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College Freshmen Living Arrangement as a Predictor of Retention and Persistence to Graduation

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COLLEGE FRESHMEN LIVING ARRANGEMENT AS A PREDICTOR OF
RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE TO GRADUATION

A Research Study

Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the
Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies at
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Master of Science
in Occupational and Technical Studies Degree

By

Mildred V. Jones

July 2013

APPROVAL PAGE

This research paper was prepared by Mildred V. Jones under the direction of Dr. John Ritz in SEPS 636. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science.

APPROVAL BY: _____
Dr. John M. Ritz, Advisor

DATE: _____

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Mildred V. Jones

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Retention and persistence has become a primary focus of discussion in higher education. Knowing why students stay and persist to degree is important in understanding how institutions of higher education can develop their programs to improve retention and persistence. Retention has become a moving target as institutions continuously try to maintain a model of graduation that meets the changing mission, curriculum, students, and financial constraints that are typical in the industry. Patterns of retention have changed based on these constantly changing variables. In the 1950s higher education was dealing mostly with expansion in enrollment. Moving into the 1960s focus turned to that of preventing dropouts. By the 1970s there was the need for building theoretical foundations in retention. In the 1980s higher education focused on managing enrollments which led to a broadening of horizons in the 1990s. Today higher education looks at current and future trends to assist institutions with establishing retention models that meet their individual needs. Retention has become one of the “core indicators” and focuses in higher education research today (Berger, Ramirez, & Lyons, 2012).

Problem Statement

Understanding why students do not persist to degree is a major element in understanding retention at institutions of higher education. While economic and academic factors play a role in retention, there may be other factors that increase retention and ultimately persistence to degree. At Old Dominion University (ODU), one such factor has been considered, living arrangement. This study focuses on living arrangement as a predictor of academic success of full-time freshmen students at ODU.

The purpose of this study was to determine if full-time freshmen who live on-campus during their first year of study have higher retention rates and stronger persistence to graduation than those who live off-campus during the first year.

Research Questions

The following research questions were utilized for this study.

RQ1: What is the GPA of residential compared to non-residential freshmen (commuters) at the end of the first year?

RQ2: What is the retention rate for ODU residential freshmen versus non-residential freshmen (commuters) from first-year to second-year?

Background and Significance

In 2010, President Barak Obama announced his 2020 College Completion Goal seeking strategies to increase persistence and graduation rates in the United States (Obama, 2013). On July 21, 2011, Under Secretary of Education Martha Kanter, Assistant Secretary of Education Eduardo Ochoa, Senior Policy Advisor Rosemarie Nassif, and Deputy Assistant Director of Education Frank Chong presented on President Obama's 2020 College Completion Goal at the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (Obama, 2013). The presentation included some very interesting figures as they addressed meeting President Obama's college completion goal.

First, Kanter, Ochoa, Nassif, and Chong (2011) noted "only half of all undergraduates complete a college degree in six years" (p. 9). Furthermore, Kanter mentioned President Obama's message in 2010 to the Hispanic Chamber of Conference on Education. "Of the 30 fastest growing occupations in America, half require a Bachelor's degree or more. By 2016, four out of every 10 new jobs will require at

least some advanced education or training” (Kanter et al., 2011, p. 4). The fastest-growing occupations mentioned during the presentation were healthcare, STEM, education, community services, and managerial/professional office (Kanter et al., 2011).

Each year, assessment studies bring up questions regarding higher retention rates and stronger persistence to graduation in higher education. The freshmen year experience is the most critical in relation to persistence with research studies showing a 20 percent drop out rate after the first year (Lowther & Langley, 2005). At ODU, it has become a priority of the administration to determine what the institution can do to increase retention and persistence to degree, working to ultimately meet President Obama’s 2020 College Completion Goal. Although economic and academic factors play a role, it is believed that living on-campus during a freshman’s first year may also impact student retention. While administrators meet to discuss the role of various university departments in retention efforts, housing and residence life has strived to build programs that ensure first-year success of freshmen that live on campus. Showing that there is a difference between living on and living off campus during a student’s first year will further support the need for program funding that support the freshmen residential experience.

This research will also represent a significant contribution to how ODU can increase housing retention rates through programs such as the on-campus residential experience and determine what other institutions are doing to meet enrollment goals, such as a freshmen requirement to live on campus the first year. This study may also contribute to the awareness of why students who live on campus traditionally have a

higher retention rate. Leading to additional studies on programming in academics (living/learning community development), as well as personal development, there is the opportunity to partner with other departments, both academic and administrative, to enhance student preparedness for careers and life beyond college.

Studies have shown that freshmen who live on campus their first year and become part of learning communities that are strongly tied to academic programming have a higher GPA and persistence to degree than those who do not participate in such programs (Tinto, 1998; Baker & Pomerantz, 2001; Purdie, 2011). While ODU does not have traditional living/learning communities in the residential experience, some themed housing has been established to build a foundation that will hopefully lead to living/learning environments that include a strong academic commitment tied directly to courses in various disciplines. As data are analyzed there is the opportunity to further study the components of student success and how to develop strong living/learning environments for students to increase retention and success.

Limitations

This study is limited to Old Dominion University and the Department of Housing & Residence Life, which prevent the generalizing of results to other institutions. It should also be noted that limitations include only the area of housing and residence life and its specific effect on retention at the university. As the university builds a model of retention to meet current needs, housing and residence life, and the opportunities it offers, will be only one component in the model. Specific limitations include:

- Retention as it is specific to Old Dominion University and its mission and goals; only one institution, Old Dominion University (ODU) was studied,

- The student culture at Old Dominion University over the past six years may be a limitation due to the transition of the university from a traditional commuter institution to a residential campus,
- Data may exclude students who did not self-identify living on campus,
- Data reviewed and obtained are secondary from the Office of Institutional Research and include:
 - National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data and,
 - Transition to College Inventory (TCI) data,
- NSSE is a voluntary survey where participation is optional, which leads to limiting the population.

Assumptions

Assumptions of this study include several factors that look at academic and social components as opportunities to increase retention of residential students. Furthermore, assumptions may also include:

- Living on campus increases GPA,
- Living on campus increases community and academic involvement and results in higher retention rates and stronger persistence to graduation (Astin, 1973; Pascarella, 1984; Blimling, 1993; Tinto, 1993; Chickering & Kyle, 1999; Lowther & Langley, 2005),
- Students who live off campus the first year have a lower GPA and lower engagement in community and academics, resulting in a lower retention rate than resident students (Astin, 1973; Pascarella, 1984; Blimling, 1993; Tinto, 1993; Chickering & Kyle, 1999; Lowther & Langley, 2005),

- It was assumed that the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) information was collected on a voluntary basis, so not all full-time freshmen may have participated in the surveys,
- The Transition to College Inventory (TCI) data were considered more accurate in that the collection method was mandatory of all freshmen, living on and off campus, enrolled at ODU during the terms that data were collected
 - Banta (1996) cited ODU as an example “of an institution that uses assessment data to drive improvements in an area of particular concern, its persistence rates” (p. 1).
- It should also be noted that students may skip questions from the surveys which may/may not skew these in one or both of the assessments.

Procedures

Data were gathered from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment from NSSE and TCI assessments as well as the housing and residence life residential management database. Data used were from academic years 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12. Data were cleaned and organized based on self-selection of full-time freshmen claiming residence on-campus (living in on-campus residential housing owned by ODU) or full-time freshmen claiming residence off-campus (commuters living in off-campus housing not owned by ODU). To determine population size of data, enrollment figures for the terms studied were collected as guidelines in analyzing the data and determined percent of population. Data were loaded and analyzed using SPSS to carry out statistical analysis and answer the research questions.

Definition of Terms

Definitions are constantly shifting to meet current needs and analysis based on retention models as trends occur. Definitions for this study are current as of 2012 as related to retention and persistence as it has been noted in the research literature.

Definitions for housing and residence life are sometimes used interchangeably and are current as they are used in the discipline as of the date of this paper.

American College Test (ACT). A standardized test for high school achievement and college admissions.

Commuter student (non-residential student; off campus residential student). A student living at home with parents (within commuting distances) or residing in non-university owned housing.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2007) defines commuter students as “students whose place of residence while attending college is not in a campus residence hall or in a fraternity or sorority house” (Jiang, Anderson, Reid, & Toncar, 2007, p. 161). Residential students are defined as “those students who simply do not fit the referenced commuter definition” (Jiang, Anderson, Reid, & Toncar, 2007, p. 161).

In this particular study the researcher will consider freshmen residential student living as a factor in retention and persistence at Old Dominion University. Non-residential students will be referred to as “commuters” throughout this paper.

First-year student. A student in the first-year of a college or university program.

Freshman. A first-year student at a college or university program.

FYR. Freshmen year residential (student).

FYNR. Freshmen year non-residential (student).

GPA. Grade point average.

Living/Learning community. A term used to describe the living arrangement of a group of students who are in the same college, school, major, or curriculum to promote an environment that has an academic focus.

Residential student. A student living in university-owned housing.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). “Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning” (NSSE, 2013, N.P.).

Persistence. “a student who persists is one who continues to enroll at the institution after matriculation” (Habley, Bloom, & Robbins, 2012, p. 4).

Retention. “a measure of the rate at which institutions reduce friction that stands in the way of a student’s continued enrollment” (Habley et al., 2012, p. 9).

Self-selection. A bias that may occur based on students deciding for themselves if they are residential or commuters. This can occur when students who reside close to campus or a block or two away consider themselves “living on campus.”

Themed housing. A term used to describe living arrangements made by housing and residence life to meet the needs of a group of students who share similar interests either socially or academically but not considered to be a “living/learning community” by definition.

TCI. Transition to College Inventory (2013) (formerly the Old Dominion University Freshman survey).

...is a **noncognitive measure** designed to enhance the predictions of academic performance based only on cognitive (high school GPA, SAT scores) and/or demographic (gender, race, first generation) factors.

...is a **self-report** of attitudes, personality characteristics, and behaviors in high school along with predictions about performance and involvement in college. (p. 1)

...produces data for a **freshman class profile**. (p. 1)

...yields the **TCI Index** used for early identification of first year students at-risk for academic difficulty at the end of the first semester. (p. 1)

...generates **individualized TCI Advising Profiles** that provide both the **TCI Index** and the responses to all of the items that contribute to the **TCI Index** for each student. Academic advisors and/or counselors can then review the Profile with the student and make plans to remediate potential barriers to college success. (p. 1)

...was **completely revised in 2003** using a data set of four years (1999-2002) of TCI data ($N = 5684$). (p. 1)

(Pickering, Calliotte, Zerwas, & Macera, 2005)

Summary and Overview of Chapters

To summarize, it was expected that this study would provide answers to whether or not living on campus during the first year of college lends itself to increased retention and ultimately persistence to degree. From there further study will take place on student

attitude, and how specifically living on campus helps the development of the student socially and academically (i.e., student satisfaction for overall social and academic experience).

Chapter II provides a review of literature focused on retention and persistence to degree in higher education. Much of this literature explored focuses on the residential experience, a living-on campus component as a factor in institutional retention. Chapter III focuses on the methodology and procedures where data procedures were described that will be used to make determinations of living arrangement associated with retention and persistence.

Chapter IV presents the findings for the study and led to Chapter V, where a summary, conclusion, and recommendations are made based on these findings. Final recommendations will be made to the Housing & Residence Life leadership team to carry forward in meetings with university administrators.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A common focus in higher education today is on retention and persistence. In building retention models it is important for institutions to understand why students do or do not persist. In this study, the area of housing and residence life is considered as one component in the retention model which may have an impact on student retention and persistence at Old Dominion University. Research suggests that students living on-campus perform at a higher academic level than those living off campus which leads to higher retention (Blimling, 1993; Tinto, 1993; Chickering & Kytle, 1999; Lowther & Langley, 2005; Fowler & Boylan, 2010; Habley et al., 2012; Morrow & Ackermann, 2012). This chapter reviews literature on previous research and writings on retention and persistence in higher education. Included are several studies that look at living arrangement as a predictor of student success.

Defining Retention and Persistence

According to Habley et al. (2012), retention and persistence can be defined as “a student who remains in continuous full-time enrollment from the point of matriculation to the completion of the degree” (p. 3). Retention was first used in the early 1970s as a descriptor for college enrollment patterns. However, over the past twenty years retention has become a more “vexing measurement in higher education” (Habley et al., 2012, p. 3). Habley et al. also suggested that the dictionary defines retention as “holding or continuing to hold in one’s possession” (2012, p. 13). Attrition, an antonym of retention, is defined as “the condition of being worn down or ground down by friction” (Habley et al., 2012, p. 13). Finally, Habley et al. (2012) defined retention from these two definitions

as “a measure of the rate at which institutions reduce friction that stands in the way of a student’s continued enrollment” (p. 9).

Persistence can be defined as “a student who continues to enroll at the institution after matriculation” (Habley et al., 2012, p. 4). For the purpose of this study the definition will be of one who continues to enroll at the institution after matriculation as a residential student, specifically at Old Dominion University.

It should be noted that persistence could also be described as students who persist elsewhere, as well as those who leave with no intention of returning to higher education. Habley et al. (2012) also define “graduation/completion/persistence to degree” as interchangeable terms that express “the rate or percentage of students who complete a degree within a specified time period” (p. 9).

Living On Campus as a Factor that Impacts Retention and Persistence

Since the 1970s retention and persistence has been a topic of discussion and why students stay or leave their academic careers.

Perhaps the most striking thing about these diverse studies is the consistency in the results. Whatever the institution, whatever the group, whatever the data, whatever the methods of analysis, the findings are the same....Students who live at home, in comparison with those who live in college dormitories, are less fully involved in academic activities, in extracurricular activities, and in social activities with other students. Their degree aspirations diminish and they become less committed to a variety of long range goals....Their satisfaction with college decreases, and they become less likely to return. (Chickering & Kyle, 1999, p. 110)

In 1973, Astin suggested that “dormitory residents” were more likely to complete a bachelor’s degree in four years than commuters. During this period, however, it was unclear the effects of socioeconomic status and high school success on degree completion (Lowther & Langley, 2005). Furthermore, Pascarella (1984) suggested living on campus had an impact on academic achievement and degree completion. Twenty years later in 1991, Chickering and Kytle referenced Pascarella and Terenzini’s findings that,

Living on campus (versus commuting to college) is perhaps the single most consistent within-college determinant of impact....Residential living is positively, if modestly, linked to increases in aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual values; a liberalizing of social, political, and religious values and attitudes; increases in self-concept, intellectual orientation, autonomy, and independence; gains in tolerance, empathy, and ability to relate to others; persistence in college; and bachelor’s degree attainment. (Chickering & Kytle, 1999, p. 110)

Residential students benefit from the opportunity to build campus relationships. In 1974, Chickering stated that the relationships people build might be the most powerful influences on individual development (Chickering, 1974). Students interact with peers, campus organizations, faculty, staff, and other groups constantly while residing on campus. These interactions stimulate a student’s ability to be creative, infuse values and beliefs, as well as provide support during stressful periods of time when students may be experiencing personal and/or academic challenges.

In addition, students residing on campus have opportunities to excel academically by participating in living/learning communities that pair their living arrangements with others students who share the same curriculum (or area) of study (e.g., health sciences,

engineering, sciences). There is evidence that living/learning communities are effective in addressing several different issues including student retention and faculty revitalization through curricular coherence (Smith, MacGregor, Matthews, & Gabelnick, 2004).

There is still a consideration in the importance of living on campus and its relationship with retention and persistence. As Chickering and Kytle (1999) mentioned, challenges exist including:

- Changing student characteristics
- More complex societal needs
- Reduced support and pressures for accountability
- Communication and information technologies
- Unclear purposes

These challenges present a moving target that change with every new generation entering higher education. In 2013 students and universities still face the challenges living in a post 911 society and culture where diversity, the dynamics of higher education, and America's economy continue to change with each new generation. Statistics indicate that today, one out of every three students do not return the second year (Habley et al., 2012). Furthermore, Tinto (1993) suggested that 40% of all college students "will never earn a degree anywhere, at anytime in their lives" and these numbers have not changed since Tinto first reported in 1993 (Habley et al., 2012, p. xiii). In 1996, Fidler and Moore suggested that students living on campus who participate in "freshmen seminars" are more likely to return. Pike et al. (1997) supports this when it was suggested that an increase in persistence might be indirectly related to "positive learning environments" (Lowther & Langley, 2005).

Programming and Retention

In 2005, Lowther and Langley presented findings of a study looking at a large public institution considering the construction of new on-campus housing and requiring all first-year students to live on campus. The primary goal was to increase the number of students returning their second year.

The study consisted of a population of incoming freshmen for years 2000 through 2003, which totaled 15,466 students. Of the 15,466, on-campus housing students represented 45.6 percent of the campus population. Lowther and Langley (2005) noted that there was a wide “divergent pattern” of males vs. females with 26% of the population male and 63.4% female. Taking gender into consideration the findings suggested that females living on-campus tended to return at a higher rate than female commuter students. On the other hand males living on-campus returned at a “lower than expected rate” (Lowther & Langley, 2005). Greek housing affiliation suggested a stronger retention rate with the male population showing a stronger retention rate when affiliated with a fraternity. Lowther and Langley concluded that residential facilities alone are not enough to increase retention; rather strong academic and social programming is needed to increase retention and persistence.

Residential Students Versus Commuters

By the late 1990s, commuter students began to change their attitudes on academics showing more interest in developing themselves in the workforce. In 1997 the University of Buffalo conducted a study of first-time, full-time freshmen and found that student motivation was based on their living arrangement (Jiang et al., 2007). Commuter students typically worked full-time and chose the university based on low tuition.

Commuters were also more interested in academics to develop security and power in the workforce. Residential students, on the other hand, were interested in the academic experience as well as cultural and social development (Jiang et al., 2007).

In 2007, Jiang et al. released findings in a research study measuring meaningful differences in perceptions and evaluations between residential versus commuter students. The study consisted of a sample population at a medium-sized, urban, public university in the Midwest. The survey of enrollment, retention, and student satisfaction, consisted of 139 items assessing student perceptions of their college experience. The instrument was given to selected sociology and anthropology seniors enrolled in their capstone course in Social Research. Nine percent (1,110) of the population (12,296 undergraduate and graduate students) enrolled during the 2005 fall term participated.

The results of this study suggested that there are significant differences between the two groups with overall findings suggesting that satisfaction of both groups were significantly below their importance ratings on the characteristics presented. This shows that neither of the groups is satisfied with their college experience, leading to a direct connection with retention and persistence.

Jiang et al. (2007) found that residential and commuter students rated the overall quality of education, cost of tuition, and campus safety as important considerations. The residential sample population rated academic programs, NCAA athletics, financial aid opportunities, and leadership opportunities significantly higher than commuter students. Commuter students rated the importance of good value and a good job following graduation significantly higher than residential students. It is clear from this study that there are significant differences between residential and commuter students in their

perceptions and assessment of their academic choices. While residential students preferred the “entire college package” to include athletics and social experiences, commuter students were most concerned with getting a good job (Jiang et al., 2007). Jiang et al. concluded “special challenges face those schools with relatively large commuter populations” (p. 165). In this study the differences between importance and satisfaction reveals that neither group is satisfied with their experience suggesting that the institution should take steps to improve the experiences of both residential and commuter populations to meet their needs. In 2009, Boylan recommended that institutions gather data on a student’s academic and social experience to evaluate what services best meet the needs of an institution’s population (Fowler & Boylan, 2010). There have been many studies on retention and persistence, yet there remains varied belief that living on campus has significant, positive, direct effects on retention and persistence (Jiang et al., 2007).

Summary

Due to the limitations related to retention, it is hard to pinpoint one attribute or cause for retention numbers and if in fact living arrangement has a direct or indirect impact. The traditional retention framework does not consider the variety of institutional types that make up higher education in America. Each institution has its own mission, admissions criteria, and academic ability of student enrolled, making it difficult to find an answer for retention that fits one particular mold or serves all institutions of higher education and their associated needs for retention (Habley et al., 2012).

Tinto (1993) stressed the importance that each institution, despite the abundance of data from research, assess itself for attributes that relate directly to their mission and retention goals. Habley et al. (2012) noted that Tinto (1993) proposed in his model “the

stronger the individual's level of social and academic integration, the greater his or her subsequent commitment to the institution and to the goal of college graduation" (p. 21). Therefore, the institution must direct efforts to look at what opportunities are offered to students that increase social and academic engagement.

Research has suggested that a student's sense of belonging is directly related to "academic progress, academic achievement, and social acceptance" (Morrow & Ackermann, 2012, p. 484). In 2003, Abdelis-Santiago assessed the differences between residential and commuter students and their social activity finding no noticeable differences (Jiang et al., 2007). However, a more "definitive finding" of this study was that a student who was satisfied with their institution, often felt more of a sense of belonging. In addition, there was a correlation between the student's involvement and sense of belonging based on their interactions with peers and faculty regardless of status as commuter or resident (Jiang et al., 2007). Furthermore, it has also been found that "a student's relationship with the academic advisor and faculty can be the single biggest factor in increasing student retention" (Fowler & Boylan, 2010, p. 3).

It is clear that the landscape of higher education has changed over the past 40 years, and it continues to change as our society and economy change in America. The literature shows that there are many factors that lead to student satisfaction and retention/persistence, and it changes as generations of students change. Research has shown differences in the residential and commuter populations indicating a need to tailor programs that meet the needs of both populations to meet retention and persistence goals. Institutions must look internally for the factors that affect retention and persistence as it relates to their individual goals and mission. As institutions build retention models based

on specific student population, it is important that opportunities are developed that meet the needs of both the residential and commuter student populations.

Chapter III focuses on the population studied at Old Dominion University for the academic years 2006-2011. Data were extracted from the TCI and NSSE to answer the research goals/questions as outlined in Chapter I. Furthermore, the TCI and NSSE instruments are also discussed in further detail to explain how the population was surveyed, and what other limitations exist based on respondent demographics. With the intention that living arrangement as a predictor of academic success of full-time freshmen students at ODU, the population was also analyzed based on self-selection of on-campus/off-campus demographics. Understanding the populations surveyed, the instruments used, and how the data can be organized and analyzed was found to be a key indicator in understanding the specific population at Old Dominion University.

CHAPTER III

METHODS & PROCEDURES

The goal of this study was to identify relationships between freshmen living on campus their first year and their academic success at Old Dominion University. Using quantitative methods, data were analyzed to determine the relationship between freshmen living arrangement as a predictor of academic success at Old Dominion University. Specifically do freshmen living on campus their first year, versus freshmen living off campus their first year, have a higher retention and persistence rate? This chapter is organized by describing first, the population studied, second the method of data collection, third, the instrument design, fourth, the statistical analysis of data, and finally a summary.

Research questions for this study consisted of:

RQ₁: What is the GPA of residential compared to non-residential freshmen (commuters) at the end of the first year?

RQ₂: What is the retention rate for ODU residential freshmen versus non-residential freshmen (commuters) from first-year to second-year?

Subjects and Location of Study

The researcher chose a population of incoming freshmen as well as sophomore level students at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, for the years 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-2011, and 2011-12. The data consisted of the population surveyed which resulted in N =14,461. Instead of a sample, the entire population was studied using these six years of data for freshmen entering ODU. In addition, second year (sophomore) data were pulled and included in the database to

determine sophomores returning to on-campus housing for their second year. The database allowed for a complete list of participants to be imported for statistical analysis for both freshmen and sophomores.

Method of Data Collection

Method of data collection was the use of existing data collected through the Transition to College Inventory (TCI) obtained from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at ODU. The TCI was designed as a noncognitive measurement to “enhance the predictions of academic performance and retention” (Pickering et al., 2005) In addition, data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and Housing and Residence Life database were used for this study.

Instruments Used

The TCI is a self-reporting tool measuring attitudes, personality characteristics, and behaviors predicting performance and involvement in college. It yields a highly descriptive profile of first year students to identify at-risk students who may have academic difficulty at the end of the first semester. In 2003, the TCI was revised using a data set of four years (1999-2002) of TCI data (N = 5684). In 2004-05 it was pilot tested with four additional institutions (N = 2734) which resulted in a revised TCI index that enhanced the ability to identify at-risk students at various types of four-year institutions (Pickering et al., 2005)

The TCI has been assessed for effectiveness in several different ways (validity and reliability). Most importantly, the TCI was tested for how well it performs in identifying students at risk for academic difficulty and subsequent attrition. Students are considered low risk at scores of 0-5, above average risk at scores of 6-8, and high-risk at

scores of 9 or greater (Pickering et al., 2005). Research-based data for ODU showed 38% of the high-risk first-year students had academic difficulty after their first semester compared to 19% of the low risk group. In addition, 30% of the high-risk group did not return as sophomores versus 19% of the low risk group. Only 32% of the high-risk group graduated in 6 years with 50% of the low risk group graduating in 6 years (Pickering et al., 2005). Validation using data from other institutions revealed 43% of high-risk students in academic difficulty at the end of the first semester compared to 13% of the low risk group (Pickering et al., 2005).

The TCI factor analysis revealed nine factors with five (*) “significantly related to academic performance at the end of the first semester” (Pickering et al., p. 2). These factors include:

- College involvement
- Influences on college choice
- Student role commitment*
- Athletic orientation*
- Personal/Academic concerns
- Self-confidence*
- Institutional commitment
- Socializing orientation*
- Independent activity focus*

(Pickering et al., 2005)

The TCI instrument consisted of a 13-page questionnaire beginning with the collection of student biographical information (see Appendix A).

The NSSE instrument was developed in 1998 supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts. In the spring of 2000, 275 colleges and universities participated in the “inaugural launch” (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2013b). The instrument was developed based on college ranking systems used by publications such as *U.S. News and World Report* as a tool to report valuable information on institutional quality (the undergraduate student experience). It is administered to undergraduate students (freshmen and senior-level) who have attended the institution for two years, about their experiences in academics such as classroom activities and faculty practices. In addition, the NSSE design team developed three general criteria in choosing content for the tool including:

1. Is the item arguably related to student outcomes as shown by research?;
2. Is the item useful to prospective students in choosing a college?; and
3. Is the item straightforward enough for its results to be readily interpretable by a lay audience with a minimum of analysis?

(National Survey of Student Engagement, 2013b).

In addition, student behavior and perceptions are measured by questions falling into three broad categories including: (1) institutional actions and requirements (curriculum and faculty behavior); (2) student behavior (time spent inside and outside the classroom); and (3) student reactions to college (student perceptions about the quality of education and experiences). The survey was designed to ensure a high response rate to give institutions enough information on the kinds of improvements to be made and where resources should be invested. NSSE also provides a component allowing peer institutions

the ability to compare and identify best practices (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2013b).

These data were used to extract first-year to second year returners who live off-campus in looking at the breakdown in retention rates of residential freshmen versus non-residential freshmen from first-year to second-year. Questions used for this study are included in Appendix B.

Finally, the Housing & Residence Life database was used to extract students returning to on-campus housing from freshman to sophomore years. These data were also used to look at the breakdown in retention rates of residential freshmen versus non-residential freshmen from first-year to second-year.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS with on-campus residential students coded as “1=FYR” (first year resident) and off-campus student coded as “2-FYNR”. The study consisted of a three-part research design employing two methodologies: ANOVA and Chi-Square. The ANOVA is used to compare *two groups of scores*, “one group of scores from one group or people and a second group of scores from an entirely separate group of people” (Aron et al., 2013, p. 316). The chi-square test (aka the Pearson chi-square) is used for a *nominal variable* where scores represent frequencies (how many of the observations fall into different categories) (Aron et al., 2013, pp. 440-441). In this study the chi-square test for goodness of fit involved levels of a single nominal variable.

First, an ANOVA was used to describe the relationship between GPA, the dependent variable, and the independent variable of living arrangement at two

levels, living on campus the first year and living off campus the first year (RQ₁). Secondly, the chi-square goodness of fit was used to determine how well the observed breakdown of people fit the expected breakdown, that is, the retention rate of residential freshmen and non-residential freshmen from first-year to second-year (RQ₂).

Summary

Chapter III discussed the methods and procedures used to gather and analyze data for this study. The population consisted of Old Dominion University incoming freshmen as well as returning students to determine living arrangements of first-year students as a predictor of retention and persistence. Using quantitative research methods, the goal of this study was to identify relationships between freshmen living on campus their first year and academic success at Old Dominion University. The TCI is a valid and reliable instrument offering data from Old Dominion University used to study incoming freshmen for retention and persistence based on living arrangement. Using statistical methods of independent t-tests and linear correlation, data revealed information on retention and persistence based on living arrangement of on-campus freshmen residents versus off-campus freshmen residents. Chapter IV will offer the findings of the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Chapter IV presents the data collected for this research study. The problem addressed in this study concerned retention and success rates at Old Dominion University based on first-year living arrangement. Data were collected for a six-year period 2006-2012 using NSSE and TCI. Data were analyzed using SPSS to determine GPA (success) for on-campus versus off-campus freshmen over a six-year period as well as freshman living arrangement from first year to second year. This chapter contains the findings for Research Question 1 and 2, GPA of residential students versus non-residential students and housing retention rate from freshmen to sophomore year respectively.

Research Question 1 (RQ₁): Student GPA

Research Question 1 asked for the GPA of residential freshmen compared to non-residential freshmen (commuters) for the six-year period 2006-2012. Through statistical analysis findings showed for the six-year period ($n=14461$), a GPA of 2.81 for freshmen was earned regardless of living arrangement ($M = 2.81$, $SD = .87$). When the ANOVA was conducted for each year by living arrangement, off-campus students had higher GPAs overall than their on-campus counterparts (See Table 1). When each academic year was analyzed, only years 2009-10 and 2010-11 showed a significant difference between on-campus and off-campus freshmen. In 2009-10, off-campus freshmen showed a significantly higher mean GPA of 3.05 versus 2.87 for on-campus at the .001 level of significance [$F(1, 1954) = 21.62$, $p < .001$]. In 2010-11, off-campus freshmen showed a significantly higher mean GPA of 3.02 versus 2.88 for on-campus at the .001 level of significant [$F(1, 2139) = 14.65$, $p < .001$]. Although off-campus students had higher GPAs

than on-campus students for the other years in the study, the ANOVA reported no significant difference in mean GPA between groups. It should be noted that transfer students were purposefully not reported with this data thus not included in the data analyzed.

Table 1

GPA by Year and Living Arrangement

Year	Off-Campus		On-Campus		Overall
	n	M	n	M	
2006	536	2.55	1062	2.71	2.66
2007	522	2.94	1085	2.88	2.90
2008	568	2.95	1250	2.91	2.93
2009	537	3.05	1419	2.87	2.92
2010	553	3.02	1588	2.88	2.92
2011	656	2.77	1952	2.72	2.73
2012	661	2.75	2072	2.66	2.68

Research Question 2 (RQ₂): Housing Retention

Research Question 2 asked about on-campus housing retention from freshmen to sophomore year. Statistical analysis using the Chi-square analysis revealed findings that indicated a housing retention percentage for each year. Those not returning for their sophomore year either stayed at the university and moved off-campus or withdrew from the university. For each year, the Chi-square was greater than the Chi-square at the .05 level of significance showing that it is too unlikely the mismatch of observed and expected could have been presented if we had equal numbers of on-campus and off-campus students. There is a significantly different proportion of on-campus versus off-campus students for the years studied. The analysis shows that the retention rate for students returning to on-campus housing their first year increased over the period 2006/07-2009/10 at which point a decline was noted beginning in 2010/11 (See Table 2).

Table 2

Housing Retention from First-year to Second-year

Year	n	Percentage of On-Campus Freshmen Returning to Housing Sophomore Year
2006/07	1062/492	46%
2007/08	1085/662	61%
2008/09	1250/860	69%
2009/10	1419/973	69%
2010/11	1588/1006	63%
2011/12	1952/1061	54%
2012/13	2072/TBD*	TBD

*NOTE: 2013 numbers will be available mid Fall 2013.

Summary

Data were collected for academic years 2006/07 through 2012/2013 to answer the research questions developed for this study. Data were analyzed to determine GPA of off-campus versus on-campus freshmen students to see if there was a relationship of GPA (success) to whether or not students resided on-campus their first year.

Data were also analyzed for housing retention over a six-year period. Findings revealed that on-campus housing retention from first-year (freshman) to second-year (sophomore) actually increased from 46% to approximately 69% over the six-year period, until 2010-11 at which time it started to decline with 2011-12 showing a 54% retention rate. A summary, conclusions, and recommendations based on this data collected are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the research project providing an overview of the research goals, as well as the methods and procedures used to achieve these goals. The researcher will answer the research questions and present conclusions based on the findings. The researcher will also offer recommendations based on the conclusions of this study and suggest topics for future study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine success of first-year students based on living arrangement (on-campus versus off-campus). Secondly, the study also investigated housing retention from first-year to second-year, that is to say what percentage of freshmen return to residential housing their sophomore year. These proposed transitioned into this study's research questions:

- RQ1: What is the GPA of residential compared to non-residential freshmen (commuters) at the end of the first year?
- RQ2: What is the retention rate for ODU residential freshmen versus non-residential freshmen (commuters) from first-year to second-year?

This study was limited to Old Dominion University and the Department of Housing & Residence Life, which prevent the generalizing of results to other institutions. It should also be noted that limitations include only the area of housing and residence life and its specific effect on retention at the university. Other limitations include the student culture at Old Dominion University, since over the past six years has been a period which ODU has seen a transition from a commuter institution to a residential campus.

Assumptions of this study included several factors that looked at academic and social components as opportunities to increase retention of residential students. Assumptions also included (1) living on campus increases GPA; (2) living on campus increases community and academic involvement which results in higher retention rates and ultimately stronger persistence to graduation (Astin, 1973; Pascarella, 1984; Blimling, 1993; Tinto, 1993; Chickering & Kyle, 1999; Lowther & Langley, 2005); and (3) students who live off campus the first year have a lower GPA and lower engagement in community and academics resulting in a lower retention rate than resident students (Astin, 1973; Pascarella, 1984; Blimling, 1993; Tinto, 1993; Chickering & Kyle, 1999; Lowther & Langley, 2005).

Methods of data collection used existing Old Dominion University data from the Transition to College Inventory (TCI) obtained from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at ODU. Also used were data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Housing and Residence Life database.

Review of literature showed that there are many factors that led to student satisfaction and retention/persistence, and it changes as generations of students change. Research has shown differences in the residential and commuter populations indicating a need to tailor programs that meet the needs of both populations to meet retention and persistence goals.

Conclusions

Research Question 1 asked for the GPA of residential freshmen compared to non-residential freshmen (commuters) for the six-year period 2006-2012. Through statistical analysis findings showed for the six-year period (n=14461), a GPA of 2.81 for freshmen

was earned regardless of living arrangement ($M = 2.81$, $SD = .87$). When the ANOVA was conducted for each year by living arrangement, off-campus students had higher GPAs overall than their on-campus counterparts.

All years with the exception of 2006 revealed that off-campus students earned a higher mean GPA than on-campus students. The year 2006 reported that on-campus students had a mean GPA of 2.71 versus off-campus which had a mean GPA of 2.54. Overall, there is also a decline in GPA each year beginning with 2008-09 where the mean GPA of freshmen, regardless of living arrangement, shows a steady decline from 2.93 to 2.68 in 2012. A decline within each group is also noted as well. The mean GPA in the first year of this study (2006), was 2.66 and it showed a steady increase through 2008-09. Following 2008-09, a steady decline to current year begins in 2009-10. As the number of on-campus residents has increased, GPA has decreased for on-campus freshmen over the six year period. In conclusion, this study indicated that off-campus students had consistently higher GPA's than on-campus students their first year.

Research Question 2 asked about on-campus housing retention from freshmen to sophomore year. Statistical analysis using the Chi-square analysis revealed findings that indicated a housing retention percentage for each year. Findings showed that retention in 2006/07 was 46%, where of the 1,062 freshmen living on campus in fall 2007, only 492 remained on campus their second year. The data showed that the retention rate indicated a steady increase to 69% through 2009/10 at which time it began to decrease with a 54% retention rate in 2011/12. In conclusion, this study indicated that there was a significant increase in retention, as high as 69%, over a four-year period; however a significant decline was noted in 2011/12. This decline may, or may not, be due to priority housing

assignments where housing and residence life has been mandated to ensure a specific number of freshman spaces which reduces the number of spaces available for other student classes. Due to the mandate from administration, Housing & Residence Life has focused on freshmen housing numbers which reduces the number of spaces available for sophomores. This may be, or may not be, the reason why Old Dominion University is losing some sophomores returning to housing. Students may wish to return but cannot return to university housing due to the overwhelming number of freshmen spaces required to meet the administration's mandated numbers.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following research and actions are recommended:

- Continue to collect data and compare housing retention for the next 5 years;
- Continue to collect data and compare population GPAs for the next 5 years;
- Conduct focus groups/surveys in the residence halls to determine where tutoring and study groups can be developed and in what areas of study it may be most needed;
- Conduct an analysis of staffing patterns in the freshmen halls to determine needs and where additional staff could be available to assist students academically;
- In collaboration with academic colleges and faculty, develop more academic programming in the freshmen residence halls to help on-campus students improve their GPAs the first year;

- Analyze why GPAs may be declining for off-campus students as well by working with academic colleges and studying trends which may be associated with this decline;
- Analyze the room assignment process to see why the percentage of freshmen returning as sophomores has decreased over the past two years (is it due to the incoming freshmen assignment process and mandated numbers?). Are sophomores lost and not returning to housing by no fault of their own, they may wish to return but the university cannot house the entire sophomore population requesting to return because numbers of “required” freshmen spaces have increased.
- Conduct a survey of freshmen who are registered to return for their sophomore year asking if they plan to return to campus housing, and if not, why they do not plan to return.

Based on the literature review and previous research it would be expected that on-campus students would have higher GPAs and therefore have higher success rates than their off-campus counterparts. However, as the findings show, this is not the case at ODU. There needs to be a comprehensive overview of the on-campus residential experience and how ODU can improve freshmen GPAs as well as housing retention. As research shows, strong athletic and academic programs typically attract students to a particular institution. As ODU continues to build its athletic programs, it must also look at its academic programs to ensure the success of its students both on and off campus.

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APPENDIX A

2008 Transition to College Inventory - Mid-Year

Page 1

First -Year Students Edition

Developed by

James A. Calliotte, PhD

J. Worth Pickering, EdD

Enter your University Identification Number (UIN):

Please make sure this is your correct UIN or we will not be able to update your records.

{Enter text answer}

[00]

All information on the TCI will be held in the strictest confidence on secure computers with password protection. Only

data on first year students as a group will be reported. Your name and University identification number (UIN) are

required in order to create a record of your completed assessment. Your name and UIN will be used to combined your

TCI results with other institutional data about you (e.g., high school GPA, SAT / ACT scores). With your permission

these data will be released to your Academic Advisor who will assist you with interpreting your results. Any immediate

questions about the TCI can be directed to assess@odu.edu.

We would strongly encourage you to release this information to your academic advisor so that she or he may discuss

the results with you and assist you in resolving any potential problems that could interfere with your academic success

during your first year.

Please answer this survey as honestly and accurately as possible

May we release your results to your Academic Advisor?

{Choose one}

Yes

No

First Name

{Enter text answer}

[]

Last Name

{Enter text answer}

[]

Gender

{Choose one}

Female

Male

Please enter you MidasID

(the username you entered to log-on to Blackboard):

{Enter text answer}

By checking this box, you are saying that you have read the information above, or had it read to you, and that you agree to release the results to your advisor.

{Choose if appropriate}

{Enter text answer}

Page 2

Deciding to Attend College

The purpose of this section is to determine the reasons you chose to attend college after high school.

Using the following scale, please indicate how important each of the following reasons was in your decision to go to college.

To be able to get a better job

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To broaden my perspectives

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To get away from home

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To be able to make more money

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To learn more things which interest me

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To attain feelings of accomplishment and self-confidence

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To develop and use my athletic skills

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To prepare myself for graduate or professional school

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To participate in college social life

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

To develop interpersonal skills

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

Selected items on the Transition to College Inventory were adapted or adopted from the Freshman Survey conducted by the Higher Educational Research institute at UCLA. Used with permission (<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/cirpoverview.php>).

Page 3

Choosing This College

In this section we are interested in finding out how and why you chose to attend this particular college.

Please rate the degree of importance you would attach to each of the following items according to the following scale.

Parents

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

High School counselor or teacher

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

Talking with an admissions representative on campus

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

High school visits by the Admissions Staff

{Choose one}

Very Important

Somewhat Important

Not Important

This college's students who are friends or acquaintances

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

A faculty member(s) from this college

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

This college's recruitment publications

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Open House/ campus visitation day

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

This college's good academic reputation

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

I was offered financial aid

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Cultural diversity

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

This college's good social reputation

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Availability of my chosen major

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

I was not accepted by my higher choice college(s)

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

This college's attractive location

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

This college's graduates get good jobs

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Cost of attending this college

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Opportunity to work part-time

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Opportunity to participate in varsity athletics

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

The appearance of the campus

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Availability of extracurricular activities

{Choose one}

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

Page 4

High School Experiences

In this section, we would like to learn more about your experiences during your LAST YEAR in high school.

First, how much time did you spend in each of the following activities during the average week in your LAST YEAR of high school?

Studying or doing homework

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Socializing with friends

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Talking with teachers outside of class

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Participating in organized sports

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Exercising on my own

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Partying

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Working for pay

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Participating in organized clubs and groups

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Watching TV

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Playing computer/video games

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Using the internet

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Doing hobbies

{Choose one}

- 0 Hours
- 1-5 Hours
- 6-15 Hours
- 16-20 Hours
- Over 20 Hours

Page 5

High School Experiences

Now, please indicate how frequently you had each of the following experiences during your LAST YEAR in high school according to the following scale.

Failed to complete a homework assignment on time

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Drank alcoholic beverages

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Had difficulty concentrating on assignments

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Made careless mistakes on tests

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Felt overwhelmed by all I had to do

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Was too bored to study

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Felt depressed

{Choose one}

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never

Abilities and Traits

In this section, we are interested in learning more about how you would rate yourself on various abilities and traits.

Please rate yourself on each of the following abilities or traits compared to the average person your age according to the following scale.

General academic ability

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Mathematical ability

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Reading comprehension

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Study skills

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Time management skills

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Writing ability*{Choose one}*

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Computer skills*{Choose one}*

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Drive to achieve*{Choose one}*

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Popularity with the opposite sex*{Choose one}*

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Popularity with the same sex*{Choose one}*

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Leadership ability*{Choose one}*

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Physical health

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Self confidence

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Interpersonal communication skills

{Choose one}

- Top 10 %
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average
- Lowest 10%

Page 7

Attitudes About Being a College Student

Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements about being a college student.

It is important to me to be a good student

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I expect to work hard at studying in college

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am committed to being an active participant in my college studies

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I will be proud to do well academically in college

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I want others to see me as an effective student in college

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I admire people who are good students

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I find learning to be fulfilling

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I will allow sufficient time for studying in college

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I see myself continuing my education in some way throughout my entire life

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I feel really motivated to be successful in my college career

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I don't seem to get going on anything important

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I don't seem to have the drive to get my work done.

{Choose one}

- Strongly Agree
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**Above item contributed by Dr. Stephen Robbins, ACT. Used with permission.
[Robbins, S. and Patton, M. (1985). Self-Psychology and Career Development:
Construction of the Superiority and
Goal Instability Scales. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 32, 221-231.]**

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Predictions About Academic Success

In this section, we are interested in your predictions about how successful you will be in your career at this college.

Please select the best answer to each question

Nationally, about 50% of college students typically leave before receiving a degree.

If this should happen to you,

which of the following do you think would be the MOST LIKELY cause?

{Choose one}

- I am absolutely certain that I will obtain a degree
- To accept a good job
- To enter military service
- It would cost more than my family could afford
- To get married
- Disinterested in study
- Lack of academic ability
- Inefficient reading or other study skills

Please check the one description below that you feel best represents your career plans at this time.

{Choose one}

- I have NOT made a career choice at this time and do not feel particularly concerned or worried about it.
- I have NOT made a career choice and I am concerned about it. I would like to make a decision soon and need some assistance doing so.
- I have chosen a career and although I have not investigated it or other career alternatives thoroughly, I think I would like it.
- I have investigated a number of careers and have selected one. I know quite a lot about this career including the kinds of training or education required and the outlook for jobs in the future.

Above item contributed by Dr. Willian Sedlacek, University of Maryland. Used with permission.

[Sedlacek, W. (2005). Beyond the Big Test: Noncognitive Assessment in Higher Education. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, p. 180).

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How great are the chances that the following situations will happen to you?

Graduate with honors

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Miss more than one class per week

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Develop a good relationship with at least one faculty member or an advisor

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Earn at least a "B" average

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Study with other students

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Fail one or more courses

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Find my courses boring

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Receive emotional support from my family if I experience problems in college

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Complete a bachelor's degree at this college

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

If needed, seek assistance for personal, career, or academic problems from the appropriate office on campus

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Be placed on academic probation

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Drop out of college temporarily

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Drop out of college permanently

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Transfer to another college at the end of my freshman year

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Transfer to another college sometime in the future

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Return for the fall semester of my sophomore year

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Be satisfied with this college

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Have serious disagreements with my family regarding my personal, social, academic, or career decisions

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Predictions About Academic Success

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Predictions About Involvement With This College

In this section, we are interested in your estimates about how involved you might be in various activities at this institution in addition to your courses.

During your freshman year, how often do you expect to:

Use the library as a place to study and do research for your classes?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Talk with faculty informally outside of class?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Think about course material outside of class and/or discuss it with other students?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Participate in cultural events (art, music, theater) on campus?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Use the student center as a place to eat and/or socialize with friends?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Use campus athletic facilities for individual or group recreational activities?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Participate in campus clubs and organizations?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally

- Often
- Very Often

Read articles or books or have conversations with others on campus that will help you to learn more about yourself?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Make friends with students who are different from you (age, race, culture, etc.) ?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Have serious discussions with students whose beliefs and opinions are different from yours?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Use what you learn in classes in your outside life?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

Actively participate in your classes?

{Choose one}

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

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How great are the chances that the following situations will happen to you?

Work full-time while attending college

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Work part-time while attending college

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Do volunteer work

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Establish some close friendships with students I meet during my freshman year

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Be elected an officer in an organization

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Participate in varsity sports

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Feel overwhelmed occasionally by all I have to do

{Choose one}

- Very Good Chance
- Some Chance
- No Chance

Predictions About Academic Success

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Making a College Choice

When it came to choosing among all of the colleges to which you were accepted, what choice was this institution?

{Choose one}

- First choice
- Second choice
- Third choice
- Lower than third choice

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**Thank you for your time and effort in completing the Transition to College Inventory
Good luck to you during your first year at Old Dominion University!**

IMPORTANT: Be sure to click the "Finish" button below to submit your responses

APPENDIX B



The College Student Report



Contact Us

FAQs

Save and Exit

National Survey of Student Engagement

What it's about—

You are invited to participate in a research study about your college experiences. The information from this National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is used by faculty and administrators at your institution and by other higher education leaders to improve the collegiate experiences of undergrads. Study participants are primarily first-year and senior students selected from the bachelor's degree-seeking students at your institution.

Students from hundreds of other colleges and universities are also being asked these same questions—about how they spend their free time, what they feel they have gained from classes, and their interaction with faculty and other students. Filling out the questionnaire takes about 15 minutes. Your participation is completely voluntary. Declining participation or leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

Things you should know—

This survey is conducted on behalf of your institution by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research; we will send your identified responses to your school for institutional assessment. Your school and the Center will make every effort to keep your responses confidential, although we cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. No information associated with your name will ever be released publicly, but personally identifiable survey responses may be inspected by university and government organizations when required by law.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the National Survey of Student Engagement at nse@indiana.edu or by calling 812-856-5824.

For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information or offer input, contact the IUB Human Subjects Office, 530 E Kirkwood Ave, Carmichael Center, L03, Bloomington IN 47408, 812-855-4242 or by e-mail at iub_hsc@indiana.edu.

On to the survey—

If you have read this form and agree to take part in this survey, click the "Proceed to the survey" button.

Proceed to the survey

I do not wish to participate

Print this page

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