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A Study to Determine the Perceptions of Marketing Education Students at Old Dominion University Toward Respective Programs and Curriculums Offered

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**A STUDY TO DETERMINE
THE PERCEPTIONS OF MARKETING
EDUCATION STUDENTS AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
TOWARD RESPECTIVE PROGRAMS
AND CURRICULUMS OFFERED**

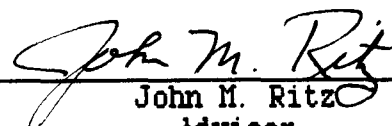
**A RESEARCH PROJECT
PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION**

**By
Michele Gregoire
August, 1990**


This research paper was prepared by Michele R. Gregoire under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in VTE 636, Problems in Education. The report was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education.

APPROVED BY:



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Date 8-1-90



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Date 8-1-90

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page	
Acknowledgements	I	
List of Tables	III	
 CHAPTER		
I. INTRODUCTION		
A. Statement of the Problem	1	
B. Research Goals	2	
C. Background and Significance	2	
D. Limitations	4	
E. Assumptions	5	
F. Procedures	5	
G. Definitions of Terms	5	
H. Summary	6	
 II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE		
A. Selected Curriculum Content	7	
B. Marketing Education program at Old Dominion University	9	
C. Focus Groups	11	
D. Summary	12	
 III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES		
A. Populations	13	
B. Instrument Design	13	
C. Data Collection	13	
D. Statistical Analysis	14	
E. Summary	14	
 IV. FINDINGS		
A. Individual Student Questionnaire.	15	
B. Questions for Focus Groups.	18	
C. Summary	23	
 V. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
A. Summary.	24	
B. Conclusions.	24	
C. Recommendations	25	
 BIBLIOGRAPHY		27
 APPENDICES		28
A. Individual Student Questionnaire	29	
B. Questions for Focus Groups	30	

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES	Page
1. Area of study.	16
2. Reasoning for enrollment	17
3. Declaration of major.	17
4. Expected date of graduation.	18
5. Overall thoughts of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University.	19
6. Classes enjoyed most.	20
7. Classes enjoyed least.	21
8. Types of classes respondents wish to add to the program	22
9. Recommendations for the program.	23

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Marketing education was a vocational instructional program that was prepared to inform and instruct students who were entering a vocational and occupational field. The students were required to maintain a competency level in one or more areas of marketing. The program of instruction should cover the areas of marketing, merchandising, management and personal development (Crawford and Meyer, 1972, p. 2).

Old Dominion University was the third university in Virginia to offer marketing education as a secondary school program. Currently the four Virginia state schools that offer the program were Virginia Tech, James Madison, Virginia Commonwealth, and Old Dominion Universities. The curriculum of these programs may have varied but they offered a variety of marketing- and management-related courses. Some courses offered by Old Dominion's marketing education department were: salesmanship, advertising, personnel management, buying, textiles, retail merchandising, and communication technology.

The marketing education program at Old Dominion was divided into three different degree categories. The three degrees offered were teacher-coordinator, training specialist and fashion. All of these programs covered the fundamentals of marketing and then move into their specialty sections.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine the perceptions of marketing education students at Old Dominion University toward the respective programs and curriculums offered.

RESEARCH GOALS

Through the collection and consolidation of data from the undergraduate marketing education students at Old Dominion University, the following objectives were achieved. To determine:

1. Why students enrolled in marketing education classes.
2. To determine the students' perceptions of the curriculum offered.
3. To determine the students' perceptions of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University as a whole.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

There were several key factors and people who contributed to the development of marketing education. Lucinda Prince, Louise Bernard and Lucy Crawford were three of these important influences. Several legislative acts also were key factors toward this development.

In 1905, Lucinda Prince started a retail training class for salespeople in the Boston school system. Later she established the Prince School for Salesmanship as a part of Simmons College. In 1912, Ms. Prince established a cooperative sales program between Filene's Department Store and the Prince School. These developments contributed to the beginning of cooperative education for women and the salesmanship curriculum (Lynch, 1983, p. 7).

Louise Bernard was the first person to found a marketing education program in Virginia. In 1936, the Roanoke school system hired her from Macy's (New York) to set up the program. Louise Bernard also set up the first adult education class in Waynesborough, Virginia in 1937.

Ms. Lucy Crawford also contributed to the development of marketing education through the Crawford study at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in the mid-1960s. She wrote a five-volume study entitled, A Competency Pattern Approach to Curriculum Construction in Marketing Teacher Education (Crawford, 1967).

Along with the contributions of these three women, Prince, Bernard and Crawford, there were several legislative acts that contributed toward the development of marketing education. The legislative acts that helped in the development of marketing education were the Smith-Hughes, George-Dean, the Vocational Acts of 1963 and the 1968, 1976, and 1981 Vocational Education Amendments.

The Smith-Hughes Act was established in 1917. This act appropriated funds for vocational education but did not entitle funds for marketing education. The act provided financial support for civic-conscious and vocationally employed workers (Lynch, 1983, p. 8). The George-Dean Act was passed in 1936. This act specifically designated federal funds for marketing education. This legislation stipulated that the federally funded programs were for full and part-time extension classes

for adults (Lynch, 1983, p. 9). A new Vocational Act was passed in 1963. This stated the removal of the mandated provisions for cooperative and part-time classes. It also stated that the funds for marketing education could be used for pre-employment classes. The minimum age for these classes was also changed from sixteen to fourteen (Crawford and Meyer, 1972, p. 229). The 1968 Vocational Education Amendments were for the Vocational Act of 1963. The amendments stated that the federal government inspired vocational educators to offer more programs to disadvantaged and high school graduates (Lynch, 1983, pp. 9-10).

Through the contributions of these women and the legislative acts, marketing education has become an important part of education on the collegiate level. Therefore it was important to determine the perceptions of the current college student on the program and curriculum offered at Old Dominion University.

LIMITATIONS

The following limitations were cited to provide structure to this study:

1. The data gathered was limited to a survey of randomly selected students to participate in a focus group study.
2. The data from the survey controlled the recommendations of the study.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made in this study:

1. That the students in the focus groups had a common goal of graduating with a marketing education degree.
2. That the students in the focus groups had a positive attitude towards the curriculum offered through the marketing education program.

PROCEDURES

Students in the focus group study were selected from advertising and personnel management classes in the marketing education program at Old Dominion University. The focus groups were surveyed during the 1990 Spring semester to determine their perceptions of the curriculum offered through the program. After the collection of the survey, each focus group gathered with the researcher to discuss the recommendations and suggestions for the marketing education program at Old Dominion University.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following definitions were an important part of this research study:

1. Marketing Education - a vocational instructional program that is prepared to inform and instruct students who are entering the occupational field (Crawford and Meyer, 1972, p. 2).
2. Marketing education program at Old Dominion University - secondary education degree program in the Darden College of

Education. The program offers emphases in teaching and training specialist and fashion.

3. Focus groups - a group interview process conducted between the researcher and group participants.

SUMMARY

This chapter introduced and stated the problem studied which was to determine the perceptions of marketing education students at Old Dominion University of the programs and curriculum offered. It also presented the expectations of the study through the research goals. This chapter also gave the limitations and assumptions of the study. A list of terms and the procedures used were stated to provide direction for the study.

Chapter II will present a review of literature. The next chapter will display the methods and procedures used for obtaining information for the study. Chapter IV will present the data collected followed by the summary, conclusions and recommendations contained in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter II was the review of literature. The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature related to the problem stated. Included in this chapter were sections on selecting curriculum content, the history and curriculum of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University, the focus group method, and the summary.

SELECTING CURRICULUM CONTENT

Curriculum content was the learning matter or material that the teacher presented to the learner. Curriculum content was important because educators and society were both worried about what the schools were teaching. Curriculum content should be periodically reviewed to make sure that what was being taught was both accurate and relevant for the learner.

Curriculum content included a variety of aspects. These were: the teacher's knowledge of content, content as concepts, causes as content, and values as content (B. Othanel Smith, 1983). The basis for content was an overview of established principles related to a learner in a logical sequence of steps. This emphasized the development of specific knowledge that was learned for a definite purpose and position.

Hilda Taba's (1962) Selecting Content included three different areas: selecting topics, basic ideas and specific content. The first phase of developing a program was selecting topics. In developing a program it was important that a topic

was neither too broad nor too narrow. The topic should have presented some interest to the student and instructor. For the topic content to be successful, it was of interest and had enough span to hold the audience's attention.

Selecting basic ideas was the second phase. After the decision was made on the topic, it was important to decide what would and would not be taught about it. An instructor would have taught the fundamentals of the topic and then elicited new ideas from the students. The students were then able to gain knowledge of the subject through their ideas.

The third phase of content selection was selecting specific content. After determining what aspects of the topic were to be taught, the instructor would establish specific ideas of the subject. The ideas would be reinforced with concrete examples on the general content.

Curriculum and education entailed a lot more than just a course of study in school. There were many different perspectives of the development of selecting curriculum content. The main emphasis was that curriculum and education were changing. Therefore it was important to determine the perceptions of what the marketing education students thought of their programs of study.

MARKETING EDUCATION PROGRAM AT
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

The marketing education program at Old Dominion University was established in 1968. It was the third university in Virginia to offer this program as a major. When the program began, it was called Distributive Education. The National Delegate Assembly voted to change the name of Distributive Education to Marketing and Distributive Education in December of 1979. The National Delegate Assembly voted again to change the name in the Spring of 1985 from Marketing and Distributive Education to Marketing Education.

The Marketing Education program has attracted students who were interested in training and development, fashion merchandising, or teaching marketing in the high school. In 1986, the university proposed to establish a separate Bachelor's degree in Training and Development as part of a six year curriculum planning process. It was recommended that the program of Training and Development remain as an emphasis area under the current title of Bachelor of Science in Marketing Education degree program. In 1987, an emphasis in fashion merchandising was also added to the Marketing Education degree (Netherton, 1986, p. 2).

As a whole the Marketing Education program was a success at Old Dominion University. Since its establishment in 1968, it has graduated numerous students in the fields of teaching, training and fashion merchandising.

The purpose of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University was to provide a quality education. The program would provide effective teaching, research and activities to undergraduate and graduate students.

The curriculum offered at Old Dominion University's Marketing Education program was to provide emphasis areas for teacher certification, training specialist and fashion merchandising along with the university's basic requirements. The courses offered through the department would provide the students with a wide range of expertise in their desired fields.

The instructional goals of the curriculum were designed to produce and employ graduates. Students graduating with a teaching certification emphasis were to develop attitudes, skills and knowledge in their content areas and to learn the methods of teaching them. Students who were graduating with an emphasis in training specialist were relied upon to develop competencies that enable them to train individuals for a job. Students who were graduating with an emphasis in fashion merchandising were to be able to assume positions in the retail industry as buyers and merchandisers (Netherton, 1986, p. 4).

The curriculum offered through the Marketing Education program ranged from 100 level to 400 level concentration courses. These courses had content skills in marketing, merchandising, salesmanship, personnel management, buying, advertising, and textiles. The emphasis areas required courses

in fashion merchandising, training and development, history and philosophy, and methods and procedures of education.

Courses were offered every semester in the 100 and 200 level areas. Upper level courses were usually offered in alternating semesters. Summer courses were also offered to accommodate students. Through the courses offered, the program was able to provide effective challenges for undergraduate students to achieve success in the fields of teaching, training and fashion merchandising.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups were a group interview process conducted between the researcher and group participants. They were not used as a one-on-one basis, but rather to let everyone interact within the group, including the interviewers. Focus groups were used either as a self-contained way of collecting data or as a supplement to other forms of research (Morgan, 1988, p.10).

There were several strengths and weaknesses in using focus groups. A strength in using a focus group was that they were easy to conduct and they were relatively cheap and quick. Another strength in the use of focus groups was the ability to explore topics and generate new ideas. The main emphasis was the interaction of group members that concentrated on the topic of interest to the researcher. One problem that arose from relying on the interaction within the group was not knowing if an individual behavior may have been altered in a group

setting.

The goal of the use of focus groups was to conduct a group discussion that resembles a conversation among friends that discusses the researcher's topic (Morgan, 1988, p. 22). Focus groups were more controlled than participant observation because the researcher controlled the discussion topic. Through the use of the focus groups discussing the research topics, they produce an opportunity to collect data. Focus groups were appropriate in collecting the data to determine the perceptions of marketing education students toward the curriculum offered by the program at Old Dominion University.

SUMMARY

The review of literature chapter presented an overview of selecting curriculum content, the history of the Marketing Education program and curriculum offered at Old Dominion University, and the use of focus groups as a research tool. Chapter III will outline the methods and procedures used by the researcher. The findings gathered through surveys and focus groups will be reviewed in Chapter IV. The final chapter will then give a summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the information gathered.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter outlined the methods and procedures used to determine the perceptions of Old Dominion students toward the curriculum offered by the marketing education program. The type of research study that was conducted was a descriptive study. Included in this chapter were population, instrument design, data collection, statistical analysis and summary.

POPULATION

Subjects used in this study were all Old Dominion students. These students were declared majors of Marketing Education in either teaching, training and development, or fashion merchandising. There were a total of twelve students that were randomly selected from advertising and personnel management classes. They were broken up into groups of six for the use of two focus groups.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN

An open form questionnaire was used to obtain information about the students enrolled. This included in what area of study the student was, what prompted them to enroll in the marketing education program, and their expected date of graduation, see Appendix A. Two focus group settings were also used with these students. A survey was developed to structure these interview sessions, see Appendix B.

DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study was collected through the completed questionnaires and the focus group discussions. In each of the focus group settings, the researcher distributed the questionnaire giving the respondents a few minutes to complete the form. After the forms were completed, the groups had informal discussions about several areas of the Marketing Education program at Old Dominion University. These discussions were tape-recorded to make sure the data reported was accurate.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Once the data was received, the researcher compiled the questionnaires to determine what area they were studying, why they enrolled in the program, and when they were expecting to graduate. Through the information obtained in the focus group discussions, the researcher found out the students' perceptions of the curriculum program offered. These findings will be discussed in Chapter IV.

SUMMARY

The methods and procedures that were used in this study were outlined in Chapter III. These included population, instrument design, data collection, and statistical analysis. The results of this study were presented in the findings of Chapter IV. Chapter V will then present the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the perceptions of marketing education students at Old Dominion University toward the respective programs and curriculums offered. The data collected was used to determine the research goals established in Chapter I:

1. Why students enrolled in marketing education classes.
2. To determine the students' perceptions of the curriculum offered.
3. To determine the students' perceptions of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University as a whole.

The research goals were met through the results of the survey instrument, compiled and reported in this chapter. Part I was the discussion and development of the individual student questionnaire data. Part II was to deal with the questions used for the two focus groups.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES

Question 1 of the questionnaire was to determine in what area of study the respondents were currently enrolled. Twelve people were surveyed with a response from all (100%). Of the twelve students there was one teacher (8.33%), nine training specialists (75%) and two fashion merchandising majors (16.67%). See Table 1.

TABLE 1

Area of Study

1. Teaching	1 (8.33%)
2. Training Specialist	9 (75%)
3. Fashion Merchandising	2 (16.67%)

Question 2 of this survey examined what prompted these students to enroll in the marketing education program at Old Dominion University. Of the twelve students surveyed, eleven (91.67%) responded. Five (41.67%) of the students said because of the classes offered, two (16.67%) heard about the program through friends, one (8.33%) wanted to become a teacher coordinator, and three (25%) disliked the business program. One (8.33%) survey respondent did not answer. This information is also displayed in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Reasoning for Enrollment

1. Classes Offered	5 (41.67%)
2. Friend	2 (16.67%)

3. To Become a Teacher-Coordinator	1 (8.33%)
4. Disliked Business Program	3 (25%)
5. No response	1 (8.33%)

Question 3 of the individual survey examined when each respondent declared his or her major in marketing education. Three (25%) respondents declared their majors in their junior year. The other nine (75%) respondents declared as sophomores. See table 3.

TABLE 3

Declaration of Major

1. Junior Year	3 (25%)
2. Sophomore Year	9 (75%)

Question 4 was their expected date of graduation. Each respondent answered with an approximate graduation date. The responses were as follows: one (8.33%) - May 1990; one (8.33%) - August 1990; one (8.33%) - December 1990; three (25%) - May 1991; one (8.33%) - December 1991; four (33.33%) - May 1992; and one (8.33%) - December 1992. See Table 4.

TABLE 4

Expected Date of Graduation

1. May 1990	1 (8.33%)
2. August 1990	1 (8.33%)
3. December 1990	1 (8.33%)
4. May 1991	3 (25%)
5. December 1991	1 (8.33%)
6. May 1992	4 (33.33%)
7. December 1992	1 (8.33%)

The first part of Chapter IV was the discussion and development of the individual student questionnaire. The answers for each question were reported in both the narrative and tables. Part two dealt with the questions and discussion used for the two focus groups.

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Question 1 of the focus group discussion and survey asked what the respondents overall thoughts were of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University. Out of the twelve respondents, nine (75%) answered. One respondent said he enjoyed the program very much and thought the advisors were very helpful. One (8.33%) respondent liked the program because it was not offered at many schools. Two (16.67%) said that

they learned more things they could use in the work force through the marketing education curriculum compared to the business curriculum. The overall thoughts of two (16.67%) respondents were that the program was good, but the image was poor because the classes were simple. Two (16.67%) respondents said their overall thoughts of the program were that they enjoyed the curriculum. One (8.33%) answered that the program was not challenging enough. Three (25%) respondents did not answer the question. This information is also summarized in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Overall Thoughts of the Marketing Education Program
at Old Dominion University

1. Enjoyed the program and helpful advisors	1 (8.33%)
2. The program is not offered at many schools	1 (8.33%)
3. Learned more than will be used in the workplace	2 (16.67%)
4. Good program but image is poor and classes are simple	2 (16.67%)
5. Good curriculum	2 (16.67%)
6. Program not challenging enough	1 (8.33%)
7. Respondents did not answer	3 (25%)

Question 2 asked the respondents what classes in the marketing education program they enjoyed most. The respondents used more than one answer for this question, therefore the total percentage is higher than one hundred. Nine (75%) respondents listed the advertising class as one of their favorites. Two (16.66%) answered that they enjoyed the business management. One (8.33%) answered personnel management, two (16.66%) fashion merchandising, two (16.66%) marketing, and two (16.66%) retailing. The total percentage for these answers was 149.97%. See Table 6 for a summary.

TABLE 6

Classes Enjoyed Most

1. Advertising	9 (75%)
2. Management (Business)	2 (16.66%)
3. Personnel Management	1 (8.33%)
4. Fashion Merchandising	2 (16.66%)
5. Marketing	2 (16.66%)
6. Retailing	2 (16.66%)

Question 3 on the focus group survey asked the respondents what classes they enjoyed least. Salesmanship was listed as the least-enjoyed class with four (33.33%) respondents. Two

(16.67%) answered they disliked personnel management, two (16.67%) buying, one (8.33%) retailing, one (8.33%) health class, one (8.33%) fashion merchandising, and one (8.33%) adult education. Each of the respondents answered once for a total of 100%. See Table 7.

TABLE 7

Classes Enjoyed Least

1. Salesmanship	4 (33.33%)
2. Personnel Management	2 (16.67%)
3. Buying	2 (16.67%)
4. Retailing	1 (8.33%)
5. Health Class	1 (8.33%)
6. Fashion Merchandising	1 (8.33%)
7. Adult Education	1 (8.33%)

Question 4 of the focus group survey asked what type of classes the respondents wished to have more of in the marketing education program. Eleven of the twelve respondents answered this question. Four (33.33%) said they would have enjoyed more advertising-related classes. Two (16.67%) wanted more fashion merchandising classes and two (16.67%) wanted more retailing classes. One (8.33%) respondent wanted more classes with

actual contact with the work environment. One (8.33%) respondent wanted more marketing and one (8.33%) wanted more management. One (8.33%) did not respond. Table 8 summarizes this data.

TABLE 8

Types of Classes Respondents Wish to Add to the Program

1. Advertising	4 (33.33%)
2. Fashion Merchandising	2 (16.67%)
3. Retailing	2 (16.67%)
4. Management	1 (8.33%)
5. Marketing	1 (8.33%)
6. Classes with contact in the working environment	1 (8.33%)
7. No response	1 (8.33%)

Question 5 of the survey asked respondent what changes they would recommend for the marketing education program. Of the twelve respondents, eight (66.66%) answered. Three (25%) respondents said they would have enjoyed more business-oriented classes. One (8.33%) would have preferred that classes be offered at more times in a semester. Two (16.67%) respondents recommend a variety of teachers and advisors. Another

recommendation from two (16.67%) respondents was to change the name of the program to improve the image. Four (33.33%) did not respond. This data is summarized in Table 9.

TABLE 9

Recommendations for the Program

1. More Business-Oriented Classes	3 (25%)
2. Larger Variety of Teachers & Advisors	2 (16.67%)
3. Classes Offered at More Times	1 (8.33%)
4. Change Name of Program to Improve Image	2 (16.67%)
5. No Response	4 (33.33%)

SUMMARY

In this chapter, the responses to both the individual questionnaires and the focus group survey were reported. The research goals were again stated and the data was reported in accordance with them. Chapter V was to provide a summary, conclusions and recommendations for this study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reported the summary, the conclusions and the recommendations of this study as a result of the research data. This data was obtained from the questionnaires answered by the focus group students in the marketing education program at Old Dominion University in April 1990. The results of this study were to be used by the Old Dominion University Marketing Education Department to assist in learning about the perceptions and needs of the student through the curriculum offered.

SUMMARY

A focus group study of the Marketing Education Department at Old Dominion University was conducted. Twelve students were surveyed and questioned in two groups of six. The data obtained from both the individual questionnaires and the focus group survey was tabulated to provide information reported in Chapter IV. The tabulated data provided a basis for the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study which were achieved through the survey conducted by the researcher has established that students enrolled in the marketing education program for a variety of reasons, such as the classes offered or because they

dislike the business program. Some students also enrolled in the program for social reasons. Many indicated an interest in improving the program through their overall thoughts and suggestions. The researcher also determined the students' perceptions of the curriculum offered. Also evident was the desire on the part of the focus groups to let the marketing education program faculty be aware of the classes that were most and least liked in the program and the types of classes they would have enjoyed more of in the curriculum. The majority (75%) of students in both groups indicated they enjoyed the advertising class and hoped to see other courses offered in this subject. The results of the study also determined the students' perceptions of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University as a whole. Both groups had several recommendations for the marketing education program. They stressed the need for the classes to be offered at more times with a wider variety of teachers. There was interest in improving the image of the marketing education program at Old Dominion University.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data collected and the findings of the study, the researcher recommended the following:

1. A focus group study of enrolled students in the marketing education program at Old Dominion University should be done on a regular basis.

2. That the suggestions of the focus groups would be carefully evaluated by the Marketing Education Program faculty.
3. Once the findings were evaluated they were considered for implementation in the curriculum program by the faculty.
4. An initial follow-up study to indicate if the changes and suggestions in the findings have been met.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**Individual Student Questionnaire
Marketing Education - Old Dominion University**

PURPOSE: This questionnaire was undertaken to determine why students enrolled in Marketing Education classes at Old Dominion University.

1. In what area of study are you currently enrolled?
(Teaching, Training Specialist, Fashion Merchandizing?)

2. What prompted you to enroll in the Marketing Education Program at Old Dominion University?

3. When did you declare your major in Marketing Education?

4. When do you expect to graduate from the program?

APPENDIX B

Questions for Focus Groups

1. What are your overall thoughts of the Marketing Education Program at Old Dominion University.
2. What classes did you enjoy most?
3. What classes did you enjoy least?
4. What type of classes do you wish to have more of?
5. What changes would you recommend for the program?