Exploring the underpinnings that attribute to low performance on standardized tests by first year university freshmen at a Historically Black College and University

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EXPLORING THE UNDERPINNINGS THAT ATTRIBUTE TO LOW PERFORMANCE ON STANDARDIZED TESTS BY FIRST YEAR UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN AT A HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Educational Theory, Policy and Practice

by
Jeffery Joseph Darby, Jr.
B.A., Langston University, 2008
M.A., Louisiana State University 2010
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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to examine and determine what factors contribute to the prevention of first semester freshmen students not succeeding on high stakes tests based on their opinions, and what variables are important to their performance at the university. The Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS), a 65 item Likert-type scale was designed to measure the students’ opinions regarding their academic knowledge acquired during their first semester in college in Academic Achievement and other courses at Langston University. The final response count was 216 representing a 35.47% response rate.

The target population in this research study was first year college students who attend Langston University, and who were conditionally admitted and enrolled in Academic Achievement as a required preparatory course because they are considered at-risk for college studies. These students’ composite scores ranged from seventeen or lower on the ACT (American College Test).

Students were administered the PEAS to measure the factors that they think impeded or enhanced their knowledge base and determined their academic levels in addition to some identifiable markers that they considered to be motivational factors as they matriculate throughout the semester. The statistical procedures that were used to help answer the research questions were Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), step-wise regression, Pearson’s r Correlation, and exploratory factor analysis.

Majority of respondents identified themselves as Black or African American (n = 202, 93.5%). The second largest group identified themselves as American Indiana or Alaska Native (n = 7, 3.2%). A total of 144 respondents (67.0%) indicated that they did not find an individual who is mentoring them during this college experience. This item question was proven to be
statistically significant of all the other variables. Many of the respondents also stated that they
would like more collaborative learning and hands-on classwork in the classroom. They also
wanted the course to be offered more than one time a week. Another major finding was that the
majority of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 3.0
and above (n = 154, 71.3%).
CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTION

An Overview of Academic Achievement, Remedial, and Bridge Programs

Research has shown that many students enter college with a variety of academic deficiencies. Bridge programs such as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), McNeir, and Upward Bound are three programs that can help bridge the gap between a student’s learning ability, and the transition from high school to college while decreasing or alleviating any academic barriers which may have inhibited a student from maximizing their learning potential. Courses such as Academic Achievement and other related mandatory freshmen college ready preparatory courses can aid in the process of enabling a student to be well prepared for college level courses. Bridge programs have been successfully implemented by many universities. At the University of Mexico, Ami (2001) reported that after four-weeks of a summer bridge program 64.3% of participants showed improved scores in algebra, with 43% increasing their placement in mathematics by one level. In Minnesota, a summer bridge program resulted in an 80% retention rate (American Association of Community Colleges, 1994). Guthrie (1992) shares that other highly successful summer bridge programs include those in California, Georgia State University and the University of Maryland-College Park (Muraskin and Lee 2004). Hicks (2005), evaluating the program at the University of Maryland-College Park, observed that students who participated in the summer transition program were more prepared for college, and had higher retention and graduation rates than other first semester freshmen.

Generally, public institutions of higher learning are more likely to provide the necessary classes and services such as Academic Achievement and Student Support Services (SSS) than private institutions of higher learning. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) stated that the federal Student Support Services (SSS) program, one of the clusters of TRIO programs, is probably the
best known and most widespread of a comprehensive program and offers perhaps the best example of the range of services that can be provided. Furthermore, the authors share that SSS provides nine supplemental academic programs to low-income, first generation, and physically handicapped students. The program offers instruction in basic study skills; tutorial services; academics, financial and personal counseling; career information; mentoring; special services for students with limited proficiency in English; laboratories (such as in mathematics or writing); workshops (for example, in orientation study skills, or career guidance); cultural events; and various handicapped services (p. 405). In the field of higher learning, it is important that educators do their best to eliminate or decrease any academic deficiencies, barriers, and/or a student’s inability to retain college content which will help aid and better prepare a student to be placed in regular college level courses.

To address the needs of students enrolling in colleges and universities who are deemed at-risk, most institutions of higher learning propose to provide a head-start on the freshmen year to students through implementation of a summer bridge program to familiarize them to the expectations of the university and various academic programs. A summer bridge program can improve self-confidence of students, enabling them to feel that they can compete at high levels, and also provide a very practical advantage of an early high GPA (grade-point average), which both set a standard and allows them a little margin for error when the programs become more challenging (Gandara, 1999).

MacKinnon et al. (2004) assert that any type of program geared towards a special population of student should “complement the mission and values of the institution, reflect the needs of the entering student body, and comprise aspects of the collegiate environment that enhance student success” (Smith & Brackin, 1993, cited in MacKinnon, 2004). Moreover, today
many campuses incorporate a variety of models to address the diverse needs of the community. It is not uncommon for a campus to have pre-enrollment programs, extended orientation programs, freshman or orientation courses, and specialized programs for targeted populations, including summer bridge programs (p. 252).

Barriers Encountered by Students Deemed “At Risk”

There are a variety of reasons why incoming first semester freshmen students are deemed at-risk. SES (socio-economic status), first generation, academic preparation in grades K-12, environmental factors, and lack of involvement in extracurricular activities are a few variables that are associated with low-performing students.

Literature reveals a preponderance of evidence that supports the realities of prosperity and unprecedented wealth in America due to increased access to higher education. There is still, however, an increasing number of low-income and minority students who are confronted with significant financial barriers that limit their ability to access and persist in college (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, 2001).

Mmeje et al. (2009) support the previous statement by declaring that “the cost of education continues to be an important consideration for most students when determining which college or university to attend. In today’s market of high tuition and fees, HBCUs are becoming an increasingly cost-effective alternative to predominantly White institutions (PWIs), particularly for White low-income and first generation college students (Wenglinsky, 1996; 1997). In addition to low tuition set by many HBCUs, some of the institutions offer minority scholarships for White students (p. 297).

Gandara (1999) shares that as a consequence of the demographic shift in the US; there is a dramatic increase in ethnic minorities in the school-age population, indicating an urgent need
to educate an increasingly diverse student body. As the numbers of African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans come to comprise a large percentage of the population, the students from these backgrounds remain seriously underrepresented at the higher academic achievement levels. Moreover, Gandara (1999) shares that underrepresented minority students, especially those from low-income backgrounds, too often fail to receive the advice and counseling that facilitates transfer to a four-year college or university. Minority faculty can be instrumental in recruiting and retaining minority students in college and serve as role models or mentors of students who often find few examples of high achievement in their own communities (Milem, 1999). Unfortunately, the low numbers of minority faculty at large institutions make it more difficult for such institutions to recruit and retain minority students (Hurtado, 1990). Given the important roles minority faculty play in the academic life of underrepresented students, predominantly minority institutions have a significant role to play in providing college education for minorities.

Ethnic minorities, especially African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans comprise a larger percentage of students who drop out of high school. High school attrition reduces the pool of students from underrepresented populations who might go on to higher education, but poor performance in high school is another significant factor that further restricts the pool of minorities in the college-going category (Gandara, 1999). Often, underrepresented minority students take fewer rigorous college preparatory courses in high school, and also have a low grade-point average (NCES 1997). Further, the performance as indicated by the GPA of students from low-performing high schools that most underrepresented minorities attend, often does not reflect the same level of accomplishment as students from high-performing suburban schools. Many reasons have been cited for the low-performance of minorities from low-income
backgrounds among which are a significant discrepancy in learning environments and resources (US Department of Education, 1997).

Reasons Underrepresented Students Perform Poorly on Standardized Tests

It is widely believed that the most formidable impediment to academic success for underrepresented students are the key so-called ‘gateway’ courses in SMET (science, math, engineering and technology) that are taken during the freshmen year and are well known to be used for screening out first year students (Gandara, 1999). Underrepresented students are disproportionately most vulnerable to the weeding-out process because of lack of rigorous preparation in high school. Arbuthnot (2009) shows that in the area of mathematics, Blacks tend to be more conservative in their strategy choices when taking a high-stakes tests; however, when Black students are in low-stakes testing environments, they have more versatility in the ways in which they solve mathematics test items. Specifically, they are more apt to use both conventional and unconventional strategy choices. The question is, can this information about strategy choice be translated into other academic areas (Arbuthnot, 2009 cited in Arbuthnot, 2011, p. 87)? Furthermore, Arbuthnot also shares that research has shown that there are large differences in performance between Black and White students on verbal ability tests. More specifically, research has shown that Analogy test items favor White test takers when compared to Black test takers. To understand if strategy choices could help explain test performance differences, we must examine the components of analogies. Analogy questions are included on several standardized tests. For instance, the graduate record examination (GRE) created by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) contains analogies (p. 87). Moreover, Arbuthnot (2011) contends that a GRE, analogy problem tests one’s ability to recognize the relationship between two pairs of words. It continues to say that on occasion, the answer choices to the analogy items
includes multiple pairs of items that may seem to express a relationship similar to the sample pair on the questions; however, there is one relationship that is more precise. Arbuthnot goes on to state that “consequently, there could be more than one solution that is correct; however, the correct answer is the one that is most precise” (p. 87).

However, Harper & Quaye (2009) contend that “research on compensatory effects indicates that students who may start college underprepared in one or more areas benefit even more than their relatively advantaged peers by participating in certain programs or practices. For example, Kuh et al. (in press) found that taking into account a global measure of engagement (a composite score based on 18 items from the National Survey of Student Engagement) boosted to a small degree about the first-year GPA of students who entered college with lower levels of academic achievement. Specifically, students with an ACT score of 20 realized an increase in GPA of 0.06 for every standard deviation increase in their participation in educationally purposeful activities, net of background characteristics. Students with an ACT score of 24 realized only about 0.04 point GPA advantage for the same increase in engagement; students with a 28 ACT score had an advantage of only 0.02 points. Similarly, a one standard deviation increase in student engagement resulted in about 0.11 advantage in first-year GPA Hispanic students compared with only 0.03 benefit in White students” (p. 315). Arbuthnot (2011) contends that “of the greatest importance is that since we have established the different ways that groups approach standardized test items, we may begin the dialogue of what can be done to help. Unfortunately, if we don’t know and don’t understand the experiences of particular groups in the test situation, we cannot make real strides in helping to make changes in closing the gaps. Further research should be focused on gaining a deeper understanding of how Black and White
students differ in the way in which they process test items. These differences can be helpful in understanding some of the test performance patterns” (p. 90).

Reasons for Remedial Courses and Bridge Programs

Remedial courses and bridge programs can help bridge the gap between a student’s overall academic performance and a student’s overall grade-point average (GPA). Research has shown that there is a huge disparity between a student’s overall composite score(s) on standardized tests and their overall GPA. However, some students can be great learners in the classroom by thoroughly reading and retaining classroom information enabling them to pass tests but not performing the best on high stakes tests. Remedial courses and/or bridge programs allow a student to be better prepared for regular college classes if a composite score of eighteen (18) or higher is not attained during the examination period.

Need for the Study

Various phenomena that may play an intricate role in a student’s academic performance have not been thoroughly examined. These phenomena can be vital and can be a source of considerable study. This research study was intended to provide keener insights relative to some characteristics of first semester university freshmen students that may attribute to poor academic performance. The research study was also undertaken to extend an area of study so that more sophisticated refined extensive research might be completed in the future. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) share that fewer studies have looked at preparatory classes and bridge programs than at the longer developmental studies programs offered during an academic year, but findings are generally consistent in suggesting that bridge program participants are more likely than nonparticipants to persists into their second year (p. 404).
Statement of the Problem

Students are not making passing scores on standardized examinations, a process used for admission to colleges and universities and placement of students in freshman level courses. What are the causes? Is it because of (a) poor academic preparation (K-12), (b) the socio-economic status of the students (SES), (c) time devoted to studying, (d) productive academic environment beyond the classroom, (e) lack of academic intrinsic motivation from home and the community, (f) below average family income, (g) being a first generation college student, thus very little help and motivation from the home, (h) lack of productive academic related extra-curricular activities, (i) absence of positive informal peer-group interaction, (j) low parental capital, (k) perceived poor quality of primary and secondary schools, (l) lack of positive relationships with teachers, advisors and counselors, (m) parental involvement in the academic process, (n) willingness to seek and accept help for academic assistance, and (o) failure to expend efforts on academic tasks. There are a plethora of factors that may contribute to this problem that will be explored and presented by the researcher assuming that the variables mentioned above are some of the key identifiable markers. These issues and others may be determining factors that attribute to students being low achievers and performing below the acceptable academic levels at schools, colleges and universities. This study will examine issues and characteristics that will identify the reasons, as students perceive them, for low academic performance in schools, colleges and universities.

Research Objectives

- To describe the personal demographics of the freshman sample of students at Langston University currently enrolled in the Academic Achievement course with regards to (a) age, (b) race, (c) gender, (d) marital status of mother, (e) marital status of father, (f) mother graduated from college, (g) father graduated from college, (h) receiving financial
aid, (i) receiving financial aid for living expenses, (j) first generation college student, (k) parents married, (l) involved in extracurricular activities in high school, (m) participated in travel abroad in high school, (n) grade point average 2.0 or below, (o) grade point average 2.1 – 2.9, (p) grade point average 3.0 and above, (q) have a college mentor, (r) assigned an academic advisor, (s) frequency of meeting with academic advisor.

- To describe the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshman students at Langston University as measured by the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS).
- To describe latent constructs within the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) that emerges in the exploratory factor analysis.
- To determine if differences exist in the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) due to following demographic variables of the freshman students at Langston University: age, race, mother graduated college, first generation student to attend college, gender, mother attended college, father attended college, found a mentor during college experience, assigned an academic advisor.
- To determine if a model exist which explains a significant portion of the variance in the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshmen students at Langston University as measured by the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) and the demographic characteristics of age, gender, mother attended college, father attended college, first generation student to attend college in my family, assigned an academic advisor, have you found a mentor during college experience, and race.
To examine the open-ended responses of the freshmen students at Langston University who responded to the following questions: “what do you think about classroom assignments at the university” and “what would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?”

Purpose of Study

The primary purpose of this research study is to explore and determine what variables prevented the academic success of first semester university freshmen to excel on high stakes tests based on their opinions provided on the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) and what variables are important to their academic performance at the university. Knowing the key variables that have prohibited students from their achievement will help design alternate methods of learning that will increasingly impact the students’ overall academic performance on standardized tests. Other purposes of this study are to examine the importance of having Academic Achievement programs at colleges and universities that are geared towards “at risk” students, and whether or not courses like Academic Achievement and remedial classes are meeting the academic needs of the students. Some students who attend colleges and universities have a myriad of academic problems after graduating from high school. However, it is the institution’s responsibility to design innovative teaching and learning strategies to eradicate or compress variables that may hinder a student from excelling academically. Also, certain programs that are geared towards at-risk students help ease the transition from high school to college for some individuals.
Research Hypotheses and Questions

Hypotheses

Variables such as below average characteristics in the preparation of mathematics, science, English, and reading; socio-economic status (SES); time devoted to studying; productive academic environment beyond the classroom; and lack of academic intrinsic motivation from home, school and the community are some major reasons why students perform at unacceptable levels in high school and the first semester of their freshman year in college. (H₁) It can be hypothesized that there is a significant correlation between the identifiable markers that will be examined in this study regarding students’ performances in the classroom. These identifiable markers are listed in the “statement of problem” section. (H₂) Based on the students’ perception of what impeded their learning, intervention methods such as Academic Achievement and environmental related interventions will enhance their success in first year academic courses and experiences.

(H₃) It can also be hypothesized that students taking the Academic Achievement course at Langston University, an Historical Black College (HBCU), will be prepared to perform better academically in general education and in major courses. (H₄) More specifically, it can be hypothesized that students taking Academic Achievement who are intrinsically motivated will perform much better than those students enrolled in Academic Achievement who are extrinsically motivated to excel in their academic studies. To test these hypotheses, as the researcher, based on students’ opinions, relevant data will be collected to calculate the correlation between cause, motivation and performance on academic activities, and academic performance. It can be expected that a positive correlation (i.e., the higher the motivation, the
higher the at-risk student will perform on academic activities). Hypothetically, if the correlation is +.5 or higher, it suggests that there is a positive correlation.

Research Questions

1. What are the reasons and characteristics associated with first year semester university freshmen students deemed at-risk or who are academically underprepared?
2. What are the major environmental, demographic, and motivational factors of the student that contribute to low performance by first year university freshmen?
3. Do students possess required thinking, reading, listening, studying, test taking, and time management skills that enhance their academic achievement because of the Academic Achievement course?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this research helps a reader conceptualize the overall picture why students are considered or deemed at-risk when exploring variables that contribute to them not performing well on high stakes tests and which prevents them from being regularly admitted to a college or university of choice, thus being conditionally admitted. The significance of this research also points out innovative ways how students learn and examines how the student deemed at-risk is creative in his or her own way. This study also adds to the limited existing scholarly literature regarding first semester university students who attend HBCUs and who are conditionally admitted. Also, by conducting this study, it will help address deficiencies in existing scholarly literature by providing additional evidence that may answer the question(s) regarding more issues and concerns posed by persons in the field of higher education pertaining to success and achievement of students.
Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study concentrates on ascertaining the perceptions of first semester university freshmen students enrolled at Langston University, a traditional college, and their perceptions of factors that may have influenced and impeded their academic success, in addition, whether or not courses like Academic Achievement and remedial classes are meeting their academic needs. The conclusions resulting from this study can only be applied to the Langston University student population. Subsequently, the population targeted was considered at-risk and had a composite score(s) on the ACT of 17 or below. Perhaps, if a different demographic from various schools such as parochial, private, or proprietary institutions and other academic characteristics were examined and identified, the data would have rendered different results.

Mmeje et al. (2009) state

the core difference between proprietary institutions and traditional colleges and universities is that the goal of the former is to obtain a better fiscal bottom line whereas the mission of the latter is the general acquisition and application of knowledge. In discussing the missions of proprietary institutions, Kelly (2001) quoted a proprietary institution’s chief executive officer stated that the purpose of his or her institution was to number one, train them for careers; number two, get them jobs (p. 302).

Because of the ambiguity in the self-reported responses of students enrolled in Academic Achievement, some of their responses could not have been verified to be factually or completely accurate when providing answers that applied to the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS). This presented a major limitation for the study.

Another limitation of this study was that the findings were restricted to students enrolled in Academic Achievement classes and teachers who taught the Academic Achievement classes were not included in this research study. The study was also limited by utilization of the students who took the ACT and the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS). Other possible limitations that emerged from this study were the type of design(s) used and various techniques
administered to the students enrolled in Academic Achievement. Since there is no manipulation of the independent variable by the researcher this perhaps can cause a difference. Another limitation is that it can be quite difficult to determine the temporal order of the variables (i.e. which of the variables occurred first). And lastly, there are usually too many other reasons why the researcher might observe the relationship (i.e., the correlation or the differences between groups); in other words, there are usually too many extraneous variables that are left unexplained and act as rival or alternative explanations for why something occurred the way it did.

Johnson and Christensen (2012) suggest that “simply finding a relationship in a correlational study is not sufficient evidence for concluding that the relationship is casual; therefore, you must not jump to that conclusion” (p. 47). As the researcher, if it is concluded that the intervention, Academic Achievement course, did in fact enhance first-year semester freshmen students’ academic ability to perform exceptionally well as they matriculated at Langston University when in fact the course did not, a Type 1 Error would be made. The counter argument to this statement could be if the researcher concludes that the intervention, Academic Achievement course, did not enhance ones academic ability to perform exceptionally as they matriculated at Langston University when in fact it did because the method of pedagogical instruction was designed badly, it would be an example of a Type 2 Error.

By conducting this study, it will help address deficiencies in existing scholarly literature by providing additional evidence that may answer the question(s) regarding more issues and concerns posed by persons in the field of higher education pertaining to student success and achievement. Another limitation of this study is that students who participate in some Academic Achievement courses and similar programs are not monitored throughout their academic studies and the years that they are matriculating at colleges and universities. Are Academic Achievement
and/or remedial courses effective? Gandara (1999) suggests that remedial programs tend to stigmatize students and reinforce the belief that they are intellectually inferior, reducing motivation and self-confidence (Gandara, 1999). However, emphasizing that students achieve at levels for which they have been ill-prepared can sometimes cause them to not excel academically. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) suggest that remediation efforts produce long-term benefits such as increased likelihood of persistence over periods of time ranging from two to six years as well as actual degree completion (p. 399).

MacKinnon et al. (2004) suggest that research from the 1980’s pinpointed five characteristics of successful programs: (1) concern for the student as an individual, (2) opportunities for students to establish relationships with faculty, (3) programmatic emphasis on the academic concerns, (4) small group meetings to ease the adjustment of new students, and (5) recognitions of the stressful transition experienced by entering students (Engstrom & Tinto, 2000; Kramer & Wasburn, 1983 cited in MacKinnon, 2004, p. 256).

Merisotis and Phipps (2000) suggest that students who needed remedial courses performed almost three-quarters as well as students who were academically inclined. These data seem to indicate that remediation is, in fact, quite effective at improving the chances of collegiate success for the underprepared students. McCabe (2000) asserts that over half a million academically underprepared college students’ successfully complete remediation and do as well in standard college courses as those students who begin fully prepared. Also, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) has observed that because few states have exit standards for remedial courses, it is unclear whether many states know whether their programs work.

High stakes testing has been a major means used to evaluate students’ skills and knowledge in specific content areas. Consider the next sentence by Hunter Boylan that is profoundly given… Boylan (2009) states that the other factors to consider are such things as “attitude toward learning, motivation, autonomy, willingness to seek and accept help, desire to
affiliate with peers or instructors, or willingness to expend effort on academic tasks (Sedlacek, 2004)” (p. 14). Boylan is suggesting that these measurable factors of high stakes tests are not capturing and/or maximizing academic learning as it should and as a result, more research needs to be conducted to convey a message to the reader that other factors should be taken into consideration when evaluating ones academic ability on high stakes tests.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were basic to this research study:

1. Unique learning strategies can be fostered.

2. Unique learning can be measured.

3. All students are creative.

4. Maximizing ones learning skills is a suppressed potential in many students; however, it can be uncovered.

5. American College Test (ACT) measures a student’s ability to think abstractly and critically, and is an objective measuring tool to predict a student’s academic achievement and college readiness.

6. The way students prepare academically in high school will dictate their college success.

7. The Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) measures the academic background of a student while considering external factors that may have inhibited a student from maximizing their learning potential.

8. The Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) has basic general demographic, personal and academic relevance.

9. Environmental factors, academic preparation, educational background, involvement in extracurricular activities, organizational participation, knowledge of foreign
languages, travel experiences and hobbies may be important characteristics of first semester freshmen students who may or may not be deemed “at risk.”

10. Students who learn and retain information differently may be a result of playing a musical instrument, ability to speak foreign languages, enjoy the fine arts, read widely, possess interesting leisure time activities and possess unusual innovative thoughts and ideas.

Definition of Key Terms

**National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE):** A survey created by George Kuh that offers a convenient mechanism for staying apprised of student reactions to their college environment (p. 58). The survey gathers information about student attitudes and opinions through large-scale national projects, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement or the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, as well as through locally designed instruments (p. 343) (Komives, 2003).

**Standardized Tests:** Tests that are based on identified standards that measure a student’s specific skills and abilities, competencies and knowledge to help predict achievement in college.

**Extroverted:** A person who possesses characteristics of interest and behavior directed toward others or the environment as opposed to the exclusion of self.

**Introverted:** A person who demonstrates an interest in and preoccupation with oneself as opposed to others or the environment.

**Competent:** A person who possesses adequate abilities or competencies.

**Visual Learner:** Teaching and learning in which ideas, concepts, data and information are associated with images and techniques. A visual learner understands better through seeing things.
Auditory Learner: Teaching and learning in which ideas, concepts, data and information are associated with an individual who prefers to hear information through oral presentation(s).

At Risk: Because of certain circumstances, the individual is more likely to fail academically based on statistical and research information.

First-Semester Freshman: A student who is matriculating in the first semester of study at a college or university.

Student Support Services (SSS): Services at a university or college that support students’ learning and development such as counseling, tutoring, writing centers, and reading centers.

Standardized Tests: A test that is administered and scored on many levels for admissions to a university or college.

Remedial Courses: A course that teaches basic skills needed to succeed in regular college courses.

Southern Educational Review Board (SREB): The Southern Regional Educational Board which works with 16 member states to improve public education at every level, from pre-K through Ph.D. (sreb.org).

College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ): A questionnaire that helps students recognize their own role in making the most of their education (p.603) (Komives, 2003).

Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS): A survey designed to determine specific educational characteristics of an individual that enhance learning.

College of Entrance Examination Board (CEEB): A board comprised of administrators who implemented selective admission policies (p. 13) (Komives, 2003)
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA): A national professional organization for the study, enhancement and expansion of personnel services for administrators who work in student personnel at colleges and universities.

Student Learning Imperative (SLI): Emphasize the centrality of the scholarship of application to effective practice (p. 625). The key to enhancing learning and personal development is not simply for faculty to teach more and better, but also create conditions that motivate and inspire students to devote time and energy to educationally-purposeful activities, both in and outside of the classroom (p. 628) (Komives, 2003).

American College Personnel Association (ACPA): A comprehensive student affairs association that advances student affairs and engages students for a lifetime of learning and discovery (www.acpa.org).

American Association of Higher Education (AAHE): A comprehensive higher education association that engages in studies and projects designed to stimulate discussion on how student affairs professionals and others can create conditions that will enhance student learning and professional development (p. 80) (Komives, 2003).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: An act to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice so that no child is left behind.

Supplemental Instruction: Instruction that enhances the learning goals and activities designed for a specific academic subject.

Educational Testing Service (ETS): An assessment development and research organization.

Post-secondary Education: The stage of learning that occurs at universities, academies, colleges, seminars, and institutes of technology.
Organization of the Study

Chapter One included the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, significance of the study, limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, definition of terms, and organization of the study. Selected and related literature was reviewed in Chapter Two. Chapter Two also included various conceptual/theoretical frameworks from renowned theorists. The literature in Chapter Two addressed areas that are critical to the success of first semester freshmen in college such as knowledge and skills acquired; motivation and support, mentoring and advising, and academic and social integration. The data were presented, analyzed and discussed in Chapter Three. Chapter Four included the findings/results, and research questions. Chapter Five included the summary, conclusions, implications and recommendations for future study.
CHAPTER 2.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Love (2003) suggests that “college students have been identified as increasingly underprepared. Seventy-three percent (73%) of college deans reported an increase in the last ten years in the proportion of students requiring remedial or developmental education (Levine & Cureton), with nearly one-third of all undergraduates reporting having to take a basic skills or remedial courses in reading, writing, or math” (p. 515).

As educators and practitioners in the field of higher education, it is important for us to understand why students are academically underprepared prior to enrolling successfully in college courses. This non-experimental research study will hopefully provide some answers to the problem. Perhaps, the way one processes information has a lot to do with how one performs academically. Consider the Epistemological Reflection Model done by Baxter Magolda in 1992.

King (2003) shares that “Baxter (1992) reported the results of a longitudinal study of a cohort of 101 college students in which she mapped their intellectual development across their college years. She described four qualitatively different ways of knowing, each characterized by a core set of epistemic assumptions. These four approaches (absolute, transitional, independent, and contextual) are associated with different expectations of the learner and his or her peers and instructors about how learning should be evaluated and how educational decisions should be made” (p. 239).

The way one processes information can render whether or not answers provided will be accurate. Arbuthnot (2011) provides an overview of issues related to cognitive processing and test performance. Specifically, the author focused on presenting explanations and ideas related to why there are differences in the ways in which Black and White test takers approach and process test items. These explanations include an understanding of how students assess the costs and
benefits associated with using certain test strategies, and provide connections between research that addresses cognitive processing of mathematical items and applying those same findings to other academic areas (p. 89). The notion that the costs and benefits related to standardized tests are different for certain groups brings up a very important point. The point is that beyond the information on the test, our culture and values can affect the way we approach a particular situation and the value placed on that situation, more importantly, our interpretation of who and what will be directly affected by our actions (p. 89).

Arbuthnot (2011) states that all students are able to demonstrate what they know when taking high-stakes tests. She shares that “if Black students are approaching standardized tests in ways that limit their strategy usage, are they truly showing what they know? Undoubtedly, the answer to that question is no. Black students who limit their strategy choices are not truly showing what they know, particularly if they would be able to perform differently if the testing conditions were changed (i.e., low-stakes)” (p. 90). What constitutes correct learning and how should one process and retain information in order to be right? Perhaps, the Division of Student Support Services can aid in this process. Penalber (2005) shares in his study that

Students enrolled in Student Support Services (SSS) are often members of minority groups (U. S. Department of Education, 1999b). Studies indicate that students served by Student Support Services often need assistance with college preparation because of the unique barriers they encounter in their pursuit of an education (Carriluo, 1994, Richardson, R. 1997). These students must often overcome the barriers of low-income and lack of exposure to post-secondary education programs. The Student Support Services program provides potential first-generation, low-income and/or students with a disability, the educational experiences and opportunities for academic support and social involvement. Federal programs, such as Student Support Services, provide eligible students with the additional support needed to complete post-secondary education programs (p. 3).

These results suggest why it is important that we have such programs like Student Support Services and Academic Achievement that are geared towards students who are not academically
inclined. Chaney, et al. (1997) report that the services provided by Student Support Services often result in improved student grades, greater numbers of credit hours earned, and greater student retention in college. Student Support Services programs are designed to provide academic, career, and personal counseling based on what the individual student lacks. These counseling services are important to student retention and success, specifically during the freshman year. The Academic Achievement course also provides a level of counseling given by the instructor.

Some students do not take full advantage of the many resources the institution has to offer because of a sense of feeling incompetence, guilt, and shame. Palmer et al. (2009) suggest that students do not utilize all the available resources on campus. African American males and other minority groups are notorious for this behavior.

There are a series of issues that attribute to the reason why students are academically deficient. Bahr (2010) suggests “that the disparities in academic courses such as mathematics, science, and English in elementary and high school preparation and achievement may be attributed to a number of well-documented expressions of socioeconomic inequality, such as academic tracking, lower levels of parental capital, and the poorer quality of primary and secondary schools in neighborhoods characterized by a high percentage of minorities” (Bahr, 2010).

MacKinnon et al. (2004) look at other factors that may have attributed to the underrepresentation of people of color. The authors assert that although some African Americans were self-educated, served apprenticeships, and to a limited extent studied abroad (Thomas & Hill, 1987 cited in MacKinnon, 2004), only 28 African Americans received baccalaureates from American Colleges prior to the Civil War (Bowles & DeCosta, 1971 cited in Mackinnon, 2004).
Their pre-Civil War experiences with American higher education were never limited to a few predominantly White institutions (PWIs) that would accept Blacks and a few historically Black institutions (HBIs) in existence at the time. Additional HBIs were founded during the years between the Civil War and 1890 (Bowles & DeCosta, 1971 cited in MacKinnon, 2004), after the second Morrill Act of 1890 that provided the “funds for Black education to be distributed on a ‘just and equitable basis’” (Ranbom & Lynch, 1987/1988, p. 17 cited in MacKinnon, 2004, p. 221), and after the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of Plessy v. Ferguson, ruled on the constitutionality of the “separate but equal” doctrine in 1896.

It was not until 1954 that the Supreme Court ruled, in Brown v. Board of Education and other cases, that separate but equal (or racial segregation within public education) was unconstitutional (Bowles & DeCosta, 1971). Still some states continued to operate dual educational systems for Blacks and Whites (Williams, 1991 cited in MacKinnon, 2004) until Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 indicated that “no person in the United States, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Malaney, 1987, p 17 cited in MacKinnon, 2004, p. 221). This legislation was largely responsible for opening the doors of PWIs to Blacks, and HBIs to whites. Although HBIs represented only about 3 percent of all colleges and universities in the United States, they enrolled approximately 14.2 percent of all African American college students in 1998 and awarded 26 percent of the total bachelor’s degrees that year (Harvey, 2001 cited in MacKinnon, 2004, p. 222).

Samuels (2004) asserts that Black Institutions of Higher Education have served and continue to serve as the bridge between a crippling and debilitating elementary and secondary
educational system to which Brown itself was directed because of the experience with the equal education cases from Murray to Sweatt in the field of higher education. This experience demonstrated that equality of educational attainment could not be achieved until the feeder system of the secondary and elementary levels had been improved for black students. Eighteen years after Brown, with a general consensus that this feeder system has not been improved and maybe has lost ground...the assimilation of the Black Institutions of Higher Learning would be to remove the wooden beam in order to replace it with a steel or cement support before the new beam is in place, leaving the structure unsupported at all (Samuels, 2004, p. 85).

Some authors would argue that the underrepresented populations were oppressed and that pursuing a post-secondary higher education was never intended for such a demographic. A professor once said that the United States possesses arguably the world’s most diverse and successful higher education system. The fact that before there was the United States Constitution, penned in 1776, there was Harvard College, chartered in 1636, which illustrates that historically higher education has been of utmost importance to the nation. However, from its establishment, the U.S. has struggled to figure out who should be allowed to participate in higher education. Is higher education exclusively for the clergy, men, the wealthy, adults, whites, Protestants or Catholics? Regardless to the point, over the four centuries that this debate has occurred, it is clear that it is ongoing and contentious. Moreover, it is also clear that participation in higher education in the 21st century represents full participation in U.S. economic, social and political life. Against this backdrop, a significant problem arises considering that only about 25% of the U.S. population actually participates in post-secondary education. Consequently, by not participating in higher education, 75% of the population is missing out on participation in the fabled American Dream. For example, consider the philosophies of Paulo Freire. In Paulo
Freire’s text entitled *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, the author states that the pedagogy of the oppressed is the pedagogy of people engaged in the fight for their own liberation. Those who recognize, or begin to recognize, themselves as oppressed must be among the developers of this pedagogy. No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption. Carter G. Woodson once said in the *Mis-Education of the Negro* text that when you control a man’s thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his “proper place” and he will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary. Conchas (2002) asserts that reproduction theory concludes that schooling reproduces hierarchical class relations in American society and culture. Some scholars, such as Bowles and Gintis (1976), view the societal and economic reproduction in schooling through a purely structural lens. Others, like Paul Willis (1977), see it in terms of culture. Structuralists place analytical significance on economic processes that are devoid of human agency, while culturalists concentrate on an individual’s own actions and inactions. Despite conceptual differences between the two camps, the majority of research concludes that schools train the wealthy to take up places at the top of the economy, and condition the poor to accept their subordinate class position. These works contribute to a greater understanding and appreciation if the relationship between structural and cultural forces on the maintenance of inequality (p. 8).

The pedagogy of the oppressed, animated by authentic, humanists (not humanitarian) generosity, presents itself as a pedagogy of humankind. Pedagogy which begins with the egoistic
interest of the oppressors (an egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression. It is an instrument of dehumanization. The pedagogy of the oppressed cannot be developed or practiced by the oppressors. It would be a contradiction in terms if the oppressors not only defended but actually implemented a liberating education (p. 54).

But if the implementation of a liberating education requires political power and the oppressed have none, how then is it possible to carry out the pedagogy of the oppressed prior to the revolution (Freire, 2010 p. 54)? Recognizing that pragmatic thought can be applied to any number of challenges facing U.S. post-secondary education for students deemed at-risk, this study will look specifically at the variables that are associated with underachieving students and its influence on shaping a more democratic student body and ultimately U.S. citizenry. Although it will be impossible to provide answers regarding the low achievement of students on standardized tests, this study will provide an analysis and some insight exposing what variables impeded or enhanced the academic performance of the student. The analysis of the actual student recruitment/admission process as in a) what recruiters look for in the types of high schools from which to attract potential students; b) the composition of admission offices and committees; c) the admission criterion (standardized tests, letters of recommendations, portfolios, and grade point averages of first semester university freshmen); d) the economic, racial, gender, ability, sexual orientation demographics of potential students; and e) the skills that competent educators possess when working with at-risk students are variables that are addressed when analyzing issues related to low performing students. Focusing heavily on item c) the admission criterion (standardized tests, letters of recommendations, portfolios, and grade point averages of first
semester university freshmen) with a brief discussion of item e) the skills that competent educators possess when working with at-risk students will be the primary focus of this study.

Theoretical Framework

Tinto’s Freshman Development Theory

The theoretical framework that was utilized when conducting the research study will come from the works of Chickering’s Seven Vectors (7V) and Tinto while integrating and drawing on three models which are Freshman Development, Student Retention, and Institutional Departure. Tinto’s “Freshman Development Theory” discusses the various developmental stages of a freshman when adjusting to college and trying to become acclimated with the university. Tinto’s models are all relevant to this research study; it deals with the overall development of a student and focuses on the various learning dynamics that attribute to one’s academic success.

The most commonly referred to model in the student retention/dropout literature is the work of Tinto's theory. It was first offered in a literature review (Tinto, 1975), and so began with the support of being broadly consistent with a considerable range of other people's research, as well as having a theoretical derivation by analogy to Durkheim's model of suicide.

Tinto’s Student Retention Theory Model

The “Student Retention Theory” explores the various reasons pertaining to whether or not students successfully continue their academic careers or withdraws from the university for various reasons. Literature that is centered around student retention and whether or not students can be retained during their academic pursuits should use the works of Tinto to better understand what are some of the barriers students encounter as they matriculate at a college or university. In essence, the central idea of Tinto’s Student Retention Theory Model discusses the integration processes which claim whether or not a student stays in college (persists) and/or drops out which
can be predicted by their degree of academic integration, and social integration. These two integration processes are important in one’s academic success.

First year seminars are also effective in terms of increasing academic performance and retention. For example, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) denote that “another distinctive approach to increasing academic performance and retention is the first-year seminar (FYS). FYS courses operate like regular classes, having students meet with an instructor at regularly scheduled times, but these courses vary considerably both within and across institutions” (p. 400). Furthermore, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) state an FYS may be required or offered to all new students or to targeted groups (such as at-risk students or students in a specific department, college, or school). The seminars also vary widely in content, duration, structure, pedagogies, and degree credit value, but all have the goal of promoting academic performance, persistence, and degree completion (p. 400).

Tinto’s theory of academic and social integration can also aid in the increasing academic performance and retention of the student. The academic and social integration evolve over time, as integration and commitment interact, with dropouts depending on commitment at the time of the decision. Academic integration can range from grade performance, personal development, enjoying class lectures, enjoying class subjects, identification with academic norms and values, identification with one’s role as a student and, study patterns. Social integration deals with the socialization aspects that can help render in the academic success of a student. For example, socialization can range from how much a student likes the college or university that they are attending, number of friends at the university, engagement, building professional relationships with teachers and staff at the university, and how gainfully involved one is on campus.
Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) contend that “integration” of Tinto’s model suggest that it is the extent to which the individual shares normative attitudes and values of peers and faculty in the institution and abides by the formal and informal structural requirements for membership in that community or in subgroups of it that determines the academic success. As integration increases, it strengthens student’s commitments to both their personal goals and to the institution through which these goals may be achieved. Negative interactions and experiences, however, tend to impede integration and distance the individual from the academic and social communities of the institution, thereby, reducing commitments to both goals and institution and promoting the individual’s marginality and ultimate withdrawal (p. 54).

Harper & Quaye (2009) posit that occasionally an idea comes along that clarifies complicated matters and suggests approaches for managing fundamental problems in higher education; student engagement is one of those ideas. The engagement premise is straightforward. The more students study a subject, the more they learn about it. Similarly, the more students practice and receive feedback from faculty and staff members on their writing, speaking, and collaborative problem solving, the more adept they become at those skills. Being engaged in a variety of educationally productive activities also builds the foundation of skills and dispositions people need to live a productive, satisfying life after college. In other words, engagement helps students to develop habits of the mind and heart that enlarge their capacity for continuous learning and personal development (p. 313).

The importance of engagement has been documented in the literature for decades, with its meaning evolving over time. One of the earliest examples was the pioneering work of the eminent educational psychologists Ralph Tyler, which showed the positive effects of time-on-task on learning. In the 1970’s, drawing off his own research, C. Robert Pace developed the
College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ), which framed the construct as quality of effort. Alexander Astin popularized the concept with his theory of involvement. Many other scholars, such as Ernest Pascarella, Patrick Terenzini, and Vincent Tinto have contributed scores of papers addressing different dimensions of the engagement concept and its relationship to various desired outcomes of college. And, as noted by the contributors, the term engagement has been firmly established in higher education lexicon, in large part because of the widespread use of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (Kuh, 2003). See Figure 1 below of Tinto’s Student Retention Theory Model.

Tinto’s Institutional Departure Model

Tinto's "Institutional Departure Model" states that, to persist, students need integration into formal (academic performance) and informal (faculty/staff interactions) academic systems.
and formal (extracurricular activities) and informal (peer-group interactions) social systems. See Figure 2 of an illustration of Tinto’s Institutional Departure Model.

![Figure 2: Tinto’s Institutional Departure Model](image)

Tinto’s Institutional Departure Model has been very relevant in academia. As stated before, this model helps one to conceptualize the many stages a student goes through and how these stages are integral to understand how a student matriculates and how well he or she does with their academic college work. The Institutional Departure Model is a conglomeration of a student’s institutional experiences and how these experiences may aid in one’s academic success. Other renowned scholars have recognized and supported Tinto’s work such as Pascarella and Terenzini. For example, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) stated that Tinto theorized that students enter a college or university with a variety of patterns of personal, family, and academic characteristics and skills, including initial dispositions and intentions with respect to college
attendance and personal goals. These institutions and commitments are subsequently modified and reformulated on a continuing basis through a longitudinal series of interactions between the individual and the structures and members of the academic and social systems of the institution. The academic and social communities within an institution are seen as nested inside an external environment of family, friends, and other communities that places its demands on students in ways largely beyond the students’ institutional world (p. 54). As educators in the field of higher learning, student persistence has become a major concern over the past decades as illustrated by renowned research experts. Tinto (1998) contends that “student persistence has become a major concern in higher education over the past twenty years; researchers have examined student retention or persistence in a variety of institutional settings. Penalber (2005) states that this model is an interactive model of student departure which describes and explains the longitudinal process by which individuals come to leave institutions of higher learning. As described by Tinto (1987), departure from the university is a longitudinal process that occurs as a result of individuals’ interactions which cause one to disassociate or withdraw from the university.

Tinto’s Freshman Development Model, Student Retention Model, and Institutional Departure Model can aid in the practical use of educators and practitioners teaching at major colleges and universities. The question then becomes, do these models and other theories have any potential for actually improving our educational systems and enhancing some areas of practice? As previously stated, students come to the university with a myriad of issues and academic deficiencies; however, it is the responsibility of the practitioners in the field to help these students by using innovative techniques and utilizing certain creative and effective pedagogies that will alleviate or decrease some of the problems of students. However, because there are so many ways in which a student's integration may not be as high as it should, or
dropping out for diverse reasons, and having a general explanation does not tell one how to do something effective for each student. All students are unique and different in their own way. Another question that can be asked is what practical use could these models be? It is evident that students are dropping out at alarming rates and not being retained which affects the university.

Chickering’s Seven Vectors of Development

As previously stated, first-semester freshmen students enter colleges and universities with a variety of academic deficiencies. Perhaps there are a plethora of external factors that may also prohibit a student from achieving in college. Arthur Chickering’s seven vectors of development theory consist of developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity can play a significant role in a student’s inability to perform well academically.

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) posit that Chickering (1969) identified seven vectors of development, each of which has several subcomponents. The authors share that the vectors are major highways for journeying toward individuation - the discovery and refinement of one’s unique way of being – and also toward communion with other individuals and groups, including the larger national and global society (p. 21).

Pascarella and Terenzini share Chickering’s seven vectors in the text and they are as follows:

Achieving Competence

According to Chickering, the college years lead to increased competence in intellectual areas, physical and manual skills and interpersonal relations with both individuals and groups. Increases in intellectual competence are particularly important and involve knowledge acquisition; increased intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural sophistication; and development of higher-order cognitive skills. Increased intellectual competence enables development along other vectors inasmuch as it entails the symbolic expression of “the events and objects of our experiences” (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 62).
Managing Emotions

Students of any age must recognize and wrestle with emotions that can interfere with the educational process, including “anger, fear, and anxiety, depression, guilt, shame, and dysfunctional sexual or romantic attraction” (Reisser, 1995). Development occurs when students learn to control impulses and to develop appropriate responses (both immediate and long-term) for handling intense, potentially disruptive, emotions. Not all emotions are negative, however, and movement along this vector includes increased capacity to experience feelings such as wonder, sympathy, relief, caring, and optimism. Growth comes with learning to balance tendencies to assertiveness with tendencies toward participation (p. 21).

Moving through Autonomy toward Interdependence

The redefinition of this vector, originally labeled “developing autonomy,” retains the importance initially ascribed to developing independence and also attributes more developmental prominence to gains in interdependence, a component less prominent in the original statement of the vector. Development involves increased emotional freedom from the need for reassurance and the approval of others as well as greater instrumental independence, the self-sufficiency evident in individuals’ ability to organize their own affairs, solve problems, and make decisions. Movement on this vector may take different gender-related forms but is generally toward interpersonal relations that rest on equality and reciprocity and that occur in a broader theater involving community and society. Balance emerges between the need to be independent and the need to belong (p. 21).

Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships

Conceived originally as the fifth vector and as an outcome that follows establishment of identity, this vector’s updated placement and definition reflect the view that students’ interactions with peers provide powerful learning experiences and help shape the emerging sense of self. Maturing interpersonal relationships reflect an increasing awareness of and openness to differences in ideas, people, backgrounds, and values. “At its heart is the ability to respond to people in their own right” (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 48 cited in Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005), respecting differences. Movement along this vector entails an increased capacity for healthy intimacy and commitment, for relationships that are increasingly independent and founded on mutual interdependence. The vector involves the complex interplay “between autonomy, interdependence, and intimacy (Reisser, 1995, p. 508 cited in Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005, p. 22).

Establishing Identity

This vector, shaped by movement on the previous vectors and influencing progress on subsequent ones, is pivotal. It retains some of the original vector’s elements relating to conceptions of physical characteristics and personal appearance, but extends beyond them to broader age range and to comfort with self-conceptions relating to gender and sexual orientation. Identity formation also involves a developing sense of self in a context shaped by historical events and social and cultural conditions and by issues emanating from family and ethnic heritage. Self-esteem and stability grow. “A solid sense of self emerges, and it becomes more apparent that there is an I who coordinates the facets of personality, who ‘owns’ the house of self
and is comfortable in all of its rooms” (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 49 cited in Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005, p. 22).

Developing Purpose
According to Chickering and Reisser, expanding competencies, developing interpersonal relationships, and clarifying identity require some sense of direction and purpose. Development along the sixth vector occurs as an individual answers not only the question “Who am I?” but also what am I going to be?” and not just “Where am I?” but “Where I am going?” Growth requires increasing intentionality goals and aspirations, interpersonal interests, and family. The emerging identity and values help guide decision making.

Developing Integrity
Growth along the seventh vector involves clarification and rebalancing of personal values and beliefs. An absolutistic reliance on rules yield to relativistic consideration of rules and the purposes they are intended to serve as well as recognition of the interest and values of others. Values previously taken on authority are reviewed, and those found consistent with the emerging values and identity find expression in ways that are internally consistent and manifest themselves in socially responsible behavior.

Both Chickering and Tinto’s theories play a significant role in the academic success of a student. Tinto’s theory focuses directly on freshmen students by providing various reasons why students do not excel and perhaps withdraw from a college or university. Chickering’s theory examines many external factors that perhaps can attribute to the poor academic performance of students.

Psychometrics Used to Access a Student’s Academic Knowledge

There are many tests used to measure how much information one has acquired over the years. In Kenna Arbuthnot's text "Filling in the Blanks: Understanding Standardized Testing and the Black-White Achievement Gap" the author demystifies her reading in a very less convoluted way making the text very simple and easy to understand the underlining issues why minority students perform so poorly on high-stake tests. The author declares that one must ask the question: are standardized tests a valid indicator of test performance? There is an ongoing debate concerning the validity of the interpretation of test scores. The ultimate question is, can we have confidence that scores on standardized tests are an accurate portrayal of one’s ability in a

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particular domain (p.74). Spring (2010) asserts that standardized tests create uniformity in the knowledge taught in public schools. In other words, these tests standardized knowledge. As a result, high-stakes tests created by state governments make a single culture the norm of schooling. Johnson and Christensen (2012) referenced several achievement tests in the Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods text. The authors share that achievement tests are designed to measure the degree of learning that has taken place after a person has been exposed to a specific learning experience (p. 153). Arbuthnot (2011) shares that understanding the test development process is central to understanding testing in today's society. It is important to understand how tests are developed and, consequently, used. Although the process seems quite straightforward, it is often a fairly rigorous and iterative process to develop tests (p. 7).

Moreover, Johnson and Christensen (2012) share that aptitude tests focus on information acquired through the informal learning that goes on in life. These tests attempt to tap the information people acquire under the uncontrolled and undefined conditions of life. In contrast, achievement to measure specific information that is acquired in a formal and relatively structured environment, such as French or computer programming class (p. 154). The authors share that there is a distinct difference between the aptitude and achievement tests. Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that aptitude tests are typically used to make predictions, whereas achievement tests are used to measure accomplishments. However, this does not mean achievement tests are never used to make predictions, because they can be used this way and sometimes are. For example, achievement test performance in a first-semester foreign language course might be considered predictive of achievement in subsequent foreign language courses. However, future predictions are more frequently made from aptitude tests. Arbuthnot (2011)
denotes that standardized tests have the potential to be very valuable on providing useful information to understand patterns of achievement. However, it is imperative that we use testing data in ways that will be beneficial to our educational system and have a positive effect on educational outcomes for all students. Very often, many assume that a test score alone will provide sufficient information that will gauge a student’s ability or achievement in a particular domain. It is of utmost importance that educational policymakers are aware of the limitations that exist when using standardized tests (p. 91).

Furthermore, Johnson and Christensen (2012) discuss various standardized tests such as the American College Test (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Graduate Record Exam (GRE), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is a group-administered tests that is divided into verbal and mathematics sections. The ACT and SAT are tests used in the college selection process and for advising high school students (p. 154). However, Cohen and Brawer (2008) proclaim that as early as 1900, the College of Entrance Examination Board began offering a common examination for college admission. Nonetheless, the wide variety types and quality of colleges in America made it impossible to devise uniform admission standards. There has never been a standard of admission to all colleges in the United States. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the ACT Program offer uniform examinations across the country, but each college is free to admit students regardless of where they place on those examinations (p. 288).

Arbuthnot (2011) gives a detailed description of the various high-stakes tests outlined in her book. The author describes the make-up of SAT, ACT, MCAT, GMAT, GRE, and LSAT. However, for the sake of this research study, the ACT and SAT will be discussed since their tests are used to determine “college readiness” and/or admission to a college or university of choice.
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

The SAT is one of the most widely used college admissions test in the United States. The SAT assesses critical thinking skills students need for academic success in college. The SAT consists of the following three major subject areas including Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing. The Critical Reading sections include passage-based reading and sentence completion items. Next, the Mathematics test covers numbers and operations; algebra and functions; geometry and statistics; and probability and data analysis. These questions are posed as multiple choice items or student response (gridin). The writing section includes multiple choice items that are centered on grammar, usage and word choice. Additionally, students are asked to construct an essay based on a prompt. Students receive a score of 200-800 on each of the sections of the SAT. The SAT lasts approximately 3.5 hours and is administered six times a year in the United States (Arbuthnot, 2011 p. 26).

American College Test (ACT)

The ACT is described as a test that assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college course work. The ACT is said to provide an indicator of college readiness. The ACT is a multiple choice test that covers the following areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Writing. The English test covers usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills. This portion of the test includes five passages which students must read and answer questions that pertain to their English skills. Next, the Mathematics test covers various facets of algebra, geometry and elementary trigonometry. The Reading Comprehension section consists of four passages that are related to science. Lastly, in the Writing section, students are given a prompt about a social issue and are instructed to construct an essay in response. The
ACT lasts approximately 4 hours and is administered six times nationally. The subject scores range between 1 and 36 (Arbuthnot, 2011 p. 26).

Since its onset, standardized testing has always been a key indicator to determine how much knowledge one has acquired. Claude Steele once shared that “to understand what these tests do and do not measure, it is important first to understand how they are constructed.” Arbuthnot (2011) contends that “the test development process is an iterative process that test developers employ to construct a standardized test. The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999) define testing development as follows: Test development is the process of producing a measure of some aspect of an individual's knowledge, skill, ability interests, attitudes, or other characteristics by developing items and combining them to form a test, according to a specified purpose” (p. 37 cited in Arbuthnot, p. 3).

Joel Spring (2010) talks about the entire make up of high-stakes tests and why states have employed such an exam to measure the knowledge one has acquired. For example, Spring shared that states use high-stakes standardized test to measure educational outcomes. Consider the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Spring denotes that the act mandated that states use high-stakes standardized tests to measure educational outcomes. By their very definition and construction, high-stakes tests given in elementary, middle, and high schools represent only a single culture. Given to all students, test questions could not be based on knowledge known only to students in a minority culture. Since teachers must teach to the test to ensure that their students are able to be promoted or graduated, teachers are forced to teach the culture embedded in the test items. In fact, the NCLB mandates that schools be ranked in quality according to the performance of their students on standardized tests. The NCLB represents a victory for those advocating that schools teach a uniform American culture (p. 135).
MacKinnon et al. (2004) denote that standardized tests such as the SAT and the ACT have been long-standing admissions requirements. By placing an important role in the admissions process at most institutions, standardized tests help to determine the composition of the student body, thereby exerting a profound influence on the first-year experience. Growing concerns about the appropriate role of standardized tests in admissions abound. For one thing, there are competing interpretations of the modest correlation between SAT scores, grades, and other measures of collegiate success. Perhaps, most importantly, there are profound concerns about the persistent racial and ethnic differences in test scores and the effects of the ACT or SAT on campus diversity.

The University of California President, Richard Atkinson, has suggested that far from serving the needs of disadvantaged students, a focus on SAT perpetuates the advantages of the already advantaged who can afford expensive tutoring and creates an unhealthy focus on test-taking, thus distracting from learning (Atkinson, 2001 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). In his view, admissions decisions should be more appropriately based on mastery of secondary education curriculum as measured with high school grades and standardized tests. There is a wide consensus that admissions and scholarship decisions should never be based on the SAT or the ACT alone, yet Hosseler (2001) indicated that the use of standardized tests increased during most of the 1990s at the expenses of high school rank or grades. It is too soon to see if this trend has been reversed as a result of the recent criticisms of standardized testing. Arbuthnot (2011) succinctly explains how personnel, policymakers, researchers, academicians, teachers and governmental officials do not clearly understand the use of standardized tests and the different ways to understand test performance differences between Black and White test takers (p. 91). The author declares that testing has become the cornerstone of our nation’s educational reform.
system. No Child Left Behind Act (2002) (NCLB) utilizes standardized tests as a means to hold states accountable for the education of all students. It has become apparent that many school personnel do not thoroughly understand the nature of testing. While there is real concern for raising test scores, many teachers and administrators lack expertise and training needed to understand how to use student achievement data to increase student learning. In a speech at Columbia University’s Teachers College, Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education, stated that there were two issues that he wanted to address concerning the way in which teachers are prepared for the classroom (Duncan, 2009 cited in Arbuthnot, 2011, p. 95). One of these issues he stated was that “they [teachers] say they were not taught how to use data to improve instruction and boost student learning.” This statement reveals an important problem that teachers are faced with in our current educational system. Although teachers and schools are inundated with standardized tests each year, a majority of teachers lack the skills and expertise to truly use test score data to assists them in the classrooms. It is very important that there are opportunities through teacher preparation programs and through continued professional developmental exercises, teachers are able to get the training necessary, first to gain a deeper understanding of standardized testing and student achievement data and second, to gain the capacity to use data in meaningful ways (p. 95).

The role of the SAT and other standardized tests in admissions is a contentious topic with no ready resolution in sight. These debates will continue to influence policies and practices in enrollment management. Enrollment managers will need to stay abreast of judicial cases and state policies as they craft institutional policies that will be legally and morally defensible and serve the needs of students and institutions (MacKinnon et al., 2004, p. 81). Arbuthnot (2011) suggests that educational policies at the national level should provide funding to state and local
officials to provide technical assistance to, and foster professional development among, school teachers and administrators whose schools are struggling to increase student achievement. The author suggests various topics addressed by technical assistance and professional development activities should include testing special populations, understanding the test development process, and understanding and interpreting test results.

Testing Special Populations

Research shows that the testing environment can be quite intimidating for particular groups of students. Teachers’ awareness of the obstacles and circumstances that can hinder one’s ability to perform well on standardized tests is essential. Ultimately, educating school personnel and these patterns will help students raise their test scores and provide them the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities (p. 95).

Understanding the Test Development Process

In order to realize the purpose and utility of standardized tests, it is crucial that school personnel understand the test development process, particularly test design, development, administration, and use. Not only should school personnel understand the elements of the test development process, but they should also understand the manner in which these elements relate to one another and to the concepts of test reliability, validity, and fairness (p. 96).

Understanding and Interpreting Test Results

In order to utilize testing information to make progress, school personnel need to be provided detailed instructions for analyzing and interpreting test results. This will prove to be a useful tool in addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the school’s academic programs and in evaluating the types of instruction best suited to improve student performance (p. 96).
Dr. Arbuthnot recommends that an educational policy be implemented and funding be provided to struggling schools in order to assist them in meeting the objectives of the NCLB (2002), as well as to gain capacity in utilizing the resources that they currently have. Furthermore, the author suggested that although testing requirements are in place, testing without the corresponding understanding among school personnel of the mechanics of test development and test interpretation is only minimally useful. Policies such as at the national, state and local levels would help make the goals of NCLB much more feasible and useful (p. 96).

Programmatic Interventions

Pascarella and Terenzini discuss the various types of interventions that are geared towards underprepared students. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) denote that “underprepared students participating in intervention programs earned grades on average that were about 10 percentile points higher than those of nonparticipants and that participants persisted at rates about 8 percentage points higher than nonparticipants” (p. 398). Furthermore, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) share that Kulik et al., (1983) examined four types of intervention programs: developmental studies and similar remedial programs, instruction in academic skills (supplemental instruction/SI), advising and counseling programs, and comprehensive support services.

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) share that developmental studies and remedial programs are very unique. Although college grades probably reflect an amalgam of factors relating to performance and educational attainment, they are nonetheless susceptible to programmatic interventions. Developmental studies and other special programs are visible manifestations of college and university efforts to enhance the academic performance and persistence of underprepared students. These interventions vary considerably in content, structure, and
duration, making synthesis of the research on their effectiveness difficult. Moreover, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) add that the evidence of these intervention programs consistently suggests that the effectiveness in helping students overcome deficiencies in their precollege academic preparation and associated disadvantages. These remedial interventions appear to promote underprepared students’ academic adjustment and persistence in the short term, such as semester to semester or into the second year at both two- and four-year institutions. In addition, remediation for academically underprepared students appears to be particularly effective during the first semester. The evidence is generally consistent whether at-risk students who participate in developmental courses and activities are compared with similar at-risk students who do not or with students judged not to need remediation (p. 399). As a result, it seems that remedial courses and/or academic interventions geared towards “at-risk” students are very effective. Pascarella and Terenzini contend that indeed, in some cases, students seen as needing remediation have subsequently persisted or graduated at higher rates than those students not judged to need such support.

Instruction in academic skills also known as Supplemental Instruction (SI) is very different from the other types of academic interventions. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) share that supplemental instruction is a distinctive intervention in a broad category of academic interventions aimed at enhancing academic performance and degree completion. Although similar in its overall goals to the academic remediation efforts of most developmental studies programs, SI differs in several important respects. Whereas conventional efforts target individual at-risk students, SI is available to all students in “historically difficult” courses (those with a high proportion of low grades or withdrawals, typically more than 30 percent). Whereas conventional remediation efforts frequently call for intensive review of material covered in a course lecture SI
stresses interactive learning in groups with SI leaders who are “model students” and who have previously earned high grades in the course. These leaders attend all classes, take notes, and do class assignments. Under the supervision of academic advisors or other academic support personnel, the SI leaders serve as group facilitators in frequent sessions devoted to basic study skills and learning strategies (Center for Supplemental Instruction, 1998).

The third programmatic intervention that Kulik et al., (1983) share as stated by Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) is “advising and counseling programs.” The authors suggest that advising and counseling can play a significant role in students’ decisions to persist and in their chances of graduating (p. 403).

The fourth programmatic intervention that Kulik et al. share as stated by Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) is “comprehensive support and retention programs.” The authors suggest that a number of colleges and universities, often with funding from state and federal programs, offer at-risk (and often all) students a broad array of services and programs intended to promote academic adjustment, persistence, and degree completion (p. 405).

Lastly, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) posits that summer bridge programs are an early form of intervention intended to promote acclimatization and academic success and persistence among at-risk students. These programs have somewhat different goals than conventional summer orientation programs and are usually longer (a week or more versus a day or two) and are more programmatically focused. Bridge programs vary in both content and structure and they target high school graduates who have been admitted for a fall semester. These programs usually bring students to campus during the summer for intensive academic and residential experiences, including course or workshops designed to help the students develop time management and study skills, form peer networks, develop academic and career plans, familiarize themselves with
the campus, and meet with faculty, other students, and academic support staff (p. 404). Another benefit that the authors share regarding summer bridge programs is that they appear to provide participants with a causal introduction to their institution as well as an opportunity to develop friendships that offer both social and academic support during the bridge program and as a student at the university.

MacKinnon et al., (2004) shares relevant models in the text “Rentz’s Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education” that have been very effective for freshmen students attending colleges and universities. The models that the authors share are The Pre-Enrollment or Orientation Model, The Freshman Day or Week Model and The Freshman Course Model.

The Pre-Enrollment or Orientation Model

MacKinnon et al, (2004) assert that “The Pre-Enrollment or Orientation Model” was established in 1949 at Michigan State University which was a summer program, two to four days in length that included testing, counseling, information dissemination, and social events (Goodrich & Pierson, 1959 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). Its value as a public relations tool quickly became apparent as an aid to personalizing large university environments and as a means of improving students’ initial adjustments and grades. Pre-admissions or pre-enrollment programs typically are coordinated by the admissions office and involve particular aspects of the campus community. As part of the strategic enrollment plan, these programs are designed to market the institution and attract students to campus. Programs can vary from large campus visitations events to small group sessions that include visits with faculty, campus tours, and presentations (Upcraft Gardner, & Associates, 1989 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). Pre-enrollment or orientation programs may also be designed for students who have applied and been admitted. Common components of such programs serve (1) to introduce students and family members to
services on campus; (2) to assist students with their academic and social adjustment and integration; (3) to provide opportunities for formal and informal conversations and discussions with faculty, staff and current students; and (4) to advise students in choosing a major and their academic courses for the first semester or quarter system (Rhode, 2000 cited in MacKinnon, 2004 p. 253).

The Freshmen Day or Week Model

The University of Maine is credited with developing the first Freshman Week in 1923. Large meetings were the preferred format, and the agendas emphasized sharing information testing, counseling, registration, campus tours, recreational activities, and social activities (Drake, 1966 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). By 1938, 83 percent of all higher education institutions offered programs based on this model. Support declined during the 1940’s, when this initial model was replaced by the structured orientation course for academic credit. Twenty years later, however, in the mid-1960’s, the Freshmen Week model regained its earlier emphasis.

Freshman or welcome week programs are designed to build community, to create a sense of belonging, and to acquaint students with the collegiate environment (Upcraft, Gardner, & Associates, 1989 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). Activities often included convocation programs, picnics, residence hall tours, and college events. Programming at the beginning of the academic year provides opportunities to acquaint students with the expectations of the academic community and to meet faculty, staff, and returning students. The needs of specialized populations, such as international students, graduate students, scholarship athletes, commuter students, returning adults, students of color, transfer students, honor students, and students with disabilities, may also be met with activities at the beginning of the school year. Some programs
extend throughout the year or are separate components of the overall program (Gonzales, Hill-Traynham, & Jacobs, 2000 cited in MacKinnon, 2004 p. 254).

The Freshman Course Model

The tradition Freshman Course Model was developed to introduce new students to available fields of study and to assist them in coping with problems associated with their freshmen status (Drake, 1966 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). These courses sprung from the counseling movement in higher education and were motivated by the perceived need to help entering students during their initial adjustment to a new institutional setting. Prior to 1986, slightly more than half of all institutions sponsored programs of this type, with an emphasis on freshman adjustment issues. However, by the mid-1960’s, in the midst of student activism, this model was viewed as obsolete (Drake, 1966 cited in MacKinnon, 2004 p. 254). Faculty voiced strong opposition to its perceived emphasis on “fun and games,” social events, and personal adjustment. They argued strongly and persuasively for a return to an orientation program that focused on academic concerns and the mission of general education (Dannells & Kuh, 1977 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). Orientation directors responded by designing academic course to meet students’ academic and personal or social needs (O’Banion, 1969 cited in MacKinnon, 2004).

During the 1960’s and the 1970’s, three forces merged, causing administrators to seek new programs that would teach entering students about the institution’s system and how to deal with it effectively. First, campuses were faced with many first-generation students who knew little about “the skills of student hood” (Cohen & Jody, 1978, p. 2 cited in MacKinnon 2004). Second, because of revisions in curricula and changes in regulations on campus, the choices for freshmen became more complex. Finally, peer culture, with its great potential for assistance to freshmen, “seemed to have lost much of its potency in helping students to adapt” (Cohen & Jody,
1978, p. 2 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). It was less likely that an administrator would observe among freshmen, as Kingman Brewster had done at Yale in the 1960’s, a single year’s “progress from arrogance to self-doubt, to self-pity, to rediscovery, and finally to mature ambition” (Brewster, 1968, p. vii cited in MacKinnon, 2004). Out of this context, John Gardner established the influential Freshman Seminar program at the University of South Carolina.

The Freshman Seminar meshes two major elements in a small class format co-taught by a faculty member and an upper-class student: (1) shared information to help students understand their potential transition period, and (2) establishment of an environment that is socially supportive (Gordon & Grites, 1984, cited in MacKinnon, 2004). The Freshman Seminar model is probably the most popular model in use on large and small campuses today. The nature and content of the courses vary, depending on the institution. However, the overarching purpose of the seminar or course is to help students make necessary academic and social adjustments as well as to assist them in developing their critical thinking skills (Upcraft, Gardner, & Associates., 1989 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). The courses are designed to provide a broad overview of the institution as well as focus on personal and academic skill development. More recent developments include theme or academic discipline seminars or courses that focus on similar topics, but from a specific discipline on interdisciplinary perspective.

Open-Door Admissions Policy

Hurtado (2003) denotes that “institutions that are relatively open access often serve more diverse populations (in age, race or ethnicity, and career aspirations) and are more dependent on local economic conditions and the overall quality of the local school system, which determine the level of preparation of high school graduates” (p. 37). Furthermore, Hurtado (2003) states that “through financial assistance provided to students and opportunities at a variety of post-
secondary institutions, the federal government and states have made at least two years of post-secondary education enrollment almost universally accessible. Moreover, almost 90 percent of high school seniors indicate they expect to attend some type of post-secondary education in the future (Hurtado, Inkelas, Briggs, & Rhee, 1997). However, institutions vary substantially in terms of the level of access afforded to students as determined by established admissions policies. The level of institutional selectivity is often referred to as the proposition of admitted students relative to applicants. In educational research articles, the average SAT or ACT score of entering students at an institution often serves as a proxy for selectivity when comparing educational effects. Through differing levels of selectivity, American higher education offers access to some type of post-secondary opportunity for all who desire it, but all colleges are not available to anyone who applies. Institutions may determine the criteria they will use to select students based on academic qualifications, leadership qualities or personal characteristics, or representation of state high school graduates” (p. 37).

Langston University has an ‘open door’ policy, currently enrolling seventy-percent (70%) of freshmen with academic deficiencies. Despite high professional aspirations, these ill-prepared students often struggle to make it through their first year of college, especially, when they intend to major in science-based disciplines. Most of the students are required to enroll in ‘zero level’ remedial courses.

In spite of significant differences in academic achievement, high school students from all backgrounds tend to aspire to pursue similar majors, as students appear to be similarly affected across ethnic groups by the same messages about job opportunities (Gandara, 1999). But according to Steele (1997), societal beliefs about intellectual or cultural inferiority of certain groups can result in constrained choices as well as constrained opportunities. He advances this
theory of ‘stereotype vulnerability’ to explain why many minorities tend to perform poorly or choose not to participate in any academic endeavors in which they run the risk of confirming the stereotype that they are academically inferior. Ames & Ames (1984) state that perhaps these meanings probably are closely tied to different values and goals regarding striving for success and failure. The cultural issue has both theoretical and practical significance for motivation in education. From a theoretical point of view, cross-cultural research allows us to test and validate theories and hypotheses in different cultural settings, so that we can then examine the generalizability of any particular theoretical paradigm. From a practical standpoint, a cultural issue is important because we are concerned in this country about how to improve educational opportunities for various minorities and special groups. Many of these groups differ in terms of SES and culture. The cornerstone variable in cross-cultural research relates to the underlining values in the culture, and differences in values become the significant motivational factor. Thus, the values and goals of individuals serve as the basis for the different meanings placed on achievement in different cultures. The environment clearly has an impact on these different meanings –hence the view that SES is a good proxy for a broad base of contextual factors that affect motivationally related beliefs (p. 8).

Understanding the value systems and family dynamics of a student are very significant in the success of that student, academically. Ames & Ames (1984) share that asserting oneself in an achievement situation may have different cultural meanings, positive and negative. These meanings may result in different approaches to achievement function of the values placed on this act such that in some cultures, achievement in the sense of doing better than someone else is highly valued, while in other cultures it receives quite a low value (p. 7).
Placement of students in ‘zero level’ remedial courses can be demoralizing to some (Ami, 2001). But for some it is inevitable. Thus, helping students to go through certain courses in a pre-academic program would significantly boost their morale when the regular semester starts.

It is a known fact that Native Americans and African Americans have maintained a relatively stable portion of the US populations, with 0.7% and 12%, respectively. There are a number of colleges and universities throughout the nation that provide culture environments that are attractive to minorities. Langston University is the only HBCU in the state of Oklahoma and the farthest west in the United States. Oklahoma has a large Native American population.

However, it was only recent that Langston University, through a memorandum of understanding (MOU), established a deliberate relationship with Native Americans for educational, research, and extension outreach. Langston University is uniquely positioned to provide university education to underrepresented ethnic demographics, especially, African Americans and Native Americans in Oklahoma and other parts of the country. There are no 1994 Land Grant institutions in Oklahoma or its region to cater to the special academic needs of at-risk students. Furthermore, because of the generally poor academic preparation of first semester freshmen entering college from low-income communities, as is the case for most minorities, a summer bridge program would be a suitable intervention program for insuring academic success and a higher retention rate of students. Komives (2003) asserts that developing partnerships with other units on a university campus also can be an important strategy in the delivery of programs, services, and learning experiences of the student. For example, the Student Affairs Division can serve as a catalyst for learning in a variety of ways by exemplifying certain characteristics that underachieving students can identify encouraging them to exceed above their own academic expectations. Light (2001) suggested that students learn best when they find their classwork or
out-of-the class involvement relevant to their own life experiences. When they join with mentors and peers who share their excitement about ideas and help construct meanings that set off sparks of recognition, students enjoy learning (Light, 2001 cited in MacKinnon et al., 2004). Based on the Academic Achievement students’ feedback on the PEAS and the few open-ended questions will provide first hand responses whether the Academic Achievement course has been beneficial to them which will gather qualitative data that will be supportive to this research study.
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY (DATA COLLECTION)

As discussed in Chapters One and Two, the purpose of this study is to a) explore and determine what are some factors that contribute to the prevention of a first semester freshmen student’s inability to succeed on high stakes tests, and b) to examine the importance of having Academic Achievement programs at colleges and universities that are geared towards at-risk students. Chapter Three provides an explanation and description of the overall design of the methodology used in the research study. The Personal Academic Educational Survey (PEAS), the experimental approach that provided answers to the research questions, was designed to measure the students’ opinions regarding their academic knowledge acquired during their senior year in high school and first semester as a freshmen enrolled in Academic Achievement and other courses at Langston University. Students were compared by sex, age, geographical location and other variables identified at the beginning of this research study. The target population in this research study was first year semester college students who attend Langston University, the only Historical Black College (HBCU) located in Langston, Oklahoma, and who were conditionally admitted and enrolled in Academic Achievement as a required preparatory course because they are considered at-risk. These students’ composite scores ranged from seventeen or lower on the ACT (American College Test). When first-year semester students desire to attend Langston University who are academically deficient, it is a requirement that they enroll in Academic Achievement. This course will help the student achieve academically as they matriculate during the first year and first semester; hopefully, the students will improve their academic performance in all course work. The Academic Achievement classes were taught by college level instructors. The course is designed to empower students to succeed through the development and utilization of academic achievement skills including - thinking, reading, listening, studying, test taking and
time management. Leadership was emphasized. The Academic Achievement course served as the intervention and the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) was the main measuring tool used to discover if variables identified by the student helped them to achieve academically. These first semester students who attend Langston University may or may not have declared a major and will be required to take remedial courses in mathematics, science, English, and reading based on their scores on the standardized entrance examination required by the university.

Students were administered the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) to measure the factors that they think impeded or enhanced their knowledge base and determined their academic levels in addition to some identifiable markers that they consider to be motivational factors as they matriculate throughout the semester. During the five months of intense study, the students enrolled in the Academic Achievement course had several class assignments related to achievement in addition to having the opportunity to listen to guest speakers and participate in and out of classroom highly motivational academic activities.

Data collected enabled the researcher to analyze item analysis by answer/response count from the student and by item analysis by percentages of students. The data also granted considerably identifiable motivational factors to be correlated with student’s overall academic performance, abilities, and skills. The students also had two open-ended questions to provide the researcher with feedback regarding the significance of the Academic Achievement class and whether or not the course enhanced their academic knowledge and ability. The researcher discovered the level of correlation between the intervention, Academic Achievement, and motivational factors identified on the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) by the student.
Elizabeth Wilmer (2008) shares that:

McCabe (2003) stated that “mandatory testing and placement is essential to the student’s best interest and to maintaining a quality academic program” (p. 37). Seventy-one percent of community colleges in the United States require pre-enrollment placement testing. These tests are important because they identify students’ abilities and facilitate their correct placement in classes. Without these tests, underprepared students face the same frustrations and barriers to success that they experienced in previous educational environments and are less likely to persist (Perez, 1998) (p. 13).

This study was conducted as a field (natural environment) research design. The subjects of the research study comprised 216 freshmen students admitted during the fall semester 2011, placed in remedial courses at Langston University and enrolled in Academic Achievement courses. More specifically, a purposive sample of targeted participants that had characteristics associated with being deemed at-risk was identified which enabled the researcher to identify appropriate traits and render significant findings that emerged from this research study. The researcher set the criteria when selecting the targeted population to participate in the study. The population consisted of low-performing first semester freshmen students admitted to the university and enrolled in Academic Achievement for increasing their academic performance as they matriculate throughout the year. A Likert scale survey/questionnaire was designed for the students to provide the researcher with their opinions. The correlational coefficient helped determine and describe the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables while simultaneously providing information about how the variables were associated. Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that

a correlation coefficient is a number that can range from -1 to 1, with zero standing for no correlation at all. If the number is greater than zero, there is a positive correlation. If a number is less than zero, there is a negative correlation. If the number is equal to zero, then there is no correlation between the variables being correlated. If the number is equal to +1.00, the correlation is called perfect; that is, it is strong as possible (p. 44).
The purpose of this study is to examine and determine what factors contributed to the prevention of first semester freshmen succeeding on high stakes tests prior to entering the university, based on their opinions, and what variables are important to their performance at the university. Knowing the key variables that have prevented a student from his or her achievement, based on their opinion, will help design another alternate method of learning that will increasingly impact the students’ overall academic performance at the University. Another purpose of this study is to examine the importance of having Academic Achievement programs at colleges and universities that are geared towards at risk students. Other examples of these programs are Bridge, McNeir, Upward Bound, and Trio Programs. Also, certain programs that are geared towards at risk students help to ease the transition from high school to college for some individuals. Another purpose of this study is to help educate readers about the various deficiencies in existing literature to help explain why, perhaps, there is a huge disparity between a student’s overall academic performances in the classroom (GPA) when compared to their overall academic performance on high stakes tests.

Proposed Data Analysis

This study is intended to build on previous findings and determine whether the identified characteristics associated with being deemed at-risk is partially responsible for one’s academic performance on standardized tests. Are the characteristics poor academic preparation (K-12), SES, less time studying, environment, and/or no academic intrinsic motivation identifiable markers associated with students who are academically underprepared? The statistical procedures that will be used to analyze the data will consist of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Step-wise-regression, Factor Analysis, Pearson’s r Correlation, Dependent Means T-test, and quantitative survey research.
The dependent T-test can be used in this study to compare the responses of the subjects on the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS). The dependent t-test should expose the overall difference(s) between the groups of students. The statistical analysis will help determine if one of the interventions, the Academic Achievement course, had a significant effect on learning, based on the students’ opinions.

Quantitative survey research will help in the prediction of the participants’ attributes and/or academic performances and behaviors. This technique is a systematic method for data collection. Also, in unusual survey research, predetermined questions are presented in a prearranged order to a sample that is usually representative of the population of interest (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Bi-serial correlation will assist in discovering if there is a correlation between the variables, and/or if they relate to one another and how accurately the researcher can predict the students’ academic performance in conjunction with the Academic Achievement course.

The following are statistical methods that will be used to help answer the research questions of this study: Pearson’s r correlation, Step-wise Regression, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), T-Test, Exploratory Factor Analysis.

The Pearson’s r will show if there is a linear relationship between two or more variables. The Step-wise regression will provide two different unique concepts of the study. 1) starting with no variables in the model, trying out the variables one by one and including them if they are statistically significant, and 2) starting with all identified variables and testing them one by one for statistical significance, deleting any that are not significant. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) will test the hypotheses that “x” population means are equal. The ANOVA will provide a statistical test of whether or not the means of several groups are all equal, and therefore
generalizes t-test to more than two groups. Doing multiple two-sample t-tests would result in an increased chance of committing a type I error. The Factor Analysis will be the statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved, uncorrelated variables called factors.

The research designed used for this study was a non-experimental designed mixed methods approach because there was no intervention. The purpose of the non-experimental design is to discover if there is a correlation between the predicted variables and how one performs on high stakes tests. Also, using multiple regressions in this study helped determine which of the influenced variables were combined to form the best prediction of each criterion variable.

There are various statistical methods and procedures that helped answer the research questions regarding this study. The Pearson’s r Correlation, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Exploratory Factor Analysis, and the Step-Wise Regression were statistical procedures that rendered answers to the research questions of this study.

The scatterplot and graph shown below depict such a relationship. It is a positive relationship because high scores on the X-axis are associated with high scores on the Y-axis. A correlation of -1 means that there is a perfect negative linear relationship between variables. The scatterplot shown below depicts a negative relationship. It is a negative relationship because high scores on the X-axis are associated with low scores on the Y-axis. Please see Figure 3 below.

![Scatterplot Depicting a Negative Relationship](image)

Figure 3: Scatterplot Depicting a Negative Relationship
A correlation of 0 means there is no linear relationship between the two variables. The second graph shows a Pearson correlation of 0 (retrieved from http://davidmlane.com/hyperstat/A63407.html). Please see Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Pearson’s r correlation of 0

Correlations are rarely if ever 0, 1, or -1. Some real data showing moderately high correlations are shown above (retrieved from http://davidmlane.com/hyperstat/A63407.html).

The Exploratory Factor analysis is a statistical procedure that analyzes correlations among test items and points out the number of factors present, and if the test is unidimensional or multidimensional.

Step-wise Regression is a statistical measure that attempts to determine the strength of the relationship between one dependent variable (usually denoted by Y) and a series of other changing variables (known as independent variables).

Introduction to Methods

As discussed in Chapter One and Two, the purpose of this research study is to explore and determine what variables impeded on the academic success of first semester freshmen to excel on high stakes tests based on their opinions provided on the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) and what variables are important to their academic performance at the university. Another purpose of this study is to examine the importance of having Academic Achievement programs at colleges and universities that are geared towards “at risk” students,
and whether or not courses like Academic Achievement and remedial classes are meeting the academic needs of the students.

The Location

This study was conducted in Langston, Oklahoma at Langston University. All Academic Achievement professors teaching the course during the fall 2011 semester and first semester freshmen students enrolled in Academic Achievement participated in this research study. All participants were informed of the study via oral presentations, e-mail, and telephone calls (See Appendix D).

Selection of the Sample

The sample for this study was comprised of 216 first semester freshmen students conditionally admitted at Langston University, and enrolled in Academic Achievement for the fall 2011 academic term. The subjects of this study were selected based on their ACT scores and overall academic performance on high stakes tests that scored lower than a seventeen (17) after receiving examination results. The participating students came from various high schools in different cities such as Detroit, California, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. There were originally 393 students enrolled in Academic Achievement class during the fall 2011 academic school year; however, only 216 students participated. The decrease in number is a result of some students withdrawing from the university after the mid-term period; others were absent during the period the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) was administered. Eleven (11) Academic Achievement teachers granted me permission to use their classes to collect data for this research study. They were tested in basic skills (reading, math, and English) by the University’s Office of Assessment at the beginning of their first semester, using the Education Testing Service (ETS) Basic Skills Test used by Langston University. This test provided an entry level assessment of
student preparedness in reading, math and English. Langston University’s Assessment Office conducts basic skills tests for all freshmen. Also, the office conducts entry-and mid-level assessment after the students accumulate 45-60 credit hours of basic skills.

Ethical Considerations and Study Approval

Prior to collecting data, an application for exemption from institutional oversight was submitted to the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The study was granted approval on Monday, November 14, 2011, #E5758 (See Appendix B).

Methods of Gathering Data

The ACT (American College Test) was the psychometric used as an identifier to consider which students performed poorly or exceptionally well during testing for entrance to a college of university of choice. The ACT was not administered during the dissemination of the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) (See Appendix E). This instrument was designed primarily to obtain demographic and academic information about the students enrolled in Academic Achievement.

Research Context

In an effort to present a clear and coherent approach to addressing the various variables associated with students deemed at-risk, first it was necessary for the researcher to understand personal biases and beliefs when conducting the research study. After completing this task, it was necessary to research and identify with several academic scholars who held similar opinions and whose research findings did not refute my beliefs pertaining to at-risk students.

Researching and considering various beliefs before completing this research study can be framed as the basis of the study which should result in sound implications for further extensive study. In conducting this research study, it was my belief that if students can be helped to be
successful in foundational courses, they would overcome major academic barriers to successfully complete their academic courses and college degree in any area of concentration including the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) areas. Langston University enrolls about 500 students annually in eight associate degree courses, including agriculture and applied sciences. Of the three, the Associate in Pre-Veterinary Science is the most intensive in the science area. Most of the associate degree students have significant academic deficiencies in science, mathematics, and reading, resulting in many not succeeding in transitioning to a 4-year degree program. As the researcher, it had been proposed that faculty and staff at Langston University provide assistance during the freshmen year to students through implementation of innovative critical learning classes and bridge programs to familiarize them with the academic expectations and programs at the University within the realm of Student Support Services and other helpful areas under Student Affairs.

Mixed Methods

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) assert that the mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods often results in the most accurate and complete assessment of the phenomenon under investigation. They identify six major methods of data collection as being key in collecting empirical research data – questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, tests, observation, and secondary data. For the purposes of this study, I am using one of the identified methods – questionnaires – the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS). According to Tashakkori and Teddlie, when conducting mixed methods research, it is important that the researcher be mindful of the fundamental principle of mixed methods research, which states that methods should be mixed in a way that have complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses. Their research shows that all methods have strengths and weaknesses. This fundamental principle can be applied to all methods of research. Tashakkori and Teddlie further posit that the
fundamental principle should be followed for at least three reasons: (a) to obtain convergence or corroboration of findings, (b) to eliminate or minimize key plausible alternative explanations for conclusions drawn from the research data, and (c) to elucidate the divergent aspects of a phenomenon.

Qualitative Research Methods

Qualitative research methods have become an increasingly popular method of inquiry for the social sciences and applied fields such as education (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Although many of the methods used in quantitative research are borrowed from experimental sciences, the social sciences utilize an extensive array of appropriate alternative research methods. Some researchers have questioned the validity of qualitative research methods while others have argued that this type of research is superior to quantitative (Schartz & Walker, 1995). Creswell (1994) however, argues that qualitative research is deeply rooted in the area of research methodology and because of such a grounded history of serving as an instrument to gain a better understanding of the complexities of human interactions, this form of research has slowly taken its rightful place amongst research methods. Qualitative methods will be used in this study, in part, to supplement, validate, explain, illuminate and reinterpret the quantitative data that will be retrieved from the students in Academic Achievement (Bogdon & Biklen, 1992).

Qualitative Sample

For the purposes of this research, purposive sampling format was chosen. This type of sampling is also called “deliberate or selective” because the researcher uses judgment in selecting individuals who will be instrumental in gathering data (Patton, 1990). Patton uses the term “purposeful,” and offers the rationalization that by selecting cases for study in depth, “the logic and power” is revealed. One can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the study, thus the term “purposeful sampling.”
Quantitative Research Methods

The Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) was the instrument design used to gather personal demographics of the freshman sample of students at Langston University currently enrolled in the Academic Achievement Course with regards to (a) age, (b) race, (c) gender, (d) marital status of mother, (e) marital status of father, (f) mother graduated from college, (g) father graduated from college, (h) receiving financial aid, (i) receiving financial aid for living expenses, (j) first generation college student, (k) parents married, (l) involved in extracurricular activities in high school, (m) participated in travel abroad in high school, (n) grade point average 2.0 or below, (o) grade point average 2.1 – 2.9, (p) grade point average 3.0 and above, (q) have a college mentor, (r) assigned an academic advisor, (s) frequency of meeting with academic advisor. The PEAS helped to describe the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshman students at Langston University. It also helped describe latent constructs within the Personal and Educational Academic Survey that emerged in the exploratory factor analysis while simultaneously determining if differences existed in the Personal and Educational Academic Survey due to following demographic variables of the freshman students at Langston University: age, race, grade point average, frequency of meeting with academic advisor, gender, marital status of parents, receiving financial aid, having a college mentor, assigned an academic advisor.

Lastly, the PEAS was developed to determine if a model exist which explained a significant portion of the variance in the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshmen students at Langston University as measured by the Personal and Educational Academic Survey and the demographic characteristics of age, race, grade point average, frequency of meeting with academic advisor, gender, marital status of parents, receiving
financial aid, having a college mentor, and assigned an academic advisor. The PEAS was also developed to examine the open-ended responses of the freshman students at Langston University who responded to the following questions: “what do you think about classroom assignments at the university” and “what would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?”

Survey Design and Instrumentation

Many of the survey items covered on the PEAS were centered around the research questions. Regarding the item questions that pertained to academic advising was a critical point that was very important to not only the researcher but also to the student. For example, MacKinnon (2004) states that academic advising is an activity that colleges and universities provide to help students (1) identify and develop suitable programs of study; (2) seek enriching experiences while at college; and (3) expand horizons and opportunities while becoming aware of talents, skills and options (p. 89).

Another key element that helped answer many questions on the PEAS regarding a student’s academic background was whether or not they received financial aid. MacKinnon et al. 2004 assert that merit based campus funding financial aid plays an intricate role in a student’s life and the progression and how well he or she does academically. For example, the authors share that merit-based financial aid, as opposed to need-based financial aid, is an important tool, but it is also becoming an increasingly contentious issue among enrollment managers, financial aid administrators, and higher education public and institutional policy makers. Financial aid can be a powerful tool for addressing a variety of competing institutional goals such as excellence, access, diversity, and revenue enhancement. Between 1988 and 1996, the number of non-need based scholarship recipients at public-four-year schools increased over 160 percent, while the
average award amount nearly tripled. This large increase in institutional aid disproportionately went to funding middle and upper-income students rather than those with demonstrated need (Reed, 200a cited in MacKinnon et al., 2004).

The use of financial aid to attract the best and brightest without regard to need has come to be called tuition discounting (Loomis-Hubble, 1991 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). While conceptually similar to the academic merit and athletic scholarship that have been used for decades, the widespread use of discounting has added a new element of expensive competition to admissions landscape. This strategic use of discounting to leverage enrollments has been supported by the emergence of a number of sophisticated analytical tools, including econometric modeling (Brooks, 1996 cited in MacKinnon, 2004). However as bidding wars escalate among schools all competing for the small pool of the "best and the brightest" students, there is a danger of further concentration of resources on those who need them least, squeezing the neediest students out of the market entirely. As Baum (1998) noted, equity does not necessarily suffer from discounting. At least conceptually, it is possible to use revenue generated from discounting need-based aid (MacKinnon et al., p. 82).

Another significant element that helped answer many questions on the PEAS regarding a student’s achievement and academic background was SES. Copper & Tom (1984) note that higher SES is associated with a stronger need for achievement. This is not surprising because all theories predict this result. The only possible exception to this conclusion might concern the highest SES groups. First, the vast majority of studies examining SES compared participants from lower and middle-SES backgrounds. Therefore, little is known about the highest income groups (p. 236). Furthermore, Cooper & Tom (1984) contend that several studies have been conducted that examined SES and/or ethnicity differences in achievement motivation among
subpopulations of countries other than in the United States (p. 232). Some of the items asked on
the PEAS referenced the highest completion of the students’ parents. Cooper & Tom (1984)
shared that McClelland (1955a, 1955b) found that SES was closely tied to the nurturance
assistance, and training given by the parents. The higher the educational level of parents, the
earlier the onset of independence training (McClelland, 1955a; 1955b cited in Ames & Ames,
1984, p. 213). Arbuthnot (2011) asserts that research has shown that a family’s income level, or
socioeconomic status, has been shown to have an effect on a student’s test performance (Brooks-
Gunn & Duncan, 1997); Meyer, 1997 cited in Arbuthnot, 2011, p. 38). Some have argued that
the Black/White test score gap is due to the fact that Black families on average are poorer than
White families (Phillips, Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Crane, 1998 cited in Arbuthnot,
2011, p. 38). Socioeconomic status has an effect on several of the factors previously mentioned.
For instance, a family’s socioeconomic status influences the schools that students attend, which
affects the types of teachers they have and so on. Therefore, it is very difficult to truly discern the
impact of the socioeconomic status on student achievement and test performance. Although
socioeconomic status can explain some of the test performance differences between White and
Black test takers, it is unclear the extent to which socioeconomic status alone has on test
performance (Phillips et al., 1998 cited in Arbuthnot, 2011, p. 38),

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were also variables heavily focused on during this study
and the administration of the PEAS. Schunk et al. describe intrinsic motivation as engaging in an
activity for its own sake. People who are intrinsically motivated work on tasks because they find
them enjoyable. Task participation is its own reward and does not depend on explicit rewards or
other external constraints. In contrast, the authors describe extrinsic motivation as engaging in an
activity as a means to an end. Individuals who are extrinsically motivated work on tasks because
they believe that participation will result in desirable outcomes such as rewards, teacher praise, or avoidance of punishment (p. 236). Furthermore, Schunk et al. share that it is tempting to think of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as two ends of a continuum such that the higher the intrinsic motivation, the lower the extrinsic motivation; however, there is no automatic relation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Lepper, Corpus, & Iyengar, 2005 cited in Schunk et al., 2008, p. 237). For any given activity, an individual may be high on both, low on both, high on one and medium on the other, and so forth. It is more accurate to think of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as separate continuums, each ranging from high to low. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are time and context dependent. They characterize people at a given time in relation to a particular activity (p. 237).

Timeline

The proposed date for the conclusion of my research study is spring, 2013. During this time frame I will collect, analyze, finalize, and report the findings that emerged from this research study.
CHAPTER 4.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESULTS/FINDINGS OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Research Question One

What are the reasons and characteristics associated with first year semester university freshmen students deemed at-risk or who are academically underprepared?

Research Question Two

What are the major environmental, demographic, and motivational factors of the student that contribute to low performance in the first year semester university freshmen?

Research Question Three

Do students possess required thinking, reading, listening, studying, test taking, and time management skills that enhance their academic achievement because of the Academic Achievement course?

Results/Findings of Research Objectives

The primary purpose of this study was to explore, examine and determine what factors contributed to the prevention of first semester freshmen succeeding on high stakes tests prior to entering the university, based on their opinions, and what variables are important to their performance at the university.

Objective One

This objective was descriptive in nature and was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. The freshman sample of the students at Langston University currently enrolled in the Academic Achievement course with regards to the following characteristics:

(a) Age

(b) Race
(c) Gender  
(d) Marital status of mother  
(e) Marital status of father  
(f) Mother graduated from college  
(g) Father graduated from college  
(h) Receiving financial aid  
(i) Receiving financial aid for living expenses  
(j) First generation college student  
(k) Parents married  
(l) Involved in extracurricular activities in high school  
(m) Participated in travel abroad in high school  
(n) Grade point average 2.0 or below  
(o) Grade point average 2.1 – 2.9  
(p) Grade point average 3.0 and above  
(q) Have a college mentor  
(r) Assigned an academic advisor  
(s) Frequency of meeting with academic advisor  

Age. Participants were asked to provide their actual ages, which were grouped into the following categories: 1) 17 or younger; 2) 18-20; 3) 21-29; 4) 30-39; 5) 40 or older. The ages ranged from 18 to 40 years. The largest group of respondents indicated their age fell between 18 and 20 years (n = 191, 88.4%). The second largest group indicated their age fell between 21 and 29 years (n = 22, 10.2%). Table 1 illustrates the distribution of age of the respondents.
Table 1. Age Distribution of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>n a</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 or younger</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>88.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 and above</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent cannot be included in the data because they were 17 or younger at the time of dissemination of the questionnaire - which was not included in the study.

Gender. The study participants were also described on gender. A majority of the respondents indicated their gender as male (n 109, 50.9%) while 105 respondents (49.1%) indicated their gender as female. Two respondents failed to indicate their gender.

Race. The respondents were further described on the race/ethnicity variable. Majority of the respondents identified themselves as Black or African American (n = 202, 93.5%). The second largest group identified themselves as American Indiana or Alaska Native (n = 7, 3.2%). Table 2 illustrates data regarding the ethnicity of the respondents.

Table 2. Self-Identified Ethnicity of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Latino, Spanish Origin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent failed to respond to the ethnicity item on the questionnaire

 Mother Attended College. The study participants were asked whether or not their mother attended college. The largest group of respondents indicated that their mother attended college (n
= 126, 58.9%) while 88 respondents (41.1%) indicated that their mother did not attend college.

Two respondents failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

Father Attended College. The study participants were also asked whether or not their father attended college. The largest group of respondents reported that their father did not attend college (n = 140, 65.1%) while 75 respondents (34.9%) indicated that their father did attend college. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

Mother Graduated from College. The study participants were asked whether or not their mother graduated from college. The largest group of the respondents indicated that their mother did not graduate from college (n = 149, 69.6%) while 65 respondents (30.4%) indicated that their mother did graduate from college. Two respondents failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

Father Graduated from College. The study participants were also asked whether or not their father graduated from college. The majority of the respondents reported that their father did not graduate from college (n = 174, 80.6%) while 40 respondents (18.5%) indicated that their father did graduate from college.

Do You Receive Financial Aid for Your Tuition. The study participants were asked whether or not they received financial aid for their tuition. The majority of the respondents indicated that they did receive financial aid for their tuition (n = 195, 90.3%) while 21 respondents (9.7%) indicated that they did not receive any financial aid for their tuition.

Do You Receive Finances For Your Living Expenses (Room and Board). Additionally, the study participants were asked whether or not they receive finances for their living expenses such as room and board. The largest group of the respondents indicated that they do receive finances for their living expenses such as room and board (n = 130, 60.5%) while 85 respondents (39.5%)
indicated that they do not receive finances for their living expenses such as room and board. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

I Am A First Generation Student To Attend College In My Family. Regarding whether or not the participant was a first generation student to attend college in their family, the largest group of the respondents reported that they were not a first generation college student \((n = 131, 60.9\%)\) while 84 respondents \((39.1\%)\) indicated that they were a first generation college student. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

My Parents Are Married. The participants were asked if their parents were married. The largest group of the respondents indicated that their parents were not married \((n = 152, 70.7\%)\) while 63 respondents \((29.3\%)\) indicated that their parents were married. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

I Was Gainfully Involved In Extracurricular Activities In High School. The participants were asked if they were gainfully involved in extracurricular activities while in high school. The majority of the respondents reported that they were gainfully involved in extracurricular activities in high school \((n = 175, 81.0\%)\) while 41 respondents \((19.0\%)\) indicated that they were not gainfully involved in extracurricular activities while in high school.

I Have Participated In Travel Abroad Programs Offered From My High School. The study participants additionally provided information about their participation in travel abroad programs offered from their high school. The majority of the respondents indicated that they did not participate in travel abroad programs offered from their high school \((n = 178, 82.4\%)\) while 38 respondents \((17.6\%)\) indicated that they did participate in travel abroad programs offered from their high school.
My Grade-Point Average In High School Was A 2.0 and below. The study participants were invited to indicate their high school grade point average. The participants were asked if their grade-point average in high school was a 2.0 or below. The largest group of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 2.0 or below (n = 161, 74.5%) while 55 respondents (25.5%) indicated that their grade-point average was a 2.0 or below.

My Grade-Point Average In High School Was A 2.1 – 2.9. The participants were asked if their grade-point average in high school was a 2.1 – 2.9. The majority of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was a 2.1 – 2.9 (n = 125, 57.9%) while 91 respondents (42.1%) indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 2.1 – 2.9.

My Grade-Point Average In High School A Was 3.0 and Above. The participants were asked if their grade-point average in high school was a 3.0 and above. The majority of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 3.0 and above (n = 154, 71.3%) while 62 respondents (28.7%) indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 3.0 and above.

Have You Found an Individual Who Is Mentoring You During This College Experience. A total of 144 respondents (67.0%) indicated that they did not find an individual who was mentoring them during their college experience. The remaining 71 respondents (33.0%) indicated that they did find an individual who was mentoring them during their college experience. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

Have You Been Assigned an Academic Advisor. The participants were asked if they had been assigned an academic advisor. The largest group of the respondents indicated that they had been assigned an academic advisor (n = 130, 60.5%) while 85 respondents (39.5%) indicated that they
had not been assigned an academic advisor. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

How Often Do You Meet With Your Academic Advisor. Respondents were presented with four categories regarding the frequency of meeting with their academic advisor, which were grouped into the following categories: 1) 1 month; 2) 2-3 months; 3) 4-5 months; 4) 5 or more months. The largest group of respondent indicated that they met with their advisor on a monthly basis ($n = 99$, 45.8%). The second most frequency provided of meeting with their academic advisor was 2-3 months ($n = 47$, 21.8%). The third most frequency provided of meeting with their academic advisor was 4-5 months ($n = 22$, 10.2%). The least frequency provided of meeting with their academic advisor was 5 or more months ($n = 18$, 8.3%). Table 3 illustrates the frequency of how often the Academic Achievement students at Langston University met with their academic advisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 months</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 months</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more months</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above demographic variables were summarized using frequencies and percentages in each category.

Objective Two

This objective was to describe the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshman students at Langston University as measured by the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS). First exploratory analysis was conducted for each section of the PEAS with the aim of uncovering the structure of interrelationships of the variables in the scale.
and defining a common set of underlying dimensions or factors. Principal axis factoring extraction with promax oblique rotation was utilized. Factors with eight values greater than 1 were retained for interpretation. Respondents were presented with a list of academic behavioral characteristics and were asked to rate the extent to which each item measured a characteristic of themselves on a four-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree. The following scale was created by the researcher to aid in the interpretation of the responses: 1 – 1.75 = strongly disagree, 1.76 – 2.50 = disagree, 2.51 – 3.25 = agree, and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree. As part of the analysis, the means and standard deviations of the responses to each item in the Personal Educational Academic Survey were calculated. The item that received the highest level of agreement from respondents was “I am motivated to succeed academically” with a mean of 3.34 (SD = .877). The item that received the second highest level of agreement from respondents was “I am a visual learner” with a mean of 3.27 (SD = .820). Using the interpretative scale, both were in the “strongly agree” range. There were three items that received the third, fourth, and fifth highest level of agreement from the respondents on the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) that were both in the “agree” range when using the interpretative scale which were “I live on the college campus” with a mean 3.21 (SD = 1.051) and ”My mother motivated me to attend college” with a mean 3.17 (SD = .932), and “I am satisfied with my overall performance in the academic achievement course” with a mean 3.13 (SD = .833). The item with the lowest level of agreement was “I live off campus” with a mean of 1.74 (SD = 1.048) which fell under the “strongly disagree” range when using the interpretative scale. The item with the second lowest level of agreement was “I study four or more hours a day” with a mean of 1.82 (SD = .787) which fell under the “disagree” range when using the interpretative scale. Overall, the response to most of the PEAS items (44 items) fell within the
“agree” range on the interpretative scale. Table 4 below illustrates the mean scores and standard deviation for each item representing respondents’ level of agreement with Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) characteristics.

Table 4. Description of the Level of Agreement of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University Reflecting Personal Educational Academic Survey Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Educational Academic Survey Items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 28. I am motivated to succeed academically</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>.877</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 37. I am a visual learner</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>.820</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 23. I live on the college campus</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>1.051</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 55. My mother motivated me to attend college</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>.932</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 60. I am satisfied with my overall performance in the Academic Achievement course</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 39. I am a good listener</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>.843</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 25. My mother graduated from high school</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.127</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 32. I study mostly at home</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.913</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 50. I seek academic help from my peers when needed</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 26. My father graduated from high school</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.284</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 63. Tutorial services and assistance of faculty have enabled me to be successful this year</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.839</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 34. I prefer to study alone</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.932</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 61. There is a need for Academic Achievement</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>.946</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 54. Not doing well on tests make me feel incompetent about my academic course</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 57. The academic Achievement course enhanced my academic abilities</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 40. I consider myself organized in my course work</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 62. I took the Academic Achievement course very seriously</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 48. I communicate often with an instructor/faculty Regarding class work</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 44. I grasp information pertaining to my academic lessons very quickly</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 58. The Academic Achievement course enhanced my Academic skill</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 20. My current living conditions are acceptable</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 53. I rate my test taking skills at 71% and above</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.826</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 49. I seek academic help from a tutor or counselor when needed</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAS 27. My high school prepared me to be successful in my academic studies at the university</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.949</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Table 4 continued)

| PEAS 59. | The academic achievement course prepared me for general education (English, reading, mathematics, and biology) | 2.77 | .831 | A |
| PEAS 41. | I am time sensitive | 2.73 | .780 | A |
| PEAS 56. | My father motivated me to attend college | 2.68 | 1.086 | A |
| PEAS 51. | My high school counselor assisted me in making decisions about entering college | 2.64 | 1.106 | A |
| PEAS 21. | My current living location (environment) is in a rural community | 2.64 | .896 | A |
| PEAS 38. | I am an auditory learner | 2.61 | .893 | A |
| PEAS 22. | My current Living location (environment) is urban | 2.56 | .959 | A |
| PEAS 46. | I like to read novels | 2.53 | .923 | A |
| PEAS 42. | I am extroverted | 2.51 | .729 | A |
| PEAS 43. | I am introverted | 2.50 | .748 | D |
| PEAS 35. | I prefer to study with peers | 2.47 | .940 | D |
| PEAS 36. | I like to lead class discussions | 2.44 | .933 | D |
| PEAS 29. | I study 1-4 hours a day | 2.41 | .830 | D |
| PEAS 52. | I rate my test taking skills at 70% or below | 2.34 | .805 | D |
| PEAS 47. | I do not like to read | 2.24 | 1.018 | D |
| PEAS 45. | I like to read academic books | 2.23 | .858 | D |
| PEAS 32. | I study mostly at a friend’s house | 2.00 | .889 | D |
| PEAS 31. | I study mostly at the library | 1.89 | .855 | D |
| PEAS 30. | I study 4 or more hours a day | 1.82 | .787 | D |
| PEAS 24. | I live off campus | 1.74 | 1.048 | SD |

**Note:** N= 216. Missing values replaced with variable mean

---

Response scale: 1 = strongly disagree (SD), 2 = disagree (D), 3 = agree (A), and 4 = strongly agree (SA)

Interpretive scale 1 – 1.75 = SD, 1.76 – 2.50 = D. 2.51 – 3.25 = A, and 3.26 – 4.00 = SA

Factor analyses were used to investigate the underlying correlation structure of the variables in this scale. Several tests were undertaken to examine whether the data was factorable.

**Objective Three**

This objective was to describe latent constructs within the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) that emerges in the exploratory factor analysis.

See Figure 5 for the Scree Plot
Objective Four

This objective was to determine if differences exist in the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) due to following the demographic variables of the freshmen students at Langston University:

a) age
b) race
c) mother graduated college
d) first generation student to attend college
e) gender

f) mother attended college

g) father attended college

h) found a mentor during college experience

i) assigned an academic advisor

Age. Differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics of scores were also examined by age. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviation reported by age are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Age of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 – 20 years</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>2.7105</td>
<td>.29258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 29 years</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.7044</td>
<td>.30130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.9664</td>
<td>.11324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2.7132</td>
<td>.29255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent failed to respond to the age item or provide data for calculation of the overall personal educational academic score on the questionnaire.

Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree.

The findings illustrated in Table 6 indicate that there were no significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported age groups (F_{2,212} = .764, p = .467). The Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant (.414, p = .662. F test was not statistically significant (F_{2,212} = .764, p = .467).

Table 6. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Age of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>18.184</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>214</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a One Way Analysis of Variance

b .05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance
Race. Differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics of scores were also examined by race. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviations reported by race are illustrated in Table 7. The race groups were recoded. The other racial groups were combined together because of the small number reported from each racial group.

Table 7. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Race of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M(^a)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>2.7406</td>
<td>.24621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.6317</td>
<td>.33167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(^b)</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>2.7339</td>
<td>.25270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 6 respondents failed to respond to the race item or provide data for calculation of the overall personal educational academic score on the questionnaire

\(^a\)Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree

\(^b\)Reported as overall item mean and standard deviation

The Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance revealed the presence of equal variance between the different racial groups (3.033, p = .083). The findings illustrated in Table 8 indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported race groups (F\(_{1,208}\) = 2.282, p = .132). The Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant (3.033, p = .083. F test was not statistically significant (F\(_{1,208}\) = 2.282, p = .132)

Table 8. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Race of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F(^a)</th>
<th>P(^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>2.282</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>13.201</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>13.346</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)One Way Analysis of Variance

\(^b\).05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance
Mother Graduated from College. Differences in overall personal educational academic scores were also examined by respondents who reported that their mother graduated from college. The group reporting the highest overall personal educational academic score of their mother graduating from college was \( F_{1,212} = 1.584, p = .210 \) which categorized as “strongly agree” on the interpretive scale was the group stating that their mother graduated from college. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviations reported by students in Academic Achievement are illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation of Mother Graduated from College of the Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother Graduated from College</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Item Mean M ( ^a )</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.7503</td>
<td>.29263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>2.6958</td>
<td>.29057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>2.7124</td>
<td>.29120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Two respondents failed to respond to the grade point average item or provide data for calculation of the overall readiness for lifelong learning score on the questionnaire

\( ^a \) Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree

\( ^b \) Reported as overall item mean and standard deviation

Results from Levenes Test of Homogeneity of Variance revealed that there was no statistically significance \( (.160, p = .689) \). The differences in overall mother graduated from college score between the groups were not statistically significant \( (F_{1,212} = 1.584, p = .210) \).

Table 10 illustrates the ANOVA results for differences in overall mother graduated from college reported by the respondents.

Table 10. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Characteristics of Mother Graduated from College of the Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>( F^a )</th>
<th>( P^b )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>1.584</td>
<td>.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>17.977</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>18.111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First Generation Student to Attend College. Differences in overall personal educational academic scores were also examined by respondents who reported whether or not they were a first generation student to attend college in their family. The group reporting the highest overall personal educational academic mean item score of whether or not they were a first generation student to attend college in their family ($F_{1,213} = 1.350$, $p = .247$) which categorized as “strongly agree” on the interpretive scale was the group stating that they were not a first generation student to attend college in their family. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviations reported by students in Academic Achievement are illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by First Generation Student to Attend College In Their Family of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Generation Student To Attend College</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$M^a$</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.7433</td>
<td>.27353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2.6958</td>
<td>.30337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2.7144</td>
<td>.29235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent failed to respond to the gender item or provide data for calculation of the overall personal educational academic score on the questionnaire.

Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree

The findings illustrated in Table 12 indicate that there were no significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported whether or not they were first generation to attend college in their family ($F_{1,213} = p = .247$). The Levenes Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant ($F_{1,213} = .1.798$, $p = .181$). $F$ test was not statistically significant ($F_{1,213} = .247$). Table 12 illustrates the ANOVA results for differences in overall first generation student to attend college reported by the respondents.
Table 12. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Characteristics by First Generation Student to Attend College of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F^a</th>
<th>p^b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>1.350</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>18.175</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>214</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a One Way Analysis of Variance
^b .05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Gender. A comparison of the overall personal educational academic characteristics score between males and females was undertaken through calculation of one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The mean item score for males was slightly lower than that for females (Table 13).

Table 13. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Gender of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M^a</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2.7110</td>
<td>.30012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2.7133</td>
<td>.28749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total^b</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>2.7121</td>
<td>.29330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a Interpretive scale: 1.00 – 1.75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree
^b Reported as overall item mean and standard deviation

Results from Levenes Test of Homogeneity of Variance revealed the presence of variance between the different the gender groups (F_{1,212} = .191, p = .675). The differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics of students in Academic Achievement scores between the gender groups were not statistically significant. Table 14 illustrates the ANOVA results for differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics by gender.

The findings illustrated in Table 14 indicate that there were no significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported gender groups (F_{1,212} = .003,
p = .954). The Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant (.176, p = .675. F test was not statistically significant (F_{1, 212} = .003, p= .954).

Table 14. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Characteristics by Gender of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F^a</th>
<th>P^b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>18.323</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>213</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a One Way Analysis of Variance
^b .05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Mother Attended College. Differences in overall personal educational academic scores were also examined by respondents who reported whether or not their mother attended college. The group reporting the highest overall personal educational academic mean item score of whether or not their mother attended college (F_{1,212} = .191, p = .663) which categorized as “strongly agree” on the interpretive scale was the group stating that their mother did attend college. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviation reported by students in Academic Achievement regarding whether or not their mother attend college is illustrated in Table 15.

Table 15. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Mother Attended College of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother Attended College</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M^a</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>2.7197</td>
<td>.30478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2.7020</td>
<td>.27299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total^b</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>2.7124</td>
<td>.29159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^Note: Two respondents failed to respond to the item on their preferred format for learning or provide data for calculation of the overall readiness for lifelong learning score on the questionnaire
^a Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree
^b Reported as overall item mean and standard deviation
Results from Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variance revealed the presence of variance between the different the groups ($F_{1,212} = .191, p = .663$). The Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant (.325, $p = .569$). F test was not statistically significant ($F_{1,212} = .191, p = .663$). The differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics of students in Academic Achievement scores between the groups were not statistically significant. Table 16 illustrates the ANOVA results for differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics by mother attended college as reported by the respondents.

Table 16. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Characteristics by Mother Attended College of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>$F^a$</th>
<th>$p^b$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>18.095</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>18.111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$One Way Analysis of Variance  
$^b$.05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Father Attended College. Differences in overall personal educational academic scores were also examined by respondents who reported that their father attended college. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviations reported by respondents regarding whether or not their father attended college are illustrated in Table 17.

Table 17. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Father Attended College of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father Attended College</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$M^a$</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.7253</td>
<td>.24444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.7037</td>
<td>.31427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2.7112</td>
<td>.29141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree

Note: One respondent failed to respond to the item on their preferred format for learning or provide data for calculation of the overall readiness for lifelong learning score on the questionnaire
Results from Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance revealed the presence of variance between the different groups ($F_{1,213} = .269, p = .605$). The differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics of students in Academic Achievement scores between the groups were not statistically significant. Table 18 illustrates the ANOVA results for differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics by father attended college as reported by the respondents. The findings illustrated in Table 18 indicate that there were no significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported “my father attended college” groups ($F_{1,213} = .269, p = .605$). The Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant ($F_{1,213} = .689, p = .407$). F test was not statistically significant ($F_{1,213} = .269, p = .605$).

Table 18. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Personal Educational Academic Characteristics by Father Attended College of Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>$F^a$</th>
<th>$P^b$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.269</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>18.151</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ One Way Analysis of Variance

$^b$.05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Found A Mentor During College Experience. Differences in overall personal educational academic scores were also examined by respondents who reported having a college mentor. The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviations reported by respondents having found a mentor during their college experience are illustrated in Table 19.

Table 19. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Students Having a College Mentor of the Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Having a College Mentor</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$M^a$</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Yes 71 2.8000 .29008
No 144 2.6722 .28509
Totalb 215 2.7144 .29235

Note: One respondent failed to respond to having a college mentor item or provide data for calculation of the overall personal educational academic score on the questionnaire

Interpretive scale: 1.00 – 1.75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree

bReported as overall item mean and standard deviation

The findings illustrated in Table 20 indicate that there was significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the groups based on having a college mentor (F1,213, = 9.449, p = .002). The Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant (.187, p = .666). F test was not statistically significant (F2, 212 = .764, p= .467).

Table 20. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Having a College Mentor of the Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F^a</th>
<th>P^b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>9.449</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>17.513</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>214</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^aOne Way Analysis of Variance

 ^.05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Assigned an Academic Advisor. Differences in overall personal educational academic scores were also examined by respondents who reported that they were assigned an academic advisor.

The sample sizes, overall personal educational academic score item means and standard deviation reported that they were assigned an academic advisor are illustrated in Table 21.

Table 21. Group Sizes, Overall Personal Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Students Assigned An Academic Advisor of the Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assigned Academic Advisor</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M^a</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.7093</td>
<td>.30251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2.7222</td>
<td>.27766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totalb</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2.7144</td>
<td>.29296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One respondent failed to respond to the item assigned an academic advisor item or provide data for calculation of the overall personal educational academic score on the questionnaire.
Interpretive scale: 1:00 – 1:75 = strongly disagree; 1.76 – 2.5 = disagree; 2.51 – 3.25 = agree; and 3.26 – 4.00 = strongly agree

Results from Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variance revealed the presence of variance between the different the groups ($F_{1,213} = .100, p = .752$). The differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics of students assigned and academic advisor in Academic Achievement scores between the groups were not statistically significant. Table 22 illustrates the ANOVA results for differences in overall personal educational academic characteristics by assigned academic advisor as reported by the respondents. The findings illustrated in Table 22 indicate that there were no significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported “my father attended college” groups ($F_{1,213} = .100, p = .752$). The Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variance was not statistically significant (.002, $p = .964$). $F$ test was not statistically significant ($F_{1,213} = .100, p = .752$).

Table 22. One Way Analysis of Variance Illustrating Differences in Overall Educational Academic Item Scores and Standard Deviation by Assigned An Academic Advisor of the Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>$F^a$</th>
<th>$P^b$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>18.281</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>18.290</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ One Way Analysis of Variance

$^b$ .05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Objective Five

This objective was to determine if a model exist which would explain a significant portion of the variance in the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshmen students at Langston University as measured by the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) and the demographic characteristics of age, gender, mother attended college, father attended college, first generation student to attend college in my family, assigned an academic advisor.
advisor, have you found a mentor during college experience, and race. Respondent’s scores from the three sections of the personal educational academic survey were summed up to obtain the overall score. The overall item mean score for each respondent was thus calculated from the overall personal educational academic score and utilized as the dependent variable in the regression equation.

The variables “gender” and “found a mentor on college” were entered into the regression as interval variables. For the categorical independent variables dummy coding was undertaken for regression analysis. In some cases the levels of the independent categorical variables were combined to form new categories. The variable “frequency of meeting with academic advisor” which originally had 4 options was combined into two options namely “once a semester”, and “twice a semester” which were then dummy coded. The variable “race” which originally had 6 options was combined into two levels namely “Caucasian” and “non-Caucasian” which were then dummy-coded. The independent variables “grade point average”, “mother attended college”, “gender”, and “assigned an academic advisor”, “having a college mentor”, “first generation” were dummy coded including all their original categories.

A graphic histogram illustration of the plotted standardized residuals for the dependent variable PEAS shows an approximation of a normal curve, and thus normality is assumed.
Figure 6: Histogram Depicting Standardized Residuals for the Dependent Variable Overall Mean PEAS
Figure 7: Scatterplot Depicting Regression Standardized Predicted Value for the Dependent Variable PEAS
Figure 8: Normal P-Plot of Regression Depicting Standardized Residual for the Dependent Variable of all PEAS.

A bivariate Pearson product moment correlation was undertaken between the overall personal educational academic score (dependent variable) and the independent variables. Within each categorical variable, the level of the variable whose correlation with the dependent variable was least significant was dropped from further analysis. The dropped independent variable levels included: “age” (n = 205, r = -.023, p = .733); “gender” (n = 207, r = .009, p = .899); “mother attended college” (n = 207, r = -.081, p = .230); “father attended college” (n = 207, r = .032, p = .631); “I am a first generation student to attend college in my family” (n = 207, r = -.053, p = .432); “I have been assigned an academic advisor” (n = 207, r = -.014, p = .833).
All the variables significantly contributed to the model: “age” \( t = -.342, p = .733 \); “gender” \( t = .127, p = .899 \); mother attended college \( t = -.081, p = -1.203 \); “father attended college” \( t = .032, p = .481 \); “I am first a first generation student to attend college in my family” \( t = -.053, p = -.788 \); and “have you been assigned an academic advisor” \( t = -.014, p = -.211 \). Table 23 illustrates the ANOVA and model summary results for the regression equation employing the independent variables in predicting the overall personal educational academic score and the model summary.

Table 23. Significance of the Regression Equation and Model Summary Employing # Independent Variables in Predicting Overall Personal Educational Academic Achievement Students at Langston University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>16.267</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>12.122</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>13.089</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a One Way Analysis of Variance
b .05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

The coefficient values, t values and corresponding significance levels for the independent variables retained in the regression equation predicting overall personal educational academic scores are presented in Table 24.

Table 24. Coefficient Values, Standard Errors, Standardized Coefficient Values, T Values, and Significance Levels for Independent Variables Retained in the Regression Equation Predicting Overall Personal Educational Academic Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.976</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>47.489</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Have you found an individual who is mentoring you during the college experience”</td>
<td>-.146</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>-.274</td>
<td>-4.033</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a .05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance
The variables excluded from the regression equation and their corresponding t values and significance levels are illustrated in Table 25.

Table 25. Excluded Variables, Standardized Coefficients, T Values, Significance Levels, and Partial Correlations for the Regression Equation Predicting Overall Personal Educational Academic Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta In</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Partial Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (recoded)</td>
<td>-.032&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.479</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>-.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.012&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother attended college</td>
<td>-.077&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-1.149</td>
<td>.252</td>
<td>-.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father attended college</td>
<td>.035&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.513</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am first generation student to attend college in my family</td>
<td>-.058&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.854</td>
<td>.394</td>
<td>-.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you been assigned an academic advisor</td>
<td>-.017&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.254</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>-.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (recoded)</td>
<td>-.111&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-1.643</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>-.115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>.05 Alpha Level for the Two-Tailed Test of Significance

Objective Six

This objective Six was to examine the open-ended responses of the freshmen students at Langston University who responded to the following questions: “what do you think about classroom assignments at the university” and “what would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?” The results can be found in Appendix G.
CHAPTER 5.
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE STUDY

Conclusion One

The respondents in this research study were predominantly African American (93.5%), 18-20 (88.4%), male (50.9%), mother attended college (58.9%), father attended college (65.1%), mother graduated from college (69.6%), father graduated from college (80.6%), receiving financial aid for tuition (90.3%), receiving finances for their living expenses (60.5%), first generation student to attend college in the family (60.9%), parents are married (70.7%), was gainfully involved in extracurricular activities in high school (81.0%), participated in travel abroad programs offered from their high school (82.4%), grade point average in high school was a 2.0 or below (74.5%), grade point average in high school was 2.1 – 2.9 (57.9%), grade point average in high school was a 3.0 and above (71.3%), found an instructor who is mentoring them during their college experience (67%), have been assigned an academic advisor (60.5%), meet monthly with their academic advisor (45.8%) while (21.8%) reported meeting with their academic advisor 2-3 months, (10.2%) reported that they meet 4-5 months while (8.3%) reported meeting 5 or more months. In some respects this may be typical demographics for students who are required to take Academic Achievement or college preparatory classes before placed in regular college level courses at a college or university.

Conclusion Two

The results of this research study indicate that students in Academic Achievement who participated had an overall personal educational academic experience. The implication is that they are more likely to engage in personal educational academic activities and events since they ranked themselves high in achievement characteristics and that they would participate in learning
when faced with circumstances known to plague them from succeeding academically, and have
the ability to overcome known deterrents to gainfully participate in their academics.

Conclusion Three

Results indicated that the respondents were likely to engage in learning when faced with
faced with circumstances known to plague them from succeeding academically, and have the
ability to overcome known deterrents to gainfully participate in their academics. Responses to
most items in the personal educational academic of the survey fell within the “likely” range on
the interpretive scale.

Conclusion Four

A regression model was found that explained a significant portion of the variance in the
overall personal educational academic score with 2 independent demographic variables
significantly contributing to it. The variable included “have you found an individual who is
mentoring you during this college experience” Since there is no literature addressing the
contributions of the above demographic variable of the personal educational academic survey,
they should be investigated further to reveal why this is the case.

Summary of Conclusions

As educators and practitioners in the field of higher education, it is important for us to
understand why students are academically underprepared prior to enrolling successfully in
college courses. This research study will provide some answers to the problem. Perhaps, the way
one processes information is important in determining how one performs academically. By
conducting this study, it will help address deficiencies in existing scholarly literature by
providing additional evidence that may answer the question(s) regarding more issues and
concerns posed by persons in the field of higher education pertaining to student success and
achievement.

This study concentrated on ascertaining the perceptions of first semester university
freshmen students enrolled at Langston University, a traditional college in the state of Oklahoma,
and regarding influential factors that may have impeded their success and if courses like
Academic Achievement and remedial classes are meeting their academic needs. The conclusions
resulting from this study can only be applied to the Langston University student population. This
sample is considered at-risk because composites scores on the ACT was a seventeen or below.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to explore, examine and determine what factors
contributed to the prevention of first semester freshmen succeeding on high stakes tests prior to
entering the university, based on their opinions, and what variables are important to their
performance at the university. Specifically, the study addressed the following research
objectives:

1. To describe the freshman sample of the students at Langston University currently
   enrolled in the Academic Achievement course with regards to the following
   characteristics
   a) Age
   b) Race
   c) Gender
   d) Marital status of mother
   e) Marital status of father
   f) Mother graduated from college
g) Father graduated from college
h) Receiving financial aid
i) Receiving financial aid for living expenses
j) First generation college student
k) Parents married
l) Involved in extracurricular activities in high school
m) Participated in travel abroad in high school
n) Grade point average 2.0 or below
o) Grade point average 2.1 – 2.9
p) Grade point average 3.0 and above
q) Have a college mentor
r) Assigned an academic advisor
s) Frequency of meeting with academic advisor

2. To describe the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshman students at Langston University as measured by the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS).

3. To describe latent constructs within the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) that emerges in the exploratory factor analysis.

4. To determine if differences exist in the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) due to following demographic variables of the freshman students at Langston University: Age, race, mother graduated college, first generation student to attend college, gender, mother attended college, father attended college, found a mentor during college experience, assigned an academic advisor.
5. To determine if a model exist which explains a significant portion of the variance in the personal and educational academic learning behavior of freshmen students at Langston University as measured by the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) and the demographic characteristics of:
   a) age
   b) gender
   c) mother attended college
   d) father attended college
   e) first generation student to attend college in my family
   f) assigned an academic advisor
   g) have you found a mentor during college experience
   h) race

6. To examine the open-ended responses of the freshmen students at Langston University who responded to the following questions: “What do you think about classroom assignments at the university” and “What would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?”

Procedures

This study targeted 393 students who were conditionally admitted at Langston University and enrolled in Academic Achievement for the fall 2011 academic term because their ACT scores and overall academic performance on the high stakes tests was lower than a seventeen (composite score). However, the accessible population was 216 first semester freshmen students who graduated from various high schools in different states such as Michigan, California, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. The decrease in number is a result of the participating students were
from a result of students withdrawing from the university after the mid-term period; others were absent during the period the Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) was administered.

The questionnaire used in this study, the Personal Educational Academic Survey consisted of three sections. The survey was developed by the researcher based on a review of related literature. The survey was reviewed by subject matter experts to establish face and content validity. Feedback was also sought from graduate students in a doctoral level research methods class and doctoral committee members with regards to the necessity, relevance, structure and clarity of items on the Personal Educational Academic Survey.

The survey was administered to eleven (11) Academic Achievement classes whom each teacher granted me the permission to use their classes to collect data for this research study. A total of 393 academic Achievement students were invited to participate in this study. The final response count was 216 representing a 35.47% response rate.

Summary of Major Findings

Objective One

- **Age** – The results indicated that the majority of respondents were 18 to 20 years of age ($n = 191, 88.4\%$). The second largest group of respondents indicated that their age fell between 21 and 29 years ($n = 22, 10.2\%$).

- **Gender** – The majority of the respondents reported their gender as male ($n = 109, 50.9\%$) while the remaining 49.1% ($n = 105$) of the respondents indicated their gender as female.

- **Ethnicity** – The majority of respondents identified themselves as Black or African American ($n = 202, 93.5\%$). The second largest group identified themselves as American Indiana or Alaska Native ($n = 7, 3.2\%$).
• Mother Attended College – The largest group of respondents indicated that their mother attended college (n = 126, 58.9%) while 88 respondents (41.1%) indicated that their mother did not attend college. Two respondents failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

• Father Attended College – The largest group of respondents reported that their father did not attend college (n = 140, 65.1%) while 75 respondents (34.9%) indicated that their father did attend college. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

• Mother Graduated from College – The largest group of the respondents reported that their mother did not complete graduate from college completing their bachelor’s degree. Those reporting that their mother did not graduate from college nor complete their bachelor’s degree comprised of the largest group (n = 149, 69.6%), followed by 30.4% (n = 65) who reported that their mother graduated from college.

• Father Graduated from College – The majority of the respondents reported that their father did not graduate from college (n = 174, 80.6%) while 40 respondents (18.5%) indicated that their father did graduate from college.

• Do you Receive Financial Aid for Your Tuition – The majority of the respondents indicated that they did receive financial aid for their tuition (n = 195, 90.3%) while 21 respondents (9.7%) indicated that they did not receive any financial aid for their tuition.

• Do you Receive Finances for Your Living Expenses – The largest group of the respondents indicated that they do receive finances for their living expenses such
as room and board (n = 130, 60.5%) while 85 respondents (39.5%) indicated that they do not receive finances for their living expenses such as room and board. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

- I am a First Generation Student to Attend College in my Family – the largest group of the respondents reported that they were not a first generation student to attend college in their family (n = 131, 60.9%) while 84 respondents (39.1%) indicated that they were a first generation student to attend college in their family. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

- My Parents are Married – The largest group of the respondents indicated that their parents were not married (n = 152, 70.7%) while 63 respondents (29.3%) indicated that their parents were married. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

- I was Gainfully Involved In Extracurricular Activities in High School – The majority of the respondents reported that they were gainfully involved in extracurricular activities in high school (n = 175, 81.0%) while 41 respondents (19.0%) indicated that they were not gainfully involved in extracurricular activities while in high school.

- I Have Participated in Travel Abroad Programs Offered from my High School – The majority of the respondents indicated that they did not participate in travel abroad programs offered from their high school (n = 178, 82.4%) while 38 respondents (17.6%) indicated that they did participate in travel abroad programs offered from their high school.
• My Grade-Point Average in High School Was a 2.0 and below – The largest group of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 2.0 or below (n = 161, 74.5%) while 55 respondents (25.5%) indicated that their grade-point average was a 2.0 or below.

• My Grade-Point Average in High School Was a 2.1 – 2.9 – The majority of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was a 2.1 – 2.9 (n = 125, 57.9%) while 91 respondents (42.1%) indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 2.1 – 2.9.

• My Grade-Point Average in High School a Was 3.0 and Above – The majority of the respondents indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 3.0 and above (n = 154, 71.3%) while 62 respondents (28.7%) indicated that their grade-point average in high school was not a 3.0 and above.

• Have you Found an Individual Who is Mentoring You During This College Experience – A total of 144 respondents (67.0%) indicated that they did not find an individual who is mentoring them during this college experience. The remaining 71 respondents (33.0%) indicated that they did find an individual who is mentoring them during this college experience. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.

• Have you Been Assigned an Academic Advisor – The largest group of the respondents indicated that they have been assigned an academic advisor (n = 130, 60.5%) while 85 respondents (39.5%) indicated that they have not been assigned an academic advisor. One respondent failed to respond to this questionnaire item.
• How Often do you Meet with Your Academic Advisor – The largest group of respondent indicated that they met with their advisor on a monthly basis (n = 99, 45.8%). The second most frequency provided of meeting with their academic advisor was 2-3 months (n = 47, 21.8%). The third most frequency provided of meeting with their academic advisor was 4-5 months (n = 22, 10.2%). The least frequency provided of meeting with their academic advisor was 5 or more months (n = 18, 8.3%). Table 3 illustrates the frequency of how often the Academic Achievement students at Langston University met with their academic advisor.

Objective Two

Factor analysis was undertaken for each of the many parts that comprised of the personal educational academic questionnaire. First exploratory analysis was conducted for each section of the PEAS with the aim of uncovering the structure of interrelationships of the variables in the scale and defining a common set of underlying dimensions or factors. In the scale, respondents rated the extent to which a list of characteristics related to personal educational academic measured a characteristic of themselves. The item that received the highest level of agreement from respondents was “I am motivated to succeed academically” with a mean of 3.34 (SD = .877). The item that received the second highest level of agreement from respondents was “I am a visual learner” with a mean of 3.27 (SD = .820).

Objective Three

Described latent constructs within the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) that emerged from the exploratory factor analysis.
Objective Four

- **Age** – The differences in the overall personal educational academic score between the age groups were not statistically significant ($F_{2,212} = .764, p = .467$).
- **Race** – There were no significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the reported race groups ($F_{1,208} = 2.282, p = .132$).
- **Mother Graduated from College** – The differences in the overall personal educational academic score between groups based on grade point average were not statistically significant ($F_{1,212} = 1.584, p = .210$).
- **First Generation Student to Go to College in Family** – there were no significant differences in the personal educational academic score within the groups based on frequency of meeting with academic advisor ($F_{1,213} = 1.350, p = .247$).
- **Gender** – The differences in the overall personal educational academic score between the gender groups were not statistically significant ($F_{1,212} = .191, p = .675$).
- **Mother Attended College** – There were no statistical significant differences in the personal educational academic score within the groups that reported that their mother attended college ($F_{1,212} = .19, p = .663$).
- **Father Attended College** – There were no statistical significant differences in the personal educational academic score within the groups that reported that their father attended college ($F_{1,213} = .269, p = .605$).
- **Found a College Mentor** – There was statistical significant differences in the overall personal educational academic score within the groups based on having a college mentor ($F_{1,213} = 9.449, p = .002$).
• Assigned Academic Advisor – The differences in the overall personal educational academic score between the assigned an academic advisor groups were not statistically significant ($F_{1,213} = 0.100, p = .752$).

Objective Five

An exploratory model was found to exist that explained a significant portion of the variance in overall personal education academic mean score from the selected demographic variables. The independent demographic variables retained in the regression equation were found to significantly contribute to the regression model. The variables included “have you found an individual who is mentoring you during this college experience.

Objective Six

Objective six examined the open-ended responses of the freshmen students at Langston University who responded to the following questions: “What do you think about classroom assignments at the university?” and “What would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?” Overall, the majority of the responses provided from the participants suggested that they would prefer more collaborative work and student engagement since their skill sets and abilities have not been developed at this point. In addition, they need the assignments to be more skill applicable. The responses pointed out that the students are requesting to have more interactive learning and not just lectures given by the teacher; they would also prefer to have more student teacher interaction in class. Many responses suggested that they need to concentrate more on note taking skills and test taking skills. Another response that was given by the participants indicated that there was obviously some disconnect between assignments and information that they are tested on when examinations are given. It was also
suggested by the participants that they would like to have the Academic Achievement class offered more than once a week. To the respondents, the class assignments are not overwhelming. In conclusion, these classes can be more effective if there is more student engagement and that the focus relates to skills that are critical to achieving in college. There are many ways a student can be successful at the college level. One of the significant ways to be productive in college is by having excellent note taking and test taking skills in addition to understanding that they need to be very intuitive and ask as many questions as necessary if they do not understand the issues that are being presented. It is imperative that learning and engagement strategies be incorporated that have been proven to increase active learning and engagement in any course environment at the college level, while developing academic plans to integrate new techniques into the classes. Overall Conclusion

Arbuthnot (2011) notes that “Black students tend to have a different perception of the cost and benefits associated with their standardized test performance. Consequently, their test performance is no longer a personal journey, but one that affects not only them, but their school, parents and their racial group as a whole. Given this information we can see that in recent years the emphasis of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) to disaggregate test performance by group exacerbates this notion of group consciousness. The fact that Black students are traditionally at the bottom of the spectrum on standardized tests and the awards and sanctions are based on group performance, we see how these characteristics could have a profound effect on Black student performance. Specifically, at the micro level, we see the effects of Black students’ interpretation of the costs and benefits of using particular strategy choices to solve test items and their interpretation of performance on the test. Understanding that these differences affect the test taking environment is important. Being able to disentangle the differences in the testing
experience and characteristics among Black and White tests takers can help further the dialogue and information regarding why we observe distinct differences in test performance between the two groups” (p. 89).

Implications and Recommendations for Future Study

Creswell (2009) contends that “after advancing the problem and reviewing the literature about a study, the researcher then identifies deficiencies found in the literature” (p. 106). However, Creswell is not identifying flaws of one’s research, he is reiterating that future studies and expansion of one’s study can be replicated and expanded upon. Creswell (2009) states that “deficiencies in past literature may exists because some topics have not been explored with a particular group, sample, or population; the literature may need to be replicated or repeated to see if the same findings hold, given new samples of people or new sites for study; or the voices of underrepresented groups who have not been heard in published literature. In any given study, authors may mention one or more of these deficiencies. Deficiencies can often be found in the “suggestions for future research” sections of journal articles, and authors can reference these ideas and provide further justification for their proposed study” (p. 106).

After this study has been completed, continuation research using randomly selected groups of first- generation female and male (gender variable 1) students can be the targeted population to determine if there is a significant correlation between their academic performance and being first-generation high school graduates and their ability to excel on high stakes examinations once they have declared a major of choice (college major variable 2) since both variables can be defined as categorical variables. Surveys can also be used to determine if there are differences in opinions and characteristics between males compared to females who are first- generation students. After the dissemination of surveys and completion of the research study,
debriefing can take place, meaning a post-study interview in which all aspects of the study are revealed, any reasons for deception can be explained, and any questions the participants may have in regards to the study should be answered.

As the researcher, it will be desirable to split the participants by groups (male v. female); the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) could be utilized. In this analysis, data from females can be focused on in comparison to data from males. The ANOVA could be used to test for differences among means obtained from the two or more groups of participants.

A longitudinal study could also be designed to analyze the students’ success during their sophomore, junior, and senior years. Variables should be identified to give reasons for their success or lack of success. The population should be analyzed as a whole and by sex, major area of study, and age groups.

Another aspect of this study could have focused on the retention rate of first semester freshmen at Langston University. Future data can be collected from this study. Other data that can be collected could be first year dropout rate and use of regular intervention programs such as Academic Achievement and/or bridge programs. One premise of the future research study can focus on students who took Academic Achievement and/or participated in a bridge program regarding if they would be better prepared to make the transitions from high school to college and therefore would be less likely than their counterparts to drop out in the first year. Each year, the program can enroll a new set of thirty (30) students for a summer bridge activity, which should consists of ninety (90) students who will receive the academic intervention during the life of the project.

However, the graduates from the previous year’s program can remain with the program and be monitored throughout their 4-years of undergraduate work. The program should be
interested in knowing the graduation rate of the participants. Each year, the program retention rate should be compared with the retention rate for the general university population of students to indicate if the intervention(s) increased and retained students over the years. The overall goal of the Bridge Program should be designed creatively which will enable the first semester freshmen to transition smoothly from high school to college, by providing more support time and intensive study for at-risk students to strengthen their skills before entering the challenging freshman semester of college education.

As a result of the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that administrators and academic advisors assist in identifying learning techniques and various teaching pedagogues to prepare students academically who may be considered at risk of unsatisfactory academic performance. The researcher suggests that professionals who teach general education introductory courses work closely with the students who are deemed at- risk in order to alleviate academic deficiencies. A degree plan (plan of study) should be established immediately between the advisee and major discipline advisor. This agreement should be an academic contract that the student abides by as he or she matriculates. Program administrators should also investigate the possibility of expanding the study skills program and remedial courses beyond the first year for potential beneficial effect on student retention.
REFERENCES

ACPA. American College Personnel Association. www.2.myacpa.or/about-acpa.


SREB. Southern Regional Review Board. www.sreb.org/page/1068/about_SREB.html


APPENDIX A
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND BRIDGE PROGRAMS BROCHURE

Parents/Guardians --- Thanks for coming. Please travel back safely!!

Special Thanks
To the USDA-CSREES for providing the funds through the 1890 Capacity Building Grants Program

Children are our future...
....teach them while they are young

"There are only two things we can give our children:
one is roots, the other is wings"

Hodding S. Carter

At Langston University, we strive to provide education that gives roots to students, so they become socially responsible, not forgetting from whence they came, and wings, so they are inspired to soar to new heights like eagles.

Langston Education ....is the Best Choice!!

Langston University
Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Summer Bridge Program

Your Bridge to Success in College
Summer Bridge Program
June 7-26, 2009

Opening Ceremony and Orientation
Multimedia Room
School of Agriculture and Applied Sciences
4:00 p.m.

Presiding
Dr. Mose Yvonne Hooks

Professor of Education
Project Principal Investigator/Director

Greetings
Dr. Clyde Montgomery

Vice President, Academic Affairs
Langston University

Introduction of Participants and Parents/Guardians

Ms. Cheryl Jackson
Faculty, Associate Degree Program

Overview of Summer Bridge Program
Dr. Mose Yvonne Hooks

Program Staff
Dr. Mose Yvonne Hooks, PLD Director
Dr. Robert Williams, USDA Cooperatior/Advisor
Mr. Clark Williams, Dept. of Agric. & Nat. Res.
Dr. Raymond Faucette, Dept. of Agric. & Nat. Res.
Mrs. Cheryl Jackson, Associate Degree Program
Mrs. Linda Williams, Associate Degree Program
Dr. Yvonne Montgomery, Counselor
Mr. Jeffrey Darby, Assistant to Director/
Assistant Counselor

2008 Summer Bridge Professors/Student Aides

Dr. Besty Showalter
Mr. Willie Baker
Ms. Cheryl Jackson
Dr. Edmund Kloh
Ms. Linda Williams
Mrs. Gail Anderson
Mr. Gregory Colbert
Ms. Chalif Moore
Mr. Walter White

Mathematics
Biology
Academic Achievement
English
Academic Achievement
Reading
Student Assistant
Student Assistant
Student Assistant

General Information

Mrs. Carmen Butler
Financial Aid

Mrs. Coquestia Lowe Ladd
Ass. Property Manager, Centennial Courts Apts.

Parents/Guardians’ Concerns

Parents/Guardians

Closing Remarks

Dr. Mose Yvonne Hooks
Dr. Clyde Montgomery

Reception

PS. Dinner will be provided for participants
APPENDIX B
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL LETTER

Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/ projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.

-- Applicant, please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts A-E, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit two copies of the completed application to the IRB Office or to a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee. Members of this committee can be found at http://www.lsu.edu/screeningmembers.shtml

-- A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:
  (A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of part B thru E.
  (B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1 & 2)
  (C) Copies of all Instruments to be used.

  *(If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.)*
  (D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)
  (E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training Link: (http://php.nltraining.com/users/login.php)
  (F) IRB Security of Data Agreement: (http://www.lsu.edu/irb/IRB%20Security%20of%20Data.pdf)

1) Principal Investigator: Roland W. Mitchell
   Dept: ETPP
   Ph: 225-578-2156
   Rank: Assistant Professor
   E-mail: rwmitch@lsu.edu

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each
   Jeffery J. Darby, Jr., ETPP Department, Doctoral Candidate, 225-578-2156, jdarby3@lsu.edu

3) Project Title: The Academically Deficient First Year Semester Freshmen: Exploring the Underpinnings that Attribute to Low Academic Performance on Standardized Tests

4) Proposal? (yes or no) No
   If Yes, LSU Proposal Number
   Also, if YES, either
   □ This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant
   OR
   □ More IRB Applications will be filed later

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology students) College Students
   *Circle any "vulnerable populations" to be used: children <18; the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the ages, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) PI Signature Date 11/10/11 (no per signatures)

** I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design is later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Screening Committee Action: Exempted Not Exempted Category/Paragraph

Reviewer: Mathews Signature Date 11/14/11

120
November 28, 2011

Dear Mr. Darby:

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved your project and permission has been granted for you to begin. Approval is valid for one (1) year from the approved date. If research is not complete by this date, you will need approval to continue.

The approval form is enclosed. Any questions should be directed to Dr. Yvonne Montgomery, Chairperson, Institutional Review Board. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Montgomery, Ed. D.
IRB Chair

- An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/ADA -
Date: November 28, 2011

Title: "First Year Freshmen at Langston University: Exploring a Student’s Performance on Standardized Test."

Principal Investigator(s): Dr. Roland Mitchell, Advisor, LSU; Jeffery Darby, Doctoral Student, LSU.

Reviewed and Processed: November 21, 2011

IRB Decision Rendered: Approved

(approval or disapproval)

All approvals must be subject to review by a full Institutional Review Board at the next meeting as well as subject to the monitoring process of the Board at any time during the approval period.

Approval status period valid for data collection is one calendar year. A request for continuation of a research project beyond the one-year time must be submitted to the Board in writing prior to the one-year expiration date.

Any changes or modifications to the approved project must also be submitted for approval.

Comments:

Reason(s) for Disapproval:

Signature: [Signature]

IRB Chair

Date: 11/28/11
Dear Faculty Teaching Academic Achievement,

Congratulations! Your class has been chosen to participate in my dissertation study. I am a graduate of Langston University, 2008, and a doctoral candidate at Louisiana State University in the Department of Educational Theory, Policy and Practice. During the week of November 28, I am requesting to administer a survey to your students that will approximately take 15-30 minutes of the class time. The Institutional Review Board, Chairman, Dr. Yvonne Montgomery, has approved the collection of data from Langston University. With your approval, I will be present in your class(s) during the week of November 28. Before the students take the survey, they will have an opportunity to agree to their participation by reviewing and signing the Informed Consent Form. Thank you for your assistance and participation of your students. I will be in communication with you this week.

Thank you.

Jeffery J. Darby, Jr.
TO: Cooperating Teachers
Langston University

FROM: Jeffery J. Darby, Jr., Research Specialist
Louisiana State University
Department of Educational Theory, Policy and Practice

Congratulations! Your class has been selected out of fifteen (15) Academic Achievement classes by first semester freshmen students attending Langston University. Because your class has been identified, I am requesting some general background academic data from your students.

Please give me a few minutes of your class time to respond to the enclosed Personal Educational Academic Survey (PEAS). Individual responses are strictly confidential.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and hopefully will assist educators in identifying unique teaching pedagogues and learning strategies that will help assist students as they matriculate at Langston University.

As the enclosed Inform Consent Form reveals, the administrative staff at Langston University have approved and been informed of the study.

You may return the survey, Personal Educational Academic Survey to me after the students have taken the questionnaire. I am requesting that the survey be completed by the students on Monday, November 28, 2011. If there are any questions, please call me at 337-781-2285.

Again, your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Jeffery J. Darby, Jr.
Enclosure
APPENDIX E
LANGSTON UNIVERSITY REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Langston University Request for Research Participants

Dear Students (Participants),

As a part of the College of Education at Langston University, it has been required to send this survey out to all students enrolled in the Academic Achievement class. You may voluntarily participate in this research study. It is intended to measure Langston University students' interest in Academic Achievement, recreational, club, extracurricular and academic activities. This survey is one of several methods used to identify and assess students' academic abilities and interests for the purpose of enhancing the knowledge of students and their academic performance in content areas at Langston University. The researcher will take all information under advisement in their efforts to ensure the university's compliance with Title IX at Langston University. The researcher will use the data collected to assess Langston University students' academic abilities and interest as it relates to program growth and development. It is important to the researcher that you get the most out of the Academic Achievement course while at Langston University, so we want to know about your experience as it relates to academics, recreation and extracurricular and academic opportunities.

Explanation and Purpose of the Research
You are asked to participate in this research study. The study will occur at Langston University located in Langston, Oklahoma. The purpose of the study is to examine and determine what factors contribute to the prevention of first semester freshmen succeeding in high stakes tests based on their opinions and what variables are important to their academic performance at the university. Another purpose of this study is to examine the importance of having Academic Achievement programs at colleges and universities that are geared towards “at risk” students. Conducting this study will address deficiencies in existing scholarly literature by providing additional evidence that may answer the question(s) regarding more issues and concerns posed by persons in the field of higher education pertaining to student success and achievement.

Participation and Benefits
Your involvement in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty. By completing the survey will provide Langston University with valuable first-hand information from first semester freshmen students that can help the researcher meet the participant’s academic needs. For instance, the researcher would like to know what academic and extracurricular activities you are currently involved in addition to taking the Academic Achievement course, if you are interested in other learning opportunities and at what level, and if you feel that Langston University is meeting your needs as it relates to academic development and services for you as the student.

Should you have questions regarding the survey, you may contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Roland W. Mitchell at e-mail address rwmitch@lusu.edu, Co-Investigator Mr. Jeffery J. Darby, Jr. at jdarbyj3@lusu.edu, Dr. Hornbeck, Dean of Education, at jhornbeck@lusu.edu, or Louisiana State University at irb@lusu.edu or 225-578-8692. Langston University appreciates your assistance.

Thank you.

Dr. Roland W. Mitchell, Principal Investigator and Chairman of Doctoral Committee
Educational Theory, Policy and Practice Department
Louisiana State University

Jeffery J. Darby, Jr., Co-Investigator and PhD Candidate
Educational Theory, Policy and Practice Department
Louisiana State University Researcher

Study Exempted By:
Dr. Robert G. Mulhern, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
2003 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu
Exemption Expires: 11-15-2014
APPENDIX F
PERSONAL EDUCATIONAL ACADEMIC SURVEY (PEAS)

Personal and Educational Academic Survey

Thank you very much for participating in this survey. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and your cooperation is highly appreciated. Your responses will be kept confidential. The survey has three parts and will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

PART I

Directions

Please provide the following information regarding your personal characteristics. This information is intended to better help the researcher analyze the collected data. CONFIDENTIALITY for individual responses is guaranteed. Please select the appropriate response to the following questions.

1. Please identify your age category.
   - 17 or younger
   - 18 - 20
   - 21 - 29
   - 30 - 39
   - 40 or older

2. Please specify your race.
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Asian
   - Black or African American
   - Hispanic, Latino, Spanish Origin
   - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   - White

3. What is your sex (gender)?
   - Male
   - Female

4. My mother attended college.
   - Yes
   - No

5. My father attended college.
   - Yes
   - No

6. My mother graduated from college.
   - Yes
   - No

7. My father graduated from college.
   - Yes
   - No

Please go on to the next page.
8. Do you receive financial aid for your tuition?
   o Yes
   o No

9. Do you receive finances for your living expenses (room and board)?
   o Yes
   o No

10. I am a first generation student to attend college in my family.
    o Yes
    o No

11. My parents are married.
    o Yes
    o No

12. I was gainfully involved in extracurricular activities in high school.
    o Yes
    o No

13. I have participated in travel abroad programs offered from my high school.
    o Yes
    o No

14. My grade-point average in high school was 2.0 and below.
    o Yes
    o No

15. My grade-point average in high school was 2.1 – 2.9.
    o Yes
    o No

16. My grade-point average in high school was 3.0 and above.
    o Yes
    o No

17. Have you found an individual who is mentoring you during this college experience?
    o Yes
    o No

18. Have you been assigned an academic advisor?
    o Yes
    o No

19. How often do you meet with your academic advisor?
    o 1 month
    o 2-3 months
    o 4-5 months
    o 5 or more months

Please go on the Next Page
PART 2

Directions

Below is a list of characteristics pertaining to students at Langston University. Please select the item regarding the degree in which it measures a characteristic of yourself: A) Strongly Disagree-SD, B) Disagree-D, C) Agree-A, D) Strongly Agree-SA): Check only one response per item.

20. My living conditions are acceptable.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

21. My current living location (environment) is in a rural community.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

22. My current living location (environment) is urban.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

23. I live on the college campus.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

24. I live off campus.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

25. My mother graduated from high school.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

26. My father graduated from high school.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

Please go on the Next Page
27. My high school prepared me to be successful in my academic studies at the university.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

28. I am motivated to succeed academically.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

29. I study 1-4 hours a day.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

30. I study 4 or more hours a day.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

31. I study mostly at the library.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

32. I study mostly at home.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

33. I study mostly at a friend’s house.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

34. I prefer to study alone.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

Please go on the Next Page
35. I prefer to study with peers.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

36. I like to lead class discussions.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

37. I am a visual learner.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

38. I am an auditory learner.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

39. I am a good listener.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

40. I consider myself organized in my course work.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

41. I am time sensitive.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

42. I am extroverted.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

Please go on the Next Page
43. I am introverted.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

44. I grasp information pertaining to my academic lessons very quickly.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

45. I like to read academic books.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

46. I like to read novels.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

47. I do not like to read.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

48. I communicate often with an instructor/faculty regarding class work.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

49. I seek academic help from a tutor or counselor when needed.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

50. I seek academic help from my peers when needed.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

Please go on the Next Page
51. My high school counselor assisted me in making decisions about entering college.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

52. I rate my test taking skills at 70% and below.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

53. I rate my test taking skills at 71% and above.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

54. Not doing well on test(s) make me feel incompetent about my academic course.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

55. My mother motivated me to attend college.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

56. My father motivated me to attend college.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

57. The Academic Achievement course enhanced my academic abilities.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

58. The Academic Achievement course enhanced my academic skills.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

Please go on the Next Page
59. The Academic Achievement course prepared me for general education (English, reading, mathematics, and biology).
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

60. I am satisfied with my overall performance in the Academic Achievement course.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

61. There is a need for the Academic Achievement course.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

62. I took the Academic Achievement course very seriously.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

63. Tutorial services and assistance of faculty have enabled me to be successful this year.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

PART 3
Directions
Please provide the following information regarding your personal academic experience. This qualitative information is intended to better help the researcher analyze the collected data. CONFIDENTIALITY for individual responses is guaranteed. Please write your response to the following open-ended questions in the space provided.

64. What do you think about classroom assignments at the university?


65. What would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?
Personal and Educational Academic Survey

Thank you very much for participating in this survey. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and your cooperation is highly appreciated. Your responses will be kept confidential. The survey has three parts and will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

PART 1

Directions
Please provide the following information regarding your personal characteristics. This information is intended to better help the researcher analyze the collected data. CONFIDENTIALITY for individual responses is guaranteed. Please select the appropriate response to the following questions.

1. Please identify your age category.
   o 17 or younger
   o 18 - 20
   o 21 - 29
   o 30 - 39
   o 40 or older

2. Please specify your race.
   o American Indian or Alaska Native
   o Asian
   o Black or African American
   o Hispanic, Latino, Spanish Origin
   o Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   o White

3. What is your sex (gender)?
   o Male
   o Female

4. My mother attended college.
   o Yes
   o No

5. My father attended college.
   o Yes
   o No

6. My mother graduated from college.
   o Yes
   o No
7. My father graduated from college.
   o Yes
   o No

8. Do you receive financial aid for your tuition?
   o Yes
   o No

9. Do you receive finances for your living expenses (room and board)?
   o Yes
   o No

10. I am a first generation student to attend college in my family.
    o Yes
    o No

11. My parents are married.
    o Yes
    o No

12. I was gainfully involved in extracurricular activities in high school.
    o Yes
    o No

13. I have participated in travel abroad programs offered from my high school.
    o Yes
    o No

14. My grade-point average in high school was a 2.0 and below.
    o Yes
    o No

15. My grade-point average in high school was 2.1 – 2.9.
    o Yes
    o No

16. My grade-point average in high school was 3.0 and above.
    o Yes
    o No

17. Have you found an individual who is mentoring you during this college experience?
    o Yes
    o No
18. Have you been assigned an academic advisor?
   o Yes
   o No

19. How often do you meet with your academic advisor?
   o 1 month
   o 2-3 months
   o 4-5 months
   o 5 or more months

PART 2

Directions

Below is a list of characteristics pertaining to students at Langston University. Please select the item regarding the degree in which it measures a characteristic of yourself: A) Strongly Disagree-SD, B) = Disagree-D, C) = Agree-A, D) = Strongly Agree-SA: Check only one response per item.

20. My living conditions are acceptable.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

21. My current living location (environment) is in a rural community.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

22. My current living location (environment) is urban.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

23. I live on the college campus.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree
24. I live off campus.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

25. My mother graduated from high school.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

26. My father graduated from high school.
   o Strongly Disagree
   o Disagree
   o Agree
   o Strongly Agree

27. My high school prepared me to be successful in my academic studies at the university.
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   o Disagree
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   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

39. I am a good listener.
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   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

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   o Strongly Agree

PART 3

Directions

Please provide the following information regarding your personal academic experience. This qualitative information is intended to better help the researcher analyze the collected data. CONFIDENTIALITY for individual responses is guaranteed. Please write your response to the following open-ended questions in space provided.

64. What do you think about classroom assignments at the university?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
65. What would you like to see different in the Academic Achievement curriculum?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX G
PARTICIPANTS QUALITATIVE RESPONSES FROM PERSONAL EDUCATIONAL ACADEMIC SURVEY

Academic Achievement Open-Ended Questions Responses

**Mr. Webb’s 1:30pm Thursday Class**

Q 64 Most of them are too long to remember
Q 65 More professors

Q 64 Classroom assignments at Langston depending on what assignments are given can be helpful for you to practice for the exams.
Q 65 I like how it is and would not change it

Q 64 There easy if you pay attention in class and attend class also.
Q 65 Nothing in particular

Q 64 Overall assignments I have been given has helped me and my skills to become successful.
Q 65 I feel what is being learned in Academic Achievement class and PSD (Personal Social Development) are so much alike. It is a waste of money to have taken both classes.

Q 64 I believe it would be a lot better than having to do everything online. I also believe it would help a lot of students pass and study better.
Q 65 You have the class more than once a week.

Q 64 The classroom assignments are very good and sometimes mind challenging.
Q 65 I think everything is good. Therefore, nothing should be changed.

Q 64 I think that they should give more classroom assignments and less lecturing or at least keep it the same.
Q 65 I would like for the information in the class to be more understandable at times.

Q 64 What I think about classroom assignments is that they vary often give me any out what they do give be a little of what we are talking about in that class or some or just too easy
Q 65 I would like to see it meet more than once a week.

**Dr. Colbert’s 11:00am Thursday Class**

Q 64 The assignments are okay but I find my assignments are usually easy compared to other Classes.
Q 65 More student teacher involvement and more extension of assignments.

Q 64 I think that the assignments were very vital to my college career and my life.
Q 65 I feel that all of the classwork and seminars were vital to a freshmen students life here at Langston.
Q64 I think class assignments are very easy and good to do.
Q65 Nothing is different because everything is great already.

Q64 They can be difficult sometime but are overall manageable.
Q65 I would like for the work to be similar to what’s on the tests so studying would be easier.

Q64 They’re cool and can help me learn more stuff every day.
Q65 Making Academic Achievement curriculum fun, so people won’t drop out.

Q64 Some are pointless and some are worth it just depends on the class.
Q65 For them to start helping out the students more.

Q64 I think the assignments are okay. They make you think but they’re not overwhelming.
Q65 I would like to see a little more interaction with the students.

Q64 There okay not too hard.
Q65 Academic Achievement is perfect.

Q64 It’s productive and helps students do better.
Q65 As of now there would be more change to the program.

Q64 There helpful and some can be difficult but they help build better skills.
Q65 More worksheets or group assignments or something to get people involved and more interested

Q64 Some are easy and some you have to do the work and research.
Q65 Yes. The teacher needs to motivate students more.

Q64 I think they are great they teach people how to grasp for extra help and to ask for extra help.
Q65 I wish things could be more hands on. I wish we could have more visitors and field trips.

Q64 Some are good and others not so good but I think it is needed.
Q65 More hands on one on one

Q64 They are helpful, they are not too hard but its college and I didn’t expect no less.
Q65 More class discussion and more speakers

Q64 Classroom assignments are not too hard for me this year.
Q65 More helping and going into perfect detail over assignments.

Linda Williams' 9:30 Thursday Class
Q64 I feel like if you dedicate time and really focus on doing well, you can do well in your class work, but that goes for every school.
Q65 I think it should be more than one day a week. It helps students with skills and to succeed in all classes.

Q64 Having classroom assignments are an advantage because if you have a problem then you could ask your professor or peer.
Q65 Making the class more often versus once a week.

Q64 Some are just like high school
Q65 Not applicable

Q64 The classes are a little easy
Q65 More interaction with students and teachers

Q64 I think most of them are challenging but I always seem to overcome that and still complete and turn in my work and get a good grade.
Q65 I mean nothing. Everything Mrs. Williams taught us was very helpful and useful in life and that’s fine with me because later on in life I can think back and do what she taught me.

Q64 They’re great to have and they help at the end whenever you need it.
Q65 I would like to have more hands on things to do in Academic Achievement. I am a visual person.

Q64 I think they’re somewhat important - just not so many assignments.
Q65 Nothing, my class is fine.

Q64 I believe that the class is maintainable if you are focus on doing good in your class.
Q65 No regrets

Q64 There is not a lot of assignments and the assignments are easy to do.
Q65 More in class discussion

Mr. Braggs' 3:00 pm Wednesday Class

Q64 I think that the assignments are fair and helped out with the course overall.

Q64 I like it when there are assignments that make you think or open your mind like critical thinking.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 The assignments are easy.
Q65 Everything is fine the way it is.

Q64 Some of the assignments are okay to me but challenging.
Q65 Talk more with others and learning more also too.
Q64 I like the assignments because it gives you a chance for help from students and teacher.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 I think the assignments are easy, and I like the fact that the assignments allow you time to
do them although most students procrastinate when the time come for dong them.
Q65 There’s nothing I would change really.

Q64 I think the assignments are ok as long as I can get an understanding of them I am fine. If I
ask for assistance, it should be given especially if I’m coming out of pocket.
Q65 More work, more guidance. I am not saying that there is no guidance but I think there can
be more.

Q64. The assignments are helpful to the students that need that extra help, but I can do it either
way- at home or in class.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 The assignments are good and it challenges me.
Q65 Nothing, it is ok.

Q64 The classroom assignments are perfect, there is nothing too hard nor too easy for me to
accomplish here at Langston University.
Q65 I am completely satisfied with the Academic Achievement program.

Q64 I like most of the assignments. We do learn valuable information.
Q65 A more interesting curriculum, less movies and more discussion.

Q64 Classroom assignments are very helpful and it helps you remember what you go over in
class.
Q65 I would like to see a little bit more done in class.

Q64 I don’t really get any classroom assignments but when I do they’re easy.
Q65 Nothing, I like It how it is.

Q64 The assignments can be hard but not as hard.
Q65 More time and group studies.

**Mr. Webb's 2:00pm Wednesday Class**

Q64 The classroom assignments are up to you to do. You have to be organized and push yourself
to know when they are due.
Q65 I wish Academic Achievement was more interesting.

Q64 The class is ok, not all that.
Q65 Nothing really, it is great.
Q64 The classroom assignments are up to you to keep track when they are due.
Q65 I wish the class was more interesting.

Q64 I think the classroom assignment(s) teaches you a lot to learn throughout real life.
Q65 More hands-on work.

Q64 The assignments are challenging but beneficial
Q65 Nothing, was perfect

Q64 I think the assignments are not meaningful.

Q64 The assignments are very simple.
Q65 More assignments and how we use them in everyday life

Q64 I think some of the class work is not necessary because most of the students will not do it.
Q65 I don’t know because I do not care too much about this course.

Q64 I think the assignments are good especially if you need your grade to be balanced. The assignments can help you.
Q65 More relatable material and activities.

Q64 The assignments are ok.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 The assignments are well planned out. It is simple because if the teacher gives an in/out class assignment, I get it done.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 Once I learned and understood the assignments the work became easier.
Q65 I would like to see the class meet more than once a week; maybe at least two times a week.

Q64 I think the assignments are very helpful and a lot easier to do.
Q65 I would not change anything about the course; it’s very helpful the way it is.

Dr. Mary Mobosowo's 12:00 pm Wednesday Class
Q64 The assignments are very good. I like the assignments.
Q65 I would like to see more hands-on assignments.

Q64 The assignments are very helpful and teaches how important organization is.
Q65 I wouldn’t change anything about the curriculum.

Q64 I think the assignments are helpful because the professor can help you more instead of you being at home not know what you do.
Q65 How to manage my time more when I need to study for a quiz or test.

Q64 It helped me become a better man.
Q65 Nothing; the class was perfect.
Q64 The class assignments were very easy.
Q65 I would like to learn more

Q64 I feel like the classroom assignments that are assigned are needed and helped me learn.
Q65 Nothing should have to change. The class is great.

Q64 I think the classroom assignments at this university are helpful in some cases but in others it is not helpful.
Q65 Nothing. I like the way it is.

Q64 The class assignments are helpful.
Q65 I would like to see more classes. Perhaps meet more than once a week.

Q64 The class assignments are easy; high school like.
Q65 Less talking.

**Mrs. Storr 11:00am Wednesday Class**

Q64 Classroom assignments at the university help me to learn better because I can read off of other Ideas.
Q65 Nothing has needs to be changed in Academic Achievement.

Q64 Some of the assignments are hard and I need my teacher to get more in depth about the assignments, others are ok and I can handle them.
Q65 More learning about our surroundings and past presidents.

Q64. The assignments are fine.
Q65 More courses and more academic majors.

Q64 Some of the assignments are good but some I don’t see why we need to do them.
Q65 I feel as if the Academic Achievement class is a waste of time. It’s a common sense class.

Q64 The assignments give us a chance to make ourselves better and to improve our abilities to get the hang of working out of class.
Q65 What I would like to see is more video tapes about different things in Academic Achievement for those who are not hearing but are note taking learners.

Q64 I think that the classroom assignments at the university are pretty good.
Q65 I would like to do more book work.

Q64 The assignments are okay. However, I think the assignments could be better. I don’t really learn that much from the assignments.
Q65 Earning more credits for the course.
Q64 I do not like to get up and present in class.
Q65 I would like to see more students paying attention.

Q64 So far it takes a little work to finish, but the assignments are easy.
Q65 I would like more homework on Langston University’s history.

Q64 I believe classroom assignments helped individual knowledge at the end of the day. It’s a great way to become involved in classroom and participate and get involved with students and the instructor.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I like the classroom assignments
Q65 I like it the way it is.

Q64 Classroom assignments at the University are very helpful.
Q65 I feel that the Academic Achievement course is fine just the way it is.

Q64 I think classroom assignments are very useful and helpful at the university. I see them as practice and something for me to study on before I take a quiz or test.
Q65 Academic Achievement was not a hard class. I did all my work and completed it on time. The teacher I had was very helpful and listened to all her students when we had something to say so honestly I wouldn’t want to change anything or see anything done differently.

Q64 I think the assignments were the same as high school. Some courses are not.
Q65 Nothing

Mr. Young's 10:00am Wednesday Class
Q64 They’re not many classroom assignments
Q65 More time spent talking about classroom note taking skills.

Q64 A lot of my teachers have us work in groups on our classroom assignments which help us to learn team building skills.
Q65 I think the Academic Achievement curriculum is just fine.

Q64 Classroom assignments are helpful. I believe that if a student can see examples on how to take on a problem then they will grasp the lesson.
Q65 Really nothing. Academic Achievement is exactly what I stated. It really helps especially when your teacher cares.

Q64 The assignments are ok.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 I believe classroom work is very useful in succeeding. I don’t think someone can get the best out of a class with any online work.
Q65 I would like if the course was a little more in depth.
Q64 The assignments are pretty hard but I learned enough to understand what I am supposed to do.
Q65 I would like field trips to be added.

Q64 To me the class work assignments at this university are very fair. I always find the time and learn how to do the assignments.
Q65 Me personally, I would like to do more activities and more things with the class it will make things much better.

Mr. Jones' 9:00 am Wednesday Class
Q64 I think the classroom assignments do the job to keep us busy.
Q65 I really don’t think there is too much you can change about this class.

Q64 I believe the classroom assignments are well prepared.
Q65 I would like the teacher to listen to the student’s' suggestions.

Q64 I think the class assignments are very productive and not a waste of time.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 The class assignments at Langston University are pointless, but if you do not know the material, the assignments give you practice to be better.
Q65 Everything is fine. I would like to see serious teachers about teaching.

Q64 The assignments at the university are different. Certain things we wouldn’t talk about in class get discussed and argued over you.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 The class assignments go with what we are learning.
Q65 I think it’s fine just the way it is.

Q64 The assignments at the University are similar to my high school assignments.
Q65 The Academic Achievement curriculum does not need any changes.

Q64 I think it is great that the class sizes are small it makes the student and teacher relationship better.
Q65 I would not change anything.

Q64 The assignments are challenging.
Q65 I would like to see teachers who do not come to class late.

Q64 So for my class assignments have been easy for me.
Q65 Nothing. This was a great course.
Mrs. Sagini's 1:30pm Tuesday Class

Q64 I believe that the assignments are very good and can get us thinking. It gets good conversations going.
Q65 We could do fun and exciting projects in class more. Also don’t do public speaking.

Q64 I think that the assignments are very good.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 The assignments are acceptable.
Q65 More test prep help.

Q64 It all depends on the teacher.
Q65 Nothing. Everything is fine to me.

Q64 The assignments at the University are ok. I like them.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I think that the assignments at the university are very reasonable. There many but we have ample time to do them.
Q65 I think there is should be a lot less assignments.

Q64 I think it’s a good way to get work done.
Q65 More talking.

Q64 So far the assignments are not that hard and pretty explainable.
Q65 More learning and less waste of time.

Q64 I think the classroom assignments are well planned and takes time to do, look over, and take notes with the amount of classroom assignments.
Q65 I would like to see less work because in this Academic Achievement class a lot of work was put on me.

Q64 The assignments are good and students should take advantage of them.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I believe that classroom assignments should be able to broaden a student’s knowledge on the topic subject.
Q65 More student and teacher interaction.

Q64 Assignments are not given out. The class is like a more pay attention and take notes environment.
Q65 It works well to me.
Q64 I think the assignments are very easy for some people that don’t like doing assignments by themselves.

Q65 Nothing.

Mrs. Williams 9:30am, Tuesday Class

Q64 I think the classroom assignments could have been more of a challenge. Most of my class work was easy for me.

Q65 Nothing really. Everything was just right in this class.

Q64 Classroom assignments are better because if you have a question you can ask the teacher.

Q65 Nothing. I like the course how it is.

Q64 Classroom assignments are easy if you obtain what is given.

Q65 I would like to have this class meet more than once a week.

Q64 The classroom assignments are very easy.

Q65 Nothing

Q64 They help teach the information without the teacher having to go in front of the classroom trying to drill the information into our heads.

Q65 Nothing.

Q64 The assignments are awesome. I enjoy going to school. The classes are good and the assignments are great.

Q65 I would not like to see anything different about Academic Achievement.

Q64 I think some of the assignments are challenging.

Q65 Nothing. The teacher covered everything and hit on every point from all angles.

Q64 I love the assignments. It made me engage myself in the class and all the conversations.

Q65 I loved my teacher and I would like everything to be like how she designed and taught the course.

Ms. Adams' 3:00pm Monday Class

Q64 The class assignments are very easy when you put a little effort in participation and studying.

Q65 I believe the Academic Achievement course should be in all colleges because it helps to prepare the students in a way that they can comprehend. I would like to see more colleges offer the Academic Achievement course because it would help out first year college students.

Q64 The classroom assignments are fairly easy but the assignments help you if you don’t understand it.

Q65 I would like to see the academic achievement class curriculum to see what the student has problems in and help them improve in that problem.
Q64 I rarely get classroom assignments in class. I think it would be more helpful and less time consuming to do class work.
Q65 More teaching the information.

Q64 Classroom assignments are okay. I like it more than to be lectured all day.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 The classroom assignments are Not too challenging if you pay attention to your instructors instructions.
Q65 I think the curriculum for the course is fine because it does prepare you for college and lets you know what you need to do to succeed.

Q64 The course is okay for practice. I would like more points toward my grade.
Q65 Nothing. It is okay.

Q64 I think the assignments are good. Some are challenging but if study and pay attention in class, the assignments usually aren’t that bad.
Q65 I would like to hear more information about the services that can help us on campus.

Q64 I like the class assignments. It’s the computer assignments I do not like - such as EDUCO.
Q65 Academic Achievement should be offered two or more times a week.

Q64 I think classroom assignments at the university are ok. They help you understand what you are learning.
Q65 I would not like to see anything different.

Q64 The class assignments help students to review and what to learn in class. Also, by reviewing it helps student to study more.
Q65 I would like to see students who participate in sports and reading newspapers improve their reading level.

Q64 They are ok. It’s not hard at all.
Q65 Nothing. It is a well done class. I learn a lot about Langston University.

Q64 The assignments are what you make out of it. You do work and pass or you don’t do work and fail.
Q65 Nothing really because it helps every student that takes this class.

Q64 I think the class assignments at this university are put together very well based on the course. I found academic achievement very beneficial.
Q65 Nothing. Everything in this class helped me throughout my first semester.

Q64 I like my class work. I think I can do better in class if I tried a little More harder.
Q65 Nothing.
Mr. Wills' 2:00 pm Monday Class

Q64 The class makes me feel as if I am in high school.
Q65 Not to be so much in common with PSD (Personal Social Development)

Q64 I think the assignments are fairly easy. They don’t require a lot of thought.
Q65 Nothing. I think the entire curriculum is ok.

Q64 It helps you get the feeling of what you are going to be learning.
Q65 I think we should be in groups because you can learn better hearing from what better people have to say.

Q64 I think the assignments in my classes are challenging but not too much that I can’t handle them.
Q65 Nothing. The curriculum is ok.

Q64 It helps students because the professor or instructor is right there to explain. Then there not a lot of classroom assignments here.
Q65 The current event in class conversation

Q64 The assignments are good not too much work just perfect it’s a good class to be in to better yourself.
Q65 Nothing. I am ok with it just the way it is.

Q64 Class assignments at Langston University can be very helpful because personally, I learned better in class due to the teacher explaining thoroughly.
Q65 Nothing. I enjoyed my Academic Achievement class.

Q64 The assignments are very simple except for Algebra. I do not like the website EDUCO.
Q65 More visual aids and examples.

Q64 Class assignments are not too easy and not too hard for general students at my university.
Q65 Nothing. It has helped me better myself and helped me adjust to pass secondary level class work.

Q64 I think the class assignments are great.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I think at times the assignments are helpful.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I feel that they help prepare me for tests and also practice.
Q65 I would not change anything.

Q64 Classroom assignments help students learn better by what is being taught.
Q65 Nothing.
Mr. Young's 12:00pm Monday Class

Q64 The assignments are pretty challenging.
Q65 More work.

Q64 I believe that the assignments are challenging but manageable.
Q65 More class time.

Q64 Some of the class assignments are challenging but others aren’t. I feel like I need more work.
Q65 Helping me more in my classes.

Q64 The biology classes are not explained well and should be taught better. Every other class Is great.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 The assignments are understandable.
Q65 More work.

Q64 The assignments are ok to a certain point.
Q65 Yes, a lot.

Q64 The assignments are very useful and help me understand a lot better.
Q65 More information about Langston University.

Q64 The assignments are relatively easy to accomplish.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 Too many assignments are given at one time.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 Assignments are easy.
Q65 I would like to see how a student can apply for scholarships in the Academic Achievement class.

Dr. Mobosowo's 10:00am Monday Class

Q64 It is good for a student to learn and understand the assignments.
Q65 More time.

Q64 I think I like on-line classes better
Q65 Yes, a lot.

Q64 The assignments are challenging.
Q65 Nothing really.
Q64 I think the assignments are unnecessary.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 The assignments help you figure things out on your own but some of it is easy.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 Assignments are not that hard but I do learn a lot.
Q65 Everything is fine.

Q64 The assignments are easy to deal with
Q65 The course is fine the way it is.

Q64 I believe the class assignments are needed so the students can learn more.
Q65 More Tips on how to be successful in college

Q64 Some of the assignment are hard and very long.
Q65 More work.

Q64 I believe that the assignments are very easy but EDUCO is too much assignments and I love math.
Q65 There shouldn’t be a need for the class.

**Mr. Jones' 9:00am Monday Class**

Q64 I believe the assignments are unnecessary because the classes are too short
Q65 I would like to see teachers doing more hands-on with students, provide tutors in the classrooms to help the students.

Q64 I like the assignments. The assignments are easy to get because this campus is so small.
Q65 Nothing, I have enjoyed this class this semester.

Q64 The assignments can be too much at time. It is as if teachers forget we have other classes.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I believe the assignments can be pointless with so limited time for class. Computer assignments outside of the class make more sense.
Q65 I would like to see more hands-on on help for students, like tutors coming in and helping the students.

Q64 We barely had assignments but the assignments I did have were very easy and taught me how to manage my time.
Q65 I would like to focus on different concepts rather than just time management.

Q64 I think the assignments were easy.
Q65 Nothing
Q64 The class assignments are far for the most part.
Q65 More credit hours.

Q64 I don’t have any thoughts about the assignments.
Q65 Nothing. I think that my teacher is helping a lot.

Q64 The assignments are easy to understand and always easy to do.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 The assignments are not explained enough for an average student to comprehend and is faulty when it comes to making people better students.
Q65 More assistance in helping to learn their material and more one on one time with professor.

Q64 The assignments were very understandable and easy to do.
Q65 Nothing.

Q64 I think the classroom assignments had a good number of work and people so that everybody could understand the work and each other.
Q65 Just going over the assignments in class.

Q64 The assignments can be better.
Q65 More programs.

Q64 The assignments are great but I feel as if the teachers should explain more and complain less. And also they should be able to teach the students to their abilities not the teacher’s abilities.
Q65 To help the students more and less complaining. Also to keep the students in line at least have a test or classroom support group for the students.

Q64 Good assignments.
Q65 Nothing

Q64 The assignments are appropriate.
Q65 More speakers.
APPENDIX H
LANGSTON UNIVERSITY INFORM CONSENT FORM

Langston University's Inform Consent Document

Project Title: First Year Freshman at Langston University: Exploring a Student's Performance on Standardized Tests.

Investigator(s): Mr. Jeffrey J. Darby, Jr., Doctoral Candidate, Louisiana State University, Dr. Roland W. Mitchell, Dissertation Chair

Purpose: You are being asked to participate in this research project because you are enrolled in the Academic Achievement class at Langston University. The purpose of this study is to examine and determine what factors contribute to the prevention of first semester freshmen succeeding on high stakes tests based on their opinions and what variables are important to their performance at the university. Knowing the key variables that have prevented a student from his or her achievement will help design another alternate method of learning that will increasingly impact the students' overall academic performance on standardized tests. Another purpose of this study is to examine the importance of having Academic Achievement programs at colleges and universities that are geared towards "at risk" students. After the data are collected, the researcher will analyze what percentages of students that considered the identified motivational factors to be correlated with their achievement, and if the Academic Achievement course enhances their academic ability. The researcher will then discover the level of correlation between the intervention, Academic Achievement, and motivational factors identified by the student on the Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS).

Procedures: The Personal and Educational Academic Survey (PEAS) which is designed by the researcher will be administered to approximately 393 freshmen students enrolled in the Academic Achievement class at Langston University. The PEAS measures variables identified by the students that helped them to achieve academically. The researcher will administer the PEAS to measure the factors that they think impeded or enhanced the students' knowledge base and determined their academic levels in addition to some identifiable markers that they consider to be motivational factors as they matriculate throughout the semester. It should take 15-30 minutes for the students to thoroughly read and respond to the appropriate items on the PEAS.

Risk of Participation: There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits: Langston University and students enrolled in the required course, Academic Achievement, will benefit in various ways. By the students completing the PEAS will provide Langston University with valuable first-hand information from first semester freshmen students that can help the researcher meet the participant's academic needs. For instance, the researcher would like to know what academic and extracurricular activities in which the students are currently involved in addition to taking the Academic Achievement course, if the students are interested in other learning opportunities and at what level, and if the students think that Langston University is meeting their needs as it relates to academic development and services.
Confidentiality: The data will be stored in a secure location located on Louisiana State University’s campus. The researcher, Jeffery J. Darby, Jr., and the Chair of the Dissertation Committee, Dr. Roland W. Mitchell, will have access to the stored data. The data will be stored for a minimum of five years without being able to link or identify subjects who participated in the research study. The data will be reported and shared with the faculty of Louisiana State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy.

Compensation: Subjects of the study will not be compensated for their participation.

Contacts: Principal Investigator, Mr. Jeffery J. Darby, Jr., email address, jdarby3@lsu.edu; Co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Roland W. Mitchell, e-mail address, rwmitch@lsu.edu, or Dr. Robert C. Matthews, IRB Chair, Louisiana State University at irb@lsu.edu. If you have questions about the research and your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Yvonne Montgomery, IRB Chair, 109 Moore Hall, Langston University, Langston OK 73050, 405-466-3242 or ykmontgomery@lunet.edu.

Participants Rights: Your involvement in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty.

__________________________________________
Signature of Participant                        Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

__________________________________________
Signature of Researcher/ Date
APPENDIX I
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) CERTIFICATE

Certificate of Completion
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Jeffery Darby, Jr. successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".
Date of completion: 10/06/2011
Certification Number: 780794

http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/cert.php?c=779794

5/2/2013
VITA

Jeffery J. Darby, Jr., the son of Linda Ann George Darby and Jeffery George Darby, Sr., was born in Lafayette, La. Jeffery grew up in a small town of Lafayette, Louisiana. Jeffery graduated from Northside High School located in Lafayette, Louisiana in 2002. He earned a Bachelor’s of Arts degree in Psychology from Langston University located in Langston, Oklahoma in May of 2008. He earned a Masters of Arts degree from Louisiana State University in Educational Leadership, Research and Counseling in May of 2010, while working full-time in Residential Life in the Nicholson and Edward Gay Graduate Apartments which housed 89% of international students. Jeffery is working at Louisiana State University A&M College as a Graduate Assistant in the Division of Student Life and Enrollment in the Center for Academic Success. Jeffery has also worked in the Division of Campus Life, & Residential Life. Upon completion of his Ph.D., he plans to continue his academic studies abroad. Jeffery has received a doctoral fellowship to travel abroad and study in many countries such as Turkey, Germany, China and Costa Rica.

After completion of his doctoral studies, Jeffery plans to study abroad in Turkey at Gediz University located in Izmir, Turkey to do post-doctoral research where he traveled May, 2011 to study the educational practices, political and school systems of Turkey. In August 2013, Jeffery J. Darby, Jr. will receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education Administration with a concentration in Educational Leadership and Research from Louisiana State University. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be conferred by Louisiana State University at the August, 2013, Commencement Ceremony. Jeffery “Jay” Darby, Jr. is the second oldest of three children. He is the brother of two sisters and one brother, Swandalyn Marie Darby, Kimberly Marie Darby, and Corey Joseph Darby.