

AN ANALYSIS OF TRIBAL COLLEGE STUDENT'S BACKGROUNDS,
MOTIVATIONS, AND ATTITUDES: THE RELATIONSHIP
TO CLASSROOM RETENTION.

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between students' backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and their academic successes or failures while enrolled in a single core level general education class at the Blackfeet Community College. The study examined indicators as identified in the literature and as identified through a pilot survey given to students at the Blackfeet Community College. A literature review yielded little research on student classroom retention in tribal colleges. The population for this study was n=113 students enrolled in core level academic courses. These students responded to a survey developed specifically for this study and were subsequently tracked through the semester to determine academic success or failure. The survey responses were then analyzed to determine which student indicators or groups of indicators were indicative of student academic success or failure. The significant findings of this study revealed that students who were academically unsuccessful were less likely to re-enroll in the next year. Specific indicators were identified to suggest that students who had not completed high school or their GED were at-risk. Male students without school-age children are more likely to be academically unsuccessful than female students without school-age children and female students with school-age children are more likely to be academically unsuccessful than male students with school-age children. Also identified as at-risk were students who did not drive themselves to campus.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

An analysis of tribal college student's backgrounds, motivations,
and attitudes: The relationship to classroom retention.

Background

Student retention is an important issue facing higher education today. Although the number of students attending college continues to grow, improving graduation and completion rates remains a challenge. In a paper presented to the American Educational Research Association, Vincent Tinto and Randi Levitz observed the rate of degree completion today is very nearly the same as that estimated at the start of the twentieth century (Tinto, 1993). Nationwide, fewer than six out of ten students finish college within six years of starting (Honawar, 2005). The success rate of Native American students is even lower. "In 1995, the graduation rate for American Indians at more than three hundred colleges and universities was only thirty-seven percent" (Family Education Model, n.d., Tribal Colleges).

In an effort to increase the availability of higher education to the Native American populace, the Navajo Tribe founded the first tribal college in 1968. Since the founding of the Navajo Community College (now Dine' College), tribal colleges and universities (TCU's) have seen their role expand and grow. Despite minimal funding, tribal colleges are succeeding in retaining students, and achieving success with graduation and transfer rates (Robbins, 2002).

Increasing the number of graduates is not only important to individual students but also to their communities. Graduates of tribal colleges have a “profound impact on the reservation's economy” and “Tribal college graduates are more likely to be employed and to earn higher wages than tribal members who have not attended college.”(Family Education Model, n.d., Tribal Colleges). These graduates also become positive role models for the children of the reservation. On some reservations up to ninety percent of elementary school teachers are Native American (Family Education Model, n.d., Tribal Colleges)..

The success rate for Native American students attending TCU's is much higher than their success rate at non-Indian institutions. Native American students who attend TCU's before transferring to a four-year institution are more likely to complete a four-year degree than those who enter mainstream institutions as freshmen (Boyer, 1997), with some calculations as high as four times more likely (Family Education Model, n.d., Tribal Colleges). For all of those successes Pavel et al., stated in 1995, “American Indians living on reservations may only be half as likely as their white counterparts to persist and attain a degree” (American Indian Higher, 1999 p. A-2). Native Americans are the smallest ethnic minority in the United States and TCU's offer many tribal members their best opportunity for success in higher education. Ortiz and Boyer (2003) found that nearly a third of all Native American students who attend a two-year college do so at a tribal college. A majority, fifty-five percent, of Native American students are enrolled in two-year schools (Carney, 1999).

Most published research on student retention focuses on four-year institutions. There is very little published research on two-year colleges and even less on tribal colleges. Much of what is published defines student retention in broader terms, using a different

context than is useful for the Blackfeet Community College (BCC). Four-year institutions often view student retention in the context of assisting a student to progress from year-to-year and to continue their academic career at that institution through graduation. This view of student retention is a long-term one that is normally measured by an institution's graduation rate. The context for student retention at BCC focuses on the much more immediate problem of assisting a student to successfully complete a single course or a semester with regular attendance. Attendance patterns are strong predictors of withdrawal (Tracy-Mumford, 1994), so this view of student retention seems a more relevant one for this study. It is measured by course completion rates of students successfully completing individual courses.

Students who dropout of classes at a four-year institution very seldom return for the next semester. A study at Oregon State University of students whose enrollment was interrupted showed that only between twenty-five to thirty-five percent of the students returned to the University within a year (Murtaugh, Burns, & Schuster, 1999). Napoli & Wortman (1998) however, found that stop-out behavior (temporary withdrawal) is more common at community colleges than four-year institutions. Tribal college students skip semesters more often than do mainstream undergraduate students (American Indian Higher, 1999). Students who dropout of classes at BCC very often do return the next semester, sometimes to dropout again.

Characteristics of the Blackfeet Community College

The Blackfeet Community College is located in Browning Montana. Browning is the largest community on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. The Blackfeet Reservation is

located in an isolated area of northwestern Montana and encompasses approximately 1.5 million acres. According to the 2003 Blackfeet tribal census there were 15,560 enrolled tribal members. 7,000 of these members live on the reservation and 8,560 live away from the reservation (Blackfeet Nation, 2005).

BCC was originally chartered in 1974 and has an open door admissions policy. BCC offers both one-year certificate programs and two-year Associate Degrees. It is one of thirty-five tribally controlled colleges in the United States and one of seven in the state of Montana.

BCC is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and governed by a board of trustees appointed by the Blackfeet Tribal business council. The Blackfeet Tribe is one of 562 federally recognized Native American tribes in the United States (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 2006).

During the Spring semester 2005 the researcher conducted a study of the influence of institutional factors on student classroom retention at the Blackfeet Community College. The purpose of that study was to determine student classroom retention rates and to identify events, circumstances, and course characteristics that related to changes in classroom retention. The findings of that study indicated that there was limited or no relation between the identified institutional events, institutional circumstances, or course characteristics and student classroom retention (Thornton, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Student dropout and attrition rates are topics of concern on any campus, but these rates are of particular concern to tribal colleges. By identifying at-risk students, BCC will

be in a position to assist those students by preparing appropriate interventions. Without a systematic method for identifying the at-risk students, students may not get the counseling or services required to achieve academic success. BCC has little empirical data to help predict student academic success or failure. When student retention is properly addressed, the college, the community, and the students prosper (Tracy-Mumford, 1994). Creating and compiling this baseline will help BCC to develop an effective student retention plan and lower the overall dropout rate in order to fulfill the promise that tribal colleges have made to their students.

The interest to engage in this study came about through what the researcher personally experienced in the classroom. As an instructor at the Blackfeet Community College the researcher has witnessed many bright students dropout or fail their classes. The retention rates described in this study represent real people from the researcher's community, not mere abstract numbers. The frustration of knowing that so many of the students enrolled in class at the beginning of the semester will not be successful at the end has driven the researcher to explore what can be done to increase student success. It is the researcher's wish to help these students to stay in school, learn, and become successful.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between student's backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and their academic successes or failures while enrolled in a single core level general education class at the Blackfeet Community College.

Research Questions

Specifically, this study was designed to address the following research questions:

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between a student's academic success and a student's re-enrollment at BCC during the next academic year?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between specific student indicators of backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and student academic success as defined as completion of the course with a grade of C or better in a required core level general education course at the Blackfeet Community College?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between groups of student indicators, backgrounds, motivations, or attitudes and student academic success as defined as completion of the course with a grade of C or better in a required core level general education course at the Blackfeet Community College?
- Are some student indicators better predictors than others of student academic success in a core level general education course at BCC?

Definition of Terms

- Attitude- A students' personal beliefs, feelings, and tendencies, about education that are based on past experiences.
- Background- A student's general life experience, demographics, and education.
- Blackfeet Community College Survey of Student Indicators (BCC-SSI)- A survey developed specifically for this study that measures student's backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes.

- Course grade- This refers to the letter grade earned in a semester course based on the grading scale for the course.
- Core course- One of the designated general education core level classes required for an Associate degree at the Blackfeet Community College.
- Indian Country- Reservations, dependent Indian communities, and allotments and must be under federal superintendence. Act of June 15, 1948, (1948)
- Indicator- Specific traits or experiences that a student possesses that can be measured and used to predict behavior consisting of their backgrounds, motivations, and attitude..
- Motivation– A force that creates a strong desire for achievement and incites him or her to action toward a desired goal.
- Native American student- A higher education student who is an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe or they are a first generation direct descendant of an enrolled tribal member.
- Other student result– Student received an incomplete grade and the student has not yet completed the make-up work or no grade is recorded for the course.
- Student academic success– Student academic success is defined as receiving a grade of “C” or above for the course.
- Student academic failure– Student academic failure is defined as receiving a grade of “D”, “F”, or “W”, in the course.
- Student retention rates- The rates measured in this study consisting of student success, academic failure, and withdrawal within a single course in a single semester.
- Student withdraw– Student dropped out of the course after the official drop date and received a grade of “W” for the course.

- Tribal college- Two or four year tribally chartered institution of higher education.
- Univers- Student information and management software
- Worldview– The distinct, unique, and inherent way of viewing the world and understanding it in terms of one's own culture and life experience. (McFadden, 2005).

Significance of the Study

The significance of measuring course completion is that it is the basic building block of student retention. Without successfully completing individual courses the student is unable to progress from semester to semester or year to year. Without this progression the student will be unable to achieve academic success by graduating or successfully transferring to a four-year institution. Achieving academic success is significant because it will generate enthusiasm for higher education in the community and on the reservation.

Findings from this research are intended primarily for the faculty and administration of BCC but hopefully will assist other tribal college retention programs. This information could also prove useful to any institution that faces low classroom attendance or high dropout rates. Also, Native American students, in general, may be positively influenced by the success factors documented in this study. Identifying at-risk students before they have academic trouble will allow BCC's Student Services department to offer additional counseling and interventions. Successful counseling or proper interventions will increase student course completion and positively impact student retention and graduation rates.

Theoretical Framework

Student retention has been studied since the mid-sixties. The study of student “persistence, attrition, and retention can trace their roots to the works of Spady (1971), Bean (1980), Tinto (1975, 1993), Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), and Astin (1993)” (Ryan, 2004, p. 97). There are limitations when trying to apply these models to Native American students so this study did not attempt to recreate or test any of these specific models in a tribal college setting. Many of the underlying principles and concepts apply to the tribal college setting even if the specific measurements or methods do not. The underlying theme of increasing student retention, regardless of the definition of the word, is to get students involved and integrated into college life both academically and socially.

Astin's studies of student descriptors allowed him to construct a profile of college dropouts versus persisters. Descriptors such as campus involvement, dormitory living, and working on campus were identified that enhance persistence rates among students (Valverde, 1986). While the measures Astin used do not fully apply to BCC, the concept of identifying specific student traits became a central theme for this study.

Astin used what he calls the "input - environment - outcome" model (Astin, 1993). This model used as inputs characteristics of the student. The environment consisted of the various educational experiences to which a student was exposed and the outcome was the student's characteristics after exposure to the environment. While the purpose of Astin's model was to assess the educational experiences this study merely identified and measured the relevant items for input. Astin used his model to attempt to measure student changes while this study measured persistence. This study used an approach almost the reverse of

Astin's. The outcome was known but the input items were not whereas Astin had known input items and was determining the outcome.

Institutions that create and implement successful student retention programs do so by putting the needs of the student foremost and making retention a campus wide effort. The key to retention is to help students experience personal success (Noel, Levitz, Saluri, & Associates, 1986). Identifying which students need the most immediate help is the desired outcome of this study.

Design of Study

This study was an associational research design. An associational research design attempts to find correlations and relations but does not attempt to determine causation or do predictions. The data were collected using a survey designed specifically for this study. The data were collected from students enrolled in various sections of required core level general education courses at BCC. The survey asked forty-five questions to collect information about student backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes. The resulting data were analyzed to look for statistically significant differences in the answer patterns of students who were successful in the courses and students who were not academically successful in the courses. Enrollment records for the following academic year were examined to determine which of the students re-enrolled and those data were analyzed for re-enrollment patterns of successful and not successful students.

Limitations

There is a limitation in the lack of standard accepted definitions for the terminology used in this study. Another limitation of this study is the manner that student participants were chosen. The participants were a convenience sample and were not drawn from all departments at the college. The responses of students from the Vocational-Education and National Vocational-Education departments who were seeking certificates might differ substantially from the academic students seeking Associate Degrees.

This study used a self-reporting questionnaire survey titled Blackfeet Community College Survey of Student Indicators (BCC-SSI) and is limited by the accuracy of the participants' responses. This study also does not account for other student risk factors such as GPA, student major, institutional factors, and a host of lurking variables that are outside the scope of the BCC-SSI to measure. The surveys were given to each class only on a specific day. Approximately 55% of the 219 students enrolled in the courses surveyed were present the day of the survey and there were no follow up efforts for the students who did not attend class that day.

An internal validity threat present in this study is the assumption of cause and effect for the specific risk factors measured by the BCC-SSI. Student success can be from a host of factors or various combinations of these factors as well as from factors not measured in this study such as faculty teaching quality, world events, or economic conditions outside the control of the student or the college. This study is unable to determine causation and can merely determine if a relationship exists. The BCC-SSI survey has not been peer reviewed or tested in other environments so its use may be limited to the specific classes surveyed or possibly to the BCC campus.

The self-reporting nature of the survey means that the information presented by participants is based on their subjective perceptions. The researcher taught two of the COS 101 course sections. This could have resulted in student bias in their answers to the survey. Although participants were assured confidentiality it is probable that some answers were chosen in an effort to please the researcher. Some students chose to agree with statements that were in direct conflict to their statements made in the open-ended response questions.

Summary

This study will address student risk factors identified by their specific indicators and their links to student course completion. The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between student's backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and their academic successes or failures while enrolled in a single core level general education class at the Blackfeet Community College. Developing a risk-factor predictor model that recognizes the specific problems of tribal college students and finds a link, whether causal or indirect, may help administrators, counselors, and faculty to identify at-risk students and target them for appropriate interventions. The next chapter will look at literature relevant to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature on the topic of student retention revealed a plethora of material written about the general subject of retention in higher education. However, finding literature related to Native American completion rates in higher education and the reasons for academic failure is much more difficult. Published studies using empirical methods to study classroom retention in a tribal college setting are very rare. This review was undertaken to help fill this void.

This literature review is divided into thirteen sections that move from a general discussion of student retention to a specific discussion of tribal colleges, and finishes with a review of Native American student attrition. Student retention theory and the factors that relate to student retention start the review. They are followed by a section that discusses a 2005 study at the Blackfeet Community College and then the economic impacts of student retention. A summary of Native Americans in higher education and some of the specific difficulties encountered by Native American students are discussed in the following two sections. The history of Native Americans in higher education recounting three distinct periods in the chronology are discussed next. A description of tribal colleges and universities and their unique role along with their effect on higher education in Indian Country follows. Attrition in higher education for Native American students closes out the review.

Student Retention Theory

Student dropout rates are influenced by many factors. Factors like institutional policies and procedures, classroom learning environment, and curriculum are under the direct control of the college while factors such the social, economic, and academic background of the student are outside of the influence of the college (Ratcliff, 1991). Designing beneficial programs to prevent academic failure for students is a complex task. These complex factors also mean that a successful program implemented at one college can not be directly implemented in another environment (Ratcliff, 1991).

Alexander Astin attempted to profile students based on a series of individual attributes as do the Noel-Levitz surveys. The literature suggests that the interaction of student and institutional values is what determines student success or failure. Theoretical models by John Bean, Ernest Pascarella, William Spady, and Vincent Tinto all emphasize the interaction of individual factors and institutional factors when discussing student attrition and retention (Nora, Attinasi, & Matonak, 1990). This suggests that student retention is not based on a single student indicator or category of indicators but on their interaction so identifying which student indicators to measure is key to building a model that will allow early identification of at-risk students.

The student factor groupings of backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes for this study were chosen based on the literature relating to student retention. These student indicator groups were measurable items that were considered likely to reveal differences in student groups. Each of the individual indicators, or attrition factors, within the groups that were suspected to be related to student success and failure were included on the survey and were chosen based on the literature as well as interviews with faculty staff, and students.

Tinto's much studied model of cultural dissonance has been widely accepted as a cornerstone in the study of retention in higher education. Taylor has summarized Tinto's model as being based on the belief that "student perceptions of their experiences and assessments of their time spent at college will determine their success. These perceptions are shaped by a wide range of personal background factors" (Taylor, 2005, p. 5). Tinto's model further suggests "that it is the student's cultural and social values that, to a great degree, determine their post-secondary educational intentions, goals, commitments, and eventually, degree success" (Taylor, 2005, p. 5). The model also promotes the idea that departure from college "most frequently occurs when there is incongruence between the student's cultural value set, pre-entry attributes, intentions, goals and commitments and the Amer-European dominated college culture and environment" (Taylor, 2005, p. 6). Ultimately, student departure can only be fully understood by "referring to the understandings and experiences of each and every person who departs" (Tinto, 1993, p. 37). The theory suggests that student perceptions and their individual reactions to the specific environment are what influences a student to stay or go.

There is no one dropout personality or profile. Tinto observed that there is little evidence to show that students who leave college have a unique personality profile but there are studies with conflicting results on this point (Tinto, 1993). It is the interaction of the specific student and the specific college climate combined with influences outside the purview of the college that lead to a student's success or failure. Three interrelated factors have emerged repeatedly in the literature as predictors of first-year persistence. These factors are a felt sense of community, involvement of students in all aspects of life at the institution, and academic and social integration (Tinto, 1993).

Some examples of the specific indicators for these interrelated factors are measurable and well known. A student that is committed to their educational goal is more likely to be successful while a student who has weak goals or is unclear about their educational goals is more likely to fail (Ratcliff, 1991). Students who spend more time on course work or hold favorable views of faculty are more likely to be successful. A study of a freshman cohort by Rotter (1988) found that student success is directly related to the time and energy devoted to postsecondary education and that “increasing time on the academic tasks of coursework reduced the likelihood of dropping out” (Ratcliff, 1991, p. 266). Sanders and Burton (1996) report that student satisfaction and how it relates to persistence is becoming a more powerful predictor that will aid institutions in their retention efforts (Lambertz, 1998).

Factors Related to Student Retention

The existing literature for student retention on mainstream campuses has identified several trends for why students fail to complete a degree. An obvious but commonly overlooked reason for this is that it “may be fallacious to assume that all first-time freshman are motivated to complete college” (Allen, D., 1999, p. 462). A 1982 study by Arcuri, et. al. documented that personal motivation and effort may be the best predictor of academic success if the definition of motivation is the desire to finish college (Allen, D. 1999). Not all students have the commitment or personal motivation required to complete a degree. Degree completion requires effort and there are some students “who are simply unable or unwilling to commit themselves to the task of college completion and expend the level of effort required to complete a degree program.” (Tinto, 1993, p. 42). Many in the

Native American community do not always perceive education as a path to success and minorities in general do not always perceive educational institutions to be providers of opportunity (Tierney, 1992). Instead of putting an individual in control of their own life there is often a sense that education puts them under the control of others. This idea of losing control by going to college is in direct conflict with the mainstream notion of gaining control of one's destiny and is often not viewed as a positive by Native American students (Tierney, 1992).

Tinto provides that student interaction with both social and academic environments of the institution are the principle determinants of educational goals and institutional commitment. However, the findings of Pascarella et al. (1983) in a study of academic and social integration of commuter students at a large urban university contradicted Tinto's findings (Napoli, & Wortman, 1998). They concluded that “social integration represented an increased risk among commuter students” because these institutions were “less likely to provide opportunities for social interaction” (Napoli, & Wortman, 1998, p. 421). When Tinto's model is applied to commuter institutions the results have been mixed (Napoli, & Wortman, 1998). However, multiple studies have confirmed Tinto's findings of social integration, but not academic integration, as being a predictor of student persistence. These mixed results provide additional evidence that student predictors are very influenced by the particular environment where the measurement is being taken. This environment is unique on Indian reservations, where the culture does not necessarily reflect mainstream values of educational achievement.

The literature is inconclusive about how well statistical models relate to retention rates for Native American students or TCU's. A 1993 study demonstrated the inability of

quantitative statistics to predict Native American students' academic success (Benjamin, Chambers, & Reiterman, 1993). The factors that have been identified as significantly influencing retention rates for mainstream college students can not necessarily be generalized to Native American students and hold little predictive value (Benjamin et al., 1993).

Davis (1992) reported results that confirmed an Uffman, et al. 1986 study of Sioux students which found that there are fundamental differences in factors that relate to success by Native American students and by mainstream students. The Davis study also determined that high school GPA was not a predictor of future academic success (Davis, 1992). Multiple studies of Navajo students concluded that, unlike mainstream students, a parent's level of education is not an influential factor in educational success of Native American college graduates (Davis, 1992). These studies suggest that judging Native American students by mainstream standards is inappropriate and does not take into account the significant cultural differences inherent in Indian Country.

2005 Institutional Study of BCC

A study of institutional factors conducted at BCC (Thornton, 2005) during the Spring 2005 semester identified events, circumstances, and course characteristics that might relate to changes in classroom retention. The conclusion drawn from this study was that student retention at BCC is not influenced to a significant degree by the identified campus events and circumstances, or by course characteristics.

The purpose of the 2005 study of institutional factors was to describe student retention rates and to identify events, circumstances, and course characteristics that relate to

changes in student retention at the Blackfeet Community College. That study sought to create baseline data that could be used to measure future retention rates. The college suffered from a lack of research about their student attrition and the factors that influence student retention. Student retention for that study was measured by student course completion.

To determine which specific institutional factors should be studied, anecdotal evidence was considered along with items identified during interviews with faculty and staff. This resulted in the following seven specific questions being asked in the study:

- Do student retention rates vary between Fall and Spring semester?
- Do student retention rates vary between core classes and electives?
- Do student retention rates vary between 100 and 200 level classes?
- Do student retention rates vary according to the status of the president's office?
- Do student retention rates vary according to class meeting days?
- Do student retention rates vary according to class meeting time-of-day?
- Did student retention rates vary from the quarter system to the semester system?

Data from the Univers system were analyzed to produce summary results for each of the questions investigated. The major finding from the study was the overall lack of significant differences in the student success rates for the campus events, circumstances, and course characteristics studied. The answers to questions one through six was no. The only noteworthy result when using aggregate data for this period was a reduction of nine percent in student success when the college switched from quarters to semesters.

The baseline data gathered showed that students were completing their courses at a rate higher than perceived by faculty and staff. The study concluded that the institutional barriers measured were not as significant as previously thought and that changes to class schedule and campus environment have limited influence on BCC student retention. Retention seemed to be a more personal matter and the study recommended that a follow-up study be conducted to determine personal characteristics that might influence an individual student toward success or failure.

Additional data were gathered and combined with data from the study to include the Spring 2005 semester student retention rates. Analysis of this retention data for the full period of Fall 1999 through Spring 2005 revealed that sixty-three percent of students were academically successful, as measured by completing their course with a grade of C or above, while nineteen percent withdrew after the drop date and received a grade of W for the course. The retention data from the period after BCC switched to semesters in Fall 2002 through Spring 2005 revealed that slightly less than fifty-eight percent of the students were academically successful in their courses while twenty-five percent of students withdrew after the drop date (Thornton, 2005).

Economic Impact of Academic Failure

There are many personal and societal benefits derived from education. Both the individual and community benefit. The personal benefits of an education are “higher income, prestige, better working conditions, and the potential for promotion” (Higher Education, 2003, p. 18). There are also many benefits to society in general. For example, the amount of education is “inversely related to involvement in criminal activity” and

“inversely related with reliance on welfare and public assistance” (Higher Education, 2003, p. 19). Research suggests that citizens who earn college educations are more likely to vote, raise healthy children, and become positive assets to the community (Higher Education, 2003).

The financial benefit of a college degree for an individual can be quite substantial when compared to those who only finish high school or drop out completely. Native student success is important because according to Jackson, Smith, and Hill (2003), there is evidence that initial salaries of Native American graduates compare favorably with the rest of the population. This is even more important when one considers that eighty-five percent of tribal college students live below the poverty level (Boyer, 1997). Researchers have quantified the financial benefits as summed up by DesJardins, Ahlburg, and McCall (2002).

College graduates earn twice as much as high school graduates and six times as much as high school dropouts (Murphy & Welch, 1993); and their wealth is two and one-half times that of a high school graduate and five times that of a high school dropout (Diaz-Jiminez, Quadrini, & Rios-Rull, 1997). In addition to these financial rewards, the spouses of college graduates are more educated and their children do better in school and are less likely to get into trouble with the police (Jencks & Edlin, 1995; Murphy & Welch, 1993).

The National Education Association (NEA) cites many measurable economic benefits that are denied to individuals and communities when a student is unable to complete their education. One of the goals of tribal colleges is to serve as an economic catalyst in the community. NEA's Higher Education Update (2003) discusses human capital theory: part of which is the notion that colleges and universities contribute to economic

growth through the creation of new knowledge. In the same report, researchers estimate that increases in college education levels account for fifteen to twenty percent of the annual growth in output for the United States (Higher Education, 2003).

There are societal costs for academic failure. Hank Hudson, of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, stated that “Native Americans are seven percent of Montana's population... but represent forty-two percent of the state's welfare caseload.” (Mulvaugh, 2004, p. 5). “Native Americans are massively overrepresented in prisons, among the unemployed, and among those with high morbidity and mortality.” (Allen, W., 2005 p. 22). A 2001 review of prison statistics conducted by the Foundation for National Progress found that Native Americans have the second largest state prison incarceration rate in the nation (Behind Bars, 2001).

The results of a 2004 study of the amount of financial resources used by an institution and the relationship between expenditures and student graduation rates indicates that expenditures do effect student persistence and graduation (Ryan, 2004). Ryan determined that instructional and academic support expenditures “produce a positive, significant effect on cohort graduation rates” (Ryan, 2004, p. 109). Student services and institutional support expenditures did not have an effect on graduation rates (Ryan, 2004).

TCU's are the most poorly funded higher education institutions in America (Acuna, 1999). According to Dr. Wayne Stein, tribal college students represent the “smallest, poorest, and most underrepresented minority group in higher education.” (Fann, 2002, Introduction).

Funding for Native American education has always lagged behind the promises of the government. In 1780 the Board of War recommended that five thousand dollars be

given to Dartmouth College to support Indian education but the money was never fully allocated (Carney, 1999). Current student financing for tribal colleges from the Tribally Controlled Community College (TCCC) Fund is authorized at \$6,000 per student but is only allocated \$4,550 per student (personal discussion, K. Werner, January, 2006). There are no federal funds allocated or authorized for non-Native students attending a tribal college. States are not obligated to pay anything for non-Native students attending a tribal college either but some will occasionally allocate funds. The TCCC funding calculation is based on full-time equivalent Native students enrolled the previous year. This makes enrollment management crucial to the financial stability of the college. Keeping students enrolled and successful is a good way to predict future enrollment.

Unlike private universities or state institutions, tribal colleges cannot merely raise tuition to make up the difference in funding and expenses. Because of the poverty rates on the reservation and their community mission, TCU's must keep tuition at an affordable rate for the reservation community. The federal Pell Grant program is the financial mainstay of students enrolled at BCC. The philosophy of the current federal administration is to reduce grants and increase educational loans. BCC does not participate in a student loan program and actually discourages students from considering this as an option when calculating financial aid.

The national trend over the last two decades is that the federal government Pell grant program is covering a smaller portion of educational expenses than before and the shift to income tax credits and students loans leaves needy students without the financial resources required to be successful in college (Doyle, 2002) This trend, combined with the federal government's change in student aid philosophy, leaves BCC in a financial bind.

Recruiting and retaining more Native students is required for the financial health of the institution. The college must have greater enrollment to offset narrowing margins.

It is imperative for tribal colleges to reverse the cycle of institutional poverty and replace it with a cycle of success. This cycle is one that allows the college to spend more money to deliver a quality education, which assists in retaining students. When students are retained, the college has additional financial resources to keep the cycle of success going. Increasing student retention as measured by course completion is the first step to creating the cycle of success at BCC.

Native Americans in Higher Education

The involvement of Native Americans in higher education, though dating back centuries, is in effect a relatively new phenomenon. Until very recently few Native American attended and very few graduated from universities.

Between 1666 and 1930 Native American enrolled was scant in institutions of higher education (Szasz, 1998; Boyer, 1997; Honawar, 2005). As late as 1932 there were only 395 Native students enrolled in higher education institutions and only 52 college graduates could be identified (Taylor, 2005). With the help of the GI Bill, enrollment had grown to approximately 2,000 students by the late 1950's and in 1961 the number reached 2,400. However, only 66 students successfully completed their bachelor's degree that year (Taylor, 2005). By 1995 the number of Native students participating in post-secondary education increased to approximately 130,000 (American Indian Higher, 1999).

Historical Background

The unique history of Western style education and its devastating effect on Native Americans must be understood before being able to begin to take steps to solve the many residual problems that continue to influence student success today. The literature divides Native American education into three historical periods. These are the Colonial Period, the Federal Period and the Self-Determination Period. Native Americans were first involved in American education beginning with the early Spanish colonies and then later in the English colonies, when the East India School opened its doors in 1621. One of the goals listed when Harvard College was founded in 1636 was “the education of the English and Indian youth of this country in knowledge and goodness” (Boyer, 1997). The Classic European curriculum and other barriers were put in place from the beginning, and if Native students could not meet the European standards it was considered their failing and not the institution's. This attitude still prevails.

Pre-Columbian education consisted of developing skills to cope with the unique challenges of the local environment. The goal was to pass an existing body of knowledge on to a new generation. No child was left behind because to do so would ensure an untimely and premature death. An example of this is illustrated by the fact that there is no word for dropout in the Blackfeet language (personal discussion, M. Weatherwax, December, 2005). Education was viewed as a lifelong process (Dupris, 1980). This philosophy of education was one of preparing individuals for their role in society.

The skills to survive passed from generation to generation in an oral tradition. Because of the tribal nature of the community this form of education utilized elders in the role of mentors and experts passing their knowledge on to the young in an apprenticeship-

like fashion. Education was non-linear, personalized to each individual, and involved all community members. Even the youngest in the community were involved, with their skills learned, and later taught, dedicated to the People. (Sanchez, Stuckey, & Morris, 1998).

When Columbus first made landfall in the New World, he found a land already inhabited. The aboriginal people had an educational system that held the universal goal to “move individuals from one status or condition to another” (Deloria, 1991, p. 33). Some New World tribes such as the Mayans, Incas, and Aztecs, did have some degree of formalized education institutions. However, for most tribes the process was so informal and unstructured that it was thought non-existent by Europeans (Carney, 1999). There has been a recent appreciation for the knowledge of the natural world Indian tribes possessed but this interest has come too late to recapture much of their knowledge about the lands, plants, and animals (Deloria, 1991).

The Colonial Period

The early Spanish explorers opened several academies and universities in the New World to teach natives the classical European curriculum of rhetoric, logic, philosophy, and music (Carney, 1999). The Santa Cruz del Tlaltecó school was opened in 1536 and became the most successful example of these institutions (Carney, 1999). Over time the Spanish withdrew their support and these institutions faded away. The French colonists often exchanged children with prominent Indian families to exchange customs. This was done with the practical intention of avoiding misunderstandings between the groups due to ignorance (Deloria, 1991).

The missionary zeal generated by the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s was a factor in the creation of early Indian schools in North America (Szasz, 1998). The Great Awakening influenced the Reverend Eleazer Wheelock to create Moor's Indian Charity School in New England. Moor's was unique not because it taught Native American students, but because it taught Native American girl students as well as boys. In fact, the period between 1730 and 1760 saw a flurry of Indian schools open their doors (Szasz, 1998). Politics also played a role. During the French and Indian War, Wheelock argued that "Money spent on education would serve New England as a better defense against Indian assaults than expensive forts." (Szasz, 1998, p. 200). These institutions were limited to primary level education only.

Missionary work and "civilizing" the Indians was a major theme of the early colleges in America (Szasz, 1998). This was especially apparent in three of the early colleges in the English colonies. Harvard, William and Mary, and Dartmouth College specifically named Indian education as part of their mission. The results of these colleges' work in educating Native American students was dismal. The three institutions only enrolled a combined forty-seven students during the Colonial Period, of which only four graduated (Carney, 1999).

Including education for Native Americans in their mission became a great fundraising tool for schools but very little of the money was actually spent on Native American education. The case of Samsun Occum, a Mohican, illustrates how the Native students were used to raise these funds. Occum became the protegee of Eleazer Wheelock. Wheelock had founded the Moor's Charity School to convert Indians to Christianity but wanted to establish a college as well. Occum was sent on a fundraising trip to England for

the Moor's school and raised considerable sums for that purpose. Wheelock founded Dartmouth College primarily with the money raised by Occum, however, little of the money raised was actually used for its intended purpose (Carney, 1999).

The Federal Period

The Federal Period of Native American education (1776 - 1960) can be subdivided into six distinct sections. The early period 1776 – 1830, the removal period 1830 – 1860, mid-century or reservation period 1860 – 1880, assimilation and allotment period 1880 – 1930, the Indian reorganization period 1930 – 1945, and the termination period 1945 – 1960. The US government did not establish or maintain any institutions of higher education for Native Americans during the Federal Period (Carney, 1999). While the stated goal of government education policy for Native Americans during this period was one of self-sufficiency, the results were the total dependency of Native Americans on the US government. To understand the impact of the Federal Period on Native American education and how such a complete failure could occur, it is important to understand the background and historical context of the relationship between the US government and Native American tribes.

The Federal Period saw 645 separate treaties negotiated between the US government and various Native American tribes continuing the government to government relationship begun by the British and French during the Colonial Period (Carney, 1999). The sovereign status of the tribes and their relationship with the US government draws authority from the US Constitution where Indians are specifically mentioned twice. The US Constitution states that Congress has the authority “to regulate commerce with foreign

nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes” (Constitution of the United States, 1787, Art 1, Sec. 8, paragraph 3). The Constitution also states that Indians are not taxed with the statement “and excluding Indians not taxed” by the federal government (Constitution of the United States, 1787, Art 1, Sec. 2, paragraph 3). The US Supreme court has confirmed this status, although the sovereign nation status was modified in 1831 to dependent nation status in Cherokee Nation versus Georgia (Carney, 1999).

One way that the US government sought to solve their perceived “Indian Problem” of the 1800's was to integrate the Native tribes into mainstream society. By the beginning of the twentieth century it was rather universally assumed that Native Americans would simply integrate themselves into the American melting pot and vanish as a separate people (Ewen, 1997). A combination of Indian removal and assimilation policies were the major tactics used by the US government to achieve this end.

The Indian Civilization Act of 1819 established a trust relationship between the tribes and the US government and provided funds for general education and agricultural instruction. Vocational training was deemed necessary to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream society. The government delegated control of the educational programs to religious and missionary groups. This led to a curriculum primarily focused on religious studies combined with agricultural training (Carney, 1999). Examples of past failure were used to justify not offering advanced education to Native American students and many felt Indian education was a waste of government resources. In his presidential report in 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt stated that “The need of higher education among the Indians is very, very limited.” (Wollock, 1997).

The General Allotment Act of 1887 was a further attempt to assimilate Native Americans. This act, generally known as the Dawes Act, attempted to break up the tribal structure and was followed by the Curtis Act of 1898 which abolished tribal governments (Carney, 1999). The Dawes Act was primarily a way to take away more Indian lands under the guise of improving the individual by making them industrious and self-sufficient (Sand, 2005). These acts were flawed attempts to create a new class of citizens that would become self-sufficient while farming the land and then absorb those individuals into mainstream society.

It is an ironic fact of history that the United States government wanted to assimilate individuals into a society in which they were not allowed citizenship. US law did not even recognize Native Americans as persons until the 1879 Standing Bear Trial. In this trial, the US government tried to prove that Indians were neither persons nor citizens so they had no right to Habeas Corpus, and therefore could not sue the government. Judge Dundy ruled in Standing Bear's favor and confirmed that Native Americans were indeed "persons within the meaning of the law" (Nebraska State Historical, 2006). Although approximately one-third of Native Americans had already received citizenship through other means, it was not until 1924 that Native Americans were given the birthright of United States citizenship (Indian Citizenship Act, 1924). Even after this act, Maine, Arizona, and New Mexico did not extend voting rights to Native Americans until the middle of the twentieth century.

Another major vehicle of assimilation was the boarding school. Boarding schools were set up to educate and "civilize" the natives (Peregoy, 1990). The boarding school era lasted until the 1960's and its damaging effects are still felt by reservations across the country today. (Mulvaugh, 2004). The style of education practiced in the Boarding schools

could best be described as indoctrination to attempt to assimilate the students and eliminate their Native language and cultural traditions.

The choices made by the US government during this Federal period reflected an attitude that a primitive savage society did not deserve to survive. The philosophy of Manifest Destiny provided that America had divine providence and God decreed that the lands from coast-to-coast were to be taken and used by the white Euro-Americans to do with as they saw fit (Lubbrage, Warmerdam, von Roesenthal, & Overeijnder, 2001). Anything that stood in the way of this destiny was in conflict with God's plan and subject to whatever means necessary to implement His will. This racist belief that Anglo-American Protestant culture was superior justified the “mass destruction of tribal organizations, confinement of Indians to reservations, and full blown genocide” (Lubragge et al., 2001).

The goal of US government policies during the latter portion of the nineteenth century was to “kill the Indian and save the man” (Mulvaugh, 2004). An example of this policy was the founding of Carlisle Indian School in 1879. Under the tutelage of Richard Pratt, Indian children were gathered and immersed in White culture and separated from their own heritage. In what was considered an enlightened view for the time, Pratt believed in the capacity of Indians to learn and that they could succeed if motivated. In his memoirs he stated “I believe in immersing the Indians in our civilization and when we get them under, holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked” (Boyer, 1997 p. 11).

“Much of the social dysfunction found on Montana reservations today stems from the effects of the boarding school era. Though this cannot be used as an excuse, it must be recognized as a distinct factor in the current and past conditions of reservation life.”

(Mulvaugh, 2004, p. 4). Education had been used as a cultural weapon against Native Americans and only with the modern era of Self-Determination would this cease.

The Self-Determination Period

Beginning in the 1960's Indian activists and Civil Rights activists joined forces to begin bringing attention to the plight of Native Americans. This activism mirrored the new social awareness of the Civil Rights movement and allowed Native Americans to begin to re-take control of their lives. As an outgrowth of President Johnson's Great Society, Self-Determination brought renewed support for Native Americans from the US government.

Carney (1999, p. 106) defined the philosophy of Self-Determination as “The actual taking control of aspects of Indian life previously in the hands of the US government.” This movement allowed tribal affairs to be controlled by the tribes instead of the federal bureaucrats. While there were a series of reforms and policy changes that started the shift toward Self-Determination as early as the New Deal era, the impact was not really felt until much later (Carney, 1999).

1968 was the watershed year for Self-Determination. That year, President Johnson stated in his “The Forgotten American” message that the government must commit to “a policy of maximum choice for the American Indian: a policy expressed in programs of self-help, self-development, self-determination” (Carnegie, 1997, p. 22). Richard Nixon, who, as President officially halted the federal termination policy, was elected in 1968. The Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 was considered a landmark because it defined tribal and state jurisdiction on reservation lands (Sand, 2005). The most significant event for Native

American higher education that year was the founding of the first tribal college: Navajo Community College.

In the following decade Congress recognized the need for reform and passed a series of empowering legislation into law, formalizing the right of Native communities to be the primary stakeholder in administering services affecting their own citizens. These laws redefined the roles of both the federal and tribal governments and their relationship to each other. The Indian Education Act of 1972 provided for Native communities to begin running their own schools. This act greatly assisted in the formation of tribal colleges. The Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act of 1975 strengthened tribal governments and earmarked federal money for a series of grant programs. The Tribally Controlled Community Colleges Act of 1978 expanded the fledgling tribal college movement and provided additional funding. Carney (1999, p. 108) called the appearance of tribally controlled community colleges “the most striking development to come out of this self-determination policy.”

Tribal Colleges and Universities

As Native tribes embraced this period of Self-Determination it is important to realize that their right to control education is not a newly won right but is a birthright now being recovered (Dupris, 1980). Tribal colleges are playing a role in this recovery. Tribal colleges represent local empowerment, service, community building, and culture (Boyer, 2002). Tribal colleges have a unique multi-part mission as illustrated by the BCC mission statement:

It is the mission of Blackfeet Community College to provide transfer equivalent academic and relevant vocational

programs of high quality that lead to appropriate Associate Degrees and certificates. Further, the college provides a core of general education instruction that results in identifiable student competence in written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, with literacy achieved in the discourse or technology appropriate to the student's program of study. Because of the changing nature of the demands placed upon members of the Blackfeet Tribe in today's tribal society and beyond, the college maintains a strong commitment to providing opportunities for life-long education including basic skills development, high school completion, GED, continuing education and high quality community service programs. This commitment to serve the needs of the Blackfeet Tribe includes electronically accessed distance learning. Finally, and most importantly, it is the mission of the Blackfeet Community College to serve as a living memorial to the Blackfeet Tribe, in preserving the traditions and culture of a proud and progressive people (Blackfeet Community College Catalog, 2005).

TCU's were created in response to the unique educational needs of Native Americans. The development of TCU's has established a precedent of success that contrasts with almost 500 years of failure (Pavel, & Colby 1992). TCU's strive to preserve and enhance tribal culture and sovereignty. They recognize that one way to achieve these goals and increase tribal Self-Determination is to increase the number of graduates teaching in their home communities on the reservation. On some reservations up to ninety percent of the elementary school teachers are Native Americans (Family Education Model, n.d., Tribal Colleges).

TCU's are different than mainstream community colleges in at least three ways: They are chartered by their tribal government; they are concerned with one cultural group; and they normally do not receive state funding. Their role in the community is also different from mainstream community colleges. Tribal colleges provide access to higher

education to very rural populations, mostly on reservations, and help preserve tribal culture and language. They consider it part of their responsibility to instill pride and self-esteem in their students.

The tribal college idea got its start with Haskell, a federal Indian high school operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), in 1928. Unfortunately, the administration's attempt to expand the school into a junior college was unsuccessful. A separate junior college program was set up that graduated 28 in June 1929 but was shut down in 1932 by the BIA because it was believed to impede assimilation. Haskell eventually would become a junior college in 1970 and went on to become a university in 1993. It is now known as Haskell Indian Nations University operated directly by the BIA (Wollock, 1997).

The tribal college movement is continuing to grow. James Shanley, president of Fort Peck Community College stated that every year he hears from two to four tribes in the process of forming their own college (Harris, 1997). Dr. Wayne Stein of Montana State University, has optimistically predicted that TCU's will number sixty by the year 2033 (Boyer, 2002). Enrollment in TCU's during the 1995-1996 academic year reached 24,363 undergraduates and 260 graduate students and represents a 43 percent increase since 1990 (American Indian Higher, 1999).

TCU's create the potential for increased inclusion in higher education of Native American students because most are located on reservations. Thirty-one of the thirty-five existing tribal colleges are located on reservations (Ambler, 2005). Geographical isolation, physical disability, and poverty are no longer equated with lack of educational opportunities and continued economic deprivation for Native American communities

(Sanchez, Stuckey, & Morris, 1998). One of the basic treaty rights of Native Americans is education. Over 180 treaties between the United States government and the Indian nations have provisions for the education of Indian children (Dupris, 1980). TCU's afford students not only the right to enhanced educational opportunities but also the opportunity to build the self-confidence needed for student success.

Some research in the literature has suggested that two-year community college entrants are less likely to show greater persistence toward a baccalaureate degree than those enrolling directly in four-year institutions. Astin (1977) suggests that attending a two-year college followed by a transfer to a four-year college is not a viable approach and actually represents a liability for minority and economically disadvantaged students (Napoli, & Wortman, 1998). In 1991, Pascarella and Terenzini also concluded that two-year community college entrants were less likely to persist to a four-year degree than four-year college entrants and that conclusion was reinforced in their 2005 follow up synthesis of the literature (Pascarella, & Terenzini, 2005). These studies assert that the differences in the character of two-year colleges hold students back from continuing on. Burton Clark (1960) also noted that two-year colleges could even be considered a means of “cooling out” low-socioeconomic students and discouraging their continued enrollment (Napoli, & Wortman, 1998).

Astin's research, and the earlier studies, do not take into account the maturing tribal college system that has developed since that research was completed. It also does not take into account the cultural differences that come into play when defining success and failure for Native American students. Native American students may not come to school with the same expectations for success as their non-Native peers. For example, mainstream students

are often raised with an assumption that family needs must be neglected to attain high grades while the exact opposite may be true for the Native American student (Wenzlaff, & Biewer, 1996).

Native American students approach education with a different worldview than their mainstream counterparts. This difference has led Native American people to be one of the most highly scrutinized and heavily studied ethnic group in the United States (Hernandez, 2004). Researchers cannot isolate students from the complex social environment and unique challenges that exist on the reservation. Native students living on a reservation are faced with higher incidence of substance abuse, lower incomes, and less academic preparation for college than mainstream students (Martin, 1993). The literature reinforces the fact that the issues facing these students cannot be quickly solved or easily measured.

Statistically, the average tribal college student is thirty years old, more likely to be female than male, likely to have children, live in their parents home, have jobs outside of school, and are often the first in their family to go to college (Fann, 2002).

Native American Student Attrition

Native American students have the lowest completion rate and are the least academically successful ethnic group in U. S. higher education. This rate varies based on the method used to calculate student success with some calculations as low as Astin's 1986 conclusion of six percent (Benjamin, Chambers, & Reiterman, 1993). No matter what methodology is used, Native American students leave colleges without degrees at rates that are unacceptably high.

Low representation of Native American students in higher education is partly the result of the lack of high school graduates. 1992 research by the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force found that approximately one-third of Native American students never finish high school. This dropout rate is the highest of any minority group (Reyhner, & Dodd, 2004). Most Native American students who dropout of school do so in the seventh and eighth grades (McFadden, 2005). For those that make it to high school on Montana's seven reservations, there was an additional decrease of almost half, forty-nine percent, between ninth and twelfth grade (Mulvaugh, 2004). A study of Montana's high schools by the Education Trust fund in 2001 listed the Native American high school graduation rate at only fifty-three percent (Education Trust, 2004). As long as there are so few students meeting the entrance requirements of colleges, there will be few Native American students graduating from college (Tate, & Schwartz, 1993).

Although predictive studies have not proven entirely useful, research involving both quantitative and qualitative methodologies shed greater light on the problems associated with the reasons for the high non-completion rates of Native American students. A 1993 study proposed that an alternative social science methodology be used that uses a "culturally sensitive approach" to help "define competencies leading to college persistence" (Benjamin, Chambers, & Reiterman, 1993, preface). Native American scholars are calling for increased cultural sensitivity in research methods that take into account tribal sovereignty and spirituality (Crazy Bull, 2004).

Many of the factors related to academic failure for Native American students fall under the broad heading of cultural differences. Native American students tend to bring to college a strong sense of their cultural identity and are generally oriented toward a set of

values and goals which are different from those institutionalized in the mainstream college or university (Atwell, 1989).

There are distinct differences in traditional and mainstream educational philosophies. Mainstream educational philosophy is one of reductionism. Reductionism forwards the idea that knowledge should be divided and subdivided into specialties. Traditional philosophy of knowledge embraces a holistic view. This philosophy forwards the idea that knowledge is about the relationship of everything to the natural world in a holistic manner (Deloria, 1991). Reductionism provides academic disciplines that have lost their relationship to the whole. The difference in these two approaches is significant when it comes to determining where knowledge originates and how it is applied. An example of this is the circle of life, which is a key traditional belief for many Native peoples, and conflicts with Western linear thought. Reconciling these differences can be difficult for some Native students (Deloria, 1991).

Some barriers to educational achievement for Native American students that have been identified include low achievement motivation, poor academic preparation, inadequate financial support, and lack of community and parental support (Huffman, 1991). Atwell (1989) also suggested that issues of inadequate preparation, low motivation, and lack of family support for education also have negative impacts on Native American retention. Addressing some of these structural barriers with programs like day care, evening or weekend classes would assist Native American students with retention (Tate, & Schwartz, 1993).

Many Native American students perceive the mainstream campus to be a hostile environment. Negative stereotypes and racism towards Native American students exist as a

barrier on many mainstream campuses. These negative attitudes come from both non-Native students and staff. These additional barriers compound feelings of isolation for many Native American students at mainstream institutions (Huffman, 1991).

According to Tate, & Schwartz, (1993) sixty-five percent of Native American students surveyed agreed that family obligations sometimes interfered with their education. This finding suggests that being a non-traditional student also contributes to the barriers faced by Native American students. The population that needs education the most: the least educated, those lower on the socioeconomic scale, and the low family involvement student, have the most barriers to overcome.

Low course completion rates are not just the concern of BCC but of many tribal colleges. For example, Deganawidah-Quetzalcaotl University (DQ), California's only tribal college, reported course completion rates as low as 20% in 1992. That rate has now risen to 80%. DQ reported that it was not a specific program but a whole range of things that changed the culture of the college and contributed to reducing the dropout rate. (Acuna, 1999).

Summary

Since Colonial times Western education has failed Native Americans. This has resulted in policies that exacerbated the problem and made tribes even more dependent on a government that did not wish to help them. Today, TCU's provide opportunities for higher education that can make a positive impact in Indian Country.

The literature provides many examples of mainstream retention practices, theories, and guidelines. These practices must be adapted for the unique educational setting

represented by TCU's. Understanding the origin of the problem and the background of the unique situation of education in Indian Country is required before taking steps to start to resolve the issues. Examining the history of education in the Native American community clearly shows that the answers to Indian education cannot be exclusively enforced from the outside but must come from within.

The next section will discuss the specifics of how this study was carried out and the methods, population, survey instruments, and design that were used to examine the problem and study the data.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken to attempt to increase BCC's understanding of student retention by identifying the elements that relate to student academic success and failure in a single required core level general education course at the Blackfeet Community College. The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between student's backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and their academic successes or failures while enrolled in a single core level general education class at the Blackfeet Community College. Academic success was defined as receiving a grade of C or above in the enrolled course with all other grades being defined as academic failure.

Research Design

The study employed an associational research design using data gathered from a student survey to examine the relationship of student indicators to student academic success in a required core level general education course at BCC. This type of design is similar to a correlational design. Associational research uses a nonexperimental design that compares groups by studying attribute independent variables. The independent attribute variables for this study are student indicators measured by a survey instrument. The dependent variables for this study were student success or failure. The focus of associational research design is to study patterns of individual differences in the participants (Gliner & Morgan, 2000, chap. 5).

To effectively prevent students from dropping out of a course there must be a means of identifying which students are at-risk for failure. This study used a single administration of a questionnaire designed specifically for this study. Students self-reported their background, attitudes and motivations on the researcher designed survey. The dependent variable, academic success in the course, was determined at the conclusion of the semester from the Univers system.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was 594. This represented the total student enrollment for the 2005 Spring semester at BCC. The sample size for the study was 113. The sample included students in nine different core level general education courses at BCC. Students completed the surveys during class time with both the researcher and their instructor present. Data was gathered from 19% of the student body. All participants were treated in accordance with the "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" (American Psychological Association, 1992).

The surveys were administered by the researcher over the course of a week from January 25 – January 31, 2005. Spreading the survey dates out lessened the chance of a major attendance event, like a funeral or community gathering, from negatively affecting the study. Gathering survey data also had to work around participating faculty schedules.

The classes that participated in the study were a convenience sample of core level general education classes. The specific classes chosen were based on their instructors agreeing to make their students available during scheduled class time. The classes participating included five sections of COS 101, Introduction to Computers, two sections of

MAT 115, Introduction to Algebra, one section of ENG 109, Written Communications I, and one section of SPE 111, Speech Communications.

The total enrollment of these nine sections was 219 students. Students who were enrolled in more than one participating class chosen for the study were asked to fill out only one survey reducing the potential sample down to 157. Many students were absent the day of the survey bringing down the number of students participating to 115. Two surveys were filled out by community members who were not enrolled in school but were attending class to upgrade their personal skills in math. These two surveys were discarded bringing the final number of eligible students to 113.

The researcher described the purpose of the study to each class before asking the students to participate. The terms of the informed consent form were also explained to students before they were asked to give their consent to participate in the survey. The fact that the study was confidential, but not anonymous to the researcher, was explained. All students participating in the study signed an informed consent form and they are on file with the researcher.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was addressed by assigning a code number to each student as they completed the survey and using only that code to track survey responses. This code was entered on each survey enabling the researcher to link the survey and the respondent. This link allowed the survey results to remain confidential without being anonymous to the researcher. Aggregate data reported contained no individually identifiable information.

Individual student identities were masked by this code. No individual quotations were used from student responses.

Instrument Design

The purpose of designing a questionnaire for this study was an attempt to build a BCC specific attrition model. The BCC-SSI survey was designed to determine immediate dropout risk rather than eventual or long-term risk. Survey research has been a mainstay of student retention research in higher education and has been used by a large number of researchers studying this problem (Bangura, 1992).

A 1993 research study (Pavel, & Padilla, 1993) attempted to validate Tinto's model on institutional departure exclusively with Native American and Alaska Native students. This study found a weak link between the mainstream model when used with this student group. One recommendation was to include better indicators that were relevant to Native American and Alaska Native students.

A site-specific survey was needed to reflect the unique quality and characteristics of Native American students and the Blackfeet Community College. Identifying which student characteristics to include on the survey was decided through an iterative process. Characteristics were gathered from a review of the literature, through student interviews, soliciting faculty input, and by allowing student input into the creation of the surveys during the pilot test. These characteristics were categorized into groups. These student indicator groups were student backgrounds, attitudes, and motivations.

The Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory Items Survey and Institutional Priorities Survey provided inspiration for the style of the completed BCC-SSI survey.

These two instruments are standardized surveys developed by Noel-Levitz and available commercially. They use questions that rate how students feel about various institutional aspects to determine overall student attitudes. The questions are categorized into various “scales” or groupings of similar items to allow for further statistical analysis.

The BCC-SSI was modeled in part on these Noel-Levitz surveys. The types of questions and the breakout of categories were similar to the questions and groupings of BCC student indicators. The specific categories and questions were general ones developed for mainstream four-year campuses and thus not a good fit for BCC. The idea provided by the Noel-Levitz surveys was the concept of measuring student satisfaction to provide data that could then be examined statistically to find relationships between how students answered specific questions or groups of questions, and whether that student would be academically successful.

A draft of the questionnaire was first given to eighty-five students with many open ended questions and options to provide feedback. This pilot test revealed which questions needed to be changed. The most commonly selected answers and the most common write-in answers were incorporated into the final version of the survey. Areas of confusion and poor wording were discovered during the trial run and corrected. BCC faculty also reviewed the draft of the survey and gave feedback and suggestions.

The BCC-SSI survey gathered information about three categories of student indicators (See Appendix A for question wording, answers, and categories). Category one measured student background information. This category recorded the general background and history of the student. And consisted of nineteen questions. The questions for this category were numbers 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 38, and

40. Questions from the second category measured student attitudes. This section recorded information about a student's overall attitude and consisted of eighteen questions. Questions from this category were divided into two sub-categories. The first sub-category looked at student perceptions of themselves. The questions for this sub-category were number 5, 17, 18, 25, 26, and 41. The second sub-category looked at student perceptions of institutional factors without trying to measure the efficacy of these institutional factors. The questions for this sub-category were number 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 43, and 44. The last category of questions measured student motivation. This section recorded information about overall student motivation for why they are attending BCC and taking classes and consisted of eight questions. Questions from this category were number 1, 3, 7, 14, 23, 28, 29, and 45.

To create scales for measurement, questions 32 – 45 were grouped into four additional categories. Questions 32, 33, 34, 39, and 43 were all found to measure student attitudes about faculty related items. Questions 35, 36, 37, 42, and 44 were all found to measure campus related issues. Questions 38 and 40 measured items from a students' background. Questions 41 and 45 were both related to student and faculty interactions.

Measurement and Variable Discussion

The dependent variable for this study was measured using a 2-category nominal variable of academic success. Students who received a grade of C or above in the course were categorized as having achieved academic success. Student who received a D, F,

incomplete or who withdrew from the course were categorized as not having achieved academic success in the course.

Student re-enrollment was another variable plotted for this study. A student was considered to have re-enrolled if they enrolled in either the Fall 2005 semester or the Spring 2006 semester. A student was then considered re-enrolled if they resumed classes within one year of the study.

Data Analysis

The survey answers were grouped by the dependent variable of academic success or failure. Some students chose not to answer specific questions on the survey so N does not always equal 113 for each question.

Paired sample t-tests were used to identify whether there was a statistically significant relationship between student academic success or failure and individual survey responses. Individual questions were also grouped and chi-square tests were used to determine if the groupings were statistically significant.

Questions one through ten and twelve through eighteen of the survey were analyzed using the chi-squared test for categories represented by answers to the multiple choice questions.

Questions nineteen through twenty-eight were analyzed using the chi-squared test for a two by two table. This yes-no section consists of only two possible answers for each outcome.

Questions twenty-nine and thirty were open-ended qualitative questions that can be interpreted to provide support for the statistical outcomes and to provide insight into the student choices on the other portions of the survey.

Questions thirty-two through forty-five consisted of Likert scale questions. This section was analyzed by calculating the mean answer for each outcome group and using an independent samples t-test to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the answers. In addition, items were grouped in scales and the mean score on each score was tested for a significant difference between the two groups using an independent samples t-test.

Questions thirty and thirty-one were open ended questions that were intended to provide qualitative support for the quantitative portion of the survey. A review of the answers to these questions did not reveal any distinct trends or patterns. Because many of the responses were very general in nature they did not provide additional data for the study and were not considered in the data analysis.

Summary

By developing a site specific survey instrument and using the associational research design it was hoped that the data collected would reveal answer patterns that would distinguish academically successful students from academically unsuccessful students. By using the statistical models appropriate for each kind of question, or groups of questions, in the survey it was hoped that at-risk students would be identified. The next chapter will examine the data in detail and present findings based on the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents data collected from students enrolled at BCC in core level classes during the Spring semester 2005. The raw data were analyzed to determine if there were any statistically significant differences in student responses based on the success of the student in their course. Each of the four research questions are answered in turn. The null hypothesis for each of these questions is the assumption that there is no difference in the way that successful and academically unsuccessful students have responded to questions on the survey. The null hypothesis is tested against a confidence level of ninety-five percent. p values lower than .05 result in a rejection of the hypothesis. Because the null hypothesis is not true it can only be suggested that there is good evidence to support the alternative. SPSS version fourteen was utilized for analyzing the data.

Research QuestionsResearch Question One

Is there a statistically significant relationship between a student's academic success and a student's re-enrollment at BCC within the next year? A contingency chi-square test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that there is no difference in the rate of re-enrollment within the next academic year between students who were academically successful and those who weren't academically successful. As reported in Table 1, 39 of the 53 successful students enrolled during the next academic year for a total of 74%. Thirty-

two of the 60 unsuccessful students enrolled during the next academic year for a total of 53%. Academic success and student re-enrollment were found to be significantly related, Pearson chi-square (2,N=113)=4.942, $p=.026$, Cramer's $V=.209$. There is a significant difference in the number of successful students who re-enroll and the number of unsuccessful students who re-enroll. Students who fail to successfully complete a core course are less likely to re-enroll within the following year while students who successfully complete a core course at BCC are more likely to re-enroll within the next year. The data for these items is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1.

Re-enrollment and Academic Success

Enrollment Status	Groups					
	Successful		Non-Successful		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Not Re-enrolled	28	46.7	14	26.4		
Re-enrolled	32	53.3	39	73.6		
Total	60	100.0	53	100.0	113	100.00

Research Question Two

Is there a statistically significant relationship between specific student indicators of backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and student academic success as defined as completion of the course with a grade of C or better in a required core level general education course at the Blackfeet Community College?

To answer this question each individual answer for questions one through twenty-eight were analyzed using a 2 sample proportion test to determine if that answer was statistically significant. A descriptive analysis of the complete data collected is summarized in a table for each question in Appendix B.

Eight specific answers from four separate questions showed a statistical significance when each answer was analyzed independently. Answers number one A, number two A, number two C, number six A, number six B, number six D, number seven A, and number seven B were shown to be statistically significant. The data for these items is summarized in the Table 2.

Table 2.

Individual Answers and Academic Success

Response	Groups			
	Successful		Non-Successful	
	n	%	n	%
Prepare for my GED (#1A)	0	00.0	7	11.9
No Diploma or GED (#2A)	1	1.9	13	21.7
I have a high school Diploma (#2C)	37	69.8	26	43.3
Drive (#6A)	41	77.4	29	48.3
Walk (#6B)	0	00.0	7	11.7
Ride with Friend or Family Member (#6D)	9	17.0	22	36.7
The college is nearby (#7A)	21	39.6	13	21.7
Work on GED (#7B)	2	3.8	13	21.7

For answer One A, 0 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they were preparing for their GED test, while 11.9 percent of 59 academically unsuccessful students indicated they were preparing for their GED test. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value

of .0096 with a confidence interval ranging from -.201 to -.036. There is good evidence that successful students are less likely to be preparing for their GED test than unsuccessful students.

For answer Two A, 1.89 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they had no high school diploma or GED, while 21.67 percent of 59 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they had no high school diploma or GED. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0014 with a confidence interval ranging from -.308 to -.087. There is good evidence that academically unsuccessful students are more likely to have not achieved a high school diploma or GED than successful students.

For answer Two C, 69.81 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they had a high school diploma, while 43.33 percent of 59 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they had no high school diploma. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0046 with a confidence interval ranging from .089 to .441. There is good evidence that successful students are more likely to have achieved a high school diploma than academically unsuccessful students.

For answer six A, 77.36 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they drove themselves to school, while 48.33 percent of 60 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they drove themselves to school. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed

that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0015 with a confidence interval ranging from .121 to .460. There is good evidence that successful students are more likely to drive themselves to school than academically unsuccessful students.

For answer six B, 0 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they walked to school, while 11.67 percent of 60 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they walked to school. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0102 with a confidence interval ranging from -.198 to -.035. There is good evidence that academically unsuccessful students are more likely to walk to school than successful students.

For answer six D, 16.98 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they relied on a ride from a friend or family member to get to school, while 36.67 percent of 60 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they relied on a ride from a friend or family member to get to school. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0193 with a confidence interval ranging from -.355 to -.038. There is good evidence that academically unsuccessful students are more likely to rely on a ride from a friend or family member to get to school than successful students.

For answer seven A, 39.62 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they chose BCC because the college was nearby, while 21.67 percent of 60 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they chose BCC because the college was nearby. The

two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0378 with a confidence interval ranging from .012 to .348. There is good evidence that successful students are more likely to chose BCC because the college was nearby than academically unsuccessful students.

For answer seven B, 3.77 percent of 53 successful students indicated that they chose BCC to work on their GED, while 21.67 percent of 60 academically unsuccessful students indicated that they chose BCC to work on their GED. The two sample proportion test was significant at a 95% confidence level. The results of this pooled sample proportion revealed that the observed difference between the two sample proportions was a p value of .0051 with a confidence interval ranging from -.295 to -.063. There is good evidence that academically unsuccessful students are more likely to chose BCC to work on their GED than academically unsuccessful students.

For question twenty-nine the number of responses to each of the specific reasons for missing classes were analyzed using an independent samples t-test to determine if that specific reason was statistically significant. None of the individual reasons for missing class were found to be statistically significant. A descriptive analysis of the complete data collected is summarized in a table for each question in Appendix C.

Questions number nineteen through twenty-eight were yes-no questions. A two-way contingency table analysis was conducted to evaluate whether successful students answered the survey questions differently than academically unsuccessful students. None of the questions in this portion of the survey were found to be statistically significant. A

descriptive analysis of the complete data collected is summarized in a table for each question in Appendix D.

An independent samples t-test was used for each of the questions on the Likert portion of the survey. Questions 32 - 45 showed no statistical differences for successful and unsuccessful student responses to individual questions. A descriptive analysis of the complete data collected is summarized in a table for each question in Appendix E.

Research Question Three

Is there a statistically significant relationship between groups of student indicators, backgrounds, motivations, or attitudes and student academic success as defined as completion of the course with a grade of C or better in a required core level general education course at the Blackfeet Community College?

Several questions had answers that could be grouped. The responses to several of these questions had "other" responses that, upon further examination, could be grouped into one of the existing answer choices. These questions were number one, two, three, four, six, seven, and thirteen. Combinations of questions and answers were also tested for interaction effects. Interactive effects are the effects that occur when a particular experience or situation affects groups of students differently (Astin, 1993).

A two-way contingency table analysis was conducted to evaluate whether successful students answered the survey question differently than academically unsuccessful students. Academic success and answer patterns were not found to be significantly related for questions number one, three, four, six, and thirteen.

Academic success and previous level of academic achievement were found to be significantly related, Pearson chi-square (2,N=113)=10.392, $p=.006$, Cramer's $V=.303$. Two cells were noted to be below the expected count of five. Answers were categorized for question number two in the following manner. Answer A for less than high school, answer B and C for high school or equivalent, and answers D and E for other. The data for these items is summarized in the Table 3. There is good evidence that academically unsuccessful students are more likely to not have achieved their GED or high school diploma while the difference is not significant once high school equivalency is achieved.

Table 3.

Educational Background and Academic Success

Achievement	Groups					
	Successful		Non-Successful		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Less than High School	1	7.1	13	92.9	14	100.0
High School or GED	50	52.1	46	47.9	96	100.0
Other	1	33.3	2	66.7	3	100.0

Academic success and student reason for selecting the college were found to be significantly related, Pearson chi-square (2,N=113)=4.298, $p=.038$, Cramer's $V=.195$.

Answers were categorized for question number seven in the following manner. Answer A and D for institutional attribute, answer B, C, and E for academic attribute. The data for these items is summarized in the Table 4. There is good evidence that academically unsuccessful students are more likely to choose to enroll based on academic attributes.

Table 4.

Reason for Enrolling and Academic Success

Reason	Groups					
	Successful		Non-Successful		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Institution Attribute	26	49.0	18	30.0		
Academic Attribute	27	51.0	42	70.0		
Totals	53	100.0	60	100.0	113	100.0

The following response scales were set up to see if responses differed for groupings of questions 32 through 45. Using the Likert scale 1 - 5, students gave their responses to these fourteen questions. Related questions were grouped into four scales. Faculty related questions were grouped together as scale one. This consisted of questions 32, 33, 34, 39, and 43. Campus related issues were grouped together as scale two. This consisted of questions 35, 36, 37, 42, and 44. Personal background questions were grouped

together as scale three. This consisted of questions 38 and 40. Interaction/Relation items were grouped together as scale four. This consisted of questions 41 and 45.

An independent-samples t test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that there is no difference in the answer patterns between students who were academically successful and those who weren't. None of the four tests were significant. Scale 1, $t(102) = -4.95$, $p = .622$. Scale 2, $t(97) = .748$, $p = .456$. Scale 3, $t(86) = -.994$, $p = .323$. Scale 4, $t(102) = -.641$, $p = .523$.

Reliability of the scales was checked using Cronbach's Alpha. The value for scale 1 was .722 if question number thirty-two was eliminated. The values for this question were suspect because it was negatively worded so a higher rating on the Likert scale indicated disagreement. The value for scale 2 was .693 if question forty-two was eliminated. This question was also suspect because it was negatively worded. The value for scale three was .502. The value for scale four was -.215. Revised scales were tested using an independent samples t-test. However, none of the tests using the revised scales were statistically significant.

A two-way contingency table analysis was conducted to evaluate whether the combined effect of being responsible for children and gender showed a significant difference between successful students and academically unsuccessful students. The combined effect of gender and responsibility for school-age children and their relationship to academic success was significant, Pearson chi-square (1, $N=111$) = 4.370, $p = .037$, Cramer's $V = .275$. The relationship was only significant for the non-successful grouping. There is good evidence that males without school-age children are more likely to be academically unsuccessful than females without school-age children and that females with

school-age children are more likely to be academically unsuccessful than men with school-age children. The data for these items is summarized in the Table 5.

Table 5.

Children, Gender, and Academic Success

	Groups					
	Successful		Non-Successful		Total	
Gender / Children	n	%	n	%	n	%
Female / Y	17	50.0	17	50.0	34	100.0
Male / Y	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100.0
Female / N	17	43.6	22	56.4	39	100.0
Male / N	14	46.6	16	53.3	30	100.0

Research Question Four

Are some student indicators better predictors than others of student academic success in a core level general education course at BCC?

Some questions relating to student motivations and background factors produced statistically significant results. Relationships between questions relating to a student attitude and academic success were not found. The specific questions, or combination of

questions, that were found significant were numbers 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 12, and 22. This suggests that motivations and background are more important factors for early identification of at-risk students than their attitude.

Summary

This section of the study has dealt with the specifics of the numbers and the relationships discovered for each of the research questions posed in the study. The next section will give an overview of the significant findings and what they mean for BCC as well as discussing additional questions this research has raised.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a summary of both the findings and the implications for future research. The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between student's backgrounds, motivations, and attitudes and their academic successes or failures while enrolled in a single core level general education class at the Blackfeet Community College. The survey instrument designed for this study in the hopes that the questions would reveal differences in the way academically successful and academically unsuccessful students responded. These differences would then be analyzed to enable identification of at-risk students.

The literature indicates that at-risk students can be successfully identified at mainstream institutions but it is inconclusive about how well indicators can be identification can be done in a tribal college setting. This study shows that some at-risk students can be identified in a tribal college setting if a site-specific instrument is used.

Independent variables, and combinations of variables, were compared in relation to a student's academic success or non-success. In this study, some areas of inquiry on the survey instrument produced variances that were too small to be able to do extensive statistical analysis. There might have been more indicators of significance revealed if the study sample had been larger. More research needs to be done to follow-up on the few indicators that were identified as significant. No single at-risk profile was revealed by this study.

The three areas of study were student attitudes, motivations, and backgrounds. Overall, there were few differences in the way students answered the survey questions. Noteworthy is the lack of statistically significant relationships between 37 of 45 individual predictor questions. While some at-risk indicators were identified as significant by the BCC-SSI, overall, it was found to be a weak fit for predicting student success or academic failure.

Findings

Q1: This study found that students who successfully complete a core course are more likely to re-enroll within the following year than students who do not successfully complete a core course at BCC. This would indicate that the first step to increasing long-term student retention and increasing graduation rates is providing students with the resources necessary to successfully complete their core level required courses.

Q2: This study also finds that the previous academic achievement of a student is relevant to their success in college level core classes. Successful students are less likely to be preparing for their GED test and are more likely to have achieved a high school diploma. Academically unsuccessful students are more likely to have not achieved a high school diploma or GED prior to enrollment. There was no significant difference in student success for students who had achieved a GED rather than a high school diploma.

Part of the mission of BCC is to provide high school completion and GED programs. As part of the open enrollment policy of BCC, a student wishing to complete their GED is also encouraged to enroll in college classes while they complete their GED. Based on the results of this study, further evaluation of this policy might be in order. It is

recommended that BCC, first and foremost, assist the student seeking their GED to pass the test while providing remediation to prepare them for the academic rigors of college level classes. When the student has achieved their GED and is academically prepared for college level courses then BCC should encourage them to enroll.

Transportation was also revealed as a significant item for student success. Successful students are more likely to drive themselves to school while academically unsuccessful students are more likely to walk to school or rely on a ride from a friend or family member. Reliable transportation seems to be the key to explain why driving one's self to school increases student success. Walking is difficult in Browning's bitter cold, windy, and dark winters. Coordinating carpools for those that live in the outlying areas does not seem to be a viable option for students with varying schedules.

Understanding why a student chose to enroll at BCC was a significant item in the study. Successful students were more likely to choose BCC because the college was nearby than academically unsuccessful students. Academically unsuccessful students were more likely to choose BCC for academic reasons, specifically, to work on their GED.

Q3: When the combination of academic success, gender, and school-age children indicators are looked at the study revealed that male students without school-age children are more likely to be academically unsuccessful than female students without school-age children and that female students with school-age children are more likely to be academically unsuccessful than male students with school-age children. Traditional parenting roles seem to come into play here. The traditional female role of caregiver appears to take precedence and classes and studies must be relegated to a lower priority.

This conflict is not apparent for men when the combination of success, gender, and school-age children was examined.

Q4: Questions relating to student motivations and background factors produced statistically significant results while questions relating to student attitude were not found to be significant.

Inferences

Student responses to the survey revealed several findings that were unexpected. Based on the literature it was expected that questions number eight, twelve, and fourteen would produce statistically significant results. In contrast to the literature the results of this study found no significant relationships between student success and hours worked, student gender, or time spent studying.

According to Pascarella & Terenzini (1993), there is an inverse bell curve relationship between the number of hours worked and student persistence. They conclude that students who work one to fifteen hours per week are more likely to persist than students who work more than fifteen hours a week or students who do not work at all. Tinto (1993) concludes that employment can limit the time a student has for academic pursuits unless the employment is on campus. On campus employment can actually enhance a student's chances of completing a degree (Tinto, 1993). The findings of the BCC study found no significant relationship between average numbers of hours employed and student success.

Student academic involvement, as measured by the time and energy devoted to their college career, was determined to be directly related to student success (Ratcliff,

1991). Study habits relate positively to student persistence. In a study of freshman (Rotter, 1988) concluded that study skills and time spent on academic tasks increased student retention (Ratcliff, 1991). Pace also observed a significant correlation between quality of effort and academic achievement and persistence (Napoli, & Wortman, 1998). The findings of the BCC study found no significant relationship between student success and the average number of hours spent studying outside of the classroom.

Gender has often been found to be a significant factor in student retention. Females are more likely than males to earn their college degree (Tinto, 1993). A majority of Native American students achieving their four-year degree are women (Taylor, 2005). In a study of student motivation it was concluded that females have a stronger desire to finish college (Allen, D., 1999). Based on the financial rate of return of college DesJardins, Ahlburg, and McCall (2002) concluded that they expected higher graduation rates for women than men. The findings of the BCC study found no significant relationship between student success and student gender.

Implications for Future Research

This study has demonstrated the need for further investigation of student risk factors for the unique population at tribal colleges. While this study looked at likely personal factors, and did build on a previous study of institutional factors at BCC, it has not provided a complete prediction model for student retention. The lack of a complete prediction model is typical of other published studies (DeBerard, Spielmans, & Julka, 2004) in this area and suggests further refinement is necessary.

Holistic inquiry might be better suited for this unique body of students. A blended study methodology using interviews or focus groups and other qualitative research methods along with further quantitative analysis might provide a clearer understanding of why a student stays or leaves. To better reflect the college population as a whole, follow-up studies should include a random sample of students from all programs to address many of the limitations of this study. Such sampling could provide a better insight into the broader retention issues of the student community at BCC.

Recommendations

Based on the findings produced in this study, the following recommendations are suggested to the Blackfeet Community College:

- 1) All students that have not currently achieved a high school diploma or GED will be enrolled only in academic enrichment or remedial courses.
- 2) All new students will meet with a counselor to discuss and define their goals and expectations for their college career.
- 3) The administration of the Blackfeet Community College will form a committee to develop a transportation plan and develop alternative transportation options for students
- 4) Counselors and advisors will identify female students with school-age children.
- 5) Counselors and advisors will identify male students without school-age children.
- 6) The BCC retention plan should be amended to include a continuing research component.

Students without their high school diploma or GED are especially at risk. It is recommended that the college should identify these students and enroll them in a specially designed program that emphasizes the skills needed to successfully achieve their GED. Once the students have successfully completed this curricula they can enroll in standard college credit courses. This might mean bypassing all college level classes for those students at first to make sure they get the skills required to succeed.

It is recommended that counselors and advisors should receive training to assist them in determining which students are the most at-risk because of their motivation for enrolling. Counselors will help students define their educational goals. Counselors can also discuss with these students what can be done to meet their expectations. Focus groups with past student dropouts to identify what could have been done to keep them enrolled along with gathering community input is required to provide information that will assist advisors and counselors.

Transportation is problematic in rural areas such as the Blackfeet Reservation. The number one reason identified by students for not coming to class was the weather. For those who have to walk to campus in the winter this is a significant problem. Those students who are not in control of their own transportation are at-risk. It is recommended that the college work with county and tribal authorities, as well as local employers, to form a transportation plan that will alleviate this problem. This plan would include in-service training for all faculty and counselors where information would be provided about all transportation options available to students. A vital part of the plan would include working with the Blackfeet Transit to establish regularly scheduled routes to all of the outlying areas. By

providing reliable transportation for students, and their children when necessary, there will be one less obstacle for an at-risk student to overcome.

It is recommended that counselors and advisors identify women with school-age children. The college can then work with these students to develop an individual individual child care plan. Because school-age, and not preschool-age, children were specifically identified by this study it is suggested that the administration work with the public schools to establish a plan to assist these students. At the very least this plan could consist of coordinating school vacations and days that both institutions will be closed. Faculty can be apprised of students who fit this at-risk profile to enable them to initiate early interventions for these students if required. Drop off daycare in the form of a "share a sitter" co-op program could be implemented. A co-op program would allow students to trade time watching other student's children, under the supervision of a licensed professional, for their child's daycare while they are attending classes.

It is recommended that counselors and advisors identify male students who are not responsible for school-age children. This demographic is probably the hardest to make suggestions for, but part of the campus retention plan needs to address activities that will keep this at-risk group motivated to complete their courses and fully participate in campus events. Faculty can be apprised of students who fit this at-risk profile to enable the faculty to initiate early interventions for these students if required.

Finally, it is recommended that continual research of student retention be included in the campus wide retention plan. Additional research and assessment will enable the college to know if progress is being made. Comparing successful students to academically unsuccessful students and continually discovering reasons that students leave and refining

the BCC predictive model will enable the college to best allocate resources for services needed by these at-risk students. It will also enable the college to identify trends and perhaps allow preemptive action to be taken by the counseling staff.

Conclusion

Native American enrollment is at an all time high. Graduation rates are increasing and many of these graduates are returning to their home communities where they serve as role models for both young students and their peers in the community. This would seem to be an encouraging sign for Native American education. However, the dropout rate for these students continues to remain unacceptably high. Graduation rates still remain the lowest of any ethnic group and persistence rates for advanced degrees remain dismal. If the promise of education is to be realized then these problems must be addressed.

This study has produced as many questions as it has answered. Why there were so few differences in answers for successful and academically unsuccessful students? How will the additional burdens placed on the college, especially counselors and advisors, be funded? The last question is one of responsibility. Where does the responsibility of the college end and the responsibility of the student begin?

More studies are recommended with larger groups of students for quantitative analysis. These additional studies should either include, or be done simultaneously with, qualitative studies examining the same questions. The focus of this additional research should be to create a culturally relevant model of student retention that addresses the uniqueness of all Native Americans and specifically the Blackfeet People. A culturally relevant retention plan can then be implemented that includes ongoing research to continue

to identify at-risk students as groups and then work with them as individuals. Outreach to community programs, employers, and public schools is vital. Individual counseling sessions with students identified as at-risk by the counseling staff or by advisors will perhaps enable students to overcome individual barriers and become successful learners.

This study concludes that student motivation and academic background are the two biggest predictors of student success in these core classes. It is crucial then that students be set up for success in their first semester while taking core courses so that they remain motivated. It also becomes crucial that students be set up for success by providing the resources necessary to assure that students enrolled in college level classes possess the skills to be successful in those classes. These first core classes must be a positive learning experience.

The challenges for the Blackfeet Community College are to raise student retention and lower the dropout rate; to increase student achievement and learning; to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas in the community. To uphold the very mission of the college and to provide financial stability to the institution, these challenges must be met and the way to accomplish this is to increase student success.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BCC STUDENT SURVEY OF INDICATORS

BCC Student Survey of Indicators

Please circle the one answer that best describes you or fill in your own answer on the *Other* line.

1) Why are you taking this class? (Select One)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| A) Prepare for my GED test | B) Required class for my associates degree |
| C) Self-improvement | D) Job related training |
| E) Other: _____ | |

2) My educational background is:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| A) No diploma or GED | B) I have completed my GED |
| C) I have a high school diploma | D) I have completed an associates degree |
| E) Other: _____ | |

3) My educational goal is:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A) Achieve an Associates Degree | B) Achieve a Bachelors Degree |
| C) Achieve a Masters degree | D) Continuing Ed – No degree |
| E) Other: _____ | |

4) Residence:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| A) Parents Home | B) Own a home |
| C) Rent | D) Live with other family member |
| E) Other: _____ | |

5) When a student receives a failing grade in a course I believe it is usually the:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A) Teacher's fault | B) College's fault |
| C) Student's fault | D) Both the teacher and the student |
| E) Other: _____ | |

6) What mode of transportation do you most often use to get to campus?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| A) Drive | B) Walk |
| C) Public Transportation | D) Ride with friend or family member |
| E) Other: _____ | |

7) Why did you choose to attend the Blackfeet Community College? (Choose One)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| A) The college is nearby | B) Work on GED |
| C) Prepare to transfer to a 4 year university | D) Small size of the college |
| E) Other: _____ | |

8) Average number of hours you are employed each week:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| A) 0 Hrs | B) 1-16 Hrs |
| C) 17 – 39 Hrs | D) 40 + Hrs |
-

- 25) I usually ask questions in my courses. Yes No

 26) I am comfortable meeting with my instructors. Yes No

 27) I am the first in my immediate family to attend college. Yes No

 28) Are you a member of any clubs or organizations on campus? Yes No

29) I have had to miss classes for the following reasons:
 (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death in family | <input type="checkbox"/> No child care | <input type="checkbox"/> Sick or illness (yourself) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child school event | <input type="checkbox"/> Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Sick or illness (family) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family emergency | <input type="checkbox"/> No transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Appointment (family) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stress | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather | <input type="checkbox"/> Appointment (yourself) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slept-in | <input type="checkbox"/> Court | <input type="checkbox"/> Home-life problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Hangover | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal business |

30) What do you like most about the Blackfeet Community College?

31) What do you like least about the Blackfeet Community College?

Please respond to the following statements on a scale of 1 - 6. Choose and circle only one answer for each question. There are no right or wrong answers so please answer each question based on your experience and knowledge. Choose the best overall answer for each statement.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 = Strongly Disagree | 4 = Agree |
| 2 = Disagree | 5 = Strongly Agree |
| 3 = No Opinion | 6 = Not Applicable To Me |

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	Faculty make very little effort to get to know the students						
33	Instructors know the material extremely well						

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
34	The quality of instruction I receive at BCC is excellent.						
35	Classes are available at times that are convenient for me.						
36	BCC has improved my quality of life.						
37	I make use of the campus commons to study						
38	I have access to reliable transportation						
39	My adviser is knowledgeable about the program requirements for registration and graduation.						
40	I have access to reliable child care						
41	I feel an instructors inquiry about my absence from class is an intrusion of my personal life.						
42	I have security concerns while on the BCC campus and do not feel safe.						
43	Faculty members treat students with respect.						
44	Taking classes at BCC is an enjoyable experience.						
45	When I have a problem in class I first talk to my instructor.						

APPENDIX B

INDIVIDUAL INDICATOR RESULTS

Survey question 1

Why are you taking this class?

Question Category = Student Motivation

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	0	0.00%	7	11.86%	7	.00960
B	35	66.04%	32	54.24%	67	.20344
C	15	28.30%	14	23.73%	29	.58120
D	0	0.00%	4	6.78%	4	.05356
E	3	5.66%	2	3.39%	5	.56128
Totals	53	100.00%	59	100.00%	112	

Survey question 2

My educational background is:

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	1	1.89%	13	21.67%	14	.00144
B	13	24.53%	20	33.33%	33	.30430
C	37	69.81%	26	43.33%	63	.00468
D	0	0.00%	1	1.67%	1	.34514
E	2	3.77%	0	0.00%	2	.12896
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113	

Survey question 3

My educational goal is?

Question Category = Student Motivation

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	14	26.42%	22	37.29%	36	.21864
B	21	39.62%	17	28.81%	38	.22770
C	8	15.09%	10	16.95%	18	.78958
D	3	5.66%	4	6.78%	7	.80698
E	7	13.21%	6	10.17%	13	.61626

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
Totals	53	100.00%	59	100.00%	112	

Survey question 4

Residence?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	16	30.19%	17	28.33%	33	.82862
B	13	24.53%	10	16.67%	23	.30030
C	18	33.96%	21	35.00%	39	.90782
D	5	9.43%	9	15.00%	14	.37014
E	1	1.89%	3	5.00%	4	.37146
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113	

Survey question 5

When a student receives a failing grade I believe it is usually the:

Question Category = Student Attitude – Personal Perceptions

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	1	1.89%	0	0.00%	1	.28520
B	1	1.89%	0	0.00%	1	.28520
C	38	71.70%	49	81.67%	87	.20896
D	7	13.21%	9	15.00%	16	.78506
E	6	11.32%	2	3.33%	6	.09852
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113	

Survey question 6

What mode of transportation do you most often use to get to campus?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	41	77.36%	29	48.33%	70	.00152
B	0	0.00%	7	11.67%	7	.01024
C	2	3.77%	1	1.67%	3	.48690
D	9	16.98%	22	36.67%	31	.01926
E	1	1.89%	1	1.67%	2	.92944
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113	

Survey question 7

Why did you choose to attend the Blackfeet Community College?

Question Category = Student Motivation

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	21	39.62%	13	21.67%	34	.03782
B	2	3.77%	13	21.67%	15	.00514
C	22	41.51%	28	46.67%	50	.58176
D	2	3.77%	3	5.00%	5	.75172
E	6	11.32%	3	5.00%	9	.21554
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113	

Survey question 8

Average number of hours you are employed each week:

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	24	47.06%	33	56.90%	57	.30486
B	11	21.57%	10	17.24%	21	.56762
C	5	9.80%	6	10.34%	11	.92546
D	11	21.57%	9	15.52%	20	.41540
Totals	51	100.00%	58	100.00%	109	

Survey question 9

Class Load:

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	52	98.11%	57	98.28%	109	.94870
B	1	1.89%	1	1.72%	2	.94870
Totals	53	100.00%	58	100.00%	111	

Survey question 10

Ethnicity:

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	50	94.34%	55	94.83%	105	.90958
B	1	1.89%	1	1.72%	2	.94870
C	0	0.00%	1	1.72%	1	.33692
D	2	3.77%	1	1.72%	3	.50600
Totals	53	100.00%	58	100.00%	111	

Survey question 11

Birthday (Birth dates were converted to age)

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>	<i>Unsuccessful</i>
Mean	27.8	26.80

Survey question 12

Gender:

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
Male	19	35.85%	19	32.76%	38	0.5411
Female	34	64.15%	39	67.24%	73	0.5411
Totals	53	100.00%	58	100.00%	111	

Survey question 13

Marital Status:

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	12	22.64%	10	17.24%	22	.47592
B	24	45.28%	26	44.83%	50	.96158
C	17	32.08%	21	36.21%	38	.64680
D	0	0.00%	1	1.72%	1	.33692
Totals	53	100.00%	58	100.00%	111	

Survey question 14

How much time do you spend studying outside the classroom in an average week for all of your classes?

Question Category = Student Motivation

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	0	0.00%	1	1.72%	1	.33692
B	18	33.96%	20	34.48%	38	.95396
C	30	56.60%	29	50.00%	59	.48616
D	5	9.43%	8	13.79%	13	.47560
Totals	53	100.00%	58	100.00%	111	

Survey question 15

How long have you lived away from the Blackfeet reservation?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	13	24.53%	9	15.79%	22	.25224
B	4	7.55%	7	12.28%	11	.40830

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
C	8	15.09%	9	15.79%	17	.91972
D	28	52.83%	32	56.14%	60	.72756
Totals	53	100.00%	57	100.00%	110	

Survey question 16

How far away from campus do you live?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	12	22.64%	19	32.76%	31	.23534
B	16	30.19%	18	31.03%	34	.92308
C	11	20.75%	13	22.41%	24	.83204
D	6	11.32%	5	8.62%	11	.63440
E	8	15.09%	3	5.17%	11	.23588
Totals	53	100.00%	58	100.00%	111	

Survey question 17

While doing homework and class assignments I prefer to work ____:

Question Category = Student Attitude – Personal Perceptions

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	36	72.00%	42	75.00%	78	.72654
B	14	28.00%	14	25.00%	28	.72654
Totals	50	100.00%	56	100.00%	106	

Survey question 18

I see myself as:

Question Category = Student Attitude – Personal Perceptions

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>	<i>2-tailed P value for 2 Sample Proportion</i>
A	28	52.83%	27	48.21%	55	.62998
B	16	30.19%	23	41.07%	39	.23614
C	9	16.98%	6	10.71%	15	.34248
Totals	53	100.00%	56	100.00%	109	

APPENDIX C

QUESTION 29 RESPONSES

I have had to miss class for the following reasons: (Check all that apply)

<i>Reason</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Death in Family	19	54%	16	46%	35
Child School Event	10	50%	10	50%	20
Family Emergency	21	53%	19	48%	40
Stress	8	47%	9	53%	17
Slept-in	16	48%	17	52%	33
Peer Pressure	2	66%	1	33%	3
No Child Care	15	39%	23	61%	38
Work	13	50%	13	50%	26
No Transportation	19	44%	24	56%	43
Weather	35	49%	36	51%	71
Court	3	57%	4	57%	7
Hangover	2	50%	2	50%	4
Sick or Illness (Self)	23	44%	29	56%	52
Sick or Illness (Family)	14	45%	17	55%	31
Appointment (Family)	13	39%	20	61%	33
Appointment (Self)	23	52%	21	48%	44
Home-Life Problems	11	58%	8	42%	19
Personal Business	12	44%	15	56%	27

APPENDIX D

YES – NO RESULTS

Survey question 19

Is this your first semester attending college?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	8	15.09%	14	23.33%	22
No	45	84.91%	46	76.67%	91
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 20

Do you have any diagnosed disabilities (Learning or physical)?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	3	5.77%	2	3.33%	5
No	49	94.23%	58	96.67%	107
Totals	52	100.00%	60	100.00%	112

Survey question 21

Are you responsible for pre-school age children in the home?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	23	43.40%	27	45.00%	50
No	30	56.60%	33	55.00%	63
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 22

Are you responsible for school age children in the home?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	22	41.51%	22	36.67%	44
No	31	58.49%	38	63.33%	69
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 23

Do you receive any form of financial aid to help pay for this class?

Question Category = Student Motivation

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	47	88.68%	57	95.00%	104
No	6	11.32%	3	5.00%	9
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 24

Are there instances of substance or alcohol abuse in your home?

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	6	11.32%	6	10.00%	12
No	47	88.68%	54	90.00%	101
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 25

I usually ask questions in my courses.

Question Category = Student Attitude – Personal Perceptions

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	46	86.79%	47	79.66%	93
No	7	13.21%	12	20.34%	19
Totals	53	100.00%	59	100.00%	112

Survey question 26

I am comfortable meeting with my instructors.

Question Category = Student Attitude – Personal Perceptions

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	50	94.34%	56	93.33%	106
No	3	5.66%	4	6.67%	7
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 27

I am the first in my immediate family to attend college.

Question Category = Student Background

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	15	28.30%	14	23.33%	29
No	38	71.70%	46	76.67%	84
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

Survey question 28

Are you a member of any clubs or organizations on campus?

Question Category = Student Motivation

<i>Answers</i>	<i>Successful</i>		<i>Unsuccessful</i>		<i>Totals</i>
Yes	6	11.32%	11	18.33%	17
No	47	88.68%	49	81.67%	96
Totals	53	100.00%	60	100.00%	113

APPENDIX E

LIKERT QUESTIONS

<i>Question</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Total</i>
32	Y	12	15	11	9	5	1	53
32	N	5	22	18	8	3	0	56
33	Y	1	2	5	24	20	1	53
33	N	1	3	5	32	13	0	54
34	Y	1	1	5	30	15	1	53
34	N	0	2	11	29	12	0	54
35	Y	3	5	4	27	13	1	53
35	N	0	7	5	34	9	0	55
36	Y	2	2	12	18	17	1	52
36	N	0	0	17	26	12	0	55
37	Y	2	10	9	23	8	1	53
37	N	1	6	12	25	9	2	55
38	Y	5	5	6	21	16	0	53
38	N	8	5	6	25	11	0	55
39	Y	4	1	4	24	19	1	53
39	N	0	4	7	25	19	0	55
40	Y	4	5	18	8	8	10	53
40	N	3	9	16	12	5	9	54
41	Y	10	7	16	14	4	2	53
41	N	4	17	20	8	4	0	53
42	Y	20	16	11	5	0	1	53
42	N	14	19	11	6	3	2	55
43	Y	2	2	6	24	18	1	53
43	N	0	2	4	34	15	0	55
44	Y	3	1	3	26	18	2	53
44	N	0	0	3	35	16	0	54
45	Y	3	1	6	26	17	0	53
45	N	0	1	11	32	11	0	55