteristics can be appraised to predict and subsequently improve post

secondary performance and retention. Researchers (Tross, Harper, Osher & Kneidinger, 2000) examined the ability of three personality characteristics to predict college GPA and student retention. Specifically, they examined students' achievement tendency, conscientiousness, and resiliency to determine if those possessing higher level of those characteristics would earn higher college GPAs and be retained longer than individuals possessing lower levels of these characteristics.

Achievement in this case was defined as the tendency to strive for competence in one's work, to set goals, and to improve on past performance in order to succeed. Conscientiousness refers to one's ability to perform and see tasks through to completion. Resiliency refers to the determination to be committed to a course of action even in the face of challenge and unexpected circumstances (Tross, Harper, Osher & Kneidinger, 2000).

Participants in this study were 844 first-year students at a large, public, urban U.S. university who were enrolled in multiple sections of a psychology course in their first semester. Measures were taken from a self-report instrument called the College Adjustment Inventory (CAI) (Osher, Ward, Tross, & Flanagan, 1995). Conscientiousness, achievement, and resiliency exhibited reliability coefficient alphas of .85, .77, and .75 respectively. Additional variables included students' high school GPA and total SAT scores. Participants' first-year cumulative GPAs were examined. Although measures of achievement and resiliency were not predictive of success or retention, the results indicated that conscientiousness affected college retention both directly and indirectly through college GPA. Results indicate that conscientiousness also

impacted both involuntary and voluntary attrition in this group.

Evidently, because the university environment demands that students be self-motivated and independent, exhibiting a higher level of conscientiousness appears to increase students' chances for academic success in university and sometimes even more than entering GPA. One of the goals of a first-year transition course is to help first-year students to develop a higher level of conscientiousness with the goal of improving their chances for success.

Bauer and Liang's (2003) research examined how students' personality traits related to their involvement in academic and extra-curricular experiences and first-year performance. This research demonstrated that certain personality and pre-college characteristics influenced the quality of effort expended with academic and personal/social activities, critical thinking, and end-of first-year grades. An essential quality for first-year student success was found to be the students' ability to be open to new experiences and to demonstrate conscientiousness. These researchers found that it was necessary for students to master a delicate balance between diligence in their academics and their development of essential social skills.

Personality and pre-college characteristics were found to influence students' level and quality of effort, critical thinking and academic performance. Students who were open to new experiences and who had a higher sense of conscientiousness were more likely to increase their opportunities for learning whereas students who scored higher on a scale designed to measure neuroticism, were less likely to become involved in academic and intellectual pursuits. Students who exhibited signs of neuroticism did not experience

increased success nor did they attain higher GPAs. These students were less able to focus their efforts in an academically productive way. Conversely, students who were more extraverted and expended more effort in personal/social items suffered from lower GPAs indicating that students need to find a balance between diligence and social extroversion.

Adjustment to University

Brooks and DuBois (1995) examined the academic and psychological adjustment of 56 full time second semester first-year students at a Midwestern U.S. university. The sample included 25 male and 31 female students with an average age of 18.59 years. Both individual and environmental factors were examined to predict differences in both the social and academic adjustment of first-year students. Students first completed a group questionnaire session. Following this, individual interviews were conducted to assess characteristics of their social support networks. Measures examined student demographic characteristics, individual predictors (personality characteristics, problem solving skills and self-esteem) and environmental predictors (social support, life events, distances from home) of student adjustment (as assessed by anticipated GPA and ratings of social, emotional and academic adjustment).

This study suggests that both individual and environmental factors are important predictors of adjustment for first-year students and will impact the transition to university. It provides evidence for the idea that providing first-year students with multiple dimensions of support is critical to their success. Students who develop effective problem solving skills, exhibit more extroverted characteristics and practice their

academic skills, are likely to adapt more successfully to university (Brooks & DuBois,

1995)

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

The current literature addresses theories and empirical findings that can guide

student transition professionals and enable them to provide a foundation to students at the

post secondary level. To be successful, students must develop on many levels including

psychologically, socially (Chickering, 1990) and intellectually (Perry, 1981). The

literature supports the idea that students who interact in their new community will have

the best chance for success (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1995). Institutions can assist students with

effective support services, programs, workshops, personal counselling, academic advising

and first-year transition courses. The benefits of these initiatives are evident as discussed

throughout the literature.

Institutions should also consider the myriad of students, the variety of support

needed and the different ways that students achieve their academic goals. Currently, there

is little if any literature available related to students in transition and how age and

maturity levels affect their success at university. However, it is conceptually, and

logically, important to distinguish between the "less-mature" and "more-mature" student.

Setting the intake age roughly a year lower would presumably affect the success of

first-year students. Since the elimination of the OAC (Ontario Academic Credit) year

(Grade 13) in 2003, first-year university students in Ontario are now one year younger.

Researchers should consider how this age difference impacts students in terms of

maturity, academic preparedness and skills. Students as young as age 16 are being

admitted to universities and colleges, and a large number of them may not be ready for these new experiences or interactions with students who are 17, 18, or 19 years and over. How do incoming students at these various age levels and with such diverse levels of maturity and experience succeed, learn, and adjust socially to university? If we have a better understanding of their perspectives on these issues, then we would be better able to help them as they progress through various stages and encounter transitional difficulties.

In addition to age differences, students arrive with a variety of cultural differences, varying degrees of family support and life experiences and psychological and emotional issues. Their reasons for pursuing a post-secondary education vary from self-motivation to parental and peer influence. Furthermore, students' expectations about university may be much different from their actual experiences. Research that examines students' expectations and actual experiences at university is somewhat limited in the current literature. Preparing students by making them aware of the changes that can occur at university is essential to their success. Unless institutions have information about students' expectations, it would be difficult for them to assist students with aligning their expectations and their experiences to ensure that they can find ways to alleviate academic and social problems, negative feelings or even failure.

One way to investigate this is to gather information from students as soon as they arrive on campus prior to having been exposed to university life to create a snapshot of who they are. Obtaining a second snapshot after they have acquired some university experience would allow institutions to compare similarities and differences, and determine where they may need transition support. It could also assist with understanding

if students change from time one to time two, what the nature of these changes might be and how the changes impact their future success.

It is also important for institutions to understand the kinds or activities that students value and how much of this time is spent productively enhancing their academics, skills and educational goals. In addition to assisting student affairs professionals, this information would also be useful for faculty to become more knowledgeable about how students learn most effectively and may enable them to create an early warning system for students who may be headed for academic difficulty.

Institutional Commitment to Change

Coping with the transition to university is highly individualized and is dependent upon many factors. Students of today are very different from the students who attended university even 10 years ago. Ten years from now, students will again be very different than they are today. By knowing more about the characteristics, expectations and experiences of current students, institutions can implement effective programming to increase retention. Regular assessment of first-year programming initiatives is essential to ensure that universities continue to be knowledgeable about issues relevant to the rapidly changing student and to ensure that their programming is achieving what it has been designed to accomplish.

<div align="center">Research Questions and Hypotheses</div>

The research focus in the current study involves developing a profile of first-year students who opt for preparatory university courses in this first "double cohort" year when younger and less-prepared students are entering university. By examining three age

groups (17-year-olds, 18-year-olds, and 19+ year olds) at two different points of time, it is possible to examine the differential effects due to age (younger versus older students) and changes over time (entry point versus end of first semester). The actual profile variables involve self-report measures of satisfaction, intentions, preparatory activity, use of resources, involvement, social supports, and self-identity.

1. Thus, the first research question is: What do younger and older students look like at the beginning of their program, and at the end of their first semester with respect to:

    a. Satisfaction with university -- in general and specifically with the University of Windsor?

    b. Satisfaction with chosen major?

    c. Expectations regarding GPA -- after first-year and at the time of graduation?

    d. Intention and practices in engaging in preparatory work (reading, note taking, out-of-class assignments, hours spent preparing for class, keeping track of time)?

    e. Intention and practices in accessing campus services and resources (academic counselling, Student Information Resource Centre, study skills workshops)?

    f. Intention and practices in being involved in campus activities?

Hypothesis 1

As a working hypothesis, it is logical to predict that younger students will show weaker profiles by responding more negatively in their responses to questions and that their responses will be somewhat less mature on the profile variables compared to the older students.

2. The second research question concerns the relationship between these profile variables and actual grade point average (GPA). Does GPA correlate with profile variables?

Hypothesis 2

As a working hypothesis it could be predicted that students who achieve higher GPAs will show positive correlations with those profile variables associated with academic success (e.g., note taking, completing readings and work before class, preparing for class). Furthermore, it could be predicted that students who do utilize campus services, would have higher GPAs.

Hypothesis 3

It is reasonable to suspect that students will have good intentions at the beginning of their programs but may fail to implement those intentions, based on a commonplace understanding of human nature. Thus, as a working hypothesis, it is predicted that students will show attrition in their work habits.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants for this study attended a mid-sized, comprehensive Ontario university in the fall 2003 semester and were enrolled in their first semester of university. Students who were registered in the course, The Transition to University (University 101) were invited to participate in the study. Enrolment for the course was open to any first-year student, and the course provided three social science credit hours (one full credit) if successfully completed. The course focused on providing new university students with the skills and strategies necessary for a more successful transition to university. Specifically, time management skills, information literacy, reading, note taking and writing skills, critical thinking, assessment of individual learning styles and research writing were taught (Appendix K).

All students were invited to complete two surveys, the First-Year Student Profile I (FYSP I) (Oakley, 2003) (Appendix B) at the start of the semester, and the First-Year Student Profile II (FYSP II) (Oakley, 2003) (Appendix C) at the end of the semester. The instrument was designed for the purposes of the present study. One hundred and fifty-six students completed the FYSP I, and 112 students completed the FYSP II. Only full time students were evaluated for the final results.

The sample of 156 students was comprised of 59 males and 97 females. The age groups were 17 (N= 22), 18 (N=73), 19+ (N=91). The relative diversity of the sample may be seen in Table 1 where frequencies and percentages are reported.

Table 1

First-Year Student Profile (FYSP) Participants

	Frequency	Percent
Males	59	37.8
Females	97	62.2
17 years of age	22	14.1
18 years of age	73	46.8
19+ years of age	91	39.1
English first language	147	94.2
Bilingual	90	57.7
Disability	6	4
Self-report High School grades A – B	123	79
Self-report High School grades half Bs or lower	33	21
Live off campus with parent or relative	59	38
Live off campus alone or with room mate	18	12
Live in university residence	78	50
High School student prior to June 2003	151	97
Transfer student or not directly from High School	5	3
Grade 12 graduate	73	47
OAC graduate	78	50
U of W 1st choice	107	69
U of W 2nd choice	26	17
U of W 3rd choice	10	6
U of W other choice	13	8
Arts & Social Science students	128	82

Measures

The FYSP I (Oakley, 2003) (Appendix B) contained questions related to demographics, expectations about university and preparatory work, connections and support services, out-of-class activities and time management strategies. Demographic questions included gender, age, ethnic background, citizenship, religion, first language, disability, and number of years in Windsor. Students were also asked questions about their high school GPA, family's educational background, current living situation and

whether this university was their first choice or something other than their first choice.

Both the FYSP I (Oakley, 2003) (Appendix B), and the FYSP II (Oakley, 2003) (Appendix C) asked a series of questions related to students' expectations of and experiences with university respectively. Questions in these categories related to their expected university GPA after first-year and at the time of graduation, desire to attend university, current declared majors, and whether they expected that they might consider changing majors, how often they expected to attend class and what factors would influence that decision, how often they expected to participate and prepare for class and how often they actually did so.

Both surveys asked students about their expected and actual use of campus services and support networks. Students were asked to assess the number of hours that they expected to spend and actually did spend performing out-of-class activities. Participants were then asked some questions about their self-satisfaction at Time 1 (T1) and Time 2 (T2). Finally, students were asked to identify the ways in which they kept track of their time.

By gathering this information, the researcher obtained an understanding of the characteristics of first-year students, and a sense of their expectations and experiences at university. It was also anticipated that the researcher could acquire further information regarding the accessibility and usefulness of current campus support services and student use of time management strategies.

The FYSP I and II are based in part on questions from the College Life Task Assessment Instrument (CLT) (Brower, 1990). The CLT identifies potential areas for

problems in college and examines individual student strengths. The CLT measures

behaviours in seven domains of college life and asks students to report their performances

and performance appraisals within each domain. The modified CLT used in the present

study includes questions specific to the current research, addressing issues relevant for

this particular population of students. Additional questions were developed by the

researcher based on readings and a review of the literature on students in transition.

Specifically, questions pertaining to expectations about university and perceived support

have been added to these tests.

The study examined certain characteristics of the University 101 students by

asking questions related to their expected and actual practices and behaviours in their

first-year of university. Characteristics relating to demographics (age, gender, major,

Grade 12 or OAC graduate, residence student or commuter student, and so on) were

identified. Questions were asked relating to desire to attend university, academic

preparedness, perceived skills, use of campus resources, perception about social support,

time spent on various activities and use of time management strategies. Responses to key

questions at T1 and T2 were examined along with their end of first-year GPA.

Procedures

Application was made to the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board

(REB) outlining the intent of the study (Appendix D). A letter was also sent to the

University of Windsor's Office of the Registrar (Appendix E) to obtain permission to

release end of first-year GPAs for subjects providing they agreed to release this

information to the researcher. A release of grades form was prepared and signed by the

Vice-Provost, Students and Registrar (Appendix F). A letter was sent to the Dean of the

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at the University of Windsor to obtain

permission to release end of first-year GPAs for students registered in University 101 for

the Fall 2003 semester (Appendix G) providing they agreed to release this information to

the researcher. A letter of permission was prepared for the University 101 instructors

(Appendix H) to request class time to obtain the data. Instructions for distribution of the

questionnaires were provided to the research assistant (Appendix I). A letter of consent

was prepared asking students for their consent to participate in the study and to allow the

researcher to obtain their entering GPAs and end of first-year GPAs (Appendix J). All

surveys were administered and collected by a research assistant. Materials remained

sealed until students' final University 101 grades were submitted to the Office of the

Registrar.

The data were collected on two occasions: the first two weeks, Time 1 (T1) of the

semester and the last two weeks of the semester, Time 2 (T2). On each occasion,

students were given the option of being dismissed 30 minutes early and invited to

complete the survey at that time in the classroom. Students were offered no remuneration

for completing the survey but were invited to participate in a random draw for a gift

certificate to the University of Windsor Bookstore. Students were asked to provide their

university student identification numbers and names on each survey to allow the

researcher to compare their responses with their end of first-year GPAs.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Data Analysis

Given the principle interest in the first-year of the double cohort, and the potential

impact of Age, the first analysis addressed Age using a two-way ANOVA with Age (17,

18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as the independent variables. When comparing the Age

grouping with the Double Cohort Categories, it is clear that the 17 year-olds are grade 12

graduates and the 19 year-olds are OAC graduates. As may be seen in Table 2, there is

considerable overlap with the 18 year-olds. Since the focus of the current study was the

Age variable, the double cohort variable was not analyzed.

Table 2

Three Age Groups of Participants and Whether or Not They Were Grade 12 Graduates or
OAC Graduates

Age	Grade 12	OAC
17	21	1
18	51	22
19+	1	55

Of interest was the change from expected practices (determined at T1) to actual

practices (determined at Time 2) as related to three levels of maturity (17 years, 18 years,

19+ years). This change was explored with respect to 6 categories of variables as

dependent measures. The dependent variables were: University Preferences, Change of

Major, GPA Expected, Academic Activities, Campus Resources and Campus Activities.

For University Preferences, the dependent variables were: (1) how much do

you/did you wish you attended a different university right now? (2) how much do you/did

you wish you weren't attending any university right now?

For Change of Major, the dependent variable was: (1) how likely is it that you will change your major?

For GPA Expected, the dependent variables were: (1) what do you expect your university grade point average to be at the end of your first-year? (2) what do you expect your university grade point average to be by the time you graduate?

For Academic Activities, the dependent variables were: (1) how often during this semester do you expect to/did you complete readings/work before class? (2) how often during this semester do you expect to/did you take notes during class? (3) how often during this semester do you expect to/did you work on course assignments outside of class with friends and classmates? (4) how many hours do you plan to/did you spend per week preparing for class (reviewing notes, studying, reading, etc.,)? (5) do/did you use some system of keeping track of your time such as a weekly planner?

For Campus Resources, the dependent variables were: (1) would you consider using/did you use academic counselling? (2) would you consider using/did you use the Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC)? (3) would you consider using/did you use the Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) program (study skills workshops)?

For Campus Activities, the dependent variable was: about how many hours per week will you/did you spend participating in campus activities?

University Preferences

Change of university was assessed with two questions.

"In general, how much do you/did you wish you attended a different university or

college?"

"In general, how much do you/did you wish you weren't attending any university or

college right now?"

Two-way ANOVAs were computed with Age (17, 18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as

the independent variables with Time treated as a repeated measure. For *"wish you*

attended a different university" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was no main

effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .35$, p > .1. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,89) = 4.71$, p

< .05. There was no interaction effect, $F(2, 89) = 2.60$, p >.05. The main effect for Time

was due to a very slight increase in the wish to attend a different university or college at

T2 as illustrated in Table 3. Even though there was no apparent change for the 19+

group, it did not show up in the statistical analysis as an interaction effect.

Table 3

Wish You Attended a Different University

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	.45	.52	0-2	.72	.79	0-2
18	44	.50	.76	0-3	.95	.96	0-3
19+	37	.81	.91	0-3	.81	1.08	0-3

Note. 0 = not at all, 3 = very much.
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

For *"wish you weren't attending any university"* as the dependent variable at T1

and T2, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .59$, p >.1. There was a main effect

for Time, $F(1,89) = 7.49$, p < .01. There was no interaction effect, $F(2, 89) = 2.62$, p >

.05. The main effect for Time showed that there was a greater desire not to attend any

university or college at T2 as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Wish You Weren't Attending Any University

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	.00	.00	0-2	.64	.81	0-2
18	44	.43	.79	0-3	.64	.84	0-3
19+	37	.57	.83	0-3	.57	.80	0-3

Note. 0 = not at all, 3 = very much.
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

Students were asked in September (T1) about how much they wished they had attended a different university or college and were asked again in November (T2). Time 1 provided evidence that they appeared to be satisfied with their choice. However, the majority indicated that their satisfaction decreased at T2, and there was an increased desire to attend a different university.

Change of Major

Change of major was assessed with one question.

"How likely is it that you will change your major?"

A two-way ANOVA was computed with Age (17, 18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as the independent variables with Time treated as a repeated measure for "*how likely is it that you will change your major*" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2. There was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .42$, p > .1. There was no main effect for Time, $F(1,89) = .46$, p > .05. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,89) = .10$, p > .05. as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5

How Likely To Change Major

.

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	1.09	1.14	0-3	1.09	1.14	0-3
18	44	.93	.97	0-3	1.02	1.00	0-3
19+	37	.76	1.14	0-3	.89	1.07	0-4

Note. 0 = not at all, 3 = very much.

Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

Students were asked in September (T1) about how likely it would be that they

might change their major and were asked again in November (T2). T1 provided evidence

that they appeared to be satisfied with their choice (86%) and the majority indicated that

they were still satisfied with their choice of major at T2 (82%). It could be that students

need to experience an entire semester or more before they can make a decision about

changing majors. It would be interesting to ask this question again in second semester.

GPA Expected

Expected GPA was assessed with two questions:

"What do you expect your university grade point average to be at the end of first-year

(0 = A+ to A range, 8 = D range or lower)?"

"What do you expect your university grade point average to be by the time you graduate

(0 = A+ to A range, 8 = D range or lower)?"

Two-way ANOVAs were computed with Age (17, 18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as

the independent variables with Time treated as a repeated measure. For "end of first-year

grade point average", there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .81$, $p > .1$. There was

a main effect for Time, $F(1,89) = 35.53$, $p < .01$. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,89)$

=1.16, p >.05. The main effect for Time showed that the students' expectations of their end of first-year GPA decreased after T2 as illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6

Expected Grade Point Average By End of First Year

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	2.91	1.30	1-5	3.45	1.57	1-6
18	44	3.18	1.15	2-6	4.20	1.61	1-8
19+	37	2.95	1.15	0-7	4.14	1.40	1-7

Note. 0 = A+ to A range, 8 = D range

For "*expected grade point average at graduation*" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89)$ =.54 , p > .1. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,89)$ = 11.19, p < .01. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,89)$ =.22, p > .05. The main effect for Time showed that students' expectations of their grade point average by the time they graduate decreased at T2 as illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7

Expected Grade Point Average By Graduation

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	2.09	1.45	0-4	2.36	1.12	1-4
18	44	2.11	.89	0-5	2.55	1.19	1-8
19+	37	2.27	.99	1-5	2.76	1.09	0-5

Note. 0 = A+ to A range, 8 = D range

For both questions, at T1, the students predicted that their GPAs would be higher than they predicted at T2. It is likely that as they began to achieve a better understanding about the demands of university, their expectations with regard to their final GPAs became more realistic.

Academic Activities

Assessment of students' preparatory work habits was assessed using the following 5

questions.

"How often this semester do you expect to/did you complete readings/work before

class?"

"How often this semester do you expect to/did you take notes during class?"

"How often this semester do you expect to/did you work on course assignments outside of

class with friends and classmates?"

"About how many hours do you plan to/did you spend per week preparing for class

(reviewing notes, studying, reading, etc.)?"

"Do/did you use some system of keeping track of your time such as a weekly planner?"

Two-way ANOVAs were computed with Age (17, 18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as

the independent variables with Time treated as a repeated measure. For *"complete*

readings and work before class" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was no

main effect for Age, F (2,89) = 1.43, p > .05. There was a main effect for Time, F (1,89)

= 48.9, p < .01. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,89)$ =.84, p > .05. The main effect

for Time was due to decreased expectations for completing readings/work at T2 as

illustrated in Table 8

Table 8

Complete Readings and Work Before Class

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	2.09	.83	1-3	1.55	.69	1-3
18	44	2.32	.71	1-3	1.39	.78	0-3
19+	37	2.52	.61	1-3	1.59	.83	0-3

Note. 0 = almost never, 3 = very often
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

For "*note taking during class*", as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was a main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = 6.19$, $p < .01$. There was no main effect for Time, $F(1,89) = .18$, $p > .05$. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,89) = .04$, $p > .05$. The main effect for Age was due to the fact that the 17 and 19 year olds were more likely to report taking notes than the 18 year olds as illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9

Note Taking During Class

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	2.91	.30	1-3	2.91	.30	2-3
18	44	2.59	.66	1-3	2.52	.79	0-3
19+	37	2.89	.31	2-3	2.84	.50	1-3

Note. 0 = almost never, 3 = very often
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

For "*working on course assignments outside of class*" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = 2.71$, $p > .05$. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1.89) = 18.27$, $p < .01$. There was no interaction effect, $F(2.89) = 1.36$, $p > .05$. The main effect for Time was due to decreased expectations for working on course assignments outside of class at T2 as illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10

Working On Course Assignments Outside of Class

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	2.55	.52	1-3	1.55	.69	1-3
18	44	1.82	.84	0-3	1.39	.99	0-3
19+	37	1.70	.85	0-3	1.33	.91	0-3

Note. 0 = almost never, 3 = very often
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

For "*hours spent preparing for class*" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .25$, p >.05. There was a main effect for Time, $F (1,89) = 17.96$, p < .01. There was no interaction effect, $F (2,89) = 1.96$, p > .05.

The main effect for Time was due to decreased expectations for spending time preparing for class at Time 2 as illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11

Hours Spent Preparing For Class

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	1.82	.87	0-4	1.45	.82	1-3
18	44	2.02	1.02	0-4	1.05	.89	0-3
19+	37	1.92	.89	0-4	1.38	1.11	0-4

Note. 0 = less than 5 hours per week, 4 = more than 25 hours per week.

For "*keeping track of your time- weekly planner*" as the dependent variable at T1 and T2, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .70$, p >.05. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,89) = 6.03$, p < .05. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,89) = .01$, p > .05.

The main effect for Time was due to students reporting a lower incidence of using a system to keep track of time (weekly planner) at T2 as illustrated in Table 12.

The main effect for Time was due to students reporting a lower incidence of using a system to keep track of time (weekly planner) at T2 as illustrated in Table 12.

Table 12

Keeping Track of Your Time – Weekly Planner

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	.00	.00	0-1	.18	.40	0-1
18	44	.23	.42	0-1	.39	.49	0-1
19+	37	.30	.46	0-1	.46	.51	0-1

Note. 0 = yes, 1 = no.
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

Results of these questions indicate that although students' initial intentions of establishing preparatory routines may be high, their actual follow through with these actions ends up being lower. It would appear that students' initiative with regard to preparatory activities appears to wane as the semester progresses. This provides support for the idea that universities need to find ways to help students to maintain their level of motivation and diligence with regard to preparatory skills. It is interesting to note that the 18 year olds were the least likely to report note taking at T1 and T2.

Campus Resources

Assessment of students' use of campus resources was assessed using the following 3 questions:

"Would you consider using/did you use academic counselling?"

"Would you consider using/did you use the Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC)?

"Would you consider using/did you use the Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) study skills workshops?"

Two-way ANOVAs were computed with Age (17, 18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as the independent variables with Time treated as a repeated measure. For "*consider using academic counselling*" as the dependent variable, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,89) = .02$, $p > .05$. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,89) = 111.51$, $p < .01$. There was an interaction effect, $F(2,89) = 3.48$, $p < .05$ due to the fact that the 17 year olds showed a more dramatic shift towards avoiding academic counselling (see Figure 1). The main effect for Time was due to students reporting a higher avoidance rating at T2 in seeking academic counselling as illustrated in Table 13. At T1, 80% of all of the students surveyed indicated that they would consider using academic counseling and at T2, only 18% reported seeking academic counseling. The interaction effect shows that it was even more dramatic for the 17 year olds.
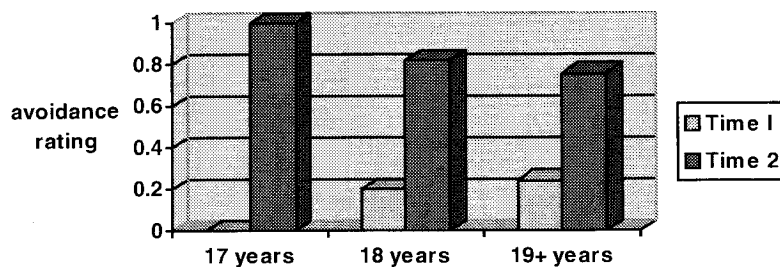
Figure 1. Avoiding Academic Counselling By Age and Time

Table 13

Consider Using Academic Counselling

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	.00	.00	0-1	1.00	.00	1-1
18	44	.20	.41	0-1	.82	.39	0-1
19+	37	.24	.43	0-1	.76	.43	0-1

Note. 0 = yes, 1 = no.

Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

For *"consider using Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC)"*, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,88) = .98$, p > .05. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,88) = 61.09$, p < .01. There was no interaction effect, $F (2,88) = .15$, p > .05. The main effect for Time was due to students reporting a lower likelihood that they would consider using the Student Information Centre after T2 as illustrated in Table 14.

Table14

Consider Using Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC)

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	.27	.47	0-1	.82	.40	0-1
18	44	.11	.32	0-1	.68	.47	0-1
19+	37	.19	.40	0-1	.69	.47	0-1

Note. 0 = yes, 1 = no.

Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

For *"Consider Using Skills to Enhance Personal Success" (STEPS)*, there was no main effect for Age, $F(2,86) = .16$, p > .05. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,86) = 60.7$, p < .01. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,86) = .010$, p > .05. The main effect for Time was due to the students reporting a lower likelihood that they would consider using the STEPS (study skills) workshops after T2 as illustrated in Table 15.

Table 15

Consider Using 'Skills to Enhance Personal Success' (STEPS)

Age	N	Time 1		Time 2	
-----	----	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
17	11	.45	.52	1.00	.00
18	44	.43	.50	.90	.30
19+	37	.44	.50	.92	.28

Note. 0 = yes, 1 = no.
Frequency charts and cross tabs analysis are reported in Appendix L.

Although students initially intended to utilize campus resources at T1, students

indicated that they would be less likely to utilize these resources at T2. Interesting to note

is the fact that the 17 year olds showed the highest tendency to avoid using academic

counselling services.

Campus Activities

Students' use of campus activities was assessed by the following question:

"About how many hours do you plan to/did you spend per week participating in campus

activities?"

A two-way ANOVA was computed with Age (17, 18, 19+) and Time (T1, T2) as

the independent variables with Time treated as a repeated measure for *"time spent*

participating in campus activities" as the dependent variable. There was no main effect

for Age, $F(2,87) = .84$, p > .05. There was a main effect for Time, $F(1,87) = 9.90$, p <

.01. There was no interaction effect, $F(2,87) = 2.32$, p > .05. The main effect for Time

was due to students reporting spending less time participating in campus activities after

T2 as illustrated in Table 16.

Table 16

Time Spent Participating in Campus Activities

Age	N	Time 1			Time 2		
----	----	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
17	11	.82	1.08	0-3	.36	.67	0-1
18	44	.34	.61	0-3	.27	.66	1-1
19+	37	.34	.68	0-3	.23	.73	0-1

Note. 0 = less than 5 hours per week, 4 = more than 25 hours per week.

Given that the literature reported the benefits of campus involvement, it was

unfortunate to see such low numbers with regard to anticipated and actual time spent

participating in campus activities. Not only did the students anticipate very little

involvement, their actual involvement was even lower than they originally intended. This

information is important for universities to know so that they can find meaningful ways

for students to get involved outside of class to enable them to enhance learning outside

the classroom.

Grade Point Average (GPA) and Age

Students'end of first-year GPAs were examined with respect to three different age

groups. It was discovered that the oldest students (19+) had the highest end of first-year

GPA. The one-way ANOVA computed for GPA with Age (17, 18, 19+) as the

independent variable showed a main effect for Age, $F(2,134) = 3.05$, $p < .05$, due to the

19+ group showing higher GPAs as illustrated in Table 17.

Table 17

End of First-Year GPA and Age

Age	N	End of First-Year GPA		
----	-----	Mean	SD	Range
17	20	6.77	2.52	2.88–11.30
18	65	6.65	2.10	2.00–10.90
19+	52	7.63	2.16	2.75–11.70

Correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between GPA

and various variables of first-year experiences. The first set of analyses focused on

expected practices and behaviours, while the second set of analyses addressed actual

practices and behaviours at the end of the first semester.

Examining first the planned practices and behaviours, the relationship between

GPA and the variables of interest may be seen in Tables 18 to 26.

GPA and University Attendance

As illustrated in Table 18, there was no correlation at T1 or T2 between GPA and

desire to attend a different university.

Table 18:

GPA and University Attendance (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
How much do you wish you attended a different university or college right now?	-.03	-.14
How much do you wish you weren't attending any university or college right now?	-.05	-.10

GPA and Course Enrolment

As illustrated in Table 19, there was no correlation at T1 or T2 between GPA and

number of courses taken.

Table 19

GPA and Course Enrolment (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
How many courses are you enrolled in?	-.17	-.12

GPA and Academics

As illustrated in Table 20, GPA correlates positively with being academically

prepared for university and correlates negatively with obtaining a university degree to meet

people and have a good time and expectations of end of first-year GPA. Students with a

higher GPA appear to have less desire to attend university for the purpose of meeting people

and having a good time and lower expectations of their end of first-year GPA. The same

pattern is evident at T2. Students with a higher GPA report feeling more prepared for

university at both T1 and T2. Students with a higher GPA had lower expectations of their

end of first-year GPA showing that perhaps their expectations were more realistic than

students with lower GPAs.

Table 20

GPA and Academics (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
How important is it to obtain a university education to increase your knowledge?	.05	.12
How important is it to obtain a university education to meet people and have a good time?	-.22**	-.29**
How academically prepared do you feel for university today?	.24**	.30**
What do you expect your university grade point average to be at the end of your first-year?	-.34**	-.54**
What do you expect your university grade point average to be by the time you graduate?	-.06	-.13

**$p < .01$

GPA and Skills

As illustrated in Table 21, there was no relationship at T1 between GPA and

expectations about skills. At T2, there was a relationship between GPA and note taking.

It appears that after acquiring some university experience, the students with the higher

GPAs were more inclined to use their note taking skills.

Table 21

GPA and Skills (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
How often this semester do you expect to/did you complete readings and work before class?	.02	.15
How often this semester do you expect to/did you take notes during class?	.12	.25*
How often this semester do you expect to/did you work on course assignments outside of class with friends and classmates?	-.04	-.03

*$p < .05$

GPA and Use of Campus Resources

As illustrated in Table 22, there was no correlation at T1 or T2 between GPA and use of Campus Resources.

Table 22

GPA and Use of Campus Resources (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
Would you consider using/did you use academic counselling in your first semester?	-.09	-.16
Would you consider using/did you use the Academic Writing Centre in your first semester?	-.10	.04
Would you consider using/did you use the Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC) in your first semester?	-.03	.10
Would you consider using/did you use the Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) workshops in your first semester?	.04	.07

GPA and Social Support

As illustrated in Table 23, there was no correlation at T1 between GPA and Social

Support. However, at T2, students with higher GPAs reported having a higher number of

non-university friends.

Table 23

GPA and Social Support (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
Estimate the number of university friends with whom you are on a first name basis.	-.16	.09
Estimate the number of non-university friends with whom you are on a first name basis.	.03	.21*
During a time of crisis or stress, how many of your university friends could you comfortably turn to for help?	-.12	-.01
During a time of crisis or stress, how many of your non-university friends could you comfortably turn to for help?	-.07	.10
How comfortable would you be turning to an official campus person during a time of academic crisis?	.04	.14
How comfortable would you be turning to an official campus person during a time of personal crisis?	-.11	-.07

*$p < .05$

GPA and Time Spent on Activities

As illustrated in Table 24, at T1, there was a negative correlation between

students with higher GPAs and how much time they spent participating in campus

activities. It seems that students with higher GPAs participate less in extracurricular

campus activities, presumably spending more time on academics. At T2, there was a

positive correlation between GPA and how much time students spent per week preparing

for class.

Table 24

GPA and Time Spent on Activities (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
About how many hours do you plan to spend/did you spend per week preparing for class?	.05	.22*
About how many hours do you plan to spend/did you spend per week participating in campus activities?	-.25**	-.08
About how many hours do you plan to spend/did you spend per week exercising or working out?	-.10	-.12
About how many hours do you plan to spend/did you spend per week relaxing and socializing?	-.05	-.08

*$p < .05$

GPA and Self-Identity

As illustrated in Table 25, at T1, there was a negative correlation between actual GPA at Time 1 and how good the students felt about who they were. This suggests that students with lower self esteems tend to achieve higher GPAs.

Table 25

GPA and Self-Identity (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
How often do you question your identity, or find yourself wondering who you are?	-.07	-.15
In general how good do you feel about who you are?	-.18*	-.05

*$p < .05$

GPA and Self-Organization

As illustrated in Table 26, at both T1 and T2, GPA correlates positively with students who rely upon reminders to keep track of their time.

Table 26

GPA and Self-Organization (Time 1 = Expected, Time 2 = Actual)
Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Time 1 (N = 137) GPA	Time 2 (N = 106) GPA
Do you use some system of keeping track of your time such as a calendar?	-.07	-.09
Do you use some system of keeping track of your time such as a weekly planner?	-.07	.08
Do you use some system of keeping track of your time such as reminders?	.24**	.20*

*$p < .05$

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Students' responses to questions relating to their expected and actual experiences in several different areas were examined. Desire to change university or major, expected GPA at the end of first-year and at the time of graduation, completion of preparatory work, and use of campus resource and activities and use of time tracking systems were observed at T1 and T2 for three age groups. Relationships between GPA and variables related to university attendance, course enrolment, academics, skills, campus resources, social support, campus activities, and self-identity were examined.

Age Differences

With the elimination of the OAC year, Ontario universities are now admitting students up to a full year younger. During the double cohort year, there was a significantly wider range in the ages of traditional first-year students. It was expected that there would therefore be a wider variation in skills level, maturity and needs. Although attempts were made to parallel the findings in this research on age and maturity levels, a comprehensive search of the current literature related to first-year students, and differences in age and maturity levels is surprisingly virtually non-existent.

Note Taking

Responses differed by Age in terms of three questions. When asked about how often during the semester they expected to and actually did take notes, the 17 year-olds and the 19 year-olds reported that they were more likely to report note-taking than the 18 year-old students at T1 and T2. Of the five questions related to preparatory work, note

taking was the only one where respondents differed by Age and contrary to the research

hypothesis, the younger students (17 year-olds) showed more diligence than the older

students (18 year-olds).

Due to the fact that the 17 year-old students arrived at university under the new

Ontario high school curriculum, it may have demanded more of them, thus making them

better prepared for university. Furthermore, the 17 year-olds may have had the perception

that due to increased competition for admission to university, they needed to work harder

to gain admission to university, and so they adapted better skills in high school, such as

note taking, to achieve their goals. The 18 year-olds may have performed less

ambitiously in high school because less may have been expected of them. They may have

been more neglected due to the teachers' preoccupation with the new curriculum. The 19

year-old students were shown to have better note taking skills than the 18 year-olds,

perhaps as a result of being more mature and thus valuing the importance of this skill.

We can conclude that it is important to provide students with sufficient resources

to access study skills not just in September, but also throughout their entire first semester

and beyond. This is especially important to minimize the risks associated with feeling

overwhelmed and hence dropping out in that critical first semester period (Noel, 1985,

Noel & Levitz; 1989, Tinto, 1987). Research tells us that institutions would benefit by

facilitating students' awareness of their skills level and then implementing support

programs accordingly (Smith et al., 1992). It could certainly be assumed that students

would also benefit.

GPA

Age difference was also a factor in students' end of first-year GPA. Of the three groups, the 19 year-olds obtained the highest average end of first year GPA. With the onset of the double cohort in the fall of 2003, when younger students began being admitted to university, age and maturity could be a growing concern with regard to student success and retention. Universities would be wise to prepare all students for the challenges associated with obtaining good grades. Special attention should be given to the younger students who may be at greater risk of attrition. Further research might examine differences between ages of students, levels of support provided and measures of success.

Academic Counselling

The final difference observed in terms of Age was the factor related to avoidance with regard to seeking academic counselling. The 17 year-olds were the most likely to report that they avoided seeking academic counselling and the level of avoidance increased at T2. At T1, 80% of the 17 year-olds indicated that they would consider using academic counselling, but at T2, none of the 17-year olds had used academic counselling. Because this group was less mature, they may have felt that the thought of approaching a professor for academic counselling was too intimidating. It is also conceivable that they believed they did not require academic counselling so early in their program. Others may have sought advice from friends and family rather than from academic advisors because they felt the need for reassurance from familiar people.

The 19 year-olds were the most likely to consider using academic counselling which may be attributed to their having a higher level of maturity and a better

appreciation for the need to seek help in an environment that requires a certain level of self-initiative. As Chickering (1990) explained, this stage of learning self-reliance is critical in the development of the student and it may be that the 17 year-olds had not yet reached this stage in their maturity.

Universities should find ways to provide all students with more effective and consistent academic advising (Kramer & Spencer, 1989). Initially, students could be surveyed to find out more about their current experiences with academic advising and suggestions collected for future recommendations. An academic advising website could be established and might include a list of academic counsellors with contact information. On-line chats offering academic advising or group advising sessions might also be considered. One possibility is that students would not be eligible to register for the next semester until they seek academic advising. This strategy is currently being used by other universities and would require additional resources to manage and implement at a mid-sized university. The advising system itself would first need to undergo many changes to ensure campus wide consistency. As part of their ongoing academic advising, students should have access to career counselling and professional development opportunities. Some universities have implemented mandatory advising, and some have combined their advising and career services to enable career counsellors and academic advisors to work together for one common goal (NACADA, 2004). It would be essential that those providing advising be well trained, highly accessible and approachable.

It was surprising that there was no difference in Age with regard to desire to change majors. The 17 year-olds might have been expected to show a higher desire to

change their majors at T2 due to a presumably lower maturity level and therefore a presumably weaker sense of clearly defined academic and career goals. It could be that the time between T1 (September) and T2 (November) was not long enough for students to consider changing majors. Future research might examine change of major with respect to a longer period of time, such as the beginning of first-year and the end of first-year and what influences impacted students' decisions.

Contrary to researcher expectations, students were comparable among all age groups in preparatory work habits except for note-taking skills. The 17 year-old students actually showed an increased level of performing this skill. One possible explanation for all ages showing similar preparatory work skills is that the 17 year-olds were more mature than expected, or that they are not disadvantaged by their youth.

Since the 17 year-olds reported being more diligent with their note-taking, it could be expected that this group might also excel in other preparatory work habits such as the habit of completing readings and work before class, working on course assignments, taking time to prepare for class, and using a weekly planner to keep track of time. Having faced a more challenging high school curriculum, it might be that the 17 year-olds were more diligent at university. Furthermore, because the 17 year-olds were under the legal drinking age, they may have encountered fewer distractions related to social interactions and therefore have been better able to focus on their academics. Perhaps the skill of note-taking was a component of their new high-school curriculum whereas it was not for the older students.

Campus Resources

It was expected that Age differences might surface with regard to students accessing campus resources. As maturity levels increased, it was expected that students would feel more comfortable exploring campus services at T2. However, this was not the case. Regardless of Age, it appeared that the students in all three age groups were reluctant to access campus support services. For example, at T1, 78% of all students surveyed indicated they would consider using Academic Counselling, but at T2, only 20.5% reported that they actually did use it. At T1, 73.1% indicated that they would consider using the Academic Writing Centre, but only 3.6% reported actually using it at T2. For the Student Information Resource Centre, at T1, 82.7% of the students thought that they would use this office, but at T2, only 33.3% had actually used it. For Personal Counselling Services, 38.1% said they would consider using this service but at T2, only 1.8% actually used it.

Universities might consider implementing more effective strategies to encourage students to utilize campus services during their first-year. Accessing campus support services has been show to increase student self-efficacy (Smith et al., 1992), and since students today depend more and more on the internet for accessing information, perhaps universities need to consider ways to improve their delivery of student services.

Professors could be a valuable resource by making suggestions during lectures or assignment grading to remind students about the services available. This would necessitate better communication between student services offices and faculty to keep faculty better informed about support and programming available for students. Through

Student Development and Support, the University of Windsor has recently implemented a program called '*Don't Cancel That Class*' whereby lectures that would otherwise be cancelled by professors are replaced with various informational workshops on student support topics such as study skills, academic writing, academic integrity, and so on.

Many universities have adopted an early warning system to alert students who may be experiencing trouble before it is too late for them to seek help (NACADA, 2004). Professors make note of students who receive low grades on assignments or exams and contact them directly or forward their names to the Dean's office. The office then contacts them and requires them to participate in workshops or meetings.

In an attempt to improve the chances for a positive transition for the younger, less mature and possibly more vulnerable first-year student population, universities should consider researching their first-year population to better understand them to provide effective support. There are many instruments available to enable universities to obtain a better picture of who their students are and what their needs might be. The College Student Inventory (Noel-Levitz, 2004), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2004), The College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ, 2004) and numerous other surveys exist to track student success, needs, opinions and development. Although this is a costly initiative, it may be cost effective by improving student retention.

Age Implications for First-Year Transition Courses

Since the 19-year old students enrolled in the first-year course obtained a higher end of first-year GPA, it might be valuable to research whether the first-year transition

course curriculum should be modified to accommodate the various age levels of new students. Future research might examine this to investigate where students excel with regard to skills taught and age levels. Younger students may require more practical skills related to transition issues whereas the 19 year-old students may be ready for a more challenging, academically focussed curriculum emphasizing critical thinking, problem solving, and so on. An additional section might be available for non-traditional students who have been away from formal education for a period of time and would benefit from a reintroduction to the academic environment.

Future research might examine more fully different age categories to determine which factors have an effect on improved student success. It would be helpful to know if students who access resources and academic advising, enroll in a first-year transition course or participate in a mentor program are more successful and whether their success differs according to age. It might be interesting to know if there are differences with regard to success levels depending upon when they reach their next birthday. Differences might be examined between students who enter university who only recently turned 17 years old versus those who will soon be turning 18 years old. It is intuitively reasonable to think that this age difference might play a role in differences.

Time Differences

Students' responses differed with respect to Time in several instances. Generally, students' responses to questions at T1 appeared to be more optimistic than they were at time T2. As time passed students' enthusiasm and intent to perform certain tasks diminished. At T2, students expressed an increased desire to attend a different university

or college, and to not attend any university or college.

GPA

Students were asked about their expected end of first-year GPA and their expected GPA by the time they graduate. At T1, students anticipated obtaining higher GPAs after first year and at time of graduation. When they began university, students may have assumed that they could maintain the same level of academic initiative and that their GPAs would be similar to what they were at the end of high school. This is not surprising. As supported by research (Smith et al., 1992), students likely gain more realistic expectations as a result of receiving feedback on assignments or midterm grades and thus gain a better understanding about the work required at the university level. It is not uncommon for first-year students' GPAs to decrease from what they were in their senior year of high school (Astin, 1993).

Students might benefit from being advised early about the differences between high school and university so that they can more readily anticipate the increasing challenges that lie ahead and be ready for the possible drop in GPA, or at least reduce the likelihood of achieving a lower first-year GPA. Increased communication between high school guidance counsellors and university transition specialists, in addition to providing transition programming in high schools, might lessen the negative impact associated with adjustment difficulties. As a recruitment tool, universities might provide students with a transition handbook in their last year of high school to prepare them for the changes that lie ahead. However, students may have the best appreciation for university transitional issues when they experience them directly.

Preparatory Work

With regard to preparatory work and time, change occurred over time in their responses to 4 of the 5 questions. Except for their expected and actual estimates of time spent taking notes during class, which remained relatively stable, students anticipated that they would spend more time than they actually did on certain preparatory tasks (completing readings and work before class, working on course assignments outside of class, preparing for class, and using time tracking devices such as a weekly planner). In other words, students' commitment to diligence decreased as the semester progressed.

Campus Resources and Activities

Students were asked about their expected and actual use of campus resources and campus activities at T1 and T2. Specifically, students were asked about whether they would utilize academic counselling, the Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC) and the Skills to Enhance Personal Success program (STEPS). They were also asked about the amount of time they planned to spend participating in campus activities. For all four of these variables, students anticipated that they would commit more time to these activities than they actually did.

There is the possibility that students' intentions to use these resources were sincere, but they may have struggled to find the time to access them. In my professional opinion and based on personal observation, students sometimes wait until they are in serious academic difficulty before accessing services that could help them to avoid problems.

Time spent on expected and actual use of campus resources was similar to

expected and actual practices with regard to their preparatory work habits. With both, they anticipated that they would be more diligent than they actually were at T2. Information about academic services including the STEPS program, the SIRC office, and other campus resources should be provided to students at various times throughout the semester rather than just during summer and fall orientations. Initially, students are overwhelmed with the numerous details of university and they may not recall this information when they require it. Universities should consider implementing strategies that encourage students to access resources that help them to cope more successfully with the new academic demands. Offering a first-year transition course to all new students may be one way to accomplish this. The transition course could incorporate assignments requiring students to access student services to expose them to opportunities for utilizing these areas. Early and frequent exposure to student services may encourage students to use them more frequently.

The way in which student services are marketed to students may also have an impact on the frequency of their use. Student service offices are often scattered across campus rather than located within a common area. This may make it more difficult and intimidating for students to access these resources. Changing the structure of student service offices might allow for more streamlined access and a more welcoming environment. Student services might be better utilized if located in the hub of the campus enabling easier access for those who may be less familiar with the campus. This could also be the first point of contact for new or potential students. Furthermore, student service areas must keep the university community better informed about services via

websites and information. Student focus groups and a university task force consisting of students and student service administrators might be established to investigate the best way to market these important services.

It was unfortunate to note that the changes that occurred between T1 and T2 for the most part showed that students' ambition toward accessing campus resources and diligence for positive preparatory work habits decreased. It was anticipated that over time, as they became increasingly more familiar with the campus, students might be more likely to take advantage of the resources available to them. Considering that students today are increasingly consumer savvy (Levine, 1998), it would stand to reason that they should expect to receive as much for their tuition money as they can. Much of the research supports the idea that students who make good use of support services and programs are more likely to increase their chances for success (Smith et al., 1992; Tinto, 1987). In turn, this also increases the institution's ability to retain students (Saluri, 1985). Future research might investigate whether students in second year and beyond are more likely to take advantage of campus resources and if so, under what circumstances and in what ways they benefit.

First-Year Transition Courses

There is ample evidence supporting the value of the first-year transition course (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Green & Miller, 1998; Hoff, Cook, & Price, 1996), but what is less clear is whether there is a difference in the level of success between students at various times in their academic careers. It would be interesting to investigate students in two groups - one group that was enrolled in a first-year transition course in first semester,

and the other in second semester. Differences in terms of GPA could be noted to see if the time of enrolment might have an effect on how students benefit from the course. Perhaps students would be more receptive to utilizing the skills learned in the transition course in their second semester once they have had the opportunity to try things on their own first. It could be assumed that students enrolled in second semester would do better simply by the fact that they have additional experience as university students.

Consideration might also be given to the success rates of students enrolled in a transition course for the full range of their first year such as would be the case in a non-semestered institution. A long term study that tracks the success of transition course enrollees against non-enrollees throughout their entire academic career would also be beneficial to see if there might be a difference in graduation GPAs.

Achievement (GPA)

Correlations between achievement (GPA) and profile variables were examined. Students who achieved a higher GPA were more likely to report feeling academically prepared for university at T1 and T2. They were also more inclined to use their note taking skills at T2 only, reported having a higher number of non-university friends at T2, spent more hours per week preparing for class at T2, and were more likely to use some system of keeping track of their time such as reminders at T1 and T2.

These traits describe students who are generally well organized, conscientious and perhaps more concerned with achieving academic success rather than enjoying the social aspects of university. It is likely that these students may have brought some of these skills with them from high school. Researchers have reported that students' pre-

enrolment variables, (Astin, 1975; Upcraft & Gardner, 1986) including their previous

level of academic achievement (Upcraft & Gardner, 1986) and previous levels of

motivation (Astin, 1975), are all essential for predicting first-year student success.

What is less clear is why some students feel more prepared and achieve a higher

level of success than others. It would be helpful for universities to explore this dynamic

more fully in order to implement effective programming to increase first-year student

retention. Future research might examine various factors that assist first-year students in

feeling more prepared for university. Personality traits, level of emotional intelligence,

skills obtained in high school, exposure to positive role models, level of maturity or level

of conscientiousness (Bauer & Liang, 2003, Osher, Ward, Tross, & Flanagan, 1995)

might all be explored further. Since the research showed that the 19+ students achieved

the highest average GPA, levels of maturity would be an interesting variable to explore

further.

Involvement

Achieving a higher GPA correlated negatively at T1 and T2 with students

reporting that they were obtaining a university degree to meet people and have a good

time and with their expectations of their end of first-year GPA. They also appeared to

have lower expectations for their end of first-year GPA at T1 and T2. Students with

higher GPAs also showed a negative correlation at T1 with hours spent participating in

campus activities.

One could conclude that the students who obtained a higher GPA were less

worried about the social benefits of going to university and more concerned with

achieving higher grades. Although out-of-class experience is important to student

success (Kuh, 1995), it would appear that being less concerned about meeting people and

getting involved in campus activities, at least in first semester, served this group well in

terms of their final first-year GPA. It may be that students need to adjust academically

prior to getting involved in the extra-curricular aspects of university. Future research

might explore levels of involvement in extra-curricular activities and GPAs to determine

when participation in extra curricular activities can be helpful and when it might be

harmful.

Confidence Levels and Self-Identity

The fact that the higher achieving students had lower expectations for their end of

first-year GPA gives evidence that they may have more realistic goals. Students may run

the risk of jeopardizing their success if they overestimate their perceived academic

achievement (Gilbert et al. 1997; Grayson, 1994). Still others underestimate their success

and this can sometimes work to their benefit (Cantor, Norem, Niedenthal, Langston &

Brower, 1987).

There was a negative correlation between GPA and how good students felt about

who they were as measured by their level of self-identity. This may lead to the

conclusion that high academic achievement does not necessarily increase a student's

confidence level and vice versa. Baumeister, Smart and Boden (1996) suggested that

high self-esteem might sometimes serve as a negative personal characteristic because it

can be associated with pride, egoism and arrogance. If we view self-esteem in this way,

then we can understand why students with lower self-esteem might actually do better at

university. An individual with high self-esteem might be regarded as someone who sees himself as overly confident, and unwilling to engage in self-improvement. Researchers (Perry et al., 2001) have found that sometimes students' preoccupation with failure can actually help them to achieve a higher level of success.

Some of the findings were surprising to the researcher. Students enrolled in fewer courses might be expected to obtain a higher GPA because of the increased ability to focus on fewer academic obligations. In fact, that is the reasoning that underlies such decisions generated by students and recommended by academic counsellors. However, this was not the case in this study. It was also expected that students who obtained a higher GPA might be more likely to report that their reason for obtaining a university degree was to increase their knowledge. Students who obtained a higher GPA might be expected to report a higher likelihood of completing readings and work before class and might be expected to make more use of campus resources. It was also surprising and disappointing to see that students who obtained a higher GPA did not report any significant difference in the use of campus resources. It may not be enough for students to know that these services exist for them. Students may require more incentive to use these services. Being directly involved with a mentor (Salinitri, 2004) or program such as a first-year transition course that requires them to have direct contact with these resources may encourage them to access these services. It was also expected that students who reported participating in regular exercise or working out would obtain a higher GPA. Individuals who are highly motivated and establish regular routines in various aspects of their personal life could be expected to be more organized students and therefore more

successful at achieving their goals.

Limitations of the Study

The results of the responses between students' expectations and actual experiences may have been limited by the short duration of time between the first and second surveys. Students' responses at T2 may have differed if the second survey had been conducted in second semester thereby allowing them to gain additional experience as a university student.

Additional questions could have been asked about what the participants believed was most influential in their decision to attend university, the activities they had participated in, their current perceived level of campus support and how they felt they might be better supported. It would have also been beneficial to determine how they felt the campus could best support their current needs as a first-year student. Obtaining a larger sample of participants would have allowed for additional exploration of certain variables such as Gender, Major, Vicinity of Permanent Residence, etc.

Since the fall 2003 semester was the year of the "double cohort" (students entering university from two grade levels), incoming students had two distinct academic backgrounds. Some had finished their Ontario Academic Credit (OAC) year and were one year older than the entering Grade 12 class. Each of the cohorts may have experienced different high school curricula since Grade 9. This was controlled for by asking students questions about their age and academic background to determine if there might be a difference between the ages of students admitted to university.

Experimenter bias may be perceived as a problem since the researcher in this case

was the course coordinator for University 101. The researcher ensured that she had no direct responsibilities for assigning any grades for course work during the semester in which the research was gathered. The researcher employed independent data collectors to distribute, collect and store all questionnaires. All data were kept sealed from the researcher until the end of the fall semester.

Conclusions and Recommendations

While numerous recommendations emerged from the data, three striking observations were evident. First, universities need to conduct ongoing research to obtain an accurate profile of first-year students to determine who they are and how to address their needs, levels of maturity and abilities. Secondly, institutions need to have a better understanding of the kinds of support programs that are most beneficial to students and how these services should best be delivered. Finally, consideration must be given to the need to support students throughout their entire first year rather than only during the orientation period. Supporting first-year students must be seen as a priority that requires campus-wide involvement.

There is a plethora of assessment tools available that can provide institutions with a better picture of who their students are and what their needs may be. Before service programs are modified, it would be essential to obtain a better understanding about what factors need to be changed and how. With younger students now being admitted to Ontario universities, it is in a sense, the perfect opportunity to assess current practices to see if they now require modification.

Providing students with support by way of orientation programs, student services,

first-year transition courses, and mentor programs can be essential for increasing first-year student retention and success. However, the challenges that universities face are to determine when they should be delivered for maximum effect, and how they can best encourage students to utilize these programs. It may be time for institutions to reevaluate how they market these programs and consider changing their delivery to accommodate today's students.

Currently, the trend is for universities and colleges to provide most of the support during summer and fall orientation programs. Along with this, throughout the year there may be optional support programs available such as study skills and academic writing workshops, library support and more. The problem appears to be that the majority of students do not make the best use of these services. Orientation to university should be considered a year-long initiative reflecting a more personalized approach. Finding ways to provide students with opportunities throughout their entire first year to participate in intervention programs, smaller classes, academic advising and personal development opportunities should be a priority. These kinds of opportunities could provide students with a deeper connection and dedication to their educational institution and a more fulfilling academic experience.

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APPENDIX A
DEFINITION OF TERMS

At-risk Students

Students admitted to the University of Windsor with a slightly lower than required high-school GPA due to special circumstances.

Attrition

The process of students leaving university prior to graduating and usually as a result of either academic failure or because of personal choice.

Connectedness/Involvement

A student's sense of involvement in the educational institution. This includes the student's willingness to participate in class discussion, engage in out-of-class activities with peers and faculty and access campus services and resources.

Double Cohort

In 2003, the final group of Ontario Academic Credit (OAC) students graduated thereby eliminating the fifth year of secondary school education in Ontario. This caused a surge in the demand at universities and colleges in Ontario and resulted in a phenomenon whereby both 17 and 18 year old students entered university in the same year.

First-Year Student/Freshman Year Student

Students in the first year of a post-secondary education.

First-Year Transition Course/Freshman Seminar Course/University 101

A university credit course designed for first-year students to assist them with developing skills to survive in a post-secondary environment. Topics may include study skills, critical thinking, writing, time management, information literacy and so on. The

course enables integration into the university community and allows for a better understanding of its culture. These courses may be compulsory, optional or targeted to at-risk students, depending on the institution. At the University of Windsor, this course has been compulsory for at-risk students and optional for all other first-year students.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Students' progress within a program is evaluated on the basis of their grade point average. At the University of Windsor, this grade point average is based on a 13-point scale. In order to stay in good academic standing, a student must maintain at least a 5.0 in most programs (8.0 in others).

Retention

The ability to retain students enrolled in university from semester to semester until the time of graduation. Universities have a financial interest in retaining students.

Self-efficacy

A feeling of being able to make a contribution to one's own learning based on a self-perception of ability, of the effort involved, and/or of one's personal control over learning (Smith et al., 1992).

Semester

An academic session equalling half of the academic year (duration of 13 weeks).

Student Affairs

A university department of professional staff members that work with students to enhance out-of-class learning experiences. Student Affairs staff provide transitional programming for first-year students such as orientation programs and first-year seminar

courses, academic and career counselling, and leadership and student development

opportunities.

Transition to University

The passing from high school to university and the process of adjusting to the new

environment both socially and academically. Also the name of a first-year transition

course at the University of Windsor.

APPENDIX B

FIRST-YEAR STUDENT PROFILE I

Instructions for Completion of
First-Year Student Profile (FYSP) Part I

1. You will be asked a variety of questions about your personal background and all aspects of your university life. If you have any questions about this survey, please raise your hand and the person giving the survey will be able to answer your questions.

2. You will be given 30 minutes to complete the survey.

3. You may use pencil or pen to complete this survey

4. You have the option of refusing to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer.

5. You may withdraw from this study at any time.

6. After you have completed the survey, you will be asked to hand in your completed survey to the research assistant.

7. Only the researcher, the research assistant and her supervisor will have access to the data contained in this survey. Once the data have been collected and confirmed, the instrument will be destroyed.

University of Windsor
First-Year Student Profile (FYSP) Part I

September, 2003
N=156 valid Valid Percent
You will be recording your answers directly on this survey.

Student I.D. number _____ (required)
(Please print clearly)

_____ (optional)
Last Name   First Name

Part A: Tell Us About Yourself

1.   What is your sex:

        __37.8__   Male   __62.2__   Female

2.   What was your age as of September 1, 2003

        __14.1__ 17   __46.8__ 18   __34__ 19   __2.6__ 20   __0.6__ 21   __1.9__ over 21

3.   Ethnic background. Which one of the following best describes your ethnic background?

        __1.3__ Aboriginal (e.g., First Nations, Inuit)
        __5.3__ African (e.g., Kenyan, West Indian, African Canadian)
        __3.3__ East Asian (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese)
        __59.2__ European (e.g., Irish, Italian, Romanian)
        __3.3__ Middle Eastern (e.g., Lebanese, Egyptian)
        __1.3__ South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi)
        __26.3__ Other (please specify):

4.   Which one of the following best describes your citizenship?

        __0__   Bangladeshi
        __94.9__ Canadian
        __1.9__ Chinese
        __0__   Indian
        __0__   Malaysian
        __0__   Pakistani
        __1.3__ United States
        __1.9__ Other

5.   Which one of the following best describes your family's religious background?

    15.5   Protestant
    49.7   Roman Catholic
    3.2   Buddhist
    2.6   Hindu
    0   Sikh
    2.6   Jewish
    1.3   Muslim
    25.2   Other

6   What is your first language? (Choose one)

    0   Arabic
    1.9   Chinese
    94.2   English
    0   French
    0   Hindi
    0   Italian
    0   Malay
    3.8   Other

7.   What is your second language? (Choose one)

    1.3   Arabic
    0.6   Chinese
    6.4   English
    39.1   French
    0   Hindi
    3.2   Italian
    0   Malay
    7.1   Other
    42.3   I do not speak a second language

8.   Do you speak more than two languages?

    16.7   Yes   83.3   No

9.   What is your generation status in Canada:

    __7.7__ 1st generation (born outside of Canada and immigrated to Canada before the age
             of 12)
    __0.6__ 1.5 generation (born outside of Canada and immigrated to Canada after the age of
             12)
    _21.9_   2nd generation (born in Canada and have at least one parent who was born outside
             of Canada)
    _27.1_   3rd generation (born in Canada and have at least one parent who was born in
             Canada)
    _40.0__ beyond 3rd or later generation
    __2.6__ I am an international student who was born outside of Canada

10.   Do you have a disability?

    ___3.8__ Yes   __96.2__ No

11.   Which of the following best describes your hometown?

    __7.7__ Rural
    _36.5__ Small town
    _24.4__ Large town
    _31.4__ Big city

12.   How many years have you lived in <u>Canada</u>?

    __2.6__ Less than 1 year
    __0___   1 - 2 years
    __0___   3 - 4 years
    __3.8__ 5 - 9 years
    __6.4__ 10 years or more, but I've lived in at least one other country
    _87.2__ All my life

13.   How many years have you lived in <u>Windsor/Essex County</u>?

    _59.6__ Less than 1 year
    _0 .6__ 1 - 2 years
    __2.6__ 3 - 4 years
    __3.8__ 5 - 9 years
    __1.9__ 10 years or more, but I've lived in at least one other country
    _31.4__ All my life

14.   Approximately how large was the size of your high school?

    __7.1__Small (200-400 students)
    _32.9__Medium (400-1000 students)
    _60.0__ Large (over 1000 students)

15.   What was your overall grade range in your final high school year?

    24.4   Mostly As
    21.2   About half As and half Bs
    33.3   Mostly Bs
    16.0   About half Bs and half Cs
    3.8   Mostly Cs
    0 .6   About half Cs and half Ds
    0 .6   Mostly Ds
    0   Mostly below Ds

16.   Are you the first person in your immediate family to attend a post secondary educational institution?

    21.2   Yes   75.6   No   3.2   Not sure

17.   What is the highest level of schooling your father (or step-father or male foster parent/guardian) completed?

    0 .6   Completed grade school or less
    6.4   Some high school
    21.8   Completed high school
    20.5   Some college/university
    31.4   Completed college/university
    13.5   Graduate or professional school after college/university
    5.8   Don't know

18.   What is the highest level of schooling your mother (or step-mother or female foster parent/guardian) completed?

    1.3   Completed grade school or less
    4.5   Some high school
    21.2   Completed high school
    20.5   Some college/university
    39.7   Completed college/university
    9.6   Graduate or professional school after college/university
    3.2   Don't know

19.   What is the highest level of schooling your sibling (or step-sibling) completed?

    12.5   Completed grade school or less
    20.1   Some high school
    12.5   Completed high school
    25.7   Some college/university
    16.0   Completed college/university
    7.6   Graduate or professional school after college/university
    5.6   Don't know

20. What is your current living situation?

    __36.1__ live off campus with parent(s)
    ___1.9__ live off campus with other relative
    __50.3__ live in University of Windsor residence
    ___9.7__ live off campus with at least one room mate
    ___1.9__ live off campus alone

21. If you do not live with your family, approximately how often will you go home this semester?

    ___3.2__ not at all
    ___0.6__ more than once a week
    ___4.5__ once a week
    __12.8__ twice a month
    __32.1__ monthly
    __12.2__ once per semester
    __34.6__ left blank (lives at home)

22. What was your educational status prior to June, 2003?

    __96.8__ high school student
    ___1.9__ transfer student from college
    ___0___ transfer student from another university
    ___1.3__ away from full time formal education for at least one full year

23. If you graduated from a high school in June 2003, please indicate the grade level of completion.

    __48.0__ Grade 12
    __51.3__ Ontario Academic Credit (OAC)
    __0.7__ Other

24. Where is the majority of your money for university coming from (including tuition, room & board, and daily expenses)?

    __10.9__ yourself
    __59.0__ parents
    ___1.9__ others
    __14.7__ loans
    ___3.8__ scholarships
    ___9.6__ combination of above

25. Was the University of Windsor your:

     68.8 first choice of a post-secondary institution
     16.7 second choice of a post-secondary institution
      6.4 third choice of a post-secondary institution
      8.3 other

26. In general, how much do you wish you attended a <u>different</u> university or college right now?
     57.1 not at all
     28.8 slightly
     11.5 somewhat
      2.6 very much

27. In general, how much do you wish you weren't attending <u>any</u> university or college right now?
     69.2 not at all
     19.9 slightly
      8.3 somewhat
      2.6 very much

28. In what faculty are you currently enrolled?

     83.1 Arts & Social Science
      3.9 Science
      0   Engineering
     11.7 Business
      0   Nursing
      1.3 Human Kinetics

29. Is your current major your:

     86.8 first program choice at this university
     10.5 second program choice at this university
      2.6 third program choice at this university

30. How likely is it that you will change your major?

     48.1 not at all
     27.3 slightly
      9.7 somewhat
     14.9 very much

31.   How many courses are you enrolled in?(do not include labs)

        _0___ one
        _3.2__ two
        _2.6__ three
        _5.8__ four
        _86.5_ five
        _1.9_ six
        _0___ seven

32.   To what extent was the decision to attend university yours:

        _1.3__ not at all
        _4.5_ slightly
        _16.0_ somewhat
        _78.2_ very much

33.   How important is it to obtain a university education to increase knowledge?

        _0___ not at all
        _1.9_ slightly
        _16.0_ somewhat
        _82.1_ very much

34.   How important is it to obtain a university education to increase your potential earning
        power?

        _0___ not at all
        _3.2__ slightly
        _17.9__ somewhat
        _78.8__ very much

35.   How important is it to obtain a university education to meet people and have a good time?

        _5.1__ not at all
        _23.7__ slightly
        _32.7__ somewhat
        _38.5__ very much

36.   How important is it to obtain a university education to increase your chances of providing
        you and your family with a better life?

        _3.2_ not at all
        _4.5_ slightly
        _16.7_ somewhat
        _75.6_ very much

37.   How academically prepared do you feel for university today?

  2.6   not at all
 16.7   slightly
 67.3   somewhat
 13.5   very much

38.   Did you attend a spring/summer orientation program at the University of Windsor (Head Start, Summer Information Program)?

   80.8 Yes 19.2 No

39.   Did you attend any of the Windsor Welcome Week events at the University of Windsor?

   82.1 Yes 17.9 No

40.   In what month did you receive your offer of admission to the University of Windsor?

 56.6   April
 32.2   May
  7.9   June
  2.6   July
  0.7   August
   0   September

Part B: Your Expectations About University: Please check only one response for each question.

41.   What do you **expect** your university grade point average to be at the end of your first-year?

  0.6   A+ to A range
  2.6   A to A- range
 26.9   A- to B+ range
 35.9   B+ to B range
 23.1   B to B- range
  7.7   B- to C+ range
  2.6   C+ to C- range
  0.6   C- to D+ range
   0   D range or lower

42.   How disappointed will you be if you do not achieve this grade point average at the end of your first-year?

  0.6   not at all
  5.1   slightly
 45.5   somewhat
 48.7   very much

43. What grade point average do you **expect** to have <u>by the time you graduate</u>?

    <u>1.9</u> A+ to A range
    <u>21.2</u> A to A- range
    <u>44.9</u> A- to B+ range
    <u>20.5</u> B+ to B range
    <u>8.3</u> B to B- range
    <u>3.2</u> B- to C+ range
    <u>0</u> C+ to C- range
    <u>0</u> C- to D+ range
    <u>0</u> D range or lower

44. How disappointed will you be if you do not achieve this grade point average <u>at the time of graduation?</u>

    <u>1.9</u> not at all
    <u>5.1</u> slightly
    <u>36.5</u> somewhat
    <u>56.4</u> very much

45. During this semester, how often do you think that you will attend your classes?

    <u>11.6</u> occasionally
    <u>87.1</u> frequently
    <u>1.3</u> almost never

46. What will influence your decision to attend your classes?

    <u>4.0</u> if attendance is taken
    <u>47.7</u> depends how interesting it is
    <u>4.0</u> if friends are in the class
    <u>44.4</u> class environment

How often during this semester do you **expect** to:

47. Ask questions in class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
15.4	60.9	17.9	5.8

48. Complete readings/work before class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
0	12.8	38.5	48.7

49.   Take notes during class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
0	3.2	15.4	18.6

50.   Participate in class discussion

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
6.4	46.8	37.8	9.0

51.   Summarize information from your readings or class notes

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
3.8	30.1	34.6	31.4

52.   Work on course assignments outside of class with friends and classmates

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
5.1	28.2	41.0	25.6

53.   Memorize facts, terminology and ideas

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1.3	16.7	51.9	30.1

54.   Analyse ideas, theories and situations to gain an in depth knowledge of a study problem

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
2.6	27.7	50.3	19.4

55.   Evaluate and judge information, methods and conclusions made by others

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
6.4	42.3	42.3	9

56.   Apply prior knowledge to solve new problems

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
0	14.1	55.1	30.8

57. Discuss your ideas from courses with your professors outside of the class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
28.4	51	16.1	4.5

58. Use email to communicate with your instructors

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
9.6	41.7	37.8	10.9

Which of the following would you consider using in your first-year:

59. I would consider using Academic Counselling (regarding my program)

___78.2__ Yes ___21.8_ No

60. I would consider using the Academic Writing Centre

___73.1_ Yes ___26.9__ No

61. I would consider using Financial Aid Support

___34.0_ Yes ___66 .0___ No

62. I would consider using Health Services

___49.4___ Yes ___50.6_ No

63. I would consider using International Student Services

__7.7___ Yes ___92.3__ No

64. I would consider using the Student Information Resource Centre

___82.7_ Yes __17.3__ No

65. I would consider using the Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) workshops

__58.7__ Yes ___41.3_ No

66. I would consider using the Leddy Library

___99.4__ Yes ___0.6__ No

67.   I would consider using the Computer Information Centre

        __75.5__ Yes __24.5__ No

68.   I would consider using Personal Counselling Services

        __38.1__ Yes __61.9__ No

69.   I would consider using the Special Needs Program

        __5.1__ Yes __94.9__ No

Part C: Your Connections and Support Networks

70.   Estimate the number of university friends with whom you are on a first name basis

        0.6   0
        3.2   1 - 2
        17.3   3 - 5
        19.2   6 - 10
        59.6   more than 10

71.   Estimate the number of non-university friends with whom you are on a first name basis

        2.6   0
        2.6   1 - 2
        8.3   3 - 5
        8.3   6 - 10
        78.2   more than 10

72.   During a time of crisis or stress, how many of your university friends could you comfortably turn to for help?

        13.5   0
        26.3   1 - 2
        35.3   3 - 5
        16.0   6 - 10
        9.0   more than 10

73.   During a time of crisis or stress, how many of your non-university friends could you comfortably turn to for help?

        6.4   0
        23.7   1 - 2
        31.4   3 - 5
        16.7   6 - 10
        21.8   more than 10

74.   With your close friends, how <u>equally</u> do you turn to each other for help?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
I turn to them   we turn   They turn to
much more than   to each   me much more
they turn to me   other   than I turn
                                   the same   to them
                                   amount
        2.5   83.2   14.3

75.   During a time of crisis or stress, where would you place yourself on the scale below in terms of who you would turn to for <u>primary</u> help?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
will use   equally as   will use
university   likely to   home or high school
friends or   use university   supports primarily
supports   as home or high
primarily   school supports
12.9   47.7   39.3

76.   By the time you graduate from university, will your day-to-day involvement with your family be more, less, or about the same, as compared to how it is now?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
much less   about   much more
                              the same
23.7   64.2   12.2

77.   In general, how satisfied are you with your relationships to your family?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
3.8   28.9   67.3

78.   In general, how satisfied are you with your relationships to your high school friends?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
1.8   32.0   66.0

79.   How important is it for you to maintain your family relationships?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
1.2   14.7   84.0

80.   How important is it for you to maintain your high school relationships?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
1.9   32.9   65.1

81.   How comfortable would you be turning to an "official" campus person (such as an advisor
        or counsellor, professor, T.A., or residence staff person) during a time of <u>academic</u> crisis
        or stress?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
9.7   50.6   39.8

82.   How comfortably could you turn to an "official" campus person (such as an advisor or
        counsellor, professor, T.A., or residence staff person) during a time of <u>personal</u> crisis or
        stress?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
37.8   51.3   10.9

83.   In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of your <u>university</u> friendships?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
5.1   47.4   47.4

84.   In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of your <u>non-university</u> friendships?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
1.3   27.7   71.0

85.   How important is it for you to make friends?

0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
not at all   moderately   extremely
1.2   33.2   65.4

Part D: Your Activities

Please select only one response for each of the following questions:

About how many hours do you plan to spend per week doing each of the following?

86.   Preparing for class (reviewing notes, studying, reading, etc)

        5.8   less than 5 hours per week
        32.7 6-10 hours per week
        32.1 11-15 hours per week
        23.1 16-20 hours per week
        6.4   more than 25 hours per week

87.   Working for pay **on** campus

        88.9 less than 5 hours per week
        6.9   6-10 hours per week
        2.8   11-15 hours per week
        1.4   16-20 hours per week
        0   more than 25 hours per week

88.   Working for pay **off** campus

        55.3 less than 5 hours per week
        12.5 6-10 hours per week
        12.5 11-15 hours per week
        15.1 16-20 hours per week
        4.6   more than 25 hours per week

89.   Participating in campus activities (student organizations & clubs, etc)

        65.8 less than 5 hours per week
        25.0 6-10 hours per week
        5.3   11-15 hours per week
        3.9   16-20 hours per week
        0   more than 25 hours per week

90.   Exercising or working out

        41.0 less than 5 hours per week
        43.6 6-10 hours per week
        9.6   11-15 hours per week
        5.8   16-20 hours per week
        0   more than 25 hours per week

91.   Relaxing and socializing

        _3.8_ less than 5 hours per week
        _42.9_ 6-10 hours per week
        _32.7_ 11-15 hours per week
        _14.1_ 16-20 hours per week
        _6.4_ more than 25 hours per week

92.   Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse)

        _85.9_ less than 5 hours per week
        _10.7_ 6-10 hours per week
        _3.4_ 11-15 hours per week
        _0__ 16-20 hours per week
        _0__ more than 25 hours per week

93.   Doing "routine" tasks and chores such as laundry, errands, shopping, banking

        _42.3_ less than 5 hours per week
        _44.2_ 6-10 hours per week
        _12.8_ 11-15 hours per week
        _0.6_ 16-20 hours per week
        _0__ more than 25 hours per week

94.   Commuting to campus

        _79.3_ less than 5 hours per week
        _14.7_ 6-10 hours per week
        _4.0_ 11-15 hours per week
        _0.7_ 16-20 hours per week
        _1.3_ more than 25 hours per week

95.   Volunteering **on** campus

        _90.8_ less than 5 hours per week
        _7.9_ 6-10 hours per week
        _0.7_ 11-15 hours per week
        _0.7_ 16-20 hours per week
        _0__ more than 25 hours per week

96.   Volunteering **off** campus

        _89.5_ less than 5 hours per week
        _8.6_ 6-10 hours per week
        _2.0_ 11-15 hours per week
        _0__ 16-20 hours per week
        _0__ more than 25 hours per week

Part D: Your Self-Satisfaction

97.   How often do you question your identity, or find yourself wondering who you are?

```
       0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
       hardly ever                         sometimes                    almost always
       14.1                                39.4                         15.5
```

98.   In general, how good do you feel about who you are?

```
          0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
       not at all good                     sometimes                    extremely good
          5.8                              32.1                         62.2
```

99.   How adequate do you feel your current amount of physical exercise is for you?

```
          0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
       not at all adequate                    sometimes                extremely adequate
          12.9                             48.4                         38.7
```

100.   In general, how satisfied are you with your nutritional intake?

```
          0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
       not at all satisfied                  sometimes                 extremely satisfied
          13.4                             56.4                         30.2
```

101.   In general, how satisfied are you with the amount of sleep that you get?

```
          0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
       not at all satisfied                  sometimes                 extremely satisfied
          12.2                             52.5                         35.3
```

102.   How important is health and fitness to you?

```
          0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 -------8 -------9
       not at important                      sometimes                 extremely important
          1.9                              22.4                         75.6
```

Do you use some system of keeping track of your time (such as keeping a date book, scribbling notes, filling out weekly planners, making lists, etc.)?

103.   calendar (general)

       __80.6_ Yes   _19.4__ No

104.   month-at-a-glance calendar

       __62.6_ Yes   _37.4_ No

105. weekly planner

    __76.8__ Yes __23.2__ No

106. daily planner

    __72.5__ Yes __27.5__ No

107. "to do" list

    __66.9__ Yes __33.1__ No

108. mental notes/rely on memory

    __74.4__ Yes __25.6__ No

109. writing yourself general note

    __77.6__ Yes __22.4__ No

110. having other people remind you of events and obligations

    __54.2__ Yes __45.8__ No

111. other (please describe your system below)

    __6.1__ Yes __93.9__ No

112. no system

    __7.1__ Yes __92.9__ No

This is the end of the FYSP I survey. Thank You.
Please ensure that you have not unintentionally missed any pages.

APPENDIX C
FIRST-YEAR STUDENT PROFILE II

Instructions for Completion of
First-Year Student Profile (FYSP) Part II

November, 2003

You will be recording your answers directly on this survey.

Student I.D. number _____ (required)
(Please print clearly)

_____ (optional)
Last Name   First Name

Part A: Tell Us About Yourself

1.   In general, how much do you wish you attended a <u>different</u> university or college right now?

       45.5   not at all
       28.6   slightly
       17.9   somewhat
        8.0   very much

2.   In general, how much do you wish you weren't attending <u>any</u> university or college right now?

       58   not at all
       26.8   slightly
       12.5   somewhat
        2.7   very much

3.   In what faculty are you currently enrolled?

       82.1   Arts & Social Science
        4.5   Science
        0   Engineering
       11.6   Business
         .9   Nursing
         .9   Human Kinetics

4. Is your **current** major your:

    _86.6_ first program choice at this university
    _10.7_ second program choice at this university
    _2.7_ third program choice at this university

5. Since September 2003, have you applied to change your major?

    _9.8_ Yes _90.2_ No

6. How likely is it that you will change your major?

    _40.2_ not at all
    _32.1_ slightly
    _10.7_ somewhat
    _16.1_ very much

7. How many courses are you **currently** enrolled in? (do not include labs)

    _.9_ one
    _2.7_ two
    _2.7_ three
    _18.8_ four
    _75.0_ five
    _0_ six
    _0_ seven

8. To what extent was the decision to attend university yours:

    _1.8_ not at all
    _7.1_ slightly
    _21.4_ somewhat
    _69.6_ very much

9. How important is it to obtain a university education to increase knowledge?

    _.9_ not at all
    _5.4_ slightly
    _17.0_ somewhat
    _76.8_ very much

10. How important is it to obtain a university education to increase your potential earning power?

    0   not at all
    4.5   slightly
    21.6 somewhat
    73.9 very much

11. How important is it to obtain a university education to meet people and to have a good time?

    4.5   not at all
    28.6 slightly
    42.0 somewhat
    25.0 very much

12. How important is it to obtain a university education to increase your chances of providing you and your family with a better life?

    0   not at all
    5.4   slightly
    17   somewhat
    77.7 very much

13. How academically prepared do you feel for university today?

    2.7   not at all
    17.0 slightly
    67.0 somewhat
    13.4 very much

14. Did you attend a spring/summer orientation program at the University of Windsor (Head Start, Summer Information Program)?

    81.3 Yes   18.8 No

15. Did you attend any of the Windsor Welcome Week events at the University of Windsor?

    69.6 Yes   30.4 No

16.   In what month did you receive your offer of admission to the University of Windsor?

        _46.7_ April
        _38.3_ May
        _7.5_   June
        _6.5_   July
        _0.9_   August
        _0_   September

Part B: Your Expectations About University: Please check only one response for each question.

17.   What do you **expect** your university grade point average to be at the end of your first-year?

        _0_   A+ to A range
        _2.7_   A to A- range
        _11.6_ A- to B+ range
        _18.8_ B+ to B range
        _26.8_ B to B- range
        _22.3_ B- to C+ range
        _13.4_ C+ to C- range
        _2.7_   C- to D+ range
        _1.8_   D range or lower

18.   How disappointed will you be if you do not achieve this grade point average at the end of your first-year?

        _1.8_   not at all
        _12.5_ slightly
        _42.9_ somewhat
        _42.9_ very much

19.   What grade point average do you **expect** to have by the time you graduate?

        _0.9_   A+ to A range
        _11.6_ A to A- range
        _36.6_ A- to B+ range
        _35.7_ B+ to B range
        _11.6_ B to B- range
        _2.7_   B- to C+ range
        _0_   C+ to C- range
        _0_   C- to D+ range
        _0.9_   D range or lower

20. How disappointed will you be if you do not achieve this grade point average <u>at the time of graduation?</u>

    <u>3.6</u>   not at all
    <u>8.9</u>   slightly
    <u>33.0</u> somewhat
    <u>54.5</u> very much

21. During this semester, how often did you attend your classes?

    <u>17.0</u> occasionally
    <u>80.4</u> frequently
    <u>2.7</u>   almost never

How **did** the following factors influence your decision to attend your classes this semester?

22. If attendance was taken

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
25	12.5	17.0	45.5

23. Depended on how interesting it was

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
19.8	20.7	26.1	33.3

24. If friends were in the class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
41.1	24.1	23.2	11.6

25. Depended on the class environment

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
31.5	30.6	29.7	8.1

How often during this semester **did** you do the following?

26. Ask questions in class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
39.3	38.4	17.9	4.5

27. Complete readings/work **before** class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
10.7	47.3	32.1	9.8

28.   Take notes during class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1.8	8.9	14.3	75.0

29.   Participate in class discussion

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
22.7	34.5	29.1	13.6

30.   Summarize information from your readings or class notes

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
21.4	39.3	25	14.3

31.   Work on course assignments outside of class with friends and classmates

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
20.5	35.7	33	10.7

32.   Memorize facts, terminology and ideas

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
7.1	28.6	44.6	19.6

33.   Analyse ideas, theories and situations to gain an in depth knowledge of a study problem

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
16.2	44.1	30.6	9.0

34.   Evaluate and judge information, methods and conclusions made by others

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
17.9	57.1	22.3	2.7

35.   Apply prior knowledge to solve new problems

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
6.3	37.5	45.5	10.7

36.   Discuss your ideas from courses with your professors outside of the class

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
55.5	30.0	9.1	5.5

37.   Use email to communicate with your instructors

	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
	20.5	46.4	20.5	12.5

Which of the following **did** you use in your first semester:

38.   I used Academic Counselling (regarding my program)

    20.5   Yes   79.5   No

39.   I used the Academic Writing Centre

    3.6   Yes   96.4   No

40.   I used Financial Aid Support

    24.1   Yes   75.9   No

41.   I used Health Services

    30.4   Yes   69.6   No

42.   I used the International Student Services

    4.5   Yes   95.5   No

43.   I used the Student Information Resource Centre (SIRC)

    33.3   Yes   66.7   No

44.   I used the Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) workshops

    9.1   Yes   90.6   No

45.   I used the Leddy Library

    99.1   Yes   0.9   No

46.   I used the Computer Information Centre

    52.7   Yes   47.3   No

47.   I used Personal Counselling Services

    1.8   Yes   98.2   No

48.   I used the Special Needs Program

       __2.7__ Yes __97.3__ No

Part C: Your Connections and Support Networks

49.   Estimate the number of <u>university</u> friends with whom you are on a first name basis

       __0.9__ 0
       __4.5__ 1 - 2
       __16.2__ 3 - 5
       __17.1__ 6 - 10
       __61.3__ more than 10

50.   Estimate the number of <u>non-university</u> friends with whom you are on a first name basis

       __1.8__ 0
       __4.5__ 1 - 2
       __9.8__ 3 - 5
       __13.4__ 6 - 10
       __70.5__ more than 10

51.   During a time of crisis or stress, how many of your <u>university</u> friends could you comfortably turn to for help?

       __8.9__ 0
       __40.2__ 1 - 2
       __35.7__ 3 - 5
       __6.3__ 6 - 10
       __8.9__ more than 10

52.   During a time of crisis or stress, how many of your <u>non-university</u> friends could you comfortably turn to for help?

       __10.7__ 0
       __28.6__ 1 - 2
       __34.8__ 3 - 5
       __12.5__ 6 - 10
       __13.4__ more than 10

53.   With your close friends, how <u>equally</u> do you turn to each other for help?

```
0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
```
I turn to them   we turn   They turn to
much more than   to each   me much more
they turn to me   other   than I turn
                                      the same   to them
                                      amount
4.5   79.5   16.1

54.   During a time of crisis or stress, where would you place yourself on the scale below in
       terms of who you would turn to for <u>primary</u> help?

```
0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
```
will use   equally as   will use
university   likely to   home or high school
friends or   use university   supports primarily
supports   as home or high
primarily   school supports

6.3   50   43.7

55.   By the time you graduate from university, will your day-to-day involvement with your
       family be more, less, or about the same, as compared to how it is now?

```
0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
```
much less   about   much more
                                      the same

17   70.6   12.6

56.   In general, how satisfied are you with your relationships to your family?

```
0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
```
not at all   moderately   extremely
2.7   35.7   61.7

57.   In general, how satisfied are you with your relationships to your high school friends?

```
0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
```
not at all   moderately   extremely
7.2   52.7   40.2

58.   How important is it for you to maintain your family relationships?

```
0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
```
not at all   moderately   extremely
1.8   10.8   87.6

59.　How important is it for you to maintain your high school relationships?

　　　0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
　　　not at all　　　　　　　　　moderately　　　　　　　　　　extremely
　　　3.6　　　　　　　　　　　　39.4　　　　　　　　　　　　57.1

60.　How comfortable would you be turning to an "official" campus person (such as an advisor or counsellor, professor, T.A., or residence staff person) during a time of academic crisis or stress?

　　　0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
　　　not at all　　　　　　　　　moderately　　　　　　　　　　extremely
　　　9.0　　　　　　　　　　　　55.4　　　　　　　　　　　　35.8

61.　How comfortably could you turn to an "official" campus person (such as an advisor or counsellor, professor, T.A., or residence staff person) during a time of personal crisis or stress?

　　　0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
　　　not at all　　　　　　　　　moderately　　　　　　　　　　extremely
　　　41.1　　　　　　　　　　　47.4　　　　　　　　　　　　11.7

62.　In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of your university friendships?

　　　0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
　　　not at all　　　　　　　　　moderately　　　　　　　　　　extremely
　　　9.0　　　　　　　　　　　　48.1　　　　　　　　　　　　42.8

63.　In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of your non-university friendships?

　　　0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
　　　not at all　　　　　　　　　moderately　　　　　　　　　　extremely
　　　5.4　　　　　　　　　　　　32.2　　　　　　　　　　　　62.5

64.　How important is it for you to make friends?

　　　0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7--------8--------9
　　　not at all　　　　　　　　　moderately　　　　　　　　　　extremely
　　　4.5　　　　　　　　　　　　31.3　　　　　　　　　　　　64.3

Part D: Your Activities **Please select only one response for each of the following questions:**

About how many hours did you spend per week doing each of the following?

65.   Preparing for class (reviewing notes, studying, reading, etc)

   25.0   less than 5 hours per week
   44.6   6-10 hours per week
   16.1   11-15 hours per week
   13.4   16-20 hours per week
   0.9   more than 25 hours per week

66.   Working for pay **on** campus

   92.7   less than 5 hours per week
   4.5   6-10 hours per week
   1.8   11-15 hours per week
   1.8   16-20 hours per week
   0.9   more than 25 hours per week

67.   Working for pay **off** campus

   63.1   less than 5 hours per week
   8.1   6-10 hours per week
   12.6   11-15 hours per week
   11.7   16-20 hours per week
   4.5   more than 25 hours per week

68.   Participating in campus activities (student organizations & clubs, etc)

   83.9   less than 5 hours per week
   10.7   6-10 hours per week
   3.6   11-15 hours per week
   0.9   16-20 hours per week
   0.9   more than 25 hours per week

69.   Exercising or working out

   58.0   less than 5 hours per week
   31.3   6-10 hours per week
   8.0   11-15 hours per week
   2.7   16-20 hours per week
   0   more than 25 hours per week

70.   Relaxing and socializing

     9.8 less than 5 hours per week
    35.7 6-10 hours per week
    28.6 11-15 hours per week
    13.4 16-20 hours per week
    12.5 more than 25 hours per week

71.   Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse)

    90.8 less than 5 hours per week
     7.3 6-10 hours per week
     0.9 11-15 hours per week
     0   16-20 hours per week
     0.9 more than 25 hours per week

72.   Doing "routine" tasks and chores such as laundry, errands, shopping, banking

    41.1 less than 5 hours per week
    50.9 6-10 hours per week
     7.1 11-15 hours per week
     0.9 16-20 hours per week
     0   more than 25 hours per week

73.   Commuting to campus

    71.8 less than 5 hours per week
    21.8 6-10 hours per week
     5.5 11-15 hours per week
     0.9 16-20 hours per week
     0   more than 25 hours per week

74.   Volunteering **on** campus

    97.2 less than 5 hours per week
     1.9 6-10 hours per week
     0   11-15 hours per week
     0   16-20 hours per week
     0.9 more than 25 hours per week

75.   Volunteering **off** campus

    92.7 less than 5 hours per week
     5.5 6-10 hours per week
     1.8 11-15 hours per week
     0   16-20 hours per week
     0   more than 25 hours per week

Part D: Your Self-Satisfaction

76.   How often do you question your identity, or find yourself wondering who you are?

        0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 --------8 --------9
        hardly ever   sometimes   almost always
        39.3   39.3   21.4

77.   In general, how good do you feel about who you are?

        0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 --------8 --------9
        not at all good   sometimes   extremely good
        5.4   42.0   52.7

78.   How adequate do you feel your current amount of physical exercise is for you?

        0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 --------8 --------9
        not at all adequate   extremely
                                                                         adequate
        25.0   56.3   18.8

79.   In general, how satisfied are you with your nutritional intake?

        0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 --------8 --------9
        not at all satisfied   extremely
                                                                         satisfied
        25.0   59.0   16.1

80.   In general, how satisfied are you with the amount of sleep that you get?

        0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 --------8 --------9
        not at all satisfied   extremely
                                                                         satisfied
        22.3   61.7   16.2

81.   How important is health and fitness to you?

        0---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7 --------8 --------9
        not at important   extremely
                                                                         important
        0.9   34.8   64.3

During this past semester, did you use some system of keeping track of your time (such as keeping a date book, scribbling notes, filling out weekly planners, making lists, etc.)?

82.   calendar (general)

     78.6 Yes   21.4 No

83.   month-at-a-glance calendar

     67.0 Yes   33.0 No

84.   weekly planner

     61.6 Yes   38.4 No

85.   daily planner

     57.7 Yes   42.3 No

86.   "to do" list

     66.7 Yes   33.3 No

87.   mental notes/rely on memory

     73.0 Yes   23.0 No

88.   writing yourself general note

     77.5 Yes   22.5 No

89.   having other people remind you of events and obligations

     57.1 Yes 42.9 No

90.   other (please describe your system below)

     53.0 Yes 94.7 No

91.   no system

     7.0 Yes   93.0 No

This is the end of the FYSP II survey. Thank You.

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO
UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

July 18, 2003

Dr. XXXXXXX XXXXXXX
Chair, Research Ethics Board
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario
N9B 3P4

Dear Dr. XXXXXXX:

As a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, I am seeking approval from the Research Ethics Board to conduct a research project. The project will act as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education. The study will explore personal characteristics of students enrolled in University 101. Characteristics related to demographics, social competence and sense of self-efficacy will be the primary focus. One possible outcome is a model that predicts first-year GPA.

The proposed study will ask first-year University 101 students to complete the First-Year Student Profile I (FYSP I, Oakley, 2003) within the first two weeks of the Fall 2003 semester. Students will be asked to complete the FYSP II at the end of the Fall 2003 semester. The FYSP asks questions related to demographics, expectations (FYSP I) and experiences (FYSP II) of university, connections and support networks and activities. Students will also be asked to sign a release granting permission for the researcher to obtain their final University 101 grade and end of year GPA.

There are no known risks involved with this study. Participation will be completely voluntary and no remuneration will be paid to the participants. No attempt to deceive any of the subjects will be made. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time or have their data withdrawn at any time. The confidentiality of each subject and the university they attend will be guaranteed by the researcher. A copy of the proposed work has been included.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at home (XXX-XXXX), work (XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX), or by email (XXXXXXX@uwindsor.ca).

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter.
Sincerely,
Elizabeth Oakley
Encl.

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO
UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

August 20, 2003

Professor XXXXX XXXXX
Vice-Provost, Students and Registrar (Acting)
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario
N9B 3P4

Dear Professor XXXXX:

As a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, I am seeking approval from the Research Ethics Board (REB) to conduct a research project. The project will act as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education. The study will explore personal characteristics of students enrolled in University 101. Characteristics related to demographics, social competence and sense of self-efficacy will be the primary focus. One possible outcome is a model that predicts first-year GPA.

The proposed study will ask first-year University 101 students to complete the First-Year Student Profile I (FYSP I, Oakley, 2003) within the first two weeks of the Fall 2003 semester. Students will be asked to complete the FYSP II at the end of the Fall 2003 semester. The FYSP asks questions related to demographics, expectations (FYSP I) and experiences (FYSP II) of university, connections and support networks and activities. Students will also be asked to sign a release granting permission for the researcher to obtain their final University 101 grade and end of year GPA.

If approval is granted by the REB, the researcher would require the approval of the Vice-Provost, Students and Registrar (Acting) and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to obtain final University 101 grades and end of first-year GPAs of all participants. Subjects would be assured that all data from the surveys would remain sealed until their final University 101 grades were submitted to the Office of the Registrar. Furthermore, subjects will be informed that only the researcher, the research assistant and the researcher's advisor would have access to the information collected.

Participation will be completely voluntary and no remuneration will be paid to the participants. No attempt to deceive any of the subjects will be made. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time or have their data withdrawn at any time. The confidentiality of each subject and the university they attend will be guaranteed by the researcher. The data collected may be used in other research studies.

If you agree to allow the researcher to obtain the final GPAs of subjects involved in this study, I would require you to sign the enclosed form requesting the release of grades of the participants.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at home (XXX-XXXX), work (XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX), or by email (XXXXXXX@uwindsor.ca).

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Oakley
Encl.

APPENDIX F

RELEASE OF GRADES FORM

WINDSOR

August 20, 2003

As the Vice-Provost, Students and Registrar (Acting) , I XXXXX XXXXX
hereby grant permission to Masters in Education candidate Elizabeth A. Oakley to obtain
access to the Winter 2004 final grades of all participants involved in the study
PROFILING FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN AN ACADEMIC
TRANSITION COURSE.

I understand that this study has received clearance from the Research Ethics Board at the
University of Windsor and will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Larry Morton,
research advisor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor.

Elizabeth Oakley agrees that access to this information will be used for the sole purpose
of completing research related to the abovementioned study and that all data collected
will remain confidential.

Sincerely,

XXXXX XXXXX
Vice-Provost, Students and Registrar (Acting)
Student and Academic Services
University of Windsor

APPENDIX G

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

August 20, 2003

Dr. XXXXX XXXXXXX
Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario
N9B 3P4

Dear Dr. XXXXXXX:

As a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, I am seeking approval from the Research Ethics Board (REB) to conduct a research project. The project will act as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education. The study will explore personal characteristics of students enrolled in University 101. Characteristics related to demographics, social competence and sense of self-efficacy will be the primary focus. One possible outcome is a model that predicts first-year GPA.

The proposed study will ask first-year University 101 students to complete the First-Year Student Profile I (FYSP I, Oakley, 2003) within the first two weeks of the Fall 2003 semester. Students will be asked to complete the FYSP II at the end of the Fall 2003 semester. The FYSP asks questions related to demographics, expectations (FYSP I) and experiences (FYSP II) of university, connections and support networks and activities. Students will also be asked to sign a release granting permission for the researcher to obtain their final University 101 grade and end of year GPA.

If approval is granted by the REB, the researcher would require the approval of the Vice-Provost, Students and Registrar (Acting) and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to obtain final University 101 grades and end of first-year GPAs of all participants. Subjects would be assured that all data from the surveys would remain sealed until their final University 101 grades were submitted to the Office of the Registrar. Furthermore, subjects will be informed that only the researcher, the research assistant and the researcher's advisor would have access to the information collected. The data collected may be used in other research studies.

Participation will be completely voluntary and no remuneration will be paid to the participants. No attempt to deceive any of the subjects will be made. Participants may

withdraw from the study at any time or have their data withdrawn at any time. The confidentiality of each subject and the university they attend will be guaranteed by the researcher. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at home (XXX-XXXX), work (XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX), or by email (XXXXXXX@uwindsor.ca).

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Oakley

APPENDIX H

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
UNIVERSITY 101 INSTRUCTORS

August 20, 2003

Professor XXXXX
Instructor of University 101
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario
N9B 3P4

Dear XXXXX:

As a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, I am seeking approval from the Registrar and Dean of Student and Academic Services, and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to conduct a research project. The project will act as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education. The study will explore personal characteristics of students enrolled in University 101. Characteristics related to demographics, social competence and sense of self-efficacy will be the primary focus. One possible outcome is a model that predicts first-year GPA.

The proposed study will ask first-year University 101 students to complete the First-Year Student Profile I (FYSP I, Oakley, 2003) within the first two weeks of the Fall 2003 semester. Students will be asked to complete the FYSP II at the end of the Fall 2003 semester. The FYSP asks questions related to demographics, expectations (FYSP I) and experiences (FYSP II) of university, connections and support networks and activities. Students will also be asked to sign a release granting permission for the researcher to obtain their final University 101 grade and end of year GPA.

Your class has been selected to participate in the study. As an instructor of University 101, I am requesting access to your class during the first two weeks and last two weeks of the fall semester to administer the FYSP I and FYSP II . The dates would be determined by a mutually agreeable time. All students should be given the choice of completing the questionnaire during the final 30 minutes of class, or being dismissed early so as not to penalize those who do not wish to participate. All questionnaires would be administered by my research assistant and during the survey, you would be asked to leave the classroom to ensure the comfort of both the participants and non-participants. All data collected would remain sealed until the final grades for your course have been submitted to the Office of the Registrar and at no time would you have access to the

information obtained. The data collected may be used in other research studies.

Participation will be completely voluntary and no remuneration will be paid to the participants. No attempt to deceive any of the subjects will be made. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time or have their data withdrawn at any time. The confidentiality of each subject and the university they attend will be guaranteed by the researcher. No attempt to deceive any of the subjects will be made. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time or have their data withdrawn at any time. The confidentiality of each subject and the university they attend will be guaranteed by the researcher. A copy of the proposed work has been included.

This study has been reviewed and received clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions, you may contact the Research Ethics Co-ordinator at XXX-XXXX ext XXXX or by email at ethics@uwindsor.ca. Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at home (XXX-XXXX), work (XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX), or by email (XXXXXXX@uwindsor.ca).

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Oakley
Encl.

APPENDIX I

INSTRUCTIONS TO UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR RESEARCH ASSISTANT
FOR QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION

September, 2003
Dear Research Assistant:

Thank you for your assistance with the research study entitled PROFILING FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN AN ACADEMIC TRANSITION COURSE. Please follow the instructions for distribution are outlined below. Students should be allowed 30 minutes to complete this survey.

- At no time should any student be made to feel pressured or coerced into completing the survey.

- I will introduce the study to the class.

- I will introduce you as the research assistant.

- I will then leave the classroom to ensure that no student feels coerced into completing the survey and so all participants and non-participants remain anonymous.

- Students who elect not to complete the survey can then be dismissed.

- Participants should be asked to read and sign the CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE.

- Once they hand in the consent forms, provide them with the FYSP.

- While they are completing the survey, pass around the sheet inviting them to sign up for the University of Windsor Bookstore gift certificate draw.

- Once the surveys are completed, collect all materials.

- Thank the students for their participation and remind them that we will request their participation in the FYSP II at the end of the semester.

- Separate all surveys, consent forms and the bookstore draw sheet and place them in the box provided. Seal the box with the tape provided and sign your name across the seal.

- Deliver the sealed box directly to the Faculty of Education office to the attention of XX. XXXXX XXXXXX.

APPENDIX J

LETTER OF CONSENT AND INSTRUCTIONS TO UNIVERSITY 101 STUDENTS

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
"PROFILING FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN AN ACADEMIC
TRANSITION COURSE"
September, 2003 (Part I) November, 2003 (Part II)

Dear Student:

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Beth Oakley, a graduate student from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. The study will act as partial fulfilment of the requirements for Elizabeth (Beth) Oakley's degree of Masters of Education.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Beth Oakley at XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX, or by email (XXXXXXX@uwindsor.ca). You may also wish to contact the faculty advisor of this research study, Dr. X. XXXXXX, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, at XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX

Purpose of the Study:

The study will explore personal characteristics of students enrolled in University 101.

Procedures:

     If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

- Answer two surveys within the Fall 2003 semester. One survey will be completed at the beginning of the fall semester and deals with questions related to your expectations of university, your connections and support networks and your activities in your university career. It will take approximately 25 minutes to complete the first survey. The second survey will be completed at the end of the fall semester and is designed to be administered after you have gained some experience as a university student. The second survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. It will ask questions related to your experiences of university, your connections and support networks and your activities at university.

- Agree to allow the researcher to request permission from the Office of the Registrar to obtain your University 101 grade and cumulative GPA at the end of first-year.

- You will be given the option of signing your name to a sheet of paper to be eligible for a draw for a $50.00 gift certificate to the University of Windsor Bookstore.

Potential Risks and Discomforts:

- You may be concerned because the researcher has some responsibilities related to University 101. You may perceive that your responses to certain questions or your lack of participation in the survey, may have an impact on your final grade for University 101.

- The researcher has no direct responsibility for the grading of any assignments or examination in University 101. All grades for the course are determined by the instructors of the course and Teaching Assistants directly supervised by the instructors. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and choosing not to participate will have no effect on your grades. The researcher will have no way of knowing who has participated and who has not since all surveys will remain secured and inaccessible to the researcher until the Winter 2004 semester. You may choose to provide only your student number and leave your name off the survey.

- You may be hesitant to provide authorization for the release of your end of year GPA if you perceive that this information could be paired with your answers to questions related to class attendance or hours dedicated to completion of course work. You may perceive that this information could be reported to your Dean or department.

- The researcher must adhere to the standards of the Research Ethics Board and as such only the researcher, research assistant and her supervisor will have access to the data collected in these surveys. The data will only be accessible to the researcher after the final University 101 grades have been submitted to the Office of the Registrar. University 101 instructors, Deans and department heads will at no time have access to any of the information collected. Once the data have been collected and verified, they will be stored in a secured location for a period of 5 years.

Potential Benefits to the Subjects and/or Society:

The benefits from this survey depend on your thoughtful responses and may provide you with the opportunity to learn something about yourself. Your answers provide a kind of self-portrait of what you have been doing and how you are benefiting from the university experience. You will have the opportunity to learn more about your personal expectations and experiences with university. You may become more aware of available

campus support services and activities and thus you may be more inclined to access them when needed. The survey may also provide you with the opportunity to reflect on your first semester learning experiences and enable you to become more aware of how your sense of connectedness will have an effect on your academic success. You may also discover some of the factors that are instrumental to your success.

This proposed research has the potential of helping universities and colleges to discover more about the personal characteristics of their students and thus implement and expand services to help students succeed. A secondary benefit may be an improved first-year student retention rate.

Payment for Participation:

After signing the Letter of Information and Consent to Participate, you will be invited to participate in a draw for a $50.00 gift certificate to the University of Windsor Bookstore. You will be asked to provide your name, student number and contact information (email address and telephone number) on a sheet of paper. A sheet will be distributed during both surveys. To ensure the anonymity of the participants, the information for the draw will remain sealed until the final University 101 grades have been submitted to the Office of the Registrar. At that time, names from the sheets will be placed on individual slips of paper and selected from a hat. Even if you choose not to complete both surveys, you will still be eligible for the draw. One random draw will take place in the Winter 2004 semester. The winning subject will be notified by telephone or email.

Confidentiality:

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Data collected will be stored in a secured location and destroyed after a period of 5 years.

Participation and Withdrawal:

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. If you withdraw from the study, you will still be eligible for the $50.00 University of Windsor Bookstore gift certificate.

Subsequent Use of Data:

The data collected may be used in other research studies.

Rights of Research Subjects:

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact:

Research Ethics Co-ordinator   Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX ext XXXX
University of Windsor   E-mail: XXXXXX@uwindsor.ca
Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4

Signature of Research Subject/Legal Representative:

I understand the information provided for the study "PROFILING FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN AN ACADEMIC TRANSITION COURSE" as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject

_____   _____
Signature of Subject   Date

Signature of Investigator:

In my judgement, the subject is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent to participate in this research study.

_____   _____
Signature of Investigator   Date

APPENDIX K

SAMPLE TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY (UNIVERSITY 101) COURSE
SYLLABUS

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

02-02-101/THE TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY
"UNIVERSITY 101" – FALL 2003

Course Description

University 101 (U101) provides an introduction to the purposes and processes of university education, emphasizing the skills and strategies needed to make a successful transition to the academic and cultural environment of the University of Windsor. This course is limited to first-year students (i.e., those having no more than 10 credits).

Welcome to U101!

Welcome to U101 – the only course at the University of Windsor specifically designed to help you succeed! We are excited to begin another year and look forward to some new additions to the course. In the past, our students have learned highly valuable skills to help them through the years to come in university. Some of you may think U101 is a "bird course" and you would be smart to rethink that before getting into trouble. Like any course, U101 has rules and tests and assignments and is just as demanding. Also, like other courses, you will get out of U101 as much as you put into it. It's your choice. So if you're ready to commit yourself and jump in with both feet then prepare for student success with U101!

Registration & Course Format Information
All students enrolled in the U101 course attend 2 labs and 1 lecture each week. You must make sure that your registration form shows that you are enrolled for both the lab AND the lecture.

> ***Hints for success:***
> - *If you don't know something, ask right away – don't let it wait!*
> - *You only get out of a course what you put into it!*
> - *Know your syllabus, bring it to class – everything important is right here!*
> - *Treat your professors with respect and they'll do the same with you.*

Labs: Labs are places where students meet in smaller groups to practice skills and apply information they have learned. You will also have a chance to get to know your professor better. Labs are part of the U101 course and are as important to attend as the lecture. Please ensure that you are registered for one of the following lab sections:

Lab #/ Section	Days	Time	Location	Instructor
51	MW	1:30	Chrysler Hall N - G100	
52	MW	2:30	Chrysler Hall N - G100	
53	MW	2:30	Dillon Hall - 352	
54	TR	10:30	Chrysler Hall N - G100	
55	TR	11:30	Chrysler Hall N - G100	
56	MW	1:30	Dillon Hall - 353	

Hints for success:
Highlight your section so you know which one it is. Then you can:
- *Say "hi" to your professor*
- *Find your classroom ahead of time*

If you don't know which section you are in, find out!

Lectures:
Each Friday from 10:30 to 11:20 all students in U101 meet in a large group for their weekly lecture (Chrysler Hall North, room G133). Like the labs, lectures are an important part of U101 and should be attended by all students and detailed notes taken. Lectures will be facilitated by Dr. XXXXXX, but will also include a wide variety of guest speakers whose job it is to introduce you to the many topics and ideas that are important to success in university.

Required Texts

All students must pick up a course pack at document services (CHN basement). It is loose leaf and 3-hole punched. You *cannot use one from a previous semester.* Make sure you have a 3-ring binder for it and bring it to class at all times. You must also purchase the text shown below. **Note**: This is a new version of the text from last year so second hand copies will not be available. This can be purchased at the University Bookstore.

Troyka, L. Q. (2000). Quick Access Reference for Writers, Second Canadian Edition. Toronto, ON: Prentice Hall.

Course Requirements

Your final grade in U101 will be the result of a series of tests and assignments. They are described below. Please note the following important points about course requirements:

- *Assignments are due at the beginning of class – Assignments handed in:*
  - *After class but within 1 hour of class end - minus 10%*
  - *More than 1 hour after class end - automatic zero*

- *DO NOT leave course work, notes or assignments under or on anyone's door – always hand them directly to an instructor.*

- *Extensions on assignments or exam re-writes are given ONLY for significant problems, generally limited to personal illness (i.e., you are sick) and bereavement (i.e., death of a close family member)*

- *Extensions or re-writes will ONLY be granted when you contact your instructor **immediately** and can provide external proof of a problem (i.e., doctor's note, death certificate)*

- *Printer problems - for emergencies only - you may hand in your assignment on **a clearly labelled disk**, saved in rich text format (.rtf) - DO NOT fax assignments or attach them to emails - please note, printer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late work*

- *Detailed instructions for all assignments can be found in the course pack and on the Virtual Course Kit (ViCKi), otherwise known as our class web page*

Item	Description (also see below)	Weight	Due Date
Library Project	Library Research Assignment	10%	Sept. 29/30
Assignment 1	Annotated Bibliography & Proposal	10%	Oct. 6/7
Mid-term Exam	Multiple Choice/Short Answer	20%	Fri. Oct. 17
Assignment 2	Rough Draft	10%	Oct. 27/28
Assignment 3	Final Paper	20%	Nov. 19/20
Journal	In class writing assignments	10%	Dec. 1/2
Final Exam	Multiple Choice/Short Answer	20%	Dec. 9
TOTAL		100%	

Brief Description - Course Requirements

Please note, each assignment is a step in the larger process of preparing a final research paper (Assignment 3). Each step is described briefly here and in greater depth in the Assignment Guidelines in the course pack and on the course website.

▶ **Library Project – Library Research Assignment** due on **Sept. 29/30** and worth 10% of your grade. With the assistance of Leddy Library staff, this assignment will familiarize you with research tools and resources available at the University of Windsor library. It will also prepare you for your Assignment 1.

▶ **Assignment 1 - Annotated Bibliography & Proposal** due on **Oct. 6/7** and worth 10% of your grade. This assignment has two parts. First you will choose, read and annotate sources for your paper. Then, based on your research, you will draft a proposal which will include a thesis statement and supporting ideas.

▶ **Assignment 2 - Rough Draft** due on **Oct. 27/28** and worth 10% of your grade. For this assignment you will expand your proposal into a full rough draft (in essay form) of your paper in MLA format.

▶ **Assignment 3 - Final Paper** due on **Nov. 19/20** and worth 20% of your grade. Your final paper in MLA format will be the result of substantive revision and editing of your rough draft.

NOTE: More detailed information about all assignments will be made available.

Formatting Your Written Work...

Every year students lose unnecessary marks on their assignments due to formatting errors. To avoid this happening to you, please make sure you:

- Submit all work in type-written format;
- Staple all work in the upper left corner (Please Note - Instructors do not bring staplers with them to class) - No folders or duotangs please!;
- Put your *full name & section number* on all written submissions; and
- Follow the formatting directions for assignments given in the Assignment Guidelines in your course pack or on the course web page.

▶ **Journal** – Up to 10% of your final grade will come from marks received for completing the journal assignments given during class time. The book you will use for your journal will be included with the course pack and your instructor will collect it at the end of each lab. Journal assignments are announced in class so it is your responsibility to attend classes in order to receive credit for journal entries.

▶ **Mid-term Exam** in the regular Friday classroom on **Friday, October 17 from 10:30pm – 11:20pm** worth 20% of your final grade. This exam will cover all the material you have covered in readings, labs and lectures up until the date of the midterm.

▶ **Final Exam** on **Tuesday, December 9 – 12:00 noon** (location TBA) worth 20% of your final grade. This exam is not cumulative - this means that it will cover only reading, lab and lecture material from the midterm onward.

Hints for Success:

- *Get to know ViCKI! - Learn how to access all the vital information on the course web site*
- *Always make sure you have a second electronic copy of your work in case of computer problems - back up often!*
- *Record the due dates of all your course requirements in your day planner or calendar NOW!*

Grading Scheme

While you will receive numeric (percentage) grades in this course, your final grade is a letter grade. The grading scheme below shows you how we translate your final percentage grade into a letter grade. For example, if you receive 73% in this course, your letter grade will be a "B". Please note that this is not standard across all courses and may vary from course to course. We also reserve the right to adjust final grades.

92 -100% A+	77 - 79% B+	67 - 69% C+
85 - 92% A	73 - 76% B	63 - 66% C
80 - 85% A-	70 - 72% B-	60 - 62% C-
57 - 59% D+	40 - 49% F	
53 - 56% D	below 40 F-	
50 - 52% D-		

Hints for success:
What does a grade mean?
A excellent
B good
C adequate
D significantly problematic
F fundamentally problematic

Course Schedule

Week	Date/Type		Topic/Lecturer	Bring/Remember/Do
1	Fri Sept 5	Lec	Surviving University - U101 Team	
	Sept 8/9	Lab	Course Calendar / Syllabus Review	Bring course calendar / syllabus
	Sept 10/11	Lab	Survival Test	Bring course calendar / syllabus
2	Fri Sept 12	Lec	University Culture	Bring your common sense
	Sept 15/16	Lab	Time Management / Goal Setting	Bring your time-table
	Sept 17/18	Lab	To Be Announced	QA: Scan Intro/Contents to familiarize
3	Fri Sept 19	Lec	Library Lecture	QA: Thinking/Reading/Writing Critically
	Sept 22/23	Lab	Mechanics of Library Searching	Class in Leddy Library, West, Basement
	Sept 24/25	Lab	Mechanics of Library Searching	QA: Research
4	Fri Sept 26	Lec	Reading Skills	
	Sept 29/30	Lab	Summarizing / Paraphrasing, etc.	**Library Project - Due in Lab**
	Oct 1/2	Lab	Documentation Styles	QA: MLA / APA Documentation
5	Fri Oct 3	Lec	Writing Skills	
	Oct 6/7	Lab	Writing Skills	**Assignment 1 - Due in Lab**
	Oct 8/9	Lab	Writing Skills / Editing	
6	Fri Oct 10	Lec	Memory / Test Taking	
	Oct 13/14	Lab	Oct. 13 –Thanksgiving ; Oct. 14	
	Oct 15/16	Lab	Test Taking / Types / Anxiety	
7	Fri Oct 17	Lec	**MIDTERM EXAM – 10:30 in regular Friday lecture classroom**	
	Oct 20/21	Lab	Note Taking	*QA: Writing Process*
	Oct 22/23	Lab	Note Taking	
8	Fri Oct 24	Lec	Critical Thinking	QA: Tips 4 Multilingual Writers [optional]
	Oct 27/28	Lab	Critical Thinking	**Assignment 2 - Due in Lab**
	Oct 29/30	Lab	Critical Thinking	QA: Sentences
9	Fri Oct 31	Lec	About Learning Styles	
	Nov 3/4	Lab	Know Thyself	QA: Words
	Nov 5/6	Lab	Applying Learning Styles	
10	Fri Nov 7	Lec	Surviving and Thriving – Guests	QA: Grammar Basics
	Nov 10/11	Lab	What's Your Problem? – Questions	
	Nov 12/13	Lab	What's Your Problem? – Answers	QA: Punctuation & Mechanics
11	Fri Nov 14	Lec	Social Scientific Thought – Dr.XXXXXX	
	Nov 17/18	Lab	Q & A Day for Research Paper	
	Nov 19/20	Lab	Methods of Inquiry	**Assignment 3 - Due in Lab**
12	Fri Nov 21	Lec	Diversity – film	

	Nov 24/25	Lab	Diversity	
	Nov 26/27	Lab	To Be Announced	
13	Fri Nov 28	Lec	Into the Future	
	Dec 1/2	Lab	Course Review / Evaluation	
	Dec 3	Lab	Last Day of Class	
Final Exam: Tuesday, December 9 at 12:00 noon (location TBA)				

NOTE: QA - refers to readings in Quick Access, your text.

APPENDIX L

FREQUENCY CHARTS AND CROSS TABS ANALYSIS

Q# 26 from FYSP I
Wish You Attended a Different University

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Not at all	6	28	17
Slightly	5	11	12
Somewhat	0	4	6
Very much	0	1	2
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 5.74, df =6, p > .05

Q# 27 from FYSP I
Wish You Weren't Attending Any University

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Not at all	11	31	23
Slightly	0	9	8
Somewhat	0	2	5
Very much	0	2	1
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 7.74, df =6, p > .05

Q# 1 from FYSP II
Wish You Attended a Different University

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Not at all	5	17	20
Slightly	4	16	9
Somewhat	2	7	3
Very much	0	4	5
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 4.88, df =6, p > .05

Q# 2 from FYSP II
Wish You Weren't Attending Any University

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Not at all	6	25	22
Slightly	3	11	10
Somewhat	2	7	4
Very much	0	1	1
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = .89, df =6, p > .05

Q# 30 from FYSP I
How Likely to Change Major

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Not at all	4	18	23
Slightly	4	15	6
Somewhat	1	7	2
Very much	2	4	6
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 8.12, df =6, p > .05

Q# 48 from FYSP I
Complete Readings and Work Before Class

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Almost Never	0	0	0
Sometimes	3	6	2
Often	4	18	14
Very often	4	20	21
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 4.59, df =4, p >.05

Q# 6 from FYSP II
How Likely to Change Major

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Not at all	4	15	19
Slightly	4	19	9
Somewhat	1	4	4
Very much	2	6	4
Total	11	44	36

Chi-Square = 5.52, df =8, p > .05

Q# 27 from FYSP II
Complete Readings and Work Before Class

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Almost Never	0	4	3
Sometimes	6	23	14
Often	4	13	15
Very often	1	4	5
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 3.14, df =6, p > .05

Q# 49 from FYSP I
Note Taking During Class

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Almost Never	0	0	0
Sometimes	0	4	0
Often	1	10	4
Very often	10	30	33
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 7.84, df =4, p > .05

Q# 52 from FYSP I
*Working On Course Assignments
Outside of Class*

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Almost Never	0	2	3
Sometimes	0	14	11
Often	8	18	17
Very often	6	10	6
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 9.96, df =6, p > .05

Q# 28 from FYSP II
Note Taking During Class

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Almost Never	0	1	0
Sometimes	0	5	2
Often	1	8	2
Very often	10	30	33
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 7.14, df =6, p > .05

Q# 31 from FYSP II
*Working On Course Assignments
Outside of Class*

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Almost Never	0	11	7
Sometimes	6	10	15
Often	4	18	11
Very often	1	5	4
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 7.07, df =6, p > .05

Q# 105 from FYSP I
*Keeping Track of Your Time – Weekly
Planner*

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	11	34	26
No	0	10	11
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 4.26, df =2, p > .05

Q# 59 from FYSP I
Consider Using Academic Counselling

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	11	35	28
No	0	9	9
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 3.23, df =2, p > .05

Q# 64 from FYSP I
*Consider Using Student Information
Resource Centre (SIRC)*

Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	8	39	30
No	3	5	7
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 1.94 df =2, p > .05

Q# from 84 FYSP II
*Keeping Track of Your Time – Weekly
Planner*

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	9	27	20
No	2	17	17
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 2.75, df =2, p > .05

Q# 38 from FYSP II
Use of Academic Counselling

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	0	8	9
No	11	36	28
Total	11	44	37

Chi-Square = 3.34, df =2, p > .05

Q# 43 from FYSP II
*Use of Student Information Resource
Centre (SIRC)*

Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	2	14	11
No	9	30	25
Total	11	44	36

Chi-Square = 0.81, df =2, p > .05

Q# 65 From FYSP I
Consider Using 'Skills To Enhance
Personal Success' (STEPS)
Time 1

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	6	25	20
No	5	18	17
Total	11	43	37

Chi-Square = 0.15, df =2, p > .05

Q# 44 From FYSP II
Use of 'Skills To Enhance Personal
Success' (STEPS)
Time 2

Age	17	18	19+
Yes	0	4	3
No	11	39	33
Total	11	43	36

Chi-Square = 1.08, df =2, p > .05

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Elizabeth Oakley

PLACE OF BIRTH: Windsor, Ontario

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1965

EDUCATION: Bachelor of Arts, 1990
                               University of Windsor

                               Bachelor of Education, 1998
                               University of Windsor