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Factors Affecting the Institutional Perception of Alumni of the University of Arkansas

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**FACTORS AFFECTING THE INSTITUTIONAL PERCEPTION OF ALUMNI OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS**

FACTORS AFFECTING THE INSTITUTIONAL PERCEPTION OF ALUMNI OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Education in Higher Education

By

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ABSTRACT

Alumni relations programs are a foundational component to institutional advancement and are often the unit that regularly communicates news and information about the institution to its alumni. Alumni relations professionals can strategically position a higher education institution among its alumni by including and emphasizing information that is found to have a positive impact on the opinion of alumni.

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the factors that impact alumni opinion of the University of Arkansas, loyalty to components of the University and overall current opinion. This study utilized secondary data from the Alumni Attitude Study[®] conducted by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the Arkansas Alumni Association in June and July 2009. A total of 43,866 alumni were presumed to have received the survey. Data from 2,670 respondents to the survey were analyzed (for a response rate of 6.1%). Only data from three questions in the Alumni Attitude Study[®] which were related to the research questions in this study were analyzed.

The first research question sought to identify differences by geographic territory among the factors that alumni use to formulate opinions of the University of Arkansas. Only slight differences were detected after examining the factors alumni use to formulate opinions in regard to assigned geographic territories.

The second research question examined the relationship between factors alumni use to formulate opinion and their overall opinion regarding the University of Arkansas. History and tradition was the only factor to have a moderate correlation ($r = .326, p < .01$). Additionally, a stepwise multiple regression analysis of the 11 factors identified as influencing opinion of alumni regarding the University of Arkansas

determined the four primary factors were: history and tradition; success of athletic teams; campus aesthetics; and accomplishments of alumni.

The third research question sought to determine the extent of the relationship between loyalty to various components of the University of Arkansas and their overall opinion of the institution. Correlating the areas of loyalty and the factors affecting opinion for the entire population only determined a moderate correlation between the factors of history/tradition ($r = .321, p < .01$) and success of athletic teams ($r = .457, p < .01$) with loyalty to athletics at the University of Arkansas. All other correlations between the factors and areas of loyalty were either weak or very weak correlations.

The final research question examined if there were significant differences in the perceptions held by alumni who received only an undergraduate degree, graduate degree or both from the University of Arkansas. There were no differences found in the overall perceptions held by alumni by each degree level as determined by an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with a Tukey post-hoc test.

The findings from this study indicate there are only slight differences in the relationship of the factors impacting opinion, loyalty and overall opinion of the University of Arkansas. The findings of this study actually indicate the alumni relations program at the University of Arkansas should direct its attention to the items that have been historically perceived to be the role of the program (history/tradition and athletics). However, special effort must be placed in determining if differences exist among the responses from this study and those who did not participate in the Alumni Attitude Study[®].

This dissertation is approved for
recommendation to the
Graduate Council

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DISSERTATION DUPLICATION RELEASE

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Anthony Dean McAdoo

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There are a series of individuals whom have touched my life and helped to expand my horizons and I credit them for reaching this point. My parents, Jane and Walter McAdoo, always believed in me and they did what they could to encourage and support me in my educational pursuits. My former high school Agricultural Education teacher, Kim Jones, believed in me and taught me that I could very well succeed at the university level. The late Dr. Nolan Arthur taught me that attending the University of Arkansas was possible for a kid from a small town in Arkansas. My former boss, former colleague, lifelong mentor and friend, Dr. Melissa Pianalto, helped me polish my work and find my niche in higher education. My present boss, supervisor, friend and mentor, Mike Macechko, also allowed me to pursue my educational goals while engaging alumni as a full time professional. To all these individuals who have helped to shape my education and career, I express my thanks!

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DEDICATION

This dissertation represents a crowning achievement for a first-generation college student from Arkansas. I dedicate what it represents to all other first-generation college students in Arkansas. Your achievement is only limited by your will.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Context of the Problem

Fundraising success requires a focused and targeted effort for any organization, including for higher education institutions. Making a financial commitment to an organization is the result of a connection or passion for a cause. Many studies have been conducted that examined the motivation of alumni from higher education institutions as a donor. Additional studies have also examined the factors that serve as predictors of alumni giving. When examining alumni in a fundraising context, a higher education institution undoubtedly has a pre-established relationship with the donor and does not face some of the challenges other organization may face. While alumni have certainly been examined in a fundraising context, developing a relationship with them by keeping them informed and engaged with the institution is the precursor to fundraising activity and serves as the focus of this study.

In order to build external support for higher education institutions, institutional advancement programs seek to position the institution among its external constituents (Trachtenberg, 2000). The basis of institutional advancement is developing relationships with external constituents (alumni, government leaders and the community) to ensure financial and ideological support from those that know the institution best (Trachtenberg, 2000). With higher education institution resources declining (particularly for public institutions), advancement has become more of an essential role within both public and private institutions of higher education (Kozobarich, 2000). Alumni relations programs are a foundational component to institutional advancement since alumni are often viewed

as the most loyal support group of an institution (Muller, 1986). Accordingly, the more embedded an individual is with the institution, the more relevant it is as a component within their networks and relationships (Burt, 2001).

Alumni are the only constituents that have a lifelong relationship with a higher education institution and that seek to protect and improve its image in order to ensure that their own degrees are perceived to be of value (Webb, 1989). The concept of alumni relations dates back to 1792 when Yale alumni designed an organization tied to class structures to communicate and inform alumni (Webb, 1989). Since then, alumni programs have continued to remain a viable part of higher education institutions while evolving into their present day form.

The alumni relations program is the first advancement tool of an institution because it seeks to involve alumni and regularly communicate with them (Nelson, 1986). Alumni relations programs seek to involve alumni and through this involvement generate interest that eventually translates into financial contributions and volunteer service (Webb, 1989). While financial support was often the original goal of alumni activity, the present objectives of alumni programs also include informing and involving alumni. Present alumni work is a precursor to development activity where financial support is solicited. Regardless of how alumni relations programs are arranged, they ultimately engage and connect alumni who invest back in the institution because of this connection (Ransdell, 1986). Alumni and development relations require a substantial institutional commitment of resources in developing a level of trust between alumni and the institution (Bila, 1999).

Alumni who feel that their educational experience was vital in their present success and have a sense of pride in their degree will more likely invest their time and money back in the institution (Bila, 1999). Factors that determine alumni giving have been the focus of many dissertation and research studies. As indicated in the findings of such studies, there is an apparent positive relationship between alumni program participation and larger and more frequent gifts from alumni. Klostermann (1995), Patouillet (2000), Shim (2001), and Lofton (2005) all specifically looked at membership in an alumni association as a factor related to giving. Shim was the only one who did not find a significant relationship through statistical analysis. The other studies concluded that alumni activity through participation in alumni events, receiving alumni communication or visiting campus all had a positive impact on alumni giving.

While the involvement and cultivation of alumni as advocates and donors is the primary emphasis of advancement programs, the factors surrounding the identification of alumni with the institution set the stage for such relationships. In studying organizational identification, Mael & Ashforth (1992), examined the relationship of alumni with their alma mater. They proposed that the perception of oneness or feeling of belonging to an organization where the success of the organization defined the individual was applicable to alumni. They also indicated that universities often know little about their alumni because studies that do exist presume opinion, beliefs and preferences. Their research sought to identify factors that would assist administrators in influencing perceptions and behaviors. As people identify themselves by their association with an organization they will be more inclined to support fundraising activities and be motivated to be a donor (Mann, 2007).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the factors that impact alumni opinion of the University of Arkansas, loyalty to components of the University and overall current opinion. This study will help address the problem of knowing how to positively impact the overall opinion of the University of Arkansas through prioritizing communications about factors that have a positive relationship with favorable opinions of the institution. For the purpose of this study, opinion was represented as the overall view or judgment that alumni have about the University of Arkansas. Additionally, loyalty represents the level of commitment alumni have toward particular aspects of the University of Arkansas.

The relationships identified in this study will assist alumni relations and institutional advancement professionals at the University of Arkansas in identifying and prioritizing content for communication and marketing for alumni. Knowing these factors will assist in determining types and amount of content to utilize to increase the likelihood that alumni form positive and favorable opinions of the University of Arkansas. When alumni have a positive opinion of the institution then the alumni program can capitalize by obtaining active members and the fundraising program can cultivate them as donors.

This study utilized secondary data from the Alumni Attitude Study[®] conducted by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the Arkansas Alumni Association in June and July 2009. Specifically for this study, the relationships were examined between demographic characteristics of assigned geographic territory and degree level and the responses from alumni to three specific questions from the Alumni Attitude Study[®]. The population for the study was all living alumni who graduated from the University of

Arkansas. A convenience sample of alumni with an active e-mail address on their alumni record who also had not opted out of the ability to receive e-mail or surveys from the Arkansas Alumni Association from June 16 to July 17, 2009, was utilized.

Statement of Research Questions

To address the purpose of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Do the factors that alumni use to formulate opinions of the University of Arkansas vary by geographic territory?
2. To what extent is there a relationship between factors alumni use to formulate opinion and their overall opinion regarding the University of Arkansas?
3. To what extent is there a correlation between the loyalty to various components of the University of Arkansas by alumni and the factors utilized in formulating their opinion of the institution?
4. Are there significant differences in the perceptions held by alumni who received only an undergraduate degree, graduate degree or both from the University of Arkansas?

Definitions

The following operational definitions clarify the major terms used in this study.

Alumni: Tradition has suggested common application of the word alumni in generic reference to an institution's graduates and former students (Ransdell, 1989). For the context of this study, this term represents degree-holding graduates from the University of Arkansas.

Alumni Association: An organization, which may or may not require dues in order to participate, staffed by professional officers who seek to cultivate alumni by serving as the connection between alumni and the institution (Fisher, 1989).

Alumni Relations: The practice of cultivating alumni to support their institution and for the institution to support its alumni (Ransdell, 1989).

Donor: An individual who makes a donation (most often financial) to an organization (Evans, 1986).

Geographic Territory: A pre-defined and automatically assigned segmentation based on the location of the current preferred address of an individual.

Institutional Advancement: The unit that provides external and internal communications/marketing, government and public relations, fund-raising, and alumni relations in an institution of higher education (Muller, 1986).

Loyalty: The level of commitment a consumer exhibits toward a brand (Chaudhur & Holbrook, 2001).

Organizational Identification: The identification of an organizational member who has either cognitively (sense of feeling of belonging), emotionally (pride in membership) or both linked his or her membership to their self-concept (Riketta, 2005).

Perception: The resulting image after attaining awareness or understanding of an object (Agnes, 1999).

Opinion: A view, judgment or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter (Agnes, 1999).

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in this study:

1. Institutional leaders have an interest in understanding the factors that contribute to the formation of opinion by alumni.
2. The relationships of alumni from the University of Arkansas will be similar to that of higher education institutions similar in size and scope.
3. Alumni who responded to the survey accurately reported information regarding their experience with and perception of the University of Arkansas.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study had the following limitations and delimitations:

1. External factors could have affected the responses of alumni answering by altering their overall current opinion outside of the factors studied.
2. The findings of this study are limited since data from only the University of Arkansas were analyzed.
3. Findings may not be generalizable to other institutions of higher education.
4. Findings of this study can only serve as a guide for decision-making and should not be generalized to the entire alumni population of the University of Arkansas.
5. The data utilized were secondary and the design and implementation of the survey could not be altered.
6. This study was limited to only degreed alumni from the University of Arkansas who had a valid e-mail address from June 16 to July 17, 2009.

Significance of the Study

Since this study focused on the University of Arkansas, the significance of the findings are limited to this particular higher education institution. However, similar studies could be designed to look at specific institutions using this study as a model. The significance as it relates to the institutional leaders, chief institutional advancement officers, communications and marketing staff members, and leaders of alumni relations programs of a higher education institution is presented for consideration in this study and for other similar studies.

The institutional advancement functions, and especially fundraising, are of growing importance to the success of higher education leaders. Likewise, the image of the institution influences external constituents to provide support for the institution, promote it to others and buy into its mission and goals (Slinker, 1988).

The findings of this study can assist higher education leaders in formulating their communication strategy with external constituents (especially alumni) that will lead to various forms of support for their institutions.

As senior administrative leaders of an institution, chief institutional advancement officers have influence on overall policy beyond the scope of advancement (Worth & Asp, 1994). Their oversight of the advancement function places them in a position to utilize the findings of this study to formulate their overall advancement strategy. Synergies that can be formulated within advancement and across the institution can be built in regard to increase the quantity and quality of information being shared with external constituents to increase their opinion of the institution.

Professional staff members who oversee the communications and marketing activities for an institution can utilize the findings from this research to enhance their work. University relations programs are tasked with communicating with and positioning their institution among many external audiences that include: the local community, alumni, current students, potential students, parents of students, foundations and corporations, current and potential donors, state and national legislators, and local, state and national citizens (Perkins, 1986). Through the findings of this study, university relations professionals can have a more detailed understanding of the types of information to emphasize in various institutional segments to improve the overall perception external constituents, and especially alumni, have of the institution. University relations personnel can utilize this information to maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses (Perkins, 1986).

Finally, leaders of alumni relations programs can utilize this information to more effectively communicate with alumni about the institution and provide them information that will establish a favorable opinion of the institution. The alumni relations program is an important part of the university community and its commitment to maintaining a lifelong relationship with students (Stone, 2001). The chief executives for alumni programs provide the leadership for building and enhancing these relationships with alumni. Alumni who are informed about the institution's needs and progress are more likely to be advocates and supporters for the institution (Barrett, 1989). The findings of this study will provide these leaders with information that will allow them to position their institution through communications from the alumni program about key issues of importance to alumni.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study addressed the factors that impact the perception that alumni have of their alma mater, the University of Arkansas. In order to provide a foundation for this study, literature related to the relationship alumni have with their alma mater was reviewed. Specific topics reviewed from the literature included alumni relations, alumni loyalty and support, factors influencing alumni giving, organizational identification, and the University of Arkansas and Arkansas Alumni Association. The alumni relations section seeks to provide an overview of the purpose and background of alumni programs within higher education. Alumni loyalty and support summarizes research that has identified factors that have a relationship with alumni connections to an institution. Research pertaining to the factors related to institutional opinion as presented in this study was reviewed to determine the relationships previously observed. Studies that examined various factors and the influence they have on donor behavior of alumni were reviewed to determine commonalities. Organizational identification was investigated as it relates to how alumni identify with their alma mater. Finally, the section on the University of Arkansas and Arkansas Alumni Association provides a historical account of their relationship and purpose for the context of this study.

Sources searched in the review of the literature included referred articles, dissertations and books. Keywords utilized (limited to higher education institutions) in the review included: alumni, alumni association, membership, gift/giving factors, loyalty, marketing, perceptions, organizational identification/commitment, value/respect for degree, campus aesthetics, media visibility, history/tradition, rankings and

accomplishments (of students, faculty and alumni), and athletics. Databases searched included ProQuest Digital Dissertations, WorldCat, ProQuest, EBSCO Academic, Emerald, JStor, PsychInfo and University of Arkansas InfoLinks. To be included in this review, the reference must have addressed the topics under investigation. In addition to the sources located through the search process outlined, references cited in reviewed articles were also utilized to identify other relevant articles which were then located directly through the source.

Alumni Relations

Alumni are the only constituents that have a lifelong relationship with a higher education institution and that seek to protect and improve its image in order to ensure that their own degrees are perceived to be of value (Webb, 1989). The concept of alumni relations dates back to 1792 when Yale alumni designed an organization tied to class structures to communicate and inform alumni (Webb, 1989).

The alumni relations program, the earliest form of institutional advancement, has primarily sought to develop committed alumni by keeping them informed so that they can be called upon to support the institution through financial giving or representation (Forman, 1989). Alumni relations programs are a foundational component to institutional advancement since alumni are often viewed as the most loyal support group of an institution (Muller, 1986). The institutional advancement programs of colleges and universities work to communicate with external constituents, raise money and link alumni to their alma mater (Kozobarich, 2000).

Alumni programs seek to serve alumni and the institution simultaneously (Barrett, 1986). The role of the alumni relations program is to serve as the link between alumni

and their alma mater through communications and opportunities to be involved (DiBiaggio, 1989). Alumni programs bring alumni input to campus for assessing quality and effectiveness in addition to relaying alumni interests and needs to campus leadership (Miles & Miller, 2000). Alumni programs should be designed so that the needs of alumni, the alumni association (or alumni program) and the institution are all met (Barrett, 1986).

The interrelation of the various activities of alumni relations programs and their eventual goal was best summarized by Ransdell who observed that through identification, informing, interesting and involving alumni, the results will be their investment in the institution (1986). Financial support for the institution is the most visible and readily reported form of alumni support, but there are many opportunities to engage alumni in the life of the institution beyond donations (DiBiaggio, 1989).

With the increased presence of development operations and major fundraising campaigns in higher education institutions, the alumni relations program is often not tapped to play a role. Alumni relations professionals focus on creating relationships between the alumni and institution while development officers view their work as focused on social events (Gearhart, 1989). In the end, both alumni and development programs seek to advance their institutions (Gearhart, 1989).

Alumni Loyalty and Support

Alumni are individuals who have successfully received the products and services of an institution of education. Likewise, alumni are individuals who have collectively completed an educational experience with the same institution. The student experience establishes the foundation for a lifelong relationship between an individual and an institution of higher education.

Alsmeyer (1994) studied institutional commitment of older alumni of Texas A&M University. Class representatives (19 out of 26) from the classes of 1925 to 1939 were interviewed to determine motivation behind the above-average support exhibited by this particular group of alumni over other groups. Findings indicated that these alumni were willing and able to make significant contributions and they viewed their commitment on an individual level. Another attributing factor was the underlying formal military code and its impact on loyalty. Additionally, the impacts of the Great Depression and World War II on the institution were identified as factors impacting loyalty. Considering these findings and the uniqueness of their relation to a specific era of graduates, it was recommended to develop new strategies to generate alumni support among more recent graduates.

Ashcraft (1995) examined the differences between alumni donors and non-donors from Arizona State University. A random sample of 1,700 alumni was surveyed with a response rate of 58.1%. Significant relationships were identified between alumni donor behavior and decade of graduation in addition to the school/college from which the alumni graduated. Additionally, significant relationships were found between gender and household income. Ashcraft also examined undergraduates involvement scales as a factor and determined that peer relationships was found to be significant in determining alumni donors from non-donors as compared to co-curricular engagement and faculty attachment.

Heckman and Guskey (1998) observed the relationship of alumni of an unnamed private Midwestern university. The study utilized the framework of discretionary collaborative behavior (DCB) performed by alumni and factors that lead to that behavior.

A stratified probability sample of 3,000 alumni provided 1,010 usable responses. Their results indicated that antecedents of DCB's were satisfaction with performance (satisfaction, career preparation, reputation), relational bonds (social activities, staying informed, reading publications, developing shared values) and individual attributes (altruism, involvement, opinion leadership, self-expression, sex, spouse graduate, graduate studies, residence and age).

Ikenberry (1999) investigated why alumni from Pennsylvania State University felt committed to their alma mater after graduation and the relationship that prior student and alumni experiences had on their current commitment to the institution. The population was 111,942 alumni who graduated from 1984 to 1997. A logistic regression model was built to analyze the population. Institutional commitment among alumni was impacted by student social involvement, past alumni institutional commitment and both formal and informal alumni involvement. Time since graduation and increased distance from the institution were found to have a negative impact on commitment.

Ritzenhein (1999) explored the information needs of alumni donors and how they were met through communication. Focus groups and a follow-up survey to donors of Wayne State University were utilized to examine the research question. Findings indicated that information needs of donors were important; however, there was variation in specific content. Donors were identified as being driven by their personal information needs.

Ridley and Boone (2001) assessed the relationship of Virginia Wesleyan College's contributions to personal and professional growth of alumni and the factors that were common among alumni who maintained an active interest in the college. A survey

of 66 alumni was conducted to study and define alumni loyalty. Sustaining loyalty was more problematic for alumni who lived further from the institution where it is less known. Recommendations included an emphasis on increasing the visibility and national reputation of the institution in order to enhance long-term alumni loyalty. Additional recommendations included the need to emphasize the importance of alumni newsletters and websites to keep alumni informed and updated to foster increased alumni support and loyalty.

Baker (2004) studied the impact of student experiences on future alumni involvement at the University of Central Florida. Utilizing secondary data from the same alumni survey instrument as this study (the Alumni Attitude Study[®]), findings indicated that there was a relationship between involvement as a student and reported satisfaction with the college experience. Additionally, those that were involved as students were more likely to indicate the importance of alumni involvement exceeded the university's support for such activities. Finally, there was a significant relationship identified between reported satisfaction with the college experience and eventual alumni satisfaction.

Conner (2005) considered the factors that most influenced the donor or non-donor status of alumni at Coastal Carolina University. Five categories of variables were investigated: demographic, undergraduate involvement, alumni involvement, educational gains (value) and alumni loyalty. Donors were more likely than non-donors to have been involved as undergraduates, express feelings of loyalty, feel they received value from their educational experience, have graduated recently and live in close proximity to the institution. Non-donors were more likely to donate to other charitable organizations, live further away and graduate from the institution years earlier.

Mercatoris (2006) experimented with the formation of a model that linked college experiences and contribution decisions. A single case study employing focus groups was utilized on 44 alumni from the University of Texas. This study investigated the relationship of 11 affinities to an individual's decision to financially support the institution. The affinities of relationships (made as a student), academic life, university financial perceptions, degree of bonding with the institution, educational contact and closing the deal were found to be related to those who donate to the university versus those who do not contribute.

Dean (2007) inquired about the perceptions of chief development officers that influenced major alumni giving. The chief development officers from 275 doctoral research universities were surveyed in regard to the factors that influence major alumni giving at their institution. Socio-demographic factors which impacted major alumni gifts included being married to another alumnus/a, annual household income greater than \$100,000, undergraduate college/school, graduation year, and number of degrees earned from the institution. Alumni involvement factors which were determined to impact major alumni gifts included service on university boards/committees, positive attitude toward stewardship of gifts, identification with mission, identification with institutional leadership, overall influence of alumni involvement, campus visit frequency, obligation to institution, attending alumni events, reading alumni publications, perceived need, and visiting alumni website. Only three student experience factors were found to have a relationship with major alumni gifts and they included satisfaction with the quality of faculty, overall influence of student experience and positive peer relationships.

Lawley (2008) examined factors that affected alumni loyalty at Purdue University. The relationships between extracurricular activities, alumni participation, graduation year, gender and size of college on financial contributions were examined. A positive relationship between extracurricular involvement as a student and financial support of the institution was identified. Alumni were identified as being more likely to donate if they participated in an alumni activity.

Wastyn (2008) researched why non-donors do not give to their alma mater. Through qualitative research, interviews with 12 non-donors focused on the decision-making process for non-donors at a large, unnamed Midwestern university. The findings suggest that donors and non-donors differ in how they socially construct their college experiences. Non-donor narratives identified themes that related to reasons for attending college, how college was part fit into their life and their views of college as a commodity.

Burt (2001) studied which alumni relations activities promote university attachments that endure over time. Findings indicated that to achieve endurance, the attachments with the institution should be established while they are students. The most effective attachments were embedded in relationships with families, friends and colleagues. The more embedded the attachment was in their relationships, the more affiliation the individual had with the institution. Finally, the attachments were found to be based on emotional experiences that encourage relationship building. Throughout the course of an individual's education, the institution itself became embedded in the network around the person.

Oliver (1999) explored consumer satisfaction responses' implication on consumer loyalty. Phases of loyalty indentified included cognitive (loyalty based on brand belief);

affective loyalty (pleasurable fulfillment); conative (behavioral intention) loyalty (brand-specific commitment to repurchase); and action loyalty (motivation intention from previous states is transformed into action). While the alumni-institution relationship may not be based upon the concept of repurchasing the product (aside from returning for further study or degrees), higher education institutions seek to keep alumni in the action loyalty stage so that alumni participate, advocate and donate to their alma mater.

Factors Influencing Alumni Giving

Higher education institutions' reliance on fundraising activities and endowment proceeds has moved beyond being additional support for excellence, to being an essential part of funding for survival (Bila, 1999). In 2007-2008, nearly 27 billion dollars in voluntary support was given to higher education institutions (Chronicle Almanac, 2009). Of this amount, 10 billion alone was directed to 142 public research institutions. The source of this support varied among foundations (27.5%), alumni (24.1%), corporations (20.9%), other individuals (17.5%), fundraising consortia (0.2%) and "other" (9.7%).

The factors related to alumni giving have been the focus of many doctoral dissertations and research articles. The population studied in these dissertations and articles is often institution-specific; however, there are some studies that examine alumni from multiple higher education institutions. The factors investigated vary by study, but collectively the results identify common factors.

Haddad (1986) examined the relationships between demographic characteristics of alumni and their level of giving to Butler University. A survey was sent to a stratified random sample of 800 alumni (400 donors and 400 non-donors). The characteristics that were found to be significantly related to giving were sex, age, number of children,

children's age range, college of study, type of degree, graduation period, distance from campus, Greek affiliation, involvement in student activities, involvement in alumni activities, and attendance of a spouse at the institution.

House (1987) explored the ability to predict the extent of alumni giving. A survey was sent to 354 alumni of the University of Florida and responses were utilized to develop and test three prediction equations. The predictors that appeared in all three equations were alumni with higher degrees, perceived financial need of the university, graduates of earlier decades and males. These factors indicated that alumni were more likely to contribute.

Hueston (1989) observed the predictive variables or characteristics of alumni donors at New Mexico State University. Eleven characteristics were analyzed from the population of 34,938 alumni records. A logistic regression technique was utilized to predict probability of membership in a high or low donor-giving group. No significant difference was found when a field validation study was implemented. However, a significant difference was discovered with the ability to contact (amount of directory information available) and membership in the higher probability-rating group.

Grill (1988) considered the ability to use select demographic, behavioral and attitudinal variables to discriminate between alumni donors and non-donors. A survey was sent to a four-group stratified sample of 2,700 undergraduate alumni of a single college from Pennsylvania State University. The strongest discriminating factor was found to be postgraduate involvement with the institution, particularly as identified by membership in the alumni association.

Burt (1989) investigated descriptive data distinguishing potential alumni donors from non-donors of Southeast Missouri State University. The results determined that descriptors of alumni giving for institutional involvement factors were participation in a service-oriented organization, involvement in athletic or varsity sports, membership in music organizations and participation in student government organizations. With regard to educational satisfaction, descriptors of alumni contributors included the ratings of educational experience and of quality of teaching. With regard to demographic variables, descriptors of alumni contributors were household income, year of graduation, age and current distance from campus.

Shadoian (1989) experimented with the ability to use select attitudinal and demographic variables to discriminate between alumni donors and non-donors and high to low donors at an unnamed public university. A survey was sent to a random sample of 1,000 alumni and 779 surveys were returned and analyzed. The characteristics that were the best predictors of group membership (donors vs. non-donors) were reading alumni publications, maintaining contact with faculty/staff, emotional attachment to the college, number of extracurricular activities as a student, and attending campus events. The characteristics that were the best predictors for high or low donors were emotional attachment to the college, enrolling for graduate work and undergraduate program.

Burgess-Getts (1992) examined the extent that select variables would discriminate between donors and non-donors in a smaller college or university, as demonstrated in a Comprehensive I institution such as Christopher Newport College. Post-graduate (alumni) involvement with the institution was one set of variables measured in a questionnaire to alumni. Planned visits to campus (to participate in events and/or to

attend athletic events) were higher among donors than non-donors. Participation in off-campus alumni activities was also slightly higher for donors than non-donors. Year of graduation, attendance of family members at the institution and identification with the institution were also found to be factors that helped predict donor status.

Martin (1993) researched donor behavior of alumni of an unnamed Research I, public university. A survey was sent to a random sample of 500 alumni (250 donors and 250 non-donors) selected from the population. The study utilized demographic, attitudinal, involvement and philanthropic variables to discriminate alumni donors from non-donors. The findings for donor status discriminators included family income, perceived need for financial support, reading alumni publications, graduate enrollment, special interest groups and involvement as an alumnus/a. The discriminate function analysis correctly classified 65% of alumni as donors or non-donors using the discriminators selected.

Robinson (1994) considered if the level of alumni financial support differed on five categories of characteristics: personal data, student experiences, academic experiences, alumni support, and alumni attitude. The population consisted of a random sample of alumni from Grambling State University, Louisiana Tech University, and Northeast Louisiana University from 1974 to 1988. Data were collected utilizing a survey and was correlated against reported giving. Findings indicated a significant, positive relationship between alumni campus visits and level of giving. Findings also indicated that donors felt that their alma mater should maintain a reputation of being a quality institution. Donors were also found to have had a positive experience with their alma mater.

Klostermann (1995) inquired if academic variables, student involvement, alumni involvement (including alumni association membership), volunteer interests, attitudes and giving capacity could be used to predict donor group membership. A survey was distributed to 667 alumni of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale with 375 being completed. A hierarchical discriminate function analyses was performed to assess donor group membership. Findings indicated that donors (as compared to non-donors) and major donors (as compared to prospects) were more likely to be members of the alumni association, have a positive attitude toward the institution, live close to institution and value altruism.

Hunter (1997) explored the relationships between alumni giving and selected characteristics of alumni at Livingstone College. A survey was sent to 1,300 alumni donors as the first phase of this study with 398 completed surveys returned. Membership in the alumni association for Livingstone College and participation in a local alumni chapter were found to be positively correlated with donor status and level. Additional factors found to be positively correlated included: gender, age, family income, year of graduation, degree earned, degrees from other schools, grade point average, Greek membership, frequency of campus visits, membership on college boards and community service. The other variables included gender, age, income, year of graduation, degree earned, degrees from other higher education institutions, church affiliation, and grade point as a student.

Rosser (1997) outlined the relationships between characteristics of former students in relation to their giving at Texas A&M University through the Association of Former Students. Four types of characteristics were investigated: personal and situational,

campus experiences, alumni experiences and attitudes, and behaviors toward philanthropy. A survey was utilized to collect responses from a stratified random sample of former students. Findings indicated that there was a positive correlation between donor status and former student involvement in alumni activities. Involvement as students and alumni was the most correlated variable with donor status and level in the entire investigation. Findings also indicated that older alumni tended to be more involved than younger alumni.

Hanson (2000) studied the relationship between selected student variables, alumni demographics, alumni social involvement and alumni attitudinal measures with alumni supportive behaviors as determined by promoting the university and making financial contributions at the University of North Dakota. Hanson's study included the development of a linear regression model used to predict donors and non-donors. Predictors of giving included income, perceived need, years since graduation, attendance at alumni events, and number of children. The predictors for promotion of the institution by alumni included perceived organizational prestige, social identification, years since graduation and respect for alumni leadership.

Patouillet (2000) assessed the giving differences that existed between member and non-member donors at an unnamed institution who was a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU). The study investigated alumni attitudes and perceptions of giving. However, it is the findings from an earlier study of 11 higher education institutions by the author that emphasized that alumni members in the alumni association were three times more likely to donate than non-members. Results from the earlier study also indicated that the average financial contribution from members of the 11 reporting

higher education institutions in the study was \$480 a year versus \$394 from non-members.

Shim (2001) observed the relationship between characteristics of alumnae and financial support of an unnamed private liberal arts college for women. The characteristics examined included campus visits, participation in alumnae activities, perception of need, satisfaction with education, involvement as a student, residence as undergraduate, being a recipient of aid, readership of alumnae publications and contact with institutional representatives. A survey was utilized to collect responses from alumnae donors. Survey responses were then analyzed against the donor status of respondents. Participation in alumnae activities, number of campus visits since graduation, perception of need for assistance and contact with institutional representatives were the four variables found to have a significant relationship with the magnitude and frequency of giving.

Hoyt (2004) explored a model used for predicting alumni giving at Utah Valley State University based upon prior research findings. Donor status was predicted utilizing willingness to give, alumni involvement, perceptions of the economy, perceived need, charitable preferences, receiving aid as a student and capacity to give. The percentage of alumni participating in alumni activities was found to be significantly higher for donors versus non-donors. Donors were also found to rate the quality of the institution higher than non-donors.

Conner (2005) investigated alumni involvement as one of five categories of variables related to alumni giving at Coastal Carolina University. A survey was utilized in assessing the variables in relation to alumni donor or non-donor status. Surveys were

distributed to 2,600 alumni and 233 completed surveys were received. Survey results were utilized to develop a comprehensive structural equation model. The results of the equation model indicated that there was no difference in alumni involvement between donors and non-donors. However, the logistic regression conducted as part of the factor analysis in the study indicated there was a strong direct path coefficient between alumni loyalty (as determined by reading alumni publications and visiting campus) to donor status.

Lofton (2005) assessed the common interests, activities, giving traits and backgrounds of supportive alumni at the University of Southern Mississippi. Members of the alumni association provided responses through a survey that was used to identify any commonalities between donor behavior and membership. Of the respondents, 72.3% did not indicate any additional support to the university foundation. These findings indicated a weak relationship between alumni association membership and financial support for the institution. Findings also indicated that alumni who were engaged as students tended to be more supportive of the institution as alumni.

Prescott (2006) studied the characteristics of donors and non-donors who were alumni of Mississippi State University. Utilizing alumni records of 85,336 living, addressable alumni from the institution, response to giving methods (phone and mail) were analyzed in comparison to alumni who did not give. Findings indicated a significant difference between donor behavior and gender, age-group, undergraduate major, giving method and resident status.

Diehl (2007) outlined the relationship between alumni giving and receiving institutional scholarship support while an undergraduate at Pennsylvania State University.

The population was 17,418 alumni who graduated between December 2000 and August 2003. Logistic and ordinary least squares regression analyses were utilized to determine the relationship of the factors to giving behavior. Gender, family income and year of graduation were demographic variables found to influence a decision to give, but not the gift level. Number of student activities, grade-point average and academic college were academic and social integration variables found to impact giving behavior and giving amount. Receiving a scholarship was found to impact the motivation to give, but not the size of the gift. When accounting for the amount of scholarship support received, both giving and amount of giving were determined to be impacted. Finally, alumni association membership was found to be the most predictive of all motivation variables impacting both giving and amount.

Weerts and Ronca (2009) researched the characteristics of alumni donors and non-donors at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. A survey was sent to a stratified random sample of 300 alumni from the institution. A classification and regression tree methodology was utilized to examine the relationship of the characteristics studied and donor status. Findings indicated that level of giving was related to household income, religious background, degree and method alumnus/a remained engaged with the campus, perceived financial need of institution and number of competing higher education institutions.

Factors Related to Institutional Opinion

External stakeholders utilize various types of information in order to form opinions regarding higher education institutions. Utilizing the factors investigated in this study as the framework, a review of literature related to each factor is presented except

for the factors scholarship assistance and accomplishments of students. Limited applicable research was located for these factors.

Value and Respect for Degree. Value and respect for a degree best translates to an assessment of quality. Bennett (2001) proposed three ways to assess quality in higher education as related to an assessment of student learning. The measure of the actual learning outcomes proved to be one of the most difficult to quantify. However, the proposed approaches to overcome this barrier utilized alumni input to prove the concepts of value added, assessed outcomes, and reputation. Proposed measures included surveys of alumni asking them to judge the quality of education they received, preparedness to address problems and skills attained.

The product of a higher education institution is the degree that certifies the credentials of its graduates. A common consensus of the measure for quality of such an education is the value added approach in which the capabilities and knowledge of the students as a result of education is the measure of quality (Bennett, 2001). While the field of higher education has not adopted measures that would apply across higher education institutions and various programs, other means of identifying the value of a degree is necessary. Many higher education institutions have relied on the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings as reputational measures of their program (Bennett, 2001).

In a study of institutional prestige and reputation, Volkwein and Sweitzer (2006) examined data from college guidebooks to determine the factors related to undergraduate reputation as measured by the *U.S. News & World Report rankings*. The study identified the factors for both liberal arts and public research universities that relate to their impact on the rankings, thus indicating prestige. The median SAT score, compensation for full

professors, along with age and wealth of institution served as indicators for both types of higher education institutions.

Campus Aesthetics. The appearance of a university or college campus is most often researched as factor in the decision to attend. Reid, et al. (2008) investigated campus appearance as a factor in recruitment efforts by academic colleges. The researchers surveyed 1,075 students from a public university in the Midwest utilizing variables as derived from the literature among which was campus appearance. Results indicated that campus appearance was rated consistently by all students (ranging from 3.53 to 3.85 on a five-point scale). Likewise, in a study of graduate students' satisfaction, del Puerto (2009) found that campus facilities play a small part in the satisfaction students have with their program. However, del Puerto (2009) also found that when surveyed as alumni, there was a disconnect between perception of adequacy and actual condition of facilities.

Media Visibility. The collective visibility that a college or university receives in the media in regard to its multiple constituents has a positive impact on organizational reputation (Alessandri, Yang & Kinsey, 2006). Higher education institutions provide many opportunities for news and media coverage (Jones, 2000). It is through this coverage that consumers of media can learn more about a particular institution; however, it is usually only fragments of the institution to which they are exposed (Jones, 2000). Media visibility assists higher education institutions by providing a third-party endorsement of work, developing name recognition and building support among the public (Jones, 2000).

Outside of news originating out of higher education institution campuses through research, there is the opportunity for higher education institutions to position themselves to develop brand identity among its key stakeholders. Higher education institutions must maintain a distinctive image to maintain a competitive advantage in the market among prospective students, donors or research funding agencies (Ivy, 2001). Developing a successful brand identity acknowledges the values of the community and presents values as a benefit of the institution (McAlexander, Koenig & Schouten, 2006).

History and Tradition. The history and tradition which surrounds a college or university campus provides the setting in which students formulate their collective experience. The history and tradition on a campus are important elements and the premises upon which decisions are made during one's college experience (Hearn, 1996). Dolbert (2002) stated that alumni believe that traditions and values they were exposed to during their education are important to them as alumni. Then as alumni individuals want programs to reflect those experiences. In a study of the various aspects of students' college life, Cheng (2004) found that a university community that celebrates traditions and heritage of the institution was one of six factors that positively impacted the sense of community felt by students. The rituals and traditions that are related to the institutional history and heritage are a major source of shaping community among a student population that comes into the institution from various backgrounds.

Rankings. Assessing the quality of higher education has been a subject of focus for administrators of higher education institutions for years. With the proliferation of rankings provided by news outlets and non-higher education organizations, the accuracy of the rankings remains debatable. One fact remains that higher education institutions do

contribute to the rankings game by touting their successes to recruit students, solicit alumni and recruit faculty (Machung, 1998).

In a qualitative study of the impact of the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings on eight differently ranked MBA programs, Dahlin-Brown (2003) found that rankings were valued in marketing materials and proving support for ranked programs. Conversely, higher education institutions felt the rankings were not a measure of academic quality, but they did acknowledge they reacted to rankings by making changes to the curriculum, student amenities and support services as needed to improve rankings.

Accomplishments of Faculty. Faculty accomplishments as signified by winning national and international awards have been a part of some of the earliest forms of academic quality rankings (Myers & Robe, 2009). Many measures of faculty quality utilized in national rankings serve as greater indicators of research prowess instead of educational measures (Myers & Robe, 2009).

In a study evaluating the promotion and tenure criteria's impact on Oregon State University Cooperative Extension faculty, there was great emphasis placed on being able to identify accomplishments of faculty. Weiser and Houglam (1998) identified that documentation efforts should focus on what was accomplished rather than the procedures utilized with a focus on substance rather than form. Umbach and Porter (2002) studied the impact of academic departments' student satisfaction and found that faculty contact with students and their research emphasis were two of three variables that had a significant impact on students' overall satisfaction with their education.

Athletics. Athletic programs of higher education institutions represent a highly visible form of institution spirit and competition. While the physical performance of

student athletes does not represent the quality of education of the institution, many studies have indicated their extent of the relationship between athletics and supportive behaviors (donations, enrollment, etc.).

Briody (1996) examined the opinions that students, faculty, alumni, and administrators had in regard to the impact on the athletic program's impact on an institution's academic reputation. The findings of the study indicated that the lower the division ranking of the institution in the NCAA classification (Division I, II or III), the more favorable the overall opinion of the relationship between academics and athletics. Alumni and students were found to hold similar opinions with the majority of them holding a favorable opinion of the relationship between athletic programs and academic reputation. However, faculty members throughout all divisions were found to have negative opinions of the relationship between academic reputation and athletics. Additionally, administrators of Division II programs were identified as having the least favorable opinion of the relationship between athletics and academics among the three division types.

Fisher (2007) examined the correlation between athletic success of the men's football and basketball programs and the rankings reported in *U.S. News & World Report* college rankings. The findings of the study indicated very little correlation between success in either men's football or basketball and the reported rankings over an 11-year period. An additional analysis of variance test did indicate that athletic success was potentially a factor in ranking performance.

Grimes and Chressanthis (1994) examined the effect that winning success of an athletic program had on alumni contributions to academics at a National Collegiate

Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I university. The findings indicated that alumni contributions were related to the overall winning percentage of the athletic program. Additionally, sanctions imposed by the NCAA on an athletic program were also found to be negatively related to alumni donations. Stinson (2005) conducted a similar study that took existing academic reputation into account while studying contributions to both academic and athletic programs. Stinson found that schools with stronger academic reputations did not encounter changes in giving in relation to the athletic program's success (win-loss records and post-season appearances). However, giving to athletic programs was found to have a relationship to the athletic program's success.

Outreach to Community. Service and outreach are terms used interchangeably in higher education which are vague and have differing meaning across campuses (Driscoll, & Lynton, 1999). In their research of higher education outreach activities, Driscoll and Lynton (1999) found that most campuses followed the Elman/Smock definition of outreach, which defines professional outreach within the context of a faculty member's professional expertise to exclude unrelated activities. Provided examples of outreach under this definition include technical assistance, policy analysis, organization/community development, program development assistance, evaluation, professional development or service-learning activities (Driscoll, & Lynton, 1999).

Accomplishments of Alumni. In a review of methods utilized to assess alumni outcomes, Volkwein (2010) identified that utilizing alumni in this manner provided a cost-effective means of outcomes assessment for higher education. Not only is alumni feedback being utilized in performance and accountability programs, but post-graduation outcomes are increasingly used in program assessments. These outcomes highlight

additional education/degrees, career attainment, career satisfaction, socioeconomic status, income levels, and awards and recognition.

Organizational Identification

The concept of organizational identification appeared in the 1950s and received minimal attention until being rediscovered in the 1980s by researchers in behavior, social psychology and communication (Riketta, 2005). Ashforth and Mael (1989) proposed that organizational identification should be based on social identity theory. This proposed reconceptualization identified organizational commitment to be a perception of belongingness to an organization in which the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization in which they are a member (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Mael (1988) originally tested the conceptual description he proposed and also examined the concept with alumni and their relationship with their alma mater.

Mael (1988) and later Mael and Ashforth (1992) proposed the concept that there were organizational antecedents (organizational distinctiveness, organizational prestige, interorganizational competition and intraorganizational competition) and individual antecedents (organizational tenure, recency of membership, number of comparable organizations joined, existence of mentor, satisfaction with organization and sentimentality) that factor into the organizational identification of individuals who were alumni from a higher education institution.

The first organizational antecedent is the distinctiveness of the organization. The distinctiveness of an institution differentiates it from other organizations and provides for a sharper definition among its members (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The second organizational antecedent is organizational prestige. The more prestigious the

organization, the greater impact of self-esteem through identification (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The third organizational antecedent is interorganizational competition.

Competition between the focal institution and its contemporaries in which group boundaries are clear and differences accentuated (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The fourth organizational antecedent is intraorganizational competition. Intraorganizational competition is viewed to negatively impact organizational identification because of its focus on competing individuals or subunits rather than the overall organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

The first of the individual antecedents is the recency of membership (the time since a student). Time since enrolled expects that the feeling of belongingness would be expected to diminish (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The second antecedent is the number of comparable organizations joined. When an individual has been associated with more than one organization in the same classification, the perception of oneness is believed to be blurred (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The third antecedent is the existence of a mentor (with faculty). The establishment of a close mentor-like relationship with a faculty member who exemplifies the institution causes greater organizational identification (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). The fourth antecedent is the satisfaction with the organization. This reflects satisfaction with the institution's contributions to the individual's goal accomplishments (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The final individual antecedent is sentimentality. This is the tendency to retain emotional and/or tangible ties to one's past and to derive pleasure from discussing and/or reliving it (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

In a study of organization images and membership as related to organizational identification, Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994) examined the images that members

view as distinctive about their organization and the view that they believe others think about their organization. The model investigated the concept that organizations have collective identities that are formed by rituals, ceremonies and stories that perpetuate the organizational identification to members. Whereas organizations have their collective identities, individuals have their own perceived organizational identification that is reflective of their distinctive, central and enduring attributes of the organization. The model developed in the study found that members identify with images of their organization based upon how well the image enhances their self-concept, is distinctive and bolsters their self-esteem.

Bhattacharya, Rao, and Glynn (1995) examined the identification of art museum members with the organization using organizational identification as a framework. The model tested related member's identification to the organizational characteristics, member affiliation characteristics and member activity characteristics. The perceived prestige of the organization, donations, length of membership, visiting frequency and organizational services meeting expectations were all positively related to organizational identification. Participation in similar organizations was found to be negatively related to identification with the organization.

Muller (2004) examined the connection of organizational identification and induced reciprocity to institutional support and philanthropy of the expatriate alumni of foreign-based American universities. A random sample of 900 was utilized out of a population of 5,100 alumni living in the United States. The study examined how institutional variables (institutional prestige, goal congruence, institutional leadership and institutional sensitivity); behavioral variables (student academic involvement, social

involvement with peers, and social involvement with faculty/administration); and individual variables (achievement level, time affiliate with institution, family members' affiliation with institution and social responsiveness) factored against the control variables (age, income, gender, family size, perceived institutional need, frequency of institutional communication and receipt of scholarship). Factors which can be managed by the institution that were found to influence financial giving and the relationship between alumni and the institution included: institutional prestige, sensitivity and need, alumni perception of congruence between the institution's goals and their own, respect for institutional leadership, institutional communication with alumni, alumni identification with the institution, satisfaction with the community as students and induced reciprocity.

Caboni and Eiseman (2003) examined voluntary support for higher education using the organizational identification framework. The relationships between involvement, perceived educational effectiveness, organizational prestige and organizational identification were examined. A sample of 725 alumni from an unnamed small Catholic liberal arts college were surveyed by phone (234 responded) for the study. Findings indicated that perceived organizational prestige and number of years since graduation both had a positive relationship with alumni giving. There was not a significant relationship between organizational identification and educational effectiveness. This finding was not consistent with previous studies that indicate organizational identification is a significant factor in alumni giving. The final finding indicated a significant negative relationship between alumni involvement and giving.

The University of Arkansas and Arkansas Alumni Association

The University of Arkansas was founded in 1871 as both the state's land grant and state university (University of Arkansas, n.d.). It is classified as a Doctorate-granting University (high research activity) by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Institutions: University of Arkansas Main Campus, n.d.). The University enrolled 19,489 (15,835 undergraduate; 398 Law; and 3,616 graduate) students in the fall of 2009 (Students, n.d.).

The Arkansas Alumni Association is a not-for-profit organization that seeks to connect alumni to the University of Arkansas (About us, n.d.). The Association's beginnings trace back to 1878 and has played a major role in campus growth, raising financial support, establishing scholarships and providing alumni programs (About us, n.d.). Seven years after the founding of the Arkansas Industrial University, the Board of Trustees ordered the creation of a set of alumni records (King, 2003a). Engagement of alumni remained loosely developed and focused on financial support and legislative advocacy prior to World War II (King, 2003a). The Arkansas Alumni Association had remained dormant during the war and in 1947 the president of the Association put out a call to alumni to send \$100 each to reinvigorate it (King, 2003b). This revitalization brought the first executive secretary who was the University's staff representative for alumni work (King, 2003b). The Association served as the organization that founded the University of Arkansas Endowment Corporation which has since evolved into the University of Arkansas Foundation (King, 2003b). In 1961, the Association reorganized once more and incorporated (King, 2003b). The 1980s proved to be the next period of change for the Association after the University of Arkansas created the office of

development, which relieved the Association of fundraising responsibilities (King, 2003c). It was in 1988, that the first non-graduate was hired as the chief executive for the Association (King, 2003c).

In 1988, the Association had a membership of 10,000 and its programming offerings were limited to chapters and reunion events. *Arkansas Alumnus* magazine was published quarterly and distributed to all dues paying members of the Association. Since 1988, the Association has seen an expansion of its membership, programming and communications to serve the alumni of the University. Programs have been developed to reach all age ranges of alumni. The Student Alumni Board (SAB) serves as a link between current University students and alumni (University of Arkansas, 2009). In addition to SAB, the Association also operates a student membership program that seeks to inspire loyalty and involvement of students (University of Arkansas, 2009). A scholarship program was formed in 1990 and today awards over \$2 million in support for University of Arkansas students yearly (University of Arkansas, 2009).

Programming for alumni is centered on the organization of groups and rallying alumni behind a cause or athletics. There are over 30 active alumni chapters, which are geographic organizations of 250 or more alumni (University of Arkansas, 2009). Areas not large enough to be supported by chapters can find individuals to serve as a Regional Razorback and serve as a point of contact and occasionally gather alumni for events (University of Arkansas, 2009). Organizations focused on academic programs are referred to as professional societies and those formed based upon a social group or student activity are referred to as affinity societies (University of Arkansas, 2009). In

2009, there were five professional societies and two affinity societies (University of Arkansas, 2009).

Programming that is centered on the athletic program of the University include pre-game rallies and road trips. Before every home game, the Association hosts nearly 700 alumni and friends for a pre-game event featuring food and entertainment (University of Arkansas, 2009). The Association also plans travel to select football games, basketball tournaments, bowl games and baseball tournaments (University of Arkansas, 2009).

Other methods of engagement for alumni include volunteering, career services and travel. Volunteer opportunities include the ability to represent the University at college planning fairs and programs as an alumni ambassador and advocating for the University to the state legislature as being part of the Legislative Advocacy Network (LAN) (University of Arkansas, 2009). The Association also selects annual tours that travel to domestic and international destinations for alumni (University of Arkansas, 2009).

The Association maintains regular communications with alumni to keep them informed about alumni activities and news about the University of Arkansas (University of Arkansas, 2009). The *Arkansas Alumnus* was renamed and redesigned to *Arkansas* magazine in 1990 and has won numerous awards for its format and content. *Arkansas* magazine is distributed quarterly to all current members in the Association with a circulation of 22,000 (households). The magazine was supplemented with the development of broadcast e-mail and a monthly electronic newsletter @Arkansas in 2003.

Chapter Summary

The review of literature presented was organized around the background of alumni relations in higher education, studies examining the relationship of alumni loyalty and support for their alma mater, organizational identification and the University of Arkansas and the Arkansas Alumni Association.

Alumni relations is a central part of institutional advancement activities as it keeps alumni engaged as stakeholders in the institution from which they hold a degree. Alumni relations programs have evolved over time, but their primary purpose has always been to inform and involve alumni in the current affairs of an institution. The ultimate goal remains a financial commitment to the organization through membership in alumni associations and giving to fundraising initiatives.

Alumni loyalty is a very subjective measure of how strongly one feels about their alma mater. While studies investigate multiple variables that try to measure or quantify loyalty, there is a strong connection between how positively one feels about an institution and their willingness to serve or donate to that institution. Loyalty is fostered either from positive student experiences or from being cultivated as alumni.

Organizational identification relates how a member of an organization relates to the overall organization through internal and external variables. Organizational antecedents (organizational distinctiveness, organizational prestige, interorganizational competition and intraorganizational competition) and individual antecedents (organizational tenure, recency of membership, number of comparable organizations joined, existence of mentor, satisfaction with organization and sentimentality) are considered the two major forces that impact organizational identification. Through a

positive identification with an organization, individuals are more likely to respond to appeals for support.

Finally, a review of the background of the University of Arkansas and the Arkansas Alumni Association indicates that alumni relations have been a valued activity of the University of Arkansas since its founding. The programs, services and membership of the organization have evolved since 1988. However, with the recent rise in the organizational prestige of the University of Arkansas, the identification and participation of alumni through membership has not been consistently related.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the factors that impact alumni opinion of the University of Arkansas, loyalty to components of the University and overall current opinion. The data used was collected by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the Alumni Attitude Study[®] on the behalf of the Arkansas Alumni Association in June and July, 2009. The Alumni Attitude Study[®] was designed to compare values, preferences and perceptions of alumni as related to their engagement with their alma mater (AAS Overview, n.d.). The remainder of this chapter will identify the population examined, design of the research study, instrumentation used to collect the data, data collection process, procedure for data analysis and a summary.

Population

The population for the study was all living alumni who graduated from the University of Arkansas. There were 141,046 alumni of the University of Arkansas with 17,416 being deceased. There were 123,630 alumni presumed to be living, but 15,355 of those were not addressable and considered “lost” alumni. This left 108,275 addressable alumni (Arkansas Alumni Association, 2010).

A convenience sample of only alumni with an active e-mail address on their alumni record who also had not opted out of the ability to receive e-mail or surveys from the Arkansas Alumni Association from June 16 to July 8, 2009 was utilized for this study. This convenience sample represents a nonprobability sampling technique as the alumni with an e-mail on record were available, convenient and represent the characteristics being examined (Creswell, 2005).

From the 108,275 living, (mailing) addressable alumni of the University of Arkansas, 46,680 records had e-mail addresses eligible to be included. There were 2,794 undeliverable e-mail messages resulting in a final count of 43,866 alumni who were presumed to have received the survey. There were 2,670 respondents to the survey representing 6.1% of the target population and 2.5% of the entire population. This exceeds the completed sample size needed of 1,056 within a +/-3% sampling error with a 95% confidence interval (Dillman, 2007).

Design

An ex-post facto research design was utilized to determine the relationship between (factors used to formulate opinion, areas of loyalty, and undergraduate/graduate alumni status) to the dependent variable group (overall perception of the University of Arkansas). This ex-post facto approach was utilized since the variations in the independent variable had already been determined in the natural course of events (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996).

Instrumentation

The Alumni Attitude Study[®] is a proprietary survey designed by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd., based in Houston, Texas. The Alumni Attitude Study[®] was designed in 2001 with 11 partner higher education institutions to compare values, preferences and perceptions of alumni as related to their engagement with their alma mater (AAS Overview, n.d.). At the time of distribution in June 2009, Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. had distributed the survey to over 200 higher education institutions (AAS Overview, n.d.).

The survey was segmented and customized for three categories of alumni at the request of the Arkansas Alumni Association: current alumni association members (See Appendix A), former alumni association members (See Appendix B), and alumni who have never been alumni association members (See Appendix C). All questions appeared in each survey, but questions regarding membership had variations in terminology to reflect the current membership status of the individual receiving the survey. The three questions that were the focus of this study were consistent across all three versions of the survey. The first page of the survey obtained demographic information of the respondent and the following page contained 25 questions (scaled and open-ended questions) in three sections.

The survey was developed through collaboration between alumni professionals and research professionals from Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. (On the Question of Validity, 2009). The alumni professionals collectively decided what issues should be included in a comprehensive look at alumni opinions and attitudes about their alma mater. This collaboration between the alumni professionals and researchers led to a survey that has been effectively administered across multiple higher education institutions and had indicated face validity (On the Question of Validity, 2009). Face validity occurs when the survey is valid for its intended purpose (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996). An additional Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to determine the reliability of all factors examined in this study. Acceptable results were received within the factors impacting opinion, overall current opinion, geographic territory and areas of loyalty. However, an acceptable result was not achieved for level of degree and overall current opinion.

Sample bias was a concern for only surveying alumni with valid e-mail accounts. Previous clients of Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. have tried to minimize this bias by implementing phone and mail surveys in addition to e-mail (On the Metrics of the AAS, 2009). The findings from these particular projects did not demonstrate any significant differences in the attitude about issues, but in a few cases amplitude differences between sub-samples were observed (On the Metrics of the AAS, 2009).

Due to the standard analyses conducted on data from the Alumni Attitude Study[®], Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. strives to have a minimum of 500 responses per participant institution to minimize concerns of statistical reliability (On the Metrics of the AAS, 2009). Since there were 2,670 responses to the survey administered by the Arkansas Alumni Association, strong confidence intervals for the overall results and acceptable confidence intervals for the internal segments for analysis were achieved

Data Collection

The data used for this study was obtained from the survey was distributed by the Arkansas Alumni Association and collected by Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. from June 24 to July 17, 2009. The survey was distributed three times to all addressable alumni who had valid e-mail addresses who had not opted out of receiving e-mails of this type. Multiple contacts were utilized to in order increase the response rate (Dillman, 2007). The data were captured, stored and analyzed by Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. before being provided to the Arkansas Alumni Association in a SPSS file format. This secondary data was used with the written permission of the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. (See Appendix G).

The survey was initially distributed through e-mail to 43,866 e-mail addresses by the Arkansas Alumni Association on June 16, 2009 using a unique click-through link to the survey. The e-mail message (see Appendix D) was sent through the Arkansas Alumni Association's e-mail delivery service provided by eROI. The message was branded with the colors and format of official e-mails from the Arkansas Alumni Association and contained the name and signature of the Executive Director of the Association.

A follow-up e-mail message (see Appendix E) was sent from the Association and contained the name and signature of the Executive Director of the Association on June 24, 2009 to alumni who had not responded to the survey or had e-mailed the Association indicating problems accessing the survey instrument. Follow-up mailing lists were achieved by providing a listing of record numbers of individuals who had responded to the survey or had e-mailed indicating difficulty to complete the survey or desire to be removed from the survey mailing. A final reminder was sent again on July 8, 2009 (see Appendix F) to alumni who had not responded to the survey or e-mailed the Association indicating problems accessing the survey instrument from the Association with the name and signature of the Executive Director of the Association asking alumni to respond by July 17, 2009. A total of 2,390 alumni responded to the survey by the deadline.

Data Analysis

Only data from the three questions which were related to the research questions in this study were analyzed. To address the first research question, measures of central tendencies were utilized to determine the difference between factors alumni use to formulate opinions of the University of Arkansas and their respective geographic territory. Determining measures of central tendency identify an index to help represent

each group studied (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996). When the data file was sent to Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd., a territory code was sent with each alumni record indicating an assigned geographic territory. The territories included: on-campus (faculty/staff members who are alumni); Northwest Arkansas (residents of Benton and Washington Counties in Arkansas who are not faculty/staff members); Greater Arkansas (residents of the rest of Arkansas and the Memphis metro area); Out-of-State (all other states excluding those alumni included in the Memphis metro area); International (foreign citizens living in US and ex-patriates and internationals living abroad). The frequency of responses from question 17 was analyzed to determine the difference between assigned geographic territories. Question 17 on the survey asked alumni to indicate how much each of the of the following impacts their overall opinion of the University of Arkansas: (a) value/respect for degree; (b) campus aesthetics (e.g., buildings, grounds, etc.); (c) media visibility (e.g., newspaper, magazine articles, etc.); (d) history/tradition; (e) accomplishments of alumni; (f) school rankings (e.g., *U.S. News & World Report*); (g) accomplishments of faculty; (h) outreach to community; (i) accomplishments of students; (j) success of athletic teams; (k) providing scholarships; (l) other (provided with space to enter open-ended comments).

To address the second research question, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was utilized to determine the relationship between the 11 factors identified as influencing opinion and the overall perception of alumni regarding the University of Arkansas. A multiple regression analysis is utilized when determining the relationship of multiple independent variables with a single dependent variable (Creswell, 2005). Question 17 on the survey asked alumni to indicate how much each of the of the following impacts their

overall opinion of the University of Arkansas: (a) value/respect for degree; (b) campus aesthetics (e.g., buildings, grounds, etc.); (c) media visibility (e.g., newspaper, magazine articles, etc.); (d) history/tradition; (e) accomplishments of alumni; (f) school rankings (e.g., *U.S. News & World Report*); (g) accomplishments of faculty; (h) outreach to community; (i) accomplishments of students; (j) success of athletic teams; (k) providing scholarships; (l) other (provided with space to enter open-ended comments). The responses to these 11 variables were compared to the responses to question six which asked respondents to describe their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas with a four-point Likert-type scale (Poor, fair, good, excellent), with an option to indicate no opinion. No opinion was the default answer selected in the survey. Those who indicated no opinion were not included in the analysis.

To address research question three, a Pearson product moment correlation between each potential area of loyalty and factors utilized in formulating opinions of the University of Arkansas. The Pearson product moment correlation relates one independent variable with one dependent variable when both are treated as continuous variables (Creswell, 2005). Question 22 asked alumni to indicate the extent of their loyalty to each of the following: (a) undergraduate college; (b) major or academic area of study; (c) faculty member or instructor; (d) student organization or activity; (e) University of Arkansas athletics; or (f) University of Arkansas in general. Question 17 asked alumni to indicate how much each of the following impacts their overall opinion of the University of Arkansas: (a) value/respect for degree; (b) campus aesthetics (e.g., buildings, grounds, etc.); (c) media visibility (e.g., newspaper, magazine articles, etc.); (d) history/tradition; (e) accomplishments of alumni; (f) school rankings (e.g., *U.S. News & World Report*); (g)

accomplishments of faculty; (h) outreach to community; (i) accomplishments of students; (j) success of athletic teams; (k) providing scholarships; (l) other (provided with space to enter open-ended comments).

To address the fourth and final research question, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with a Tukey post-hoc test was utilized to determine if there were significant differences in the overall perceptions held by alumni who received only an undergraduate degree, graduate degree or both from the University of Arkansas. ANOVA is utilized for group comparisons where there is one or more categorical independent variables and one continuous dependent variable (Creswell, 2005). The overall current opinion of the institution was the continuous dependent variable and the alumni classification (undergraduate only, graduate only, and both undergraduate and graduate) was the categorical independent variable. When the data file was sent to Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the survey, a categorical value was added to each alumni record for “Degree Obtained from the University” (undergraduate only, graduate only, and both undergraduate and graduate). The categorical assignments were compared to the responses to question six which asked respondents to describe their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas with a four point Likert-type scale (poor, fair, good, excellent), with an option to indicate no opinion. No opinion was the default answer selected in the survey.

Chapter Summary

Utilizing an ex-post facto research design, three specific data points from the Alumni Attitude Study[®] conducted for the Arkansas Alumni Association, the relationship between alumni perceptions of their alma mater and various factors utilized to form their

perceptions was examined. Data from 2,670 respondents to the survey were analyzed. These results should not be generalized to alumni of other higher education institutions. However, the results of this study shall serve as an example that could be repeated by other higher education institutions.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Alumni of higher education institutions are truly the only non-transient constituency of the institution (Forman, 1989). While many alumni do maintain a lifelong relationship with their alma mater, higher education institutions are one of many organizations in the life of its alumni and must compete for their attention and strive to ensure that they hold a positive opinion of the current state of their alma mater (Forman, 1989). The goal of all this activity is to increase quality alumni interactions with and support for the university (Grafton, 2000). The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the factors that impact alumni opinion of the University of Arkansas, loyalty to components of the University and overall current opinion as indicated in the Alumni Attitude Study[®]. The Alumni Attitude Study[®] was conducted by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the Arkansas Alumni Association from June 16 to July 17, 2009. Data contained in this study specifically addressed the overall current opinion of alumni and the factors affecting their opinion and their feeling of loyalty to various areas of the institution.

This chapter contains a summary of the Alumni Attitude Study[®] and the research questions addressed in this study. The data collection procedure is identified. Results of the data analysis as related to the stated research questions are presented and discussed. Finally, a summary is presented to provide an overview of the results.

Summary of the Study

The study examined the relationship between the overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas, factors alumni identified that impact their opinion and loyalty to various aspects of the University of Arkansas. Responses from three specific questions of the Alumni Attitude Study[®], in addition to known demographic factors of respondents (degree level and geographic location through assigned geographic territory code provided the data for analysis). Utilizing this data, this study sought to further explain the relationship between alumni and the University of Arkansas which was not available in the standard analysis available as a participant in the Alumni Attitude Study[®].

The significance of examining the relationship between alumni opinion of the University of Arkansas, the factors that impact opinion, and areas of loyalty is that it provides a framework for alumni relations and advancement programs at the University of Arkansas. Identifying the relationship between the factors that influence opinion and overall current opinion can help alumni relations and institutional advancement professionals identify content that is most important to communicate to alumni. By enhancing the coverage of topics that have the greatest positive impact on alumni opinion of a university, alumni relations professionals can create an environment that increases their likelihood of engaging alumni as members of an alumni association or for their development counterparts to engage them as donors. The findings from this study can provide a framework to establish and maintain relationships with alumni that increase their opinion of their alma mater. This framework will help strategically place information related to the factors that influence opinion, by segmenting information as related to specific areas of loyalty, geographic territory, or level of degree.

This study utilized secondary data from 2,670 responses to the Alumni Attitude Study[®] conducted by Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the Arkansas Alumni Association from June 16 to July 17, 2009. The Alumni Attitude Study[®] is a standardized study developed for the purpose of identifying the relationship that alumni with their particular institution.

Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. was provided a data file that contained defined background characteristics of alumni invited to participate in the study. The responses of alumni were matched up with this data and all responses contained the variables necessary for this study. After Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. conducted their standard analysis, the complete data file including the background characteristics and survey responses were then provided to the Arkansas Alumni Association for further use.

Data Collection Results

From June 16 to July 17, 2009, alumni from the University of Arkansas with a valid e-mail address that was deliverable for the purpose of this survey (43,866), were invited to participate in the Alumni Attitude Study[®]. The Alumni Attitude Study[®] was conducted by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. The e-mails inviting alumni to participate were distributed by the Arkansas Alumni Association and alumni were directed to a website where they took the appropriate version of the study. There were three versions of the study that had slightly different terminology based upon the participant's current membership status with the Arkansas Alumni Association. For the purpose of this study, the questions analyzed were consistent between each version.

A total of 2,670 survey responses were received for the study representing 6.1% participation rate of the target population and 2.5% of the entire population. The demographic profile of respondents included gender, ethnicity and degree level. There were 1,576 (59.9%) male respondents and 1,028 (39.1%) female. There were 26 records with missing data (1.0%). The ethnicity of participants included: African-American (3.4%); Asian-Pacific (1.9%); Caucasian (51.7%); Hispanic (0.6%), Foreign (0.2%) and Unknown (41.2%). The breakdown of participants by assigned geographic territory is contained in Table 1. The degree level of participants with degrees from the University of Arkansas included 1,608 (61.4%) who received only an undergraduate degree, 568 (21.7%) who received only a graduate degree, and 441 (16.9%) who received both an undergraduate and graduate degree.

Table 1.

Responses by Territory

Territory	<i>N</i>	%
On-Campus	73	2.8
Northwest Arkansas	409	15.6
Arkansas	790	30.0
United States	1,300	49.4
International	58	2.2
Total	2,630	

A Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to determine the reliability of all factors examined in this study. Complete results are presented in Table 2. Acceptable results were received within the factors impacting opinion, overall current opinion, geographic

territory and areas of loyalty. However, an acceptable result was not achieved for level of degree and overall current opinion.

Table 2.

Factor Reliability and Variance

Factors	<i>N</i>	Cronbach's Alpha	% of Variance
Overall Current Opinion/ Factors Impacting Opinion	2,162	.879	1.7
Geographic Territories/ Factors Impacting Opinion	2,189	.859	47.2
Areas of Loyalty/ Factors Impacting Opinion	1,571	.880	4.3
Level of Degree/ Overall Current Opinion	2,567	-.030	1.1

Data Analysis

This study contained four research questions and this section addresses the findings related to each question. To answer the research questions, responses from the appropriate questions in the Alumni Attitude Study[®] were analyzed utilizing the determined statistical analysis. All data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 15.

Research Question One

Do the factors that alumni use to formulate opinions of the University of Arkansas vary by geographic territory? To answer this question, responses to each of the 11 factors presented to alumni in Question 17 of the Alumni Attitude Study were examined using measures of central tendency. Alumni were asked to indicate how much each of the

factors impacted their overall opinion of the University of Arkansas. Alumni could select from a Likert-type scale in which was coded in the following manner: 1 represented “No impact on my opinion”; 2 represented “Some impact on my opinion;” 3 represented “Significantly impacts my opinion;” and 4 represented “Critically impacts my opinion.”

The factor of value and respect for degree only had minimal variation when examined by geographic territory. The mean for the international territory for this factor was highest among all the territories ($M = 3.35$, $SD = .716$). The mean for the United States territory was the lowest ($M = 3.24$, $SD = .787$). Complete results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Frequencies and Mean Value and Respect for Degree by Territory

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	3.25	.861
Northwest Arkansas	382	3.25	.774
Arkansas	734	3.33	.741
United States	1,187	3.24	.787
International	51	3.35	.716
Total	2,417	3.27	.773

The factor of value and campus aesthetics had slight variation when examined by geographic territory. The alumni from the Arkansas territory ($M = 3.09$, $SD = .709$) rated this factor the highest among all the territories. The alumni from the Northwest Arkansas

territory rated it the lowest ($M = 2.94$, $SD = .810$). Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Campus Aesthetics

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	2.98	.793
Northwest Arkansas	386	2.94	.810
Arkansas	736	3.09	.709
United States	1,175	2.95	.790
International	51	2.96	.713
Total	2,408	2.99	.769

The factor of media visibility was valued most by alumni in the on-campus territory. The alumni from the on-campus territory ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .859$) rated this factor the highest among all the territories. The alumni from the Northwest Arkansas ($M = 2.78$, $SD = .847$), United States ($M = 2.78$, $SD = .859$) and International ($M = 2.78$, $SD = .664$) territories all rated it the same. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Media Visibility

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	62	3.14	.859
Northwest Arkansas	378	2.78	.847
Arkansas	730	2.91	.803
United States	1,159	2.78	.859
International	54	2.78	.664
Total	2,379	2.82	.837

The factor of history and tradition was similar across geographic territories. The alumni from the Arkansas territory ($M = 3.29$, $SD = .726$) rated this factor the highest among all the territories. The alumni from the on-campus ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .859$) and Northwest Arkansas ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .850$) territory rated it the lowest. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

Frequencies and Mean Values for History and Tradition

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	3.14	.859
Northwest Arkansas	384	3.14	.850
Arkansas	739	3.29	.726
United States	1,185	3.16	.833
International	54	3.17	.607
Total	2,421	3.20	.801

The factor of accomplishments of alumni varied substantially by geographic territory. The alumni from the international territory ($M = 3.17$, $SD = .720$) rated this factor higher than all other territories. The average of all responses ($M = 2.87$, $SD = .904$) were consistent with the responses of the other territories. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 7.

Table 7.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Accomplishments of Alumni

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	2.92	.809
Northwest Arkansas	378	2.81	.931
Arkansas	728	2.89	.899
United States	1,176	2.88	.902
International	53	3.17	.720
Total	2,393	2.87	.904

The factor of school rankings varied substantially by geographic territory. The alumni from the international territory ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .677$) rated this factor higher than all other territories. Additionally, alumni from the on-campus territory ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .963$) rated this factor lower than all other territories. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 8.

Table 8.

Frequencies and Mean Values for School Rankings

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	2.56	.963
Northwest Arkansas	383	2.95	.870
Arkansas	729	2.95	.899
United States	1,184	2.97	.894
International	53	3.25	.677
Total	2,408	2.96	.892

The factor of accomplishments of faculty was consistent by all geographic territories. The alumni from the international territory ($M = 3.17$, $SD = .72$) rated this factor the highest of all territories. The lowest rating came from the on-campus territory ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .809$). Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 9.

Table 9.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Accomplishments of Faculty

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	2.92	.809
Northwest Arkansas	382	2.94	.841
Arkansas	727	2.94	.876
United States	1,181	2.95	.852
International	54	3.17	.72
Total	2,403	2.95	.854

The factor of outreach to community was consistently rated by all geographic territories. The alumni from the Northwest Arkansas territory ($M = 2.90$, $SD = .791$) rated this factor higher than all other territories. Alumni from the United States territory ($M = 2.74$, $SD = .824$) rated this factor lower than all other territories. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 10.

Table 10.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Outreach to Community

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	62	2.84	.834
Northwest Arkansas	377	2.90	.791
Arkansas	725	2.86	.856
United States	1,148	2.74	.824
International	51	2.82	.793
Total	2,359	2.81	.862

The factor of accomplishments of students was valued most by alumni from the on-campus territory ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .875$). Alumni from the United States territory ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .824$) and Northwest Arkansas ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .804$) rated this factor lower than all other territories. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 11.

Table 11.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Respect for Accomplishments of Students

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	3.10	.875
Northwest Arkansas	381	3.02	.804
Arkansas	727	3.07	.809
United States	1,162	3.02	.824
International	53	3.09	.714
Total	2,382	3.04	.815

The factor of success of athletic teams was consistent among territories beyond the on-campus territory. The alumni from the on-campus territory ($M = 2.16$, $SD = .902$) rated this factor lower than all other territories. Alumni from all other territories were consistently near the overall population average ($M = 2.61$, $SD = .981$). Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 12.

Table 12.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Success of Athletic Teams

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	63	2.16	.902
Northwest Arkansas	382	2.51	1.08
Arkansas	732	2.66	.958
United States	1,174	2.65	.985
International	53	2.64	.982
Total	2,400	2.61	.981

The factor of providing scholarships was valued most by alumni from the Northwest Arkansas territory ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .738$). Alumni from the United States territory ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .861$) rated this factor lower than all other territories. Complete results for this factor are presented in Table 13.

Table 13.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Providing Scholarships

Territory	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
On-Campus	62	3.27	.793
Northwest Arkansas	371	3.33	.738
Arkansas	716	3.25	.817
United States	1,162	3.14	.861
International	51	3.29	.701
Total	2,358	3.21	.827

Slight differences were detected after examining each factor independently. School rankings were the factor with the greatest variance within the highest and lowest mean when compared by geographic territory. Alumni in the international territory valued it the most ($M = 3.25, SD = .677$) while alumni in the on-campus territory rated it the lowest ($M = 2.56, SD = .963$). Accomplishments of students were the factor that had the least variation when compared by territory. The on-campus territory rated it the highest ($M = 3.10, SD = .875$), while the Northwest Arkansas territory rated it the lowest ($M = 3.02, SD = .804$).

Research Question Two

To what extent is there a relationship between the factors influencing opinion and the overall perception of alumni regarding the University of Arkansas? Responses from Question 6 and Question 17 from the Alumni Attitude Study[©] were examined to determine the relationship between the factors presented and overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas. A Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to determine which factors were related to overall current opinion.

The factor of history/tradition had the strongest relationship with overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas as indicated by a moderate correlation of .326 ($p < .01$). All other factors were determined to have a weak correlation to overall current opinion. The only factor to indicate a very weak correlation to overall current opinion was school rankings as indicated with a correlation of .059. Complete results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14.

Correlation between Factors Affecting Opinion and Overall Opinion

Factor	<i>r</i>
History/Tradition	.326**
Success of Athletic Teams	.276**
Campus Aesthetics	.271**
Accomplishments of Alumni	.236**
Media Visibility	.221**
Outreach to Community	.196**
Accomplishments of Students	.196**
Value/Respect for Degree	.189**
Accomplishments of Faculty	.163**
Providing Scholarships	.122**
School Rankings	.059**

** $p < .01$

To determine the extent to which each of the factors could predict the overall current opinion, a stepwise multiple regression was conducted utilizing all the variables and the responses for the overall current opinion. A stepwise multiple regression identifies the best predictor variable in step one and in additional steps the variables that would contribute the greatest amount of unique relevant variance are added (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). A four-step model was developed using the factors of history/tradition, success of athletic teams, campus aesthetics and accomplishments of alumni. The results are in Table 15.

The first factor loaded into the regression model ($r = .330, p < .05$) was history and tradition. The regression analysis for model one indicated predicting overall current opinion from history/tradition as a factor was statistically significant, $F(1, 2190) = 267.87, p < .05$. The R^2 was 0.109 indicating that 10.9% of the variance in overall current opinion about the University of Arkansas is accounted for by the factor of history and tradition of the institution. For every unit increase in the importance of history and tradition as a factor, there was a corresponding increase in overall current opinion of .275.

The second factor loaded into the regression model ($r = .362, p < .05$) was success of athletic teams. A regression analysis for model two indicated predicting overall current opinion from both factors was statistically significant, $F(1, 218) = 164.88, p < .05$. The R^2 was 0.131 indicating that 13.1% of the variance in overall current opinion about the University of Arkansas was accounted for by the factors of history and tradition of the institution and success of athletic teams. For every unit increase in the importance of history and tradition as a factor, the corresponding increase in overall current opinion about the University of Arkansas drops from .275 in model one to .217. For every unit increase in the importance of the success of athletic teams, there was a corresponding increase of overall opinion of .110.

The third factor loaded into the regression model ($r = .371, p < .05$) was campus aesthetics. A regression analysis for model three indicated predicting overall current opinion from all three factors was statistically significant, $F(1, 2188) = 116.47, p < .05$. The R^2 was 0.138 indicating that 13.8% of the variance in overall current opinion about the University of Arkansas is accounted for by the factors of history and tradition,

success of athletic teams, and campus aesthetics. For every unit increase in the importance of history and tradition as a factor, the corresponding increase in overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas drops from .275 in model one to .182. Taking the new factor of model three into account for every unit increase in importance of success of athletics teams, the corresponding increase in overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas drops from .110 in model two to .097. For every unit increase in the importance of campus aesthetics, there was a corresponding increase of overall opinion of .086.

The fourth factor loaded into the regression model ($r = .374, p < .05$) was accomplishments of alumni. A regression analysis for model four indicated predicting overall current opinion from all four factors was statistically significant, $F(1, 2187) = 88.67, p < .05$. The R^2 was 0.140 indicating that 14.0% of the variance in overall current opinion about the University of Arkansas was accounted for by the factors of history and tradition, success of athletic teams, campus aesthetics, and accomplishments of alumni. For every unit increase in the importance of history and tradition as a factor, the corresponding increase in overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas drops from .275 in model one to .168. Taking the new factor of model four into account for every unit increase in importance of success of athletics teams the corresponding increase in overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas drops from .110 in model two to .092. The factor of campus aesthetics drops from .086 to .078 when the fourth factor was added. For every unit increase in the importance of accomplishments of alumni, there was a corresponding increase of overall opinion of .037.

Table 15.

Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Overall Current Opinion of the University of Arkansas (N=2,192)

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	β
Model 1			
Constant	2.54	.05	
History and Tradition	.275	.017	.330**
Model 2			
Constant	2.44	.057	
History and Tradition	.217	.018	.261**
Success of Athletic Teams	.110	.015	.163**
Model 3			
Constant	2.33	.062	
History and Tradition	.182	.020	.218**
Success of Athletic Teams	.097	.015	.143**
Campus Aesthetics	.086	.021	.099**
Model 4			
Constant	2.30	.063	
History and Tradition	.168	.021	.202**
Success of Athletic Teams	.092	.015	.136**
Campus Aesthetics	.078	.021	.090**
Accomplishments of Alumni	.037	.017	.050**

Research Question Three

To what extent is there a correlation between the loyalty to various components of the University of Arkansas by alumni and the factors utilized in formulating their opinion of the institution? In order to address this research question, the responses from question 22 of the Alumni Attitude Study[®] in which alumni were asked to indicate the extent of their loyalty to six aspects of the University of Arkansas were correlated with the responses from question 17 in which alumni were asked how the 11 factors impacted overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas.

Among all the aspects of the University of Arkansas that alumni were asked to identify their level of loyalty, the University of Arkansas in general had the highest average rating. Likewise, a student organization or activity received the lowest rating by alumni completing the question. The mean for responses to the various areas of loyalty which alumni were asked to respond to are presented in Table 16.

Table 16.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Areas of Loyalty (1-4 scale)

Area of Loyalty	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
My Undergraduate College	2,293	3.12	.900
My Major or Academic Area of Study	2,391	3.20	.885
A Faculty Member or Instructor	2,069	2.84	1.07
A Student Organization or Activity	1,958	2.71	1.10
University of Arkansas Athletics	2,362	3.07	1.03
University of Arkansas in General	2,456	3.43	.738

In order to conduct a point-biserial correlation between the various areas of loyalty and factors in opinion, the areas of loyalty were artificially dichotomized with a 0 representing “No Loyalty” and a 1 representing “somewhat loyal”, “loyal,” and “very loyal.” The results of the point-biserial correlation analysis for the entire population are presented in Table 17. Only two groupings (Success of Athletic Teams, Loyalty to Faculty, Providing Scholarships, and Loyalty to the University of Arkansas) did not have a statistically significant correlation. However, when the same correlation analysis was conducted for each of the respective geographic territories, differences between the correlation of factors and loyalty were noted. Complete results for each territory are presented in Tables 17-22.

Correlating the areas of loyalty and the factors affecting opinion for the entire population only determined a moderate correlation between the factors of history/tradition (.321, $p < .01$) and success of athletic teams (.457, $p < .01$) with loyalty to athletics at the University of Arkansas. All other significant factors and area correlations were either weak or very weak correlations.

When correlations were conducted by geographic territory, differences among the territories were discovered. For the on-campus territory, there was a strong correlation between the factor of success of athletic teams and loyalty to athletics ($r = .617, p < .01$). There were many additional moderate correlations for the on-campus territory between each of the factors and areas of loyalty as indicated in Table 18.

The results for the Northwest Arkansas Territory identified that there was a moderate correlation between loyalty to athletics and the four factors of campus aesthetics ($r = .311, p < .01$), history/tradition ($r = .348, p < .01$), accomplishments of

alumni ($r = .307, p < .01$), and success of athletic teams ($r = .469, p < .01$). All other correlations between factors and areas of loyalty for the Northwest Arkansas territory produced either weak or very weak correlations. Complete results for the Northwest Arkansas territory are available in Table 19.

The results for the Arkansas territory indicate that the only moderate correlation existed between loyalty to athletics and success of athletic teams as a factor ($r = .425, p < .01$). All other correlations between factors and areas of loyalty for the Arkansas territory produced either weak or very weak correlations. Complete results for the Arkansas territory are available in Table 20.

The results for the United States territory indicate that there are moderate correlations between loyalty to athletics and history/tradition ($r = .338, p < .01$) and success of athletic teams ($r = .464, p < .01$) as factors affecting opinion. All other correlations between factors and areas of loyalty for the United States territory produced either weak or very weak correlations. Complete results for the United States territory are available in Table 21.

The results for the International territory indicate that there was a moderate negative correlation between loyalty to faculty and the factor of media visibility ($r = -.315, p < .05$) and loyalty to athletics and success of athletic teams as a factor ($r = .377, p < .05$). Complete results for the international territory are available in Table 22.

Table 17.

Correlation between Areas of Loyalty and Factors Affecting Opinion for entire population

Factor	College	Major	Faculty	Student Org	Athletics	U of A
Value/Respect for Degree	.092**	.171**	.180**	.122**	.127**	.083**
Campus Aesthetics	.112**	.140**	.112**	.119**	.223**	.139**
Media Visibility	.134**	.131**	.084**	.146**	.224**	.137**
History/Tradition	.140**	.121**	.089**	.151**	.321**	.170**
Accomplishments of Alumni	.141**	.108**	.152**	.132**	.182**	.117**
School Rankings	.093**	.140**	.189**	.117**	.065**	.098**
Accomplishments of Faculty	.097**	.140**	.189**	.117**	.065**	.056**
Outreach to Community	.108**	.127**	.158**	.131**	.128**	.127**
Accomplishments of Students	.115**	.127**	.158**	.131**	.128**	.096**
Success of Athletic Teams	.098**	.060**	.017	.104**	.457**	.144**
Providing Scholarships	.054*	.095**	.128**	.146**	.080**	.027

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Table 18.

Correlation between Areas of Loyalty and Factors Affecting Opinion for On-Campus Territory

Factor	College	Major	Faculty	Student Org	Athletics	U of A
Value/Respect for Degree	.376**	.251*	.334*	.344**	.289*	.328**
Campus Aesthetics	.323	.09	.21	.205	.239	.280*
Media Visibility	.312*	.112	.146	.273*	.317*	.288*
History/Tradition	.275	-.049	.089**	.269*	.362**	.125
Accomplishments of Alumni	.132	.022	.414**	.299*	.298*	.105
School Rankings	.284	.023	.054	.124	.007	.031
Accomplishments of Faculty	.293*	.163	.286*	.381**	.243	.256*
Outreach to Community	.268*	.326*	.467**	.432**	.091	.229
Accomplishments of Students	.324*	.283*	.390**	.471**	.282*	.282*
Success of Athletic Teams	.356**	-.043	.12	.248	.617**	.290*
Providing Scholarships	.19	.021	.266*	.137	.028	.079

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Table 19.
Correlation between Areas of Loyalty and Factors Affecting Opinion for Northwest Arkansas Territory

Factor	College	Major	Faculty	Student Org	Athletics	U of A
Value/Respect for Degree	.054	.230**	.173**	.160**	.158**	.076
Campus Aesthetics	.112*	.092	.056	.129*	.311**	.249
Media Visibility	.138**	.139**	.076	.096	.275**	.209**
History/Tradition	.135*	.177**	-.01	.054	.348**	.205**
Accomplishments of Alumni	.124*	.120*	.105	.150**	.307**	.214**
School Rankings	.092	.047	.083	.011	.227**	.186**
Accomplishments of Faculty	.118*	.106*	.232**	.081	.05	.125*
Outreach to Community	.146**	.086	.203**	.078	.123*	.173**
Accomplishments of Students	.073	.044	.133*	.137*	.197**	.194**
Success of Athletic Teams	.06	.097	-.061	.018	.469**	.169**
Providing Scholarships	-.025	-.023	.064	-.016	.039	.068

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Table 20.

Correlation between Areas of Loyalty and Factors Affecting Opinion for Arkansas Territory

Factor	College	Major	Faculty	Student Org	Athletics	U of A
Value/Respect for Degree	.110**	.181**	.188**	.123**	.089*	.034
Campus Aesthetics	.055	.126**	.127**	.106*	.180**	.034
Media Visibility	.084*	.101**	.089*	.150**	.155**	.005
History/Tradition	.044	.092*	.098*	.152**	.269**	.082*
Accomplishments of Alumni	.153**	.083*	.175**	.157**	.101**	.047
School Rankings	.132**	.143**	.111**	.138**	.061	.025
Accomplishments of Faculty	.122**	.149**	.223**	.188**	.051	.039
Outreach to Community	.099*	.109**	.169**	.172**	.137**	.016
Accomplishments of Students	.125**	.118**	.156**	.156**	.085*	.044
Success of Athletic Teams	.066	.07	.043	.100*	.425**	.039
Providing Scholarships	.029	.066	.063	.179**	.063	-.025

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Table 21.

Correlation between Areas of Loyalty and Factors Affecting Opinion for United States Territory

Factor	College	Major	Faculty	Student Org	Athletics	U of A
Value/Respect for Degree	.074*	.152**	.75**	.097**	.122**	.085**
Campus Aesthetics	.126**	.110**	.133**	.123**	.221**	.139**
Media Visibility	.147**	.162**	.096**	.161**	.242**	.161**
History/Tradition	.180**	.142**	.132**	.186**	.338**	.205**
Accomplishments of Alumni	.141**	.128**	.138**	.107**	.175**	.097**
School Rankings	.068*	.095**	.052	.107**	.175**	.097**
Accomplishments of Faculty	.067**	.145**	.146**	.068**	.073*	.025
Outreach to Community	.091**	.160**	.158**	.097**	.125**	.165**
Accomplishments of Students	.109**	.160**	.158**	.097**	.125**	.072*
Success of Athletic Teams	.119**	.047	.023	.126**	.464**	.177**
Providing Scholarships	.078*	.161**	.183**	.177**	.106**	.039

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Table 22.

Correlation between Areas of Loyalty and Factors Affecting Opinion for International Territory

Factor	College	Major	Faculty	Student Org	Athletics	U of A
Value/Respect for Degree	--	-.141	-.143	-.215	.163	--
Campus Aesthetics	--	-.226	-.251	-.153	-.048	--
Media Visibility	--	-.276	-.315*	-.275	-.111	--
History/Tradition	--	.152	.143	.017	.046	--
Accomplishments of Alumni	--	0	.005	-.236	-.072	--
School Rankings	--	.295*	.296	-.013	.088	--
Accomplishments of Faculty	--	.041	.045	-.035	-.102	--
Outreach to Community	--	.127	.129	.789	.332	--
Accomplishments of Students	--	-.182	-.197	-.196	-.003	--
Success of Athletic Teams	--	.098	.084	.083	.377*	--
Providing Scholarships	--	-.162	-.166	-.158	-.069	--

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Research Question Four

Are there significant differences in the perception held by alumni who received only an undergraduate degree, graduate degree or both from the University of Arkansas? In order to address this research question, the responses to question six in which alumni were asked to state their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas were summarized by degree level. There was only a slight difference between alumni who received their graduate degree ($M = 3.37, SD = .666$) and those who received their undergraduate degree ($M = 3.43, SD = .662$) or both undergraduate and graduate ($M = 3.43, SD = .665$).

Table 23.

Current Opinion of the University of Arkansas by Degree Level

Degree Level	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Undergraduate	1,605	3.43	.662
Both Undergraduate and Graduate	437	3.43	.665
Graduate	560	3.37	.666
Total	2,602	3.42	.664

For alumni who received their undergraduate degree only from the University of Arkansas, their loyalty to the University of Arkansas in general ($M = 3.47, SD = .718$) was highest among the six areas. Loyalty to faculty for undergraduate alumni was the lowest factor ($M = 2.70, SD = 1.09$) among the six areas. Complete results are available in Table 24.

Table 24.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Loyalty of Undergraduate Alumni

Area of Loyalty	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Undergraduate College	1,496	3.16	.881
Major	1,480	3.15	.901
Faculty	1,260	2.70	1.09
Student	1,258	2.76	1.08
Athletics	1,487	3.15	.997
University of Arkansas	1,520	3.47	.718

For alumni who received both their undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Arkansas, their loyalty to the University of Arkansas in general ($M = 3.54$, $SD = .655$) was highest among the six areas. Loyalty to student organizations or activities for this group of alumni was the lowest factor ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 1.11$) among the six areas. Complete results are available in Table 25.

Table 25.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Loyalty of Undergraduate and Graduate Alumni

Area of Loyalty	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Undergraduate College	402	3.18	.871
Major	400	3.26	.876
Faculty	369	3.09	1.02
Student	346	2.82	1.11
Athletics	400	3.05	1.04
University of Arkansas	412	3.54	.655

For alumni who received only their graduate degree only from the University of Arkansas, their loyalty to their major ($M = 3.29$, $SD = .812$) was highest among the six areas. Loyalty to athletics was the lowest factor ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.08$) among the six areas.

Complete results are available in Table 26.

Table 26.

Frequencies and Mean Values for Loyalty of Graduate Alumni

Area of Loyalty	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Undergraduate College	378	2.93	.974
Major	494	3.29	.828
Faculty	425	3.05	.990
Student	425	3.05	.990
Athletics	458	2.81	1.08
University of Arkansas	507	3.23	.812

To determine if there is a statistically significant difference between undergraduate, undergraduate/graduate or graduate alumni and their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas, a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The ANOVA technique determines if the differences among the means of three or more groups are greater than would be expected from sampling error (Glass and Hopkins, 1996). The results in Table 27, indicate no statistical difference among the groups ($F_{(3, 2601)} = 2.02, p > .05$).

Table 27.

One-Way ANOVA Summary Table for Overall Current Opinion of the University of Arkansas versus Degree Level

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Between Groups	2.67	3	.889	2.02	.109
Within Groups	1144.43	2601	.440		
Total	1147.09	2604			

The level of degree obtained by alumni does not have an impact on their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas. Alumni who received either their undergraduate only or both their undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Arkansas indicate their loyalty to the University in general was the highest. However, alumni who receive only their graduate degree from the University of Arkansas indicate their loyalty to their major was the highest of the areas examined.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a summary of this study and the results of the data analysis specifically addressed each of the four research questions. Findings highlight the relationships between the overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas, the factors that alumni report as impacting their opinion of the University, and loyalty to various areas of the University.

When each of the factors alumni utilize in forming their opinion of the University of Arkansas were analyzed by geographic territory, only minimal differences were detected for each factor. The factor of school rankings has the greatest variance within the highest and lowest mean when compared by geographic territory. Alumni in the international territory valued it the most ($M = 3.25, SD = .677$) while alumni in the on-campus territory rated it the lowest ($M = 2.56, SD = .963$). Accomplishments of students were the factor that had the least variation when compared by territory. The on-campus territory rated it the highest ($M = 3.10, SD = .875$), while the Northwest Arkansas territory rated it the lowest ($M = 3.02, SD = .804$).

History and tradition impacted overall opinion of the University of Arkansas the greatest among all the factors alumni were asked to identify the extent to which they impact their opinion of the University of Arkansas. The correlation between history/tradition and overall current opinion was moderate. Utilizing an ANOVA, overall current opinion was determined to be impacted the most by history/tradition. Additional factors that impact opinion included success of athletic teams, campus aesthetics and accomplishments of alumni.

Examining the relationship between the areas of loyalty and the factors that alumni report impact their opinion of the University of Arkansas did not identify any correlations that were moderate or strong. However, when the correlations were conducted by geographic territory, there was a strong correlation found between loyalty to athletics and the success of athletic teams as a factor that impacts opinion for the on-campus territory. The on-campus territory identified sixteen different correlation pairings that identified moderate correlations between areas of loyalty and factors that impact opinion. Among the other geographic territories, only moderate correlations existed between loyalty to athletics and various factors by territory. The international territory had one moderate correlation that was a negative relationship between loyalty to faculty and media visibility as a factor that impacts opinion.

The level of degree obtained by alumni was not determined to have an impact on their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas. Alumni who received either their undergraduate only or both their undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Arkansas indicate their loyalty to the University in general was the highest. However, alumni who receive only their graduate degree from the University of Arkansas indicate their loyalty to their major was the highest of the areas examined.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to build external support for higher education institutions, institutional advancement programs strive to move their higher education institution forward by positioning it among its external constituents (Trachtenberg, 2000). The foundation of institutional advancement is developing relationships with external constituents (alumni, government leaders and the community) to ensure financial and ideological support from those that know the institution best (Trachtenberg, 2000). Alumni relations programs are the foundational component to institutional advancement since alumni are often viewed as the most loyal support group of an institution (Muller, 1986). Accordingly, the more embedded an individual is with the institution, the more relevant it is as a component within their networks and relationships (Burt, 2001).

Alumni associations seek to involve alumni with their alma mater and through this involvement generate interest that eventually translates into financial contributions and volunteer service (Webb, 1989). While financial support was often the original goal of alumni activity, the present objectives of alumni programs also include informing and involving alumni. Present alumni work is a precursor to development activity where financial support is solicited. Regardless of how the alumni relations programs are arranged, they ultimately engage and connect alumni who invest back in the institution because of this connection (Ransdell, 1986).

In studying organizational identification, Mael and Ashforth (1992) examined the relationship of alumni with their alma mater. They proposed that the perception of oneness or feeling of belonging to an organization where the success of the organization

defined the individual was applicable to alumni. Their research sought to identify factors that would assist administrators in influencing perceptions and behaviors. As people identify themselves by their association with an organization they will be more inclined to support fundraising activities and be motivated to be a donor (Mann, 2007).

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the factors that impact alumni opinion of the University of Arkansas, loyalty to components of the University and overall current opinion. This study will help address the problem of knowing how to positively impact the overall opinion of the University of Arkansas through prioritization of communications about factors that have a positive impact. For the purpose of this study, opinion was represented as the overall view or judgment that alumni have about the University of Arkansas. Additionally, identifying loyalty represents the level of commitment alumni have toward particular aspects of the University of Arkansas.

The significance of this study can assist University of Arkansas leaders in formulating their communication strategy with external constituents (especially alumni) that will lead to various forms of support for the institution. Synergies can be formulated within institutional advancement and across the institution in order to increase the quantity and quality of information being shared with external constituents to increase their opinion of the institution. Through the findings of this study, alumni relations and institutional advancement professionals can have a more detailed understanding of the types of information to emphasize in various institutional segments to improve the overall perception external constituents, and especially alumni, have of the institution. Leaders of

the alumni relations program can also utilize this information to more effectively communicate with alumni about the institution and provide them information that will establish a favorable opinion of the institution.

The data used in this study was collected by the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. for the Alumni Attitude Study[®] on the behalf of the Arkansas Alumni Association from June 16 to July 17, 2009. The Alumni Attitude Study[®] was designed to compare values, preferences and perceptions of alumni as related to their engagement with their alma mater (AAS Overview, n.d.).

The survey was distributed three times to all addressable alumni who had valid e-mail addresses who had not opted out of receiving e-mails of this type from June 16 to July 8, 2009. The data were captured and stored by Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. before being provided to the Arkansas Alumni Association. This secondary data were used with the written permission of the Arkansas Alumni Association. (See Appendix G).

There were 108,275 living, (mailing) addressable alumni of the University of Arkansas at the time of the study. The total count of records eligible to be included was 46,680. There were 2,794 undeliverable e-mail messages resulting in a final count of 43,866 alumni who were presumed to have received the survey. There were 2,670 respondents to the survey representing 6.1% of the target population and 2.5% of the entire population.

The first research question sought to identify differences by geographic territory among the factors that alumni use to formulate opinions of the University of Arkansas. Only minimal differences were detected for each factor used to formulate opinion after

examining the measures of central tendencies for each geographic territory. School rankings were the factor with the greatest variance within the highest and lowest mean when compared by geographic territory. Alumni in the international territory valued it the most ($M = 3.25, SD = .677$) while alumni in the on-campus territory rated it the lowest ($M = 2.56, SD = .963$). Accomplishments of students were the factor that had the least variation when compared by territory. The on-campus territory rated it the highest ($M = 3.10, SD = .875$), while the Northwest Arkansas territory rated it the lowest ($M = 3.02, SD = .804$).

The second research question examined the relationship between factors alumni use to formulate opinion and their overall opinion regarding the University of Arkansas. History and tradition had the strongest relationship with a moderate correlation ($r = .326, p < .01$) among all the factors alumni were asked to identify the extent to which they impact their opinion of the University of Arkansas. All other factors except school rankings were determined to have a weak correlation. School rankings had a very weak correlation ($r = .059, p < .01$) to overall current opinion.

In addition to the correlation analysis, a stepwise multiple regression was performed to identify the strength of the relationship between factors affecting opinion and overall opinion. The four factors loaded into the model were history and tradition, success of athletic teams, campus aesthetics, and accomplishments of alumni. The regression analysis indicated predicting overall current opinion from all four factors was statistically significant, $F(1, 2187) = 88.67, p < .05$. The R^2 was 0.140 indicating that 14.0% of the variance in overall current opinion about the University of Arkansas was

accounted for by the factors of history and tradition, success of athletic teams, campus aesthetics, and accomplishments of alumni.

The third research question sought to determine the extent of the relationship between loyalty to various components of the University of Arkansas and their overall opinion of the institution. Correlating the areas of loyalty and the factors affecting opinion for the entire population only determined a moderate correlation between the factors of history/tradition ($r = .321, p < .01$) and success of athletic teams ($r = .457, p < .01$) with loyalty to athletics at the University of Arkansas. All other significant factors and area correlations were either weak or very weak correlations.

However, when the correlations were conducted by geographic territory, there was a strong correlation ($r = .617, p < .01$) found between loyalty to athletics and the success of athletic teams as a factor that impacts opinion for the on-campus territory. The on-campus territory identified sixteen different correlation pairings that had moderate correlations between areas of loyalty and factors that impact opinion. Among the other geographic territories, the only moderate correlations existed between loyalty to athletics and various factors by territory. The international territory had one moderate correlation ($r = -.315, p < .01$) that was a negative relationship between loyalty to faculty and media visibility as a factor that impacts opinion.

The final research question examined if there were significant differences in the perceptions held by alumni who received only an undergraduate degree, graduate degree or both from the University of Arkansas. The level of degree obtained by alumni was not determined to have an impact on their overall current opinion of the University of

Arkansas. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) indicated no statistical difference among the groups ($F_{(3, 2601)} = 2.02, p > .05$).

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are presented below. These conclusions are based upon the findings as previously presented.

1. There was no significant difference between geographic territories and the factors that alumni of the University of Arkansas utilize to form their opinion of the institution. This indicates that efforts to segment communications by geographic territories would not assist with improving the overall current opinion alumni by each territory. A consistent message should be communicated across all territories that prioritize the factors with the strongest relationship.
2. History and tradition was the single most powerful factor which can impact overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas. Additional factors having a significant relationship in combination with history and tradition included success of athletic teams, campus aesthetics and accomplishments of alumni. These results indicate that the activities with which alumni relations programs are commonly associated do have the greatest impact. However, before continuing to emphasize these factors, programs must examine the factors in the context of the non-respondents to the study to have the greatest impact.
3. Alumni of the University of Arkansas are very loyal to the overall institution more than sub-areas. This can have implications in the coordination of information for alumni. While information needs related to majors and programs

from which alumni graduated, there is apparently a need to reinforce the overall University of Arkansas brand among alumni to sustain that level of loyalty.

4. Alumni who hold either an undergraduate degree or both an undergraduate and graduate degree exhibit the highest level of loyalty with the University of Arkansas in general. Alumni who hold only a graduate degree from the University of Arkansas have the highest level of loyalty with their major or department. This is to be expected due to the nature of how programs at the graduate level are focused and heavily integrated within the academic unit. Whereas students that develop a relationship with an institution from the undergraduate perspective have a more traditional view of the institution.

Limitations

The primary limitation from this study was its focus on the University of Arkansas. Utilizing secondary data from the Alumni Attitude Study© provided convenient access to data, but limited the scope of the findings and conclusions drawn. The results demonstrate a bias toward those who utilize e-mail as that was the only method of data collection. The potential also exists for non-response bias if alumni who did not respond would have answered differently than the respondents reported here. Knowing these limitations, the findings of this study should only be used to guide decisions and should not be generalized even to the entire alumni population from the University of Arkansas.

Recommendations

Based on the results presented and conclusions drawn for this study, the following recommendations are made for identifying the factors affecting the institutional perception of alumni.

For Research

1. This study was limited to only alumni from the University of Arkansas with an active e-mail address. This study could be expanded to utilize the survey format to solicit alumni input through print and phone surveys to determine any differences that may exist between the responses.
2. This study was limited to only one higher education institution. The study could be expanded to examine results from multiple higher education institutions or from a sample of all alumni participants in the Alumni Attitude Study[®] in cooperation with the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd.
3. The results for loyalty in this study could be further analyzed by examining if results varied by college or school of major.
4. This study and the Alumni Attitude Study[®] could be repeated in the future to determine if changes occur within a defined time period. An additional component could be added to examine external factors over that specific period that could influence the change.

For Practice

1. Alumni relations and communications professionals at the University of Arkansas should emphasize content that focuses on the history and tradition of campus

when communicating with alumni so that they form favorable overall opinions of the University.

2. In addition to emphasizing history and tradition in communications, other areas that should receive increased exposure in communications should be athletic team successes, campus aesthetics and accomplishments of alumni.
3. Alumni who are faculty and staff members at the University of Arkansas have a unique set of information needs as related to the priority in which they place on the factors studied. These results should be carefully applied to specific programs and communications targeted to this population.
4. Determining the factors of those not represented in this study should be a priority to determine how to best impact overall opinion of the University of Arkansas among the unengaged alumni.

Discussion

As the alumni relations program at the University of Arkansas seeks to develop programming, communications and services for the future, the findings of this study indicate that they need to direct their attention to these findings and recommendations. In relation to its use of geographic territories, the findings indicate no statistical difference as related to overall opinion of the institution. However, in previous studies examining distance from campus and its relationship to giving, many have confirmed that distance is a factor in predicting donor status (Conner, 2005; Ridley & Boone, 2001; Klostermann, 1995; Burt, 1989; Haddad, 1986).

The results of this study also reinforce that the stereotypical activities of an alumni association are those that are perceived to be the role of the program. That

stereotype is to promote history/tradition and the success of the athletic teams in order to form a favorable opinion of the institution among alumni. In similar studies, the degree of bonding with the institution and identification with the institution's mission were found to be related to alumni giving and satisfaction (Dean, 2007; Mercatoris, 2006; Dolbert, 2002). In order to prepare for the future, the University of Arkansas must examine the non-members, non-donors and non-respondents to surveys to determine if their non-participation can be related to factors within its control.

The bond between alumni and their alma mater is often expressed through loyalty to the institution. In this examination of the loyalty between various components of the University of Arkansas, it is obvious that the brand name of the institution itself exhibits the greatest loyalty among most graduates. A strong sense of alumni loyalty has previously been identified as a factor in alumni giving (Conner, 2005; Alsmeyer, 1994; Burgess-Getts, 1992; Shadoian, 1989). Likewise, if loyalty can be fostered through reading alumni publications, then fostering eventual donor support is likely (Dean, 2007; Ridley & Boone, 2001; Heckman & Guskey, 1998; Martin, 1993; Shadoian, 1989).

The level of degree earned by alumni is a factor worth consideration in program planning. The results of this study indicate that traditional graduates have a stronger brand affinity with the overall university whereas those that only receive a graduate degree have a stronger affinity with their academic department. This confirms previous research that relates the level of degree to alumni giving status (Hunter, 1997; Martin, 1993; Shadoian, 1989; House, 1987; Haddad, 1986). The alumni relations program at the University of Arkansas should consider this factor for cultivating future relationships with alumni holding only a graduate degree. Engaging faculty and focusing news and

information on a department or discipline level as a vital part of the alumni relations program will enhance the connection between this segment of alumni and the institution.

While research such as this indicates the alumni relations program of the University of Arkansas should continue to emphasize traditional aspects of the institution to positively impact opinion, there remains the need to determine what needs to be done to impact the opinion of those that who have not actively been engaged through membership, giving or volunteer service. Just as Ritzenhein (1999) concluded, information needs of alumni (donors) are important; however, there is variation in their specific content needs. If institutions can determine how to inform this audience to positively impact opinion, greater strides can be made in building alumni support.

The University of Arkansas is focused on effectively positioning the institution among the various stakeholders (prospective students, community and government leaders, alumni and donors). Utilizing the findings from this study can assist leaders in emphasizing the key items that most positively impacts overall opinion for the institution at this current time among those engaged. However, finding the differences between those who participated in the Alumni Attitude Study[©] and those that did not should help determine if the results are generalizable to the entire alumni body of the University of Arkansas. Likewise, this information would provide insight how to effectively position the University of Arkansas among that particular segment of alumni.

Chapter Summary

Utilizing data from the Alumni Attitude Study[©] this study sought to identify the factors that alumni utilize in forming their overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas. While segmenting results by geographic territory and degree level provided

confirmation of consistency for most factors, some unique attributes of each were able to be identified. History and tradition was found to be the factor that had the strongest relationship and served as the best predictor for overall current opinion. Additionally, alumni who are categorized in the on-campus territory have a unique perspective and should be communicated to differently to most positively impact overall current opinion.

The recommendations of this study are limited for practice to only the University of Arkansas and should be used as a guide in the development and prioritization of content when communicating with alumni. This study could be completed by other participants in the Alumni Attitude Study[®] or utilizing a sample of participants from all other higher education institutions to determine if any differences in the findings exist. Finally, results from repeating this study in the future at the University of Arkansas can be utilized to determine if results indicate a change over time. Those results could then be compared with other external factors known to have occurred over the time period.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Alumni Attitude Study Survey for Current Association Members

Aun

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Dear Alumnus/a,

The Arkansas Alumni Association at the University of Arkansas works hard every day to serve your interests. Over the past year, the Association has begun a process to more effectively and efficiently deliver programming, services and communications that better serve the alumni and friends of the University. Your opinions and concerns are an important part of our continued efforts in this process. Please help us better understand what you expect of your university and your alumni association by completing this survey. Your input is critical to helping us meet your expectations.

We are grateful for your participation. We are listening and are committed to taking action based on the feedback you provide us. The results from this study will also be available on the Association's website this fall.

Thank you for your participation.

With Pride in Arkansas,
Myron D. Macechko
Executive Director & Associate Vice Chancellor
Arkansas Alumni Association

Please provide the following information and then hit the submit button to access your survey. Thank you for your time and your participation.

Year of graduation	Select year (first degree)
Degree obtained from this university	Click here for choices
Alumni Association Membership	Click here for choices
Gender	Click here for choices
Ethnic Origin	Click here for choices
Current Age	Click here for choices

Your current location

City	
State	Select State
Country	

Open Your Survey



Section I

To start, would you please tell us a bit about yourself and your experience with the University of Arkansas?

1. How would you rate your decision to attend the University of Arkansas?
 Bad decision
 Fair decision
 Good decision
 Great decision
 No opinion
2. How often do you promote the University of Arkansas to others?
 Never
 Occasionally
 Regularly
 All the time
 No opinion
3. How close to the University of Arkansas do you currently live?
[Click here for choices](#)
4. Which of the following best describes your experience as a student?
 Poor
 Fair
 Good
 Excellent
 No opinion
5. Which of the following best describes your experiences as an alumnus/a?
 Poor
 Fair
 Good
 Excellent
 No opinion
6. Which of the following describes your overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas?
 Poor
 Fair
 Good
 Excellent
 No opinion
7. How well did the highest degree earned from the University of Arkansas prepare you for each of the following:
 Poor Fair Good Excellent
 preparation preparation preparation preparation No opinion

- a. Current work status
- b. Commitment to continuous learning
- c. Responding to new career opportunities
- d. Contributing to my community
- e. Deepening my understanding and commitment to personal development
- f. Further graduate education

8. How important is it for you and alumni in general to do the following and how well does the Arkansas Alumni Association do at supporting alumni in doing them?

Importance for alumni to do the item				Quality of support from the Arkansas Alumni Association			
1 = Not important				1 = Poor			
2 = Somewhat important				2 = Fair			
3 = Very important				3 = Good			
4 = Critically important				4 = Excellent			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

- a. Mentoring students
- b. Identifying job opportunities for graduates
- c. Providing feedback to the University of Arkansas about how it is perceived
- d. Recruiting students
- e. Serving as ambassadors or advocates for the University of Arkansas
- f. Providing financial support for the University of Arkansas (e.g. donations)
- g. Networking with other alumni
- h. Volunteering for the University of Arkansas
- i. Providing leadership by serving on boards, committees, etc.
- j. Attending general alumni and university events
- k. Attending athletic events

Section II

The following questions are about your experience as a student.

9. In which of the following organizations/activities did you participate as a student? (Choose all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Honor Society c. Intramural athletics e. Music/theater/art g. Religious organizations i. Professional or career related | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Fraternity/Sorority d. Intercollegiate athletics f. Community service h. Residence halls j. Academic clubs |
|--|---|

Feedback (anon)

8/10/09 6:23 AM

- organizations
- k. Ethnic and/or cultural centers l. Newspaper, radio, or yearbook
- m. Other

10. How important was each of the following to your experience as a student, and how well did the University of Arkansas do at providing them?

Importance				University's performance			
1 = Not important				1 = Poor			
2 = Somewhat important				2 = Fair			
3 = Very important				3 = Good			
4 = Critically important				4 = Excellent			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

- a. Admissions process
- b. Relationship with other students
- c. Academics/classes
- d. Relationship with the faculty
- e. Attending athletic events
- f. Attending cultural events including films, lectures, and other arts
- g. Opportunity to participate in fraternity/sorority
- h. Orientation for new students
- i. Relationship with administration and staff
- j. Student leadership opportunities
- k. Student employment opportunities
- l. Skills/training for career
- m. Lessons about life
- n. Exposure to new things
- o. Traditions or values learned on campus
- p. Opportunity to interact with alumni

11. Name one person who had a special impact on your experience as a student. Please also provide a brief description of the relationship.

12. Name one program or activity that had a special impact on your experience as a student. Please also provide a brief description of the program or activity.

WebForm (arkasr)

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Section III

The balance of the questions pertain to your experience as an alumnus/a.

13. What are barriers to your participation in alumni activities? (Choose all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>No Yes</p> <p>a. Time</p> <p>c. Value (cost as compared to benefit)</p> <p>e. Don't know anyone</p> <p>g. Just don't want to</p> <p>i. Concern about future solicitation</p> <p>k. Not interested in the University of Arkansas</p> <p>m. Other</p> | <p>No Yes</p> <p>b. Cost of event(s)</p> <p>d. Type or subject matter of the event</p> <p>f. I won't make a difference</p> <p>h. Geographical distance</p> <p>j. Family or job commitments</p> <p>l. Do not know how to get involved</p> |
|--|--|

14. How would you most like to be contacted by the Arkansas Alumni Association?

Click for choices

15. In your relationship with the University of Arkansas and Arkansas Alumni Association, please describe how often you do or have done each of the following.

Never One time A few times Frequently No opinion

- a. Attend local Alumni Association events
- b. Get in touch with other alumni
- c. Read alumni e-mail
- d. Read the alumni magazine
- e. Use printed alumni directory
- f. Use electronic alumni directory
- g. Attend University sporting events
- h. Attend class reunions
- i. Visit campus
- j. Visit University Web site
- k. Volunteer to work on campus/event

16. For each of the communication methods listed below, please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the Arkansas Alumni Association's effectiveness in utilizing that method.

<p>Importance</p> <p>1 = Not important</p> <p>2 = Somewhat important</p> <p>3 = Very important</p> <p>4 = Critically important</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>1 = Poor</p> <p>2 = Fair</p> <p>3 = Good</p> <p>4 = Excellent</p>
---	--

- a. Alumni web site

Have financially supported the University of Arkansas but do not plan to continue
 Have not financially supported the University of Arkansas but plan to in the future
Currently financially support the University of Arkansas and plan to continue
Currently financially support the University of Arkansas and plan to increase in future
 No Opinion

21. Please indicate your feeling regarding the frequency of the following.

- | | Way too
much | A little too
much | About
right | Would
welcome
more | Not nearly
enough | No opinion |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| a. Email correspondence from the Arkansas Alumni Association (newsletters, news flashes, etc.) | | | | | | |
| b. Printed materials from the Arkansas Alumni Association (magazines, newsletters, etc.) | | | | | | |
| c. Information regarding programs such as credit cards, insurance services, long distance services, etc. | | | | | | |
| d. Solicitations for donations (annual fund, support for athletics, etc.) | | | | | | |
| e. Invitations to alumni activities | | | | | | |

22. Please indicate the extent of your loyalty to each of the following:

- | | Not loyal | Somewhat
loyal | Loyal | Very loyal | No opinion |
|---|-----------|-------------------|-------|------------|------------|
| a. My undergraduate college | | | | | |
| b. My major or academic area of study | | | | | |
| c. A faculty member or instructor | | | | | |
| d. A student organization or activity I was associated with | | | | | |
| e. the University of Arkansas athletics | | | | | |
| f. the University of Arkansas in general | | | | | |

23. What impact does each of the following have in motivating you to continue being a member of the Arkansas Alumni Association?

- | | No impact
on decision | Some
Impact on
decision | Important
to decision | Very
Important
to decision | No opinion |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| a. Knowing that the alumni association provides financial support for student activities | | | | | |
| b. Receiving information about "hot issues" on-campus | | | | | |
| c. Receiving the directory of alumni | | | | | |
| d. Receiving the alumni newsletters | | | | | |
| e. Receiving the alumni magazine | | | | | |
| f. Obtaining campus privileges such as access to campus facilities (libraries, exercise facilities, etc.) and on-campus discounts | | | | | |
| g. Having access to career or business networking opportunities | | | | | |
| h. Giving back to the university | | | | | |

Feedback (arksc) 8/10/09 6:23 AM

i. The alumni association is the "voice" of alumni on campus

j. Keeping me connected with my classmates

k. Staying connected to the university

l. Staying connected to friends from University of Arkansas

m. Other

24. Which of the following best describes the performance of the Arkansas Alumni Association?

Poor

Fair

Good

Excellent

No opinion

25. Please use the space below to provide any further comments you may have.

**Thank you for your input. Your time is greatly appreciated.
Yes, submit my survey!**

Appendix B: Alumni Attitude Study Survey for Former Association Members

Alum

8/10/09 6:26 AM



Dear Alumnus/a,

The Arkansas Alumni Association at the University of Arkansas works hard every day to serve your interests. Over the past year, the Association has begun a process to more effectively and efficiently deliver programming, services and communications that better serve the alumni and friends of the University. Your opinions and concerns are an important part of our continued efforts in this process. Please help us better understand what you expect of your university and your alumni association by completing this survey. Your input is critical to helping us meet your expectations.

We are grateful for your participation. We are listening and are committed to taking action based on the feedback you provide us. The results from this study will also be available on the Association's website this fall.

Thank you for your participation.

With Pride in Arkansas,
Myron D. Macechko
Executive Director & Associate Vice Chancellor
Arkansas Alumni Association

Please provide the following information and then hit the submit button to access your survey. Thank you for your time and your participation.

Year of graduation	Select year (first degree)
Degree obtained from this university	Click here for choices
Alumni Association Membership	Click here for choices
Gender	Click here for choices
Ethnic Origin	Click here for choices
Current Age	Click here for choices

Your current location

City	
State	Select State
Country	

Open Your Survey



Section I

To start, would you please tell us a bit about yourself and your experience with the University of Arkansas?

1. How would you rate your decision to attend the University of Arkansas?
 - Bad decision
 - Fair decision
 - Good decision
 - Great decision
 - No opinion
2. How often do you promote the University of Arkansas to others?
 - Never
 - Occasionally
 - Regularly
 - All the time
 - No opinion
3. How close to the University of Arkansas do you currently live?
 - [Click here for choices](#)
4. Which of the following best describes your experience as a student?
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - No opinion
5. Which of the following best describes your experiences as an alumnus/a?
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - No opinion
6. Which of the following describes your overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas?
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - No opinion
7. How well did the highest degree earned from the University of Arkansas prepare you for each of the following:

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No opinion
preparation	preparation	preparation	preparation	preparation

hesdmet (arka)

8/10/09 6:27 AM

- a. Current work status
- b. Commitment to continuous learning
- c. Responding to new career opportunities
- d. Contributing to my community
- e. Deepening my understanding and commitment to personal development
- f. Further graduate education

8. How important is it for you and alumni in general to do the following and how well does the Arkansas Alumni Association do at supporting alumni in doing them?

Importance for alumni to do the Item				Quality of support from the Arkansas Alumni Association			
1 = Not important				1 = Poor			
2 = Somewhat important				2 = Fair			
3 = Very important				3 = Good			
4 = Critically important				4 = Excellent			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

- a. Mentoring students
- b. Identifying job opportunities for graduates
- c. Providing feedback to the University of Arkansas about how it is perceived
- d. Recruiting students
- e. Serving as ambassadors or advocates for the University of Arkansas
- f. Providing financial support for the University of Arkansas (e.g. donations)
- g. Networking with other alumni
- h. Volunteering for the University of Arkansas
- i. Providing leadership by serving on boards, committees, etc.
- j. Attending general alumni and university events
- k. Attending athletic events

Section II

The following questions are about your experience as a student.

9. In which of the following organizations/activities did you participate as a student? (Choose all that apply.)

- | No | Yes | No | Yes |
|----|--------------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| a. | Honor Society | b. | Fraternity/Sorority |
| c. | Intramural athletics | d. | Intercollegiate athletics |
| e. | Music/theater/art | f. | Community service |
| g. | Religious organizations | h. | Residence halls |
| i. | Professional or career related | j. | Academic clubs |

Survey (arkiso)

8/10/09 6:27 AM

- organizations
- k. Ethnic and/or cultural centers l. Newspaper, radio, or yearbook
- m. Other

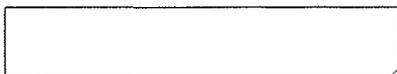
10. How important was each of the following to your experience as a student, and how well did the University of Arkansas do at providing them?

Importance				University's performance			
1 = Not important				1 = Poor			
2 = Somewhat important				2 = Fair			
3 = Very important				3 = Good			
4 = Critically important				4 = Excellent			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

- a. Admissions process
- b. Relationship with other students
- c. Academics/classes
- d. Relationship with the faculty
- e. Attending athletic events
- f. Attending cultural events including films, lectures, and other arts
- g. Opportunity to participate in fraternity/sorority
- h. Orientation for new students
- i. Relationship with administration and staff
- j. Student leadership opportunities
- k. Student employment opportunities
- l. Skills/training for career
- m. Lessons about life
- n. Exposure to new things
- o. Traditions or values learned on campus
- p. Opportunity to interact with alumni

11. Name one person who had a special impact on your experience as a student. Please also provide a brief description of the relationship.

12. Name one program or activity that had a special impact on your experience as a student. Please also provide a brief description of the program or activity.



Section III

The balance of the questions pertain to your experience as an alumnus/a.

13. What are barriers to your participation in alumni activities? (Choose all that apply.)

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|-------------------------------------|
| No | Yes | No | Yes |
| a. | Time | b. | Cost of event(s) |
| c. | Value (cost as compared to benefit) | d. | Type or subject matter of the event |
| e. | Don't know anyone | f. | I won't make a difference |
| g. | Just don't want to | h. | Geographical distance |
| i. | Concern about future solicitation | j. | Family or job commitments |
| k. | Not interested in the University of Arkansas | l. | Do not know how to get involved |
| m. | Other | | |

14. How would you most like to be contacted by the Arkansas Alumni Association?
Click for choices

15. In your relationship with the University of Arkansas and Arkansas Alumni Association, please describe how often you do or have done each of the following.

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----------|-------------|------------|------------|
| | Never | One time | A few times | Frequently | No opinion |
| a. | Attend local Alumni Association events | | | | |
| b. | Get in touch with other alumni | | | | |
| c. | Read alumni e-mail | | | | |
| d. | Read the alumni magazine | | | | |
| e. | Use printed alumni directory | | | | |
| f. | Use electronic alumni directory | | | | |
| g. | Attend University sporting events | | | | |
| h. | Attend class reunions | | | | |
| i. | Visit campus | | | | |
| j. | Visit University Web site | | | | |
| k. | Volunteer to work on campus/event | | | | |

16. For each of the communication methods listed below, please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the Arkansas Alumni Association's effectiveness in utilizing that method.

Importance				Effectiveness			
1 = Not important				1 = Poor			
2 = Somewhat important				2 = Fair			
3 = Very important				3 = Good			
4 = Critically important				4 = Excellent			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

- a. Alumni web site

- b. University web site
- c. Electronic newsletter
- d. Alumni chapter mailings/e-mails
- e. E-mail
- f. Communication regarding services and benefits
- g. Invitations to University activities
- h. The alumni magazine
- i. Periodic informational communications
- j. Invitations to alumni activities
- k. Viral videos/YouTube/Online Networking (MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

17. Please indicate how much each of the following impacts your overall opinion of the University of Arkansas:

No impact on my opinion	Some impact on my opinion	Significantly impacts my opinion	Critically impacts my opinion	No opinion
-------------------------------	---------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------	------------

- a. Value/respect for degree
- b. Campus aesthetics (e.g. buildings, grounds, etc.)
- c. Media visibility (e.g. newspaper, magazine articles, etc.)
- d. History/tradition
- e. Accomplishments of alumni
- f. School rankings (e.g. U.S. News & World Report)
- g. Accomplishments of faculty
- h. Outreach to community
- i. Accomplishments of students
- j. Success of athletic teams
- k. Providing scholarships
- l. Other

18. What are the one or two things that are most important to you about being an alumnus/a?

19. What is the most meaningful thing the Arkansas Alumni Association can do for you in the next 5-10 years?

20. Which of the following best describes your financial support of the University of Arkansas?
Have not financially supported the University of Arkansas and do not plan to in future

Votefair (arkap)

8/1/09 6:27 AM

Have financially supported the University of Arkansas but do not plan to continue
 Have not financially supported the University of Arkansas but plan to in the future
 Currently financially support the University of Arkansas and plan to continue
 Currently financially support the University of Arkansas and plan to increase in future
 No Opinion

21. Please indicate your feeling regarding the frequency of the following.

- | | Way too
much | A little too
much | About
right | Would
welcome
more | Not nearly
enough | No opinion |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| a. Email correspondence from the Arkansas Alumni Association (newsletters, news flashes, etc.) | | | | | | |
| b. Printed materials from the Arkansas Alumni Association (magazines, newsletters, etc.) | | | | | | |
| c. Information regarding programs such as credit cards, insurance services, long distance services, etc. | | | | | | |
| d. Solicitations for donations (annual fund, support for athletics, etc.) | | | | | | |
| e. Invitations to alumni activities | | | | | | |

22. Please indicate the extent of your loyalty to each of the following:

- | | Not loyal | Somewhat
loyal | Loyal | Very loyal | No opinion |
|---|-----------|-------------------|-------|------------|------------|
| a. My undergraduate college | | | | | |
| b. My major or academic area of study | | | | | |
| c. A faculty member or instructor | | | | | |
| d. A student organization or activity I was associated with | | | | | |
| e. the University of Arkansas athletics | | | | | |
| f. the University of Arkansas in general | | | | | |

23. How much impact did each of the following have on your decision to discontinue membership in the Arkansas Alumni Association?

- | | No impact
on decision | Some
impact on
decision | Important
to decision | Very
important
to decision | No opinion |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| a. My personal circumstances changed | | | | | |
| b. Something happened at University of Arkansas that upset me | | | | | |
| c. A student I am related to or know well did not get accepted into University of Arkansas | | | | | |
| d. Something happened with a University of Arkansas student I am related to or know well | | | | | |
| e. Not enough value to me personally or professionally | | | | | |
| f. I don't know how the Arkansas Alumni Association uses dues | | | | | |
| g. I wasn't asked | | | | | |
| h. I don't think the alumni association uses the funds it raises wisely | | | | | |

http://www.popsurvey.com/survey/collect/ressond.php

Page 6 of 7

question (arkap) 8/10/09 6:27 AM

uses the funds it raises wisely

i. I got the mailing but forgot it/lost it

j. I do not know enough about the Arkansas Alumni Association

k. Seeing the impact of my contribution

l. I didn't use the benefits

m. I support University of Arkansas in other ways

n. I don't live near campus

o. I am concerned that i will receive solicitations for donations

p. I have little to no relationship to the University of Arkansas

q. I receive the Arkansas Alumni Magazine without being a member

r. Having access to the Arkansas Alumni Association online community

s. Other

24. Which of the following best describes the performance of the Arkansas Alumni Association?

Poor

Fair

Good

Excellent

No opinion

25. Please use the space below to provide any further comments you may have.

Thank you for your input. Your time is greatly appreciated.
Yes, submit my survey!

Appendix C: Alumni Attitude Study Survey for Alumni
Who Have Never Joined Alumni Association

Aun

8/10/09 6:28 AM



Dear Alumnus/a,

The Arkansas Alumni Association at the University of Arkansas works hard every day to serve your interests. Over the past year, the Association has begun a process to more effectively and efficiently deliver programming, services and communications that better serve the alumni and friends of the University. Your opinions and concerns are an important part of our continued efforts in this process. Please help us better understand what you expect of your university and your alumni association by completing this survey. Your input is critical to helping us meet your expectations.

We are grateful for your participation. We are listening and are committed to taking action based on the feedback you provide us. The results from this study will also be available on the Association's website this fall.

Thank you for your participation.

With Pride in Arkansas,
Myron D. Macechko
Executive Director & Associate Vice Chancellor
Arkansas Alumni Association

Please provide the following information and then hit the submit button to access your survey. Thank you for your time and your participation.

Year of graduation	Select year (first degree)
Degree obtained from this university	Click here for choices
Alumni Association Membership	Click here for choices
Gender	Click here for choices
Ethnic Origin	Click here for choices
Current Age	Click here for choices

Your current location

City	
State	Select State
Country	

Open Your Survey



Section I

To start, would you please tell us a bit about yourself and your experience with the University of Arkansas?

1. How would you rate your decision to attend the University of Arkansas?
 - Bad decision
 - Fair decision
 - Good decision
 - Great decision
 - No opinion

2. How often do you promote the University of Arkansas to others?
 - Never
 - Occasionally
 - Regularly
 - All the time
 - No opinion

3. How close to the University of Arkansas do you currently live?
 - [Click here for choices](#)

4. Which of the following best describes your experience as a student?
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - No opinion

5. Which of the following best describes your experiences as an alumnus/a?
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - No opinion

6. Which of the following describes your overall current opinion of the University of Arkansas?
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - No opinion

7. How well did the highest degree earned from the University of Arkansas prepare you for each of the following:

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No opinion
preparation	preparation	preparation	preparation	

- a. Current work status
- b. Commitment to continuous learning
- c. Responding to new career opportunities
- d. Contributing to my community
- e. Deepening my understanding and commitment to personal development
- f. Further graduate education

8. How important is it for you and alumni in general to do the following and how well does the Arkansas Alumni Association do at supporting alumni in doing them?

Importance for alumni to do the item	Quality of support from the Arkansas Alumni Association
1 = Not important	1 = Poor
2 = Somewhat important	2 = Fair
3 = Very important	3 = Good
4 = Critically important	4 = Excellent
1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

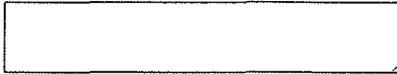
- a. Mentoring students
- b. Identifying job opportunities for graduates
- c. Providing feedback to the University of Arkansas about how it is perceived
- d. Recruiting students
- e. Serving as ambassadors or advocates for the University of Arkansas
- f. Providing financial support for the University of Arkansas (e.g. donations)
- g. Networking with other alumni
- h. Volunteering for the University of Arkansas
- i. Providing leadership by serving on boards, committees, etc.
- j. Attending general alumni and university events
- k. Attending athletic events

Section II

The following questions are about your experience as a student.

9. In which of the following organizations/activities did you participate as a student? (Choose all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>No Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Honor Society c. Intramural athletics e. Music/theater/art g. Religious organizations i. Professional or career related | <p>No Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Fraternity/Sorority d. Intercollegiate athletics f. Community service h. Residence halls j. Academic clubs |
|--|---|



Section III

The balance of the questions pertain to your experience as an alumnus/a.

13. What are barriers to your participation in alumni activities? (Choose all that apply.)

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|-------------------------------------|
| No | Yes | No | Yes |
| a. | Time | b. | Cost of event(s) |
| c. | Value (cost as compared to benefit) | d. | Type or subject matter of the event |
| e. | Don't know anyone | f. | I won't make a difference |
| g. | Just don't want to | h. | Geographical distance |
| i. | Concern about future solicitation | j. | Family or job commitments |
| k. | Not interested in the University of Arkansas | l. | Do not know how to get involved |
| m. | Other | | |

14. How would you most like to be contacted by the Arkansas Alumni Association?

Click for choices

15. In your relationship with the University of Arkansas and Arkansas Alumni Association, please describe how often you do or have done each of the following.

Never One time A few times Frequently No opinion

- a. Attend local Alumni Association events
- b. Get in touch with other alumni
- c. Read alumni e-mail
- d. Read the alumni magazine
- e. Use printed alumni directory
- f. Use electronic alumni directory
- g. Attend University sporting events
- h. Attend class reunions
- i. Visit campus
- j. Visit University Web site
- k. Volunteer to work on campus/event

16. For each of the communication methods listed below, please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the Arkansas Alumni Association's effectiveness in utilizing that method.

Importance	Effectiveness
1 = Not important	1 = Poor
2 = Somewhat important	2 = Fair
3 = Very important	3 = Good
4 = Critically important	4 = Excellent
1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

- a. Alumni web site

Question (arnew) 8/10/09 6:28 AM

b. University web site

c. Electronic newsletter

d. Alumni chapter mailings/e-mails

e. E-mail

f. Communication regarding services and benefits

g. Invitations to University activities

h. The alumni magazine

i. Periodic informational communications

j. Invitations to alumni activities

k. Viral videos/YouTube/Online Networking (MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

17. Please indicate how much each of the following impacts your overall opinion of the University of Arkansas:

	No impact on my opinion	Some impact on my opinion	Significantly impacts my opinion	Critically impacts my opinion	No opinion
a. Value/respect for degree					
b. Campus aesthetics (e.g. buildings, grounds, etc.)					
c. Media visibility (e.g. newspaper, magazine articles, etc.)					
d. History/tradition					
e. Accomplishments of alumni					
f. School rankings (e.g. U.S. News & World Report)					
g. Accomplishments of faculty					
h. Outreach to community					
i. Accomplishments of students					
j. Success of athletic teams					
k. Providing scholarships					
l. Other					

18. What are the one or two things that are most important to you about being an alumnus/a?

19. What is the most meaningful thing the Arkansas Alumni Association can do for you in the next 5-10 years?

20. Which of the following best describes your financial support of the University of Arkansas?
Have not financially supported the University of Arkansas and do not plan to in future

<http://www.popsurvey.com/survey/collect/respond.php> Page 5 of 7

Feedback (archive)

8/10/09 6:23 AM

Have financially supported the University of Arkansas but do not plan to continue
Have not financially supported the University of Arkansas but plan to in the future
Currently financially support the University of Arkansas and plan to continue
Currently financially support the University of Arkansas and plan to increase in future
 No Opinion

21. Please indicate your feeling regarding the frequency of the following.

- | | Way too
much | A little too
much | About
right | Would
welcome
more | Not nearly
enough | No opinion |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| a. Email correspondence from the Arkansas Alumni Association (newsletters, news flashes, etc.) | | | | | | |
| b. Printed materials from the Arkansas Alumni Association (magazines, newsletters, etc.) | | | | | | |
| c. Information regarding programs such as credit cards, insurance services, long distance services, etc. | | | | | | |
| d. Solicitations for donations (annual fund, support for athletics, etc.) | | | | | | |
| e. Invitations to alumni activities | | | | | | |

22. Please indicate the extent of your loyalty to each of the following:

- | | Not loyal | Somewhat
loyal | Loyal | Very loyal | No opinion |
|---|-----------|-------------------|-------|------------|------------|
| a. My undergraduate college | | | | | |
| b. My major or academic area of study | | | | | |
| c. A faculty member or instructor | | | | | |
| d. A student organization or activity I was associated with | | | | | |
| e. the University of Arkansas athletics | | | | | |
| f. the University of Arkansas in general | | | | | |

23. Please indicate the degree to which each of the following options explain why you have not become a member of Arkansas Alumni Association.

- | | No impact
on decision | Some
impact on
decision | Important
to decision | Very
important
to decision | No opinion |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| a. My personal circumstances didn't allow me to | | | | | |
| b. Something happened at University of Arkansas that bothered me | | | | | |
| c. A student I am related to or know well did not get accepted into University of Arkansas | | | | | |
| d. Something happened with a University of Arkansas student I am related to or know well | | | | | |
| e. Not enough value to me personally or professionally | | | | | |
| f. I don't know how the dues are used. | | | | | |
| g. I haven't been asked to become a member. | | | | | |

Feedback (review)

8/10/09 6:28 AM

- h. I don't think the alumni association uses the funds it raises wisely
- i. I got the mailing but forgot it/lost it
- j. Seeing the impact of my membership
- k. I do not know what the benefits are
- l. I won't use the benefits
- m. I support University of Arkansas in other ways
- n. I don't live near campus
- o. I am concerned that if I am a member I will receive solicitations from others at University of Arkansas or the alumni association
- p. I have little to no relationship to University of Arkansas
- q. I receive the Arkansas Alumni Magazine without being a member
- r. Having access to the Arkansas Alumni Association online community
- s. Other

24. Which of the following best describes the performance of the Arkansas Alumni Association?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- No opinion

25. Please use the space below to provide any further comments you may have.

**Thank you for your input. Your time is greatly appreciated.
Yes, submit my survey!**

Appendix D: June 16, 2009 E-Mail Invitation to Participate In Study

Anthony D. Mc Adoo

From: Arkansas Alumni Association [news@arkansasalumni.org]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 3:16 PM
To: Anthony D. Mc Adoo
Subject: Alumni Attitude Study: We need your feedback



**ARKANSAS
ALUMNI**
Creating and Serving
the University of Arkansas Family

[Join/Renew](#) [Shop Today](#) [How To Ask](#)

Arkansas Alumni Association

Connecting and Serving the University of Arkansas Family

Dear Anthony,

The Arkansas Alumni Association works hard every day to serve your needs and interests as part of the University of Arkansas family. To better serve you, the Association has been implementing a plan which strives to further improve existing and develop new programs, communications and services.

Take Our Attitude Survey!

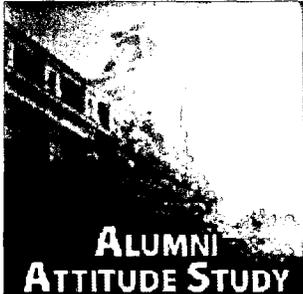
Your opinions and concerns are an important part of this process. Please help us better understand what you expect of your university and your alumni association by completing this survey. Your input is critical to help us meet your expectations.

It takes approximately 15 minutes to complete the 25 questions in three sections. You cannot save and return to the survey, but it will not timeout due to inactivity so you can leave it open in your browser and return to it.

Take the Arkansas Alumni Attitude Survey Today

For your convenience, this study is being conducted online only and you will not receive any mail or phone calls related to this study.

We are listening and are committed to taking action based on the feedback you give us. We will also share the findings of this study on the Association's website and in Arkansas magazine. We are grateful for your participation.



**ALUMNI
ATTITUDE STUDY**

Appendix E: June 24, 2009 E-Mail Reminder to Participate In Study

Anthony D. Mc Adoo

From: Arkansas Alumni Association [news@arkansasalumni.org]
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2009 9:21 PM
To: Anthony D. Mc Adoo
Subject: Make Sure Your Thoughts Are Heard in the Alumni Attitude Study



**ARKANSAS
ALUMNI**
Connecting and Serving
the University of Arkansas Family

[Join/Renew](#) [Shop Today](#) [Hot Tags](#)

Arkansas Alumni Association

Connecting and Serving the University of Arkansas Family

Dear Anthony,

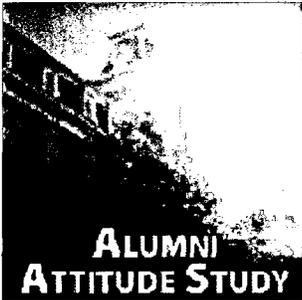
Last week we invited alumni to participate in the 2009 Alumni Attitude Study. We've had a good response, but we also want to be sure that your input is included in this project!

Complete the Survey!

It takes approximately 15 minutes to complete the 25 questions in three sections. You cannot save and return to the survey, but it will not timeout due to inactivity so you can leave it open in your browser and return to it.

Thank you in advance for your participation. Your input will be valuable to the Arkansas Alumni Association and the University as we examine programming and services to meet the needs of alumni and students.

With Pride in Arkansas,
Myron D. Macechko
 Executive Director & Associate Vice Chancellor
 Arkansas Alumni Association



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Your Profile](#) | [Send this to a Friend](#)
 Arkansas Alumni Association - P.O. Box 1070, Fayetteville, AR 72702 - 1-888-275-2586

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Appendix F: July 8, 2009 Final E-Mail to Participate In Study

Anthony D. Mc Adoo

From: Arkansas Alumni Association [news@arkansasalumni.org]
Sent: Wednesday, July 08, 2009 7:05 PM
To: Anthony D. Mc Adoo
Subject: Time is Running Out to Be A Part of the Alumni Attitude Study



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Arkansas Alumni Association

Connecting and Serving the University of Arkansas Family

Dear Anthony,

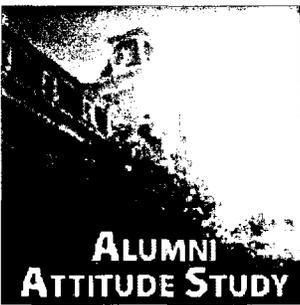
Since June 24, we have invited alumni to give us their feedback about their alumni experience in addition to their perceptions of the University and the Arkansas Alumni Association. We have had numerous alumni give us feedback so far, but we are still hoping to receive yours before the Alumni Attitude Study ends on Friday, July 17th.

Take the Survey Now!

Please give us 15-20 minutes to revisit your connection to the University and complete the survey

Thank you in advance for your participation. The results from this study will be analyzed and shared online and in various alumni communication outlets.

With Pride in Arkansas,
Myron D. Macechko
Executive Director & Associate Vice Chancellor
Arkansas Alumni Association



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Appendix G: Letter of Permission from Arkansas Alumni Association
to use data from the 2009 Alumni Attitude Study©



June 1, 2010

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to confirm that Mr. Anthony Dean McAdoo has the permission of the Arkansas Alumni Association to use the data collected during our 2009 Alumni Attitude Study. The Association received this file for its further use as contracted with the Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. and did not contain any personal information about respondents.

The use of this data was previously agreed upon and provided to Mr. McAdoo in an SPSS file format for use in his dissertation research. Mr. McAdoo has agreed to destroy the data file after use and to not share it with any entity.

In exchange for use of the file, Mr. McAdoo will provide the Arkansas Alumni Association and Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. a copy of the dissertation.

Sincerely,

Myron Macechko
Executive Director
Arkansas Alumni Association

