

A Descriptive Study of Freshman Orientation Courses and Their Relevance in Meeting the
Needs of Nontraditional Students

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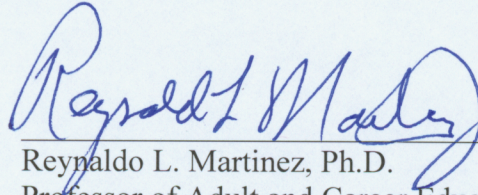
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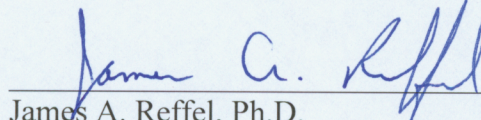
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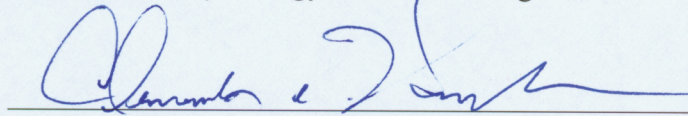
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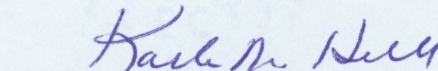


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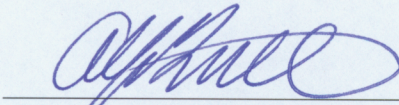
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ABSTRACT

The nontraditional student, based on the theory of andragogy, is a unique student with educational needs different from those of the traditional student. The beginning of the First Year Experience program began in 1972 with John Gardner at the University of South Carolina. As a component of the First Year Experience Program, the freshman orientation course seeks to prepare the beginning freshman for the challenges of college. With a one-size-fits-all model, the nontraditional student is often overshadowed by the traditional college student. The purpose of this descriptive qualitative study was to investigate the extent and relevance of the freshman orientation course in meeting the unique needs of the nontraditional student and to make recommendations as to the most beneficial curricular structure and learning objectives of the freshman orientation course to better meet the unique needs of nontraditional students.

A descriptive qualitative analysis was used in the analysis of three focus groups instruments of ABAC 1000 students, an online questionnaire of nontraditional students, and a survey of 92 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia. The content analysis of these research instruments allowed for the discovery of commonalities in programs, the perceived educational needs of nontraditional students, and the current course design of the freshman orientation course.

This study had many findings in regards to perceived educational needs of the nontraditional student and the course design of the freshman orientation course. Within these findings there were fourteen recommendations for course objectives for nontraditional students. The need for a freshman orientation course will continue to grow with the increase of the nontraditional student population within higher education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION..... 1

 History..... 1

 Traditional Students..... 3

 Nontraditional Students..... 4

 Freshman Orientation Course..... 6

 ABAC 1000..... 7

 Theoretical Framework..... 8

 Andragogy..... 10

 Design of the Program..... 11

 Problem Statement..... 13

 Purpose of the Study..... 13

 Research Questions..... 13

 Assumptions..... 14

 Limitations..... 14

 Definitions..... 15

 Significance..... 16

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE..... 18

 Definitions of Nontraditional Students..... 18

 Numbers of Nontraditional Students..... 23

 GI Bill & Truman Commission..... 26

 Community Colleges..... 28

 Student Development Theory..... 34

Emotional Intelligence.....	37
Adult Learning Theory.....	39
Nontraditional Student Learning Style.....	42
Adult Enrollment & Recruitment.....	45
Nontraditional Student Educational Readiness.....	47
Barriers.....	52
Nontraditional Student Motivation.....	55
Nontraditional Student Retention.....	58
Adjustment.....	60
Support Systems.....	64
Social Integration.....	69
Nontraditional Student Organizations.....	72
Adult Learning Design.....	74
FYE Program/Freshman Orientation Course.....	80
Faculty.....	88
Testimonials.....	89
Summary.....	95
III. METHODOLOGY.....	97
Introduction.....	97
Research Design.....	98
Methodology.....	98
Data Collection.....	99
Preliminary Arrangements.....	103

Population.....	104
Instrumentation.....	105
Pilot Test.....	106
Data Collection.....	108
Data Analysis.....	109
IV. RESULTS.....	111
Introduction.....	111
Institutional Survey.....	112
Sample of Institutional Survey.....	113
Response Rate of Institutional Survey.....	113
Purpose of Institutional Survey.....	115
Results of Institutional Survey.....	115
Content Analysis of Institutional Survey.....	119
Focus Groups.....	124
Sample of Focus Groups.....	125
Response Rate of Focus Groups.....	127
Purpose of Focus Groups.....	127
Results of Focus Groups.....	128
Content Analysis of Focus Groups.....	134
Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	136
Sample of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	136
Response Rate of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	137
Purpose of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	138

Results of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	138
Content Analysis of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	140
Research Question One.....	151
Research Question Two.....	152
Research Question Three.....	152
Research Question Four.....	153
Research Question Five.....	154
V. DISCUSSION.....	157
Freshmen Orientation Courses.....	159
Nontraditional Student Perceptions.....	160
Theoretical Framework.....	163
Conclusions.....	163
Recommendations for Future Research.....	167
Recommendations for Practice.....	169
Significant Outcomes	173
REFERENCES.....	175
APPENDICES.....	196
Appendix A Institutional Survey.....	196
Appendix B Focus Group Instrument.....	198
Appendix C Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire.....	201
Appendix D SACS-Accredited Institutions of Higher Education.....	205
Appendix E ABAC 1000 Course Selections.....	214
Appendix F IRB Approval.....	217

Appendix G Research Solicitation Emails.....	220
Appendix H Institutional Survey Data.....	224
Appendix I Focus Group Instrument Data.....	281
Appendix J Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire Data.....	302
Appendix K Content Analysis.....	369
Appendix L Consent to Participate.....	378

LIST OF TABLES

1. Adult Student Enrollment In Post-Secondary Education.....4

2. 2000 Statistics of Nontraditional Students.....25

3. Nontraditional Student Support Service Likelihood of Use.....64

4. Institutional Survey Response Rate by Funding Source and Governing Body.....114

5. Focus Group Demographic Data.....126

6. Nontraditional Student Demographic Data137

7. Common Themes for ABAC 1000 Topics Question Four.....147

8. Comparison of Freshman Orientation Course Objectives and Activities..... 159

9. Comparison of Most Frequent Educational Needs of Nontraditional Students and the
Most Frequently Recommended Topics for ABAC 1000 by Nontraditional
Students..... 161

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Fall Enrollment by Age in Higher Education.....	24
2. Original Georgia Agricultural & Mechanical Schools.....	31
3. Permission to Conduct Research at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.....	103
4. Institutions Offering an Autonomous Freshman Orientation Course.....	115
5. Institutions Requiring a Mandatory Freshman Orientation Course.....	116
6. Institutions Offering a Freshman Orientation Course with Curriculum Designed for Nontraditional Students.....	117
7. Institutions Considering the Design of a Freshman Orientation Course with Curriculum Unique to Nontraditional Students.....	119
8. Emergent Themes of Freshman Orientation Course Objectives with Multiple References (5+).....	120
9. Emergent Themes of Freshman Orientation Course Objectives and Expectations with Multiple References (5+).....	122
10. Emergent Themes of Freshman Orientation Course Activities with Multiple References (5+).....	123
11. Emergent Themes of ABAC 1000 Focus Groups with Multiple References (3+).....	135
12. Nontraditional Student Educational Preparedness Question Five Rating Scale Results.....	139
13. Emergent Themes of Nontraditional Student Questionnaire, Question Two with Multiple References (3+).....	141
14. Emergent Themes of Nontraditional Student Questionnaire, Question Three with Multiple References (4+).....	144

15. Emergent Themes of Nontraditional Student Questionnaire, Question Four with Multiple References (5+).....	145
16. Emergent Themes of Nontraditional Student Questionnaire, Question Five with Multiple References (5+).....	148
17. Emergent Themes of Nontraditional Student Questionnaire, Question Six with Multiple References (3+).....	151
18. Recommendations for Nontraditional Student Freshman Orientation Course Curriculum.....	170

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

History

At the end of World War II there were many soldiers returning from war who entered college for the first time. This influx of students expanded and changed the role of the modern American college. During the 1950s and early 1960s *In Loco Parentis* began to lose favor as the guiding principle of college administrators in favor of a more developmental approach in which staff members would teach students outside of the classroom rather than just serve as parent figures and authoritarians (Hunter, 2006b). Mortimer (1984) discussed *Involvement in learning: Realizing the potential of American higher education*, in which the National Institute of Education recommended that “college administrators should reallocate faculty and other institutional resources toward increased service to first- and second-year students” (p. 36). In 1970, students rioted at the University of South Carolina during the presidency of Thomas F. Jones to protest “the Vietnam War, other perceived social injustices, and local campus issues” (History, n.d.). Jones was barricaded in his office for some time. In response to this upheaval, the President formed a committee that decided something should be done (Schroeder, 2003).

In 1972, a month after Watergate, Thomas F. Jones, president of USC, invited me [Gardner] to a workshop, but he wouldn’t tell me what it was about. A little over two years before he had been barricaded in his office during a student riot, which led him to put together a faculty-student affairs committee to study the causes of the

riots. But he got impatient with the progress of the committee deliberations and came up with the idea that the key to preventing future riots was to restructure the whole socialization process of bringing students into a major research university. He wanted to develop a process to redo the first year and teach students to love the university rather than be angry and trash it (Schroeder, 2003, p. 10).

This meeting between President Jones and John Gardner, a relatively new history professor at the University of South Carolina, would lead to the First Year Experience program.

John Gardner is a Senior Fellow of the National Resource Center for The First Year Experience and Students in Transition, President of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, Executive Director of the Policy Center on the First Year of College, and Professor Emeritus of the University of South Carolina (National Resource Center Fellow, n.d.). Gardner was described as “an educator, university professor and administrator, author, editor, public speaker, consultant, change agent, student retention specialist, first-year students’ advocate, and initiator and scholar of the American first-year and senior-year reform movements” (National Resource Center Fellow, n.d., para. 2). Gardner authored many books, was the recipient of several awards (some of which bear his name), founder of several initiatives, and holder of ten honorary doctorate degrees (National Resource Center Fellow, n.d.).

In 1972 John Gardner began a University 101 course at the University of South Carolina that would become the First Year Experience movement (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). In 1982 Gardner organized the first annual national conference on the First Year Experience. Although Gardner’s first approach was to create a First Year Seminar class, it was his ultimate goal to improve upon “the total experience of students” in their first year

(Schroeder, 2003, p. 10). In 1986, administrators and researchers began to formally collect and organize the data that had been gathered since the beginning of the First Year Experience program. Upon this formalization, Gardner and the University of South Carolina established the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition as a clearinghouse for information related to the First Year Experience (Roach, 1998). Barefoot (2002) reported that some 95% of four year colleges at that time indicated that they had some form of First Year Seminar in place (p. 14). In fact, Delaney (2005) indicated that the First Year Experience program had grown to become internationally known as countries such as Canada, Russia, Sweden, Australia, and South Africa held conferences on the First Year Experience (2005). As the original emphasis of the program, the freshman seminar or freshman orientation course became a critical part of the First Year Experience program.

Traditional Students

The two populations involved in the First Year Experience program are traditional and nontraditional students. Traditional students are often defined as those students 18 to 24- years-old when entering college as a freshman. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, traditional students are defined as “one who earns a high school diploma, enrolls full time immediately after finishing high school, depends on parents for financial support, and either does not work during the school year or works part time” (Choy, 2002, p. 1). These students are often residential students as well (Eduventures, 2007). Traditional students are also defined through their dissimilarities to the nontraditional student.

Nontraditional Students

Nontraditional students are defined as those students 25 years of age and older, with various external responsibilities. Nontraditional students are increasingly identified as a distinct and growing population within higher education. In addition to being 25 years old or older, these students “are functionally defined as persons who have assumed major life responsibilities and commitments such as work, family, and community activities” (Mancuso, 2001, p. 165). Nontraditional students are not solely defined by age, but also through their life circumstances.

According to Kilgore and Rice, “adult or nontraditional, students compose one of the fastest growing segments of higher education’s student population” (2003, p. 11). Aslanian (2001) tracked and predicted the number of nontraditional students enrolled in institutions of higher education from 1970 to the present.

Table 1

Adult Student Enrollment In Post-Secondary Education

Year	Nontraditional Student Enrollment
1970	2.4 million
1980	4.5 million
1990	5.6 million
2000	6.5 million
2010	7.1 million

As shown in Table 1, Aslanian predicted that nontraditional student enrollment would rise to 7.1 million by 2010 (p. 4). According to the US Department of Education, *Digest of*

Educational Statistics, nontraditional enrollment in post-secondary education was at 7 million in 2008, keeping pace for the 2010 estimate (2008). These students were entering and returning to college in larger numbers as the economy of the United States became more technologically sophisticated and dependent upon the service industry. In 2008 the United States and the world began to experience an economic crisis and a steady increase in the unemployment rate. During these troubled economic times, adults were returning to college as an unemployed and underemployed workforce prepared for the economic recovery that would come. Draeger (2008) noted of this increased enrollment during recessions as enrollment would often “increase during recessions, as many nontraditional and adult learners return to college to retool their skills or change career paths following a layoff” (p. 2). For example, at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), in Tifton, Georgia, nontraditional students comprised 16% of the student population (C. Riehle, personal communication, June 8, 2009).

These nontraditional students brought different variables to the development of freshman orientation courses. The nontraditional student entered college with needs, characteristics, life circumstances, and academic factors that did not necessarily mirror those of the traditional student (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). These differences suggested a need for objectives specifically designed for the growing population of nontraditional students entering college as first-year freshmen. Without these specific objectives tailored for the nontraditional student, colleges were in jeopardy of not meeting the needs of this specific group of learners, resulting in a vacuum that would leave nontraditional students underserved or without the benefit of a freshman orientation course.

These students required a customized freshman orientation course to aid in their transition back to education and the college environment.

Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1992) found that the nontraditional student perceived themselves “less prepared than their younger counterparts.” “In addition, nontraditional students frequently face[d] the ‘now or never’ syndrome” (para. 9). These students “may be inhibited from learning by a poor self-image” of their academic ability (Draves, 1984, p. 8). Menec (as cited in James, 1997), noted that the nontraditional student perception of the likelihood to fail affected their possibility for success.

Students who perceive that they will fail, regardless of their actions and/or efforts, are apt to reduce their attempts towards achievement. The consequences of their beliefs may range from lack of attention in the classroom, to insufficient studying, to absenteeism. Attributional retraining has proven to be a beneficial factor in instilling more adaptive attributions in individuals who have external locus of control. When students are taught that the cause for failure is changeable and/or controllable, attributional retraining is thought to amplify their perception of control and competence, enhance their motivation, and ultimately their academic performance (p. 18).

These self-perceptions of the nontraditional students were precisely the reason that they needed the benefits of the freshman orientation course to combat their poor self-perceptions.

Freshman Orientation Course

The freshman orientation course was designed to assist first year students in their transition to college. There were many different objectives within the myriad of freshman orientation courses offered at institutions of higher education around the nation. These

objectives were designed to meet the needs of the students who entered each college with challenges unique to that student population. As the primary student population of many colleges around the nation, the traditional student was most often, if not exclusively, the focus of these courses. The issue at hand concerned the growing number of nontraditional students entering college for the first time and whether freshman orientation courses are meeting the needs of nontraditional students.

According to Barefoot and Fidler (1991), only 13% of the 1,064 colleges surveyed offered courses specifically designed for nontraditional students (p. 47). In 2006, the National Survey of First Year Seminars did not specifically survey colleges to determine the number of courses designed specifically for nontraditional students (Tobolowsky, 2008). This failure to consider the unique needs of the nontraditional students within the freshman orientation course known as ABAC 1000, in addition to national data, suggested that there may be an irrelevant design for the freshman orientation course at ABAC and possibly throughout the nation as the demographics of the freshman class and in turn, the freshman orientation class, has evolved.

ABAC 1000

During the 2009-2010 academic year, only 24 nontraditional students enrolled in the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course. These 24 students represented 4.5% of the 544 nontraditional learners at ABAC and 5% of the 458 students enrolled in ABAC 1000 during the fall semester of 2009. These numbers compared to 12% of the traditional student population enrolled in ABAC 1000 (Discoverer Report, 2009). These nontraditional students were treated no differently than the traditional students sitting across the aisles. In addition to this lack of customization, it was also troubling to see a lack of nontraditional

student participation in these ABAC 1000 courses. Ntiri (1999) suggested that nontraditional students deserved more individualized attention based upon their individual circumstances.

So diverse are the backgrounds, characteristics and objectives of the adult learners, their settings, needs and aspirations, which successful learning can occur only with a carefully designed set of teaching-learning strategies and a commitment to the teaching-learning process. Research demonstrates that the key to successful adult learning is twofold: first, understanding the adult learner, and second, understanding the characteristics they bring with them (p. 7).

Theoretical Framework

The nontraditional student is a student who has distinctive characteristics not shared by the traditional student. These students come to college with backgrounds, priorities, responsibilities, experiences, motivations, interests, and needs that set them apart from the traditional student. Malcolm Knowles approached the nontraditional student by applying the theory of andragogy (Knowles, 1973). Knowles included as his core concepts in the theory of andragogy: the need to know, the learner's self-concept, the role of the learners' experiences, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, pp. 64-68). Nontraditional students bring a maturity to their education unique to their life experiences and responsibilities. This theory was used as the theoretical framework through which findings have been interpreted and conclusions have been developed.

Nontraditional students likely approach freshman orientation courses with distinct ideas and an approach unique to their situations. Many of these students entered college for

the first time, after a long hiatus due to family or other obligations, or to change careers. These students, unlike their traditional aged counterparts, bring experiences beyond those of the traditional high school to college experience. The priorities of these students were often not to make friends and socialize, but rather to do well in classes and earn their degree. These students shared responsibilities distinctive to the nontraditional student. The traditional student lived on campus and going to class was just another part of their everyday campus-centered routine. Nontraditional students talked about their spouses who stayed at home with children to allow him/her to attend college. During the day these nontraditional students cared for their children, worked, and maintained their homes. These students expected to do well in college, not because they deserved it more than any other student, but because they had prioritized educational achievement among (and above in some cases) many other expectations and responsibilities. Draves (1984) summed up the important issue of time for the nontraditional student when he stated:

As a child, time, both past and future, is a vast quantity. A year ago is a long time. And the future is endless. Increasingly as one becomes older, time becomes less expendable and more limited. The future is not so endless after all, and the past blurs a little so that ten years wasn't all that long ago. As time becomes more limited, it becomes more important. (p. 11)

The different life experiences of the nontraditional student have often affected their approach to learning. William Draves (1984) also noted:

The adult's mental learning state is not a blank chalkboard on which you, the teacher, can write as you wish. Neither is the nontraditional student's head an empty pail for you to fill with your knowledge and ideas. The nontraditional student's

chalkboard already has many messages on it, and his mental pail is almost full already. Your job as teacher is not to fill a *tabula rasa*, but to help your participants reorganize their own thoughts and skills. A prerequisite to helping adults learn is to understand how they learn. (p. 7)

This understanding of how adults learn can be approached through Knowles' theory of andragogy (1973).

Andragogy

The first concept of andragogy was that nontraditional students “need to know” related to the “why” of education. Nontraditional students must know the purpose of their learning. The second core concept of andragogy was the principle that the nontraditional student approached education with a self-concept that required him or her to act in ways which portrayed a self-reliant individual (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 65). This concept of the nontraditional student suggested the feeling that learners must be in control of their own destinies and have a say in their education. Third, nontraditional students also brought their experiences to their learning opportunities. Nontraditional students were not dependent on the ideas and examples provided in textbooks. Rather, these learners brought their own feelings, experiences, examples, and conditions to education. While these experiences were often beneficial to the nontraditional student, they might also be detriments. Knowles et al. suggested that these experiences may also create “mental habits, biases, and presuppositions” which become barriers to learning (2005, p. 66). As the learner balanced the negative and positive experiences of their past, they formed a tapestry upon which adult education and learning found a place. Fourth, Knowles discussed the idea that the nontraditional student approached their learning opportunity with a “readiness” not

possessed by their traditional aged counterparts. These nontraditional students did not consider the knowledge they would be given as theoretical, foreign, or disconnected. Through their positions in life, these nontraditional students prepared to apply their learning to immediate and practical endeavors. Fifth, the nontraditional students' orientation towards learning compared subject-centered learning to problem-centered learning (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 67). Students who invested in subject-centered learning segregated their learning into clear divisions based on subject. Nontraditional students were more likely to base their learning on problem-centered issues. Real-life contexts provided the most motivation for nontraditional students (p. 67). In the sixth and final concept of andragogy, Knowles discussed the nontraditional students' motivation to improve their lives through both external and internal motivators. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson listed "better jobs, promotions, and higher salaries" as external motivators, and "increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, and quality of life" as internal motivators (p. 68). These motivators brought nontraditional students to the classroom with a greater appreciation for the benefits of dedication to learning. Tough noted that poor self-esteem, difficulties in finding resources and assistance, and time commitments, all posed significant roadblocks in the motivation of nontraditional students to succeed (1979). Even with these barriers, nontraditional students still possessed a motivation that was likely to increase the effectiveness of their learning experiences.

Design of the Program

Beginning in August 2004 this researcher began to teach freshman orientation courses at Columbus State University. It was during this time that this researcher had his first meaningful encounter with a nontraditional student. The nontraditional students in this

course were entering college to change careers, start their careers anew after years of following their military spouses all around the world, or had matured enough to settle down and devote the time it would take to be successful in college. The freshman orientation course that this researcher taught followed a structure developed by the department with small variations from the structure permitted by each instructor. During the first semester it became evident that the course was not designed for the nontraditional student. These students were not interested in the same things as the traditional students. Many times after class, the nontraditional students would stay after to discuss their difficulty in attending campus events and making it to the offices on campus while the offices were open. These nontraditional students would then talk about the difficulties of balancing college with family obligations and the rigors of the academic courses. The nontraditional students wanted to know how they could be success in math or English, when they had not been inside a classroom in many years, if not decades. The nontraditional students had substantially different concerns regarding college; they had different priorities, and they participated in the class in a significantly different manner. After leaving Columbus State University this researcher began working at ABAC and in August 2008 returned to the classroom. Waiting in this classroom were the same nontraditional students with which this researcher had become familiar at Columbus State University. After teaching freshman orientation courses for three years, a conclusion was reached. The needs of nontraditional students were not being met by the existing orientation course.

Problem Statement

The central problem addressed in this study was that the freshman orientation classes were not designed to meet the needs of entering and/or returning nontraditional college students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative study was to investigate the extent and relevance of the freshman orientation course in meeting the unique needs of the nontraditional student and to make recommendations as to the most beneficial curricular structure and learning objectives of the freshman orientation course to better meet the unique needs of nontraditional students.

Research Questions

The following research questions would be used to guide this study:

1. To what extent do Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia, both public and private, develop and teach the freshman orientation course differently for traditional versus nontraditional students?
2. What are the curricular differences between freshman orientation courses for traditional versus nontraditional students?
3. How do traditional and the nontraditional students perceive the relevance of the ABAC freshman orientation course objectives?
4. What are the educational orientation needs of the ABAC freshman orientation nontraditional students?

5. What are the recommended elements and content of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students?

Assumptions

One assumption was that the freshman orientation course possessed unique objectives and course descriptions as is the case with courses in other academic disciplines. It may also have been assumed that the freshman orientation course held some benefit for the nontraditional students. Another assumption was that respondents to the institutional survey and focus group instrument would be honest and forthcoming with their answers and opinions.

Limitations

The conclusions and recommendations of this study may have limited generalizability due to the relatively small sample size of those students who would be solicited to participate in the focus group instrument and a nontraditional student online questionnaire. The variation among the objectives and course descriptions of the freshman orientation course may also pose a limitation in regards to this study as there was likely to be variance in the objectives and functions of these courses across institutions. The definitions by which the respondents to the institutional survey classified nontraditional students and their varying identifications of the distinctly different needs of the nontraditional students may have also played a role in limiting the generalization of the results. The honesty and forthrightness of the focus group instrument and nontraditional online questionnaire responses may play a role in the generalization of the study recommendation. Additionally, at the conclusion of the study, implementation of

recommendations may be limited due to the variability within the SACS-accredited institutions.

Definitions

The following definitions were referenced throughout the literature in addition to being operational defined:

ABAC 1000 – Non-mandatory freshman orientation course offered at ABAC.

Nontraditional Student – A nontraditional student was defined to be at least twenty-five years of age having entered post-secondary education as a freshman. This definition was referenced by Spanard (1990) as “the average adult student has been defined as being older than 25 (p. 317). Nontraditional students were often referred to as adult students or adult learners. “Adults are functionally defined as persons who have assumed major life responsibilities and commitments such as work, family, and community activities. In addition, adults are considered those who are no longer dependent upon their parents or guardians, who operate independently in society, and whose principle identities have moved beyond the role of full-time student” (Mancuso, 2001, pp. 165-166).

Andragogy – The theory as proposed by Alexander Kapp and later developed and explored as an educational theory by Malcolm Knowles regarding the unique needs, educational development, and postulates of nontraditional students and adult education (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

Autonomous Freshman Orientation Course - Stand-alone orientation course not linked as an introductory course with a major area, field of study, or as a component of a welcome week program.

Freshman Orientation – A course designed to assist first-year students in their transition to college. Courses vary by name, specific objectives, and application. Freshman orientation courses were considered to be a component of the First Year Experience (Hardin, 2000).

First Year Experience – A set of activities, classes, communities, etc. designed to improve the success and transition of first-year students. Information and statistics regarding the First Year Experience was collected and promoted by the National Resource Center for The First Year Experience and Students in Transition (Hunter, 2006a).

Southern Association of Colleges and School – Accrediting body of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Latin American colleges and universities. (Operational Definition, www.sacs.org)

Traditional Student – Students enrolled in a post-secondary education institution as an 18 to 24-year-old. These students were financially dependent upon their parents and they were often residential students (Eduventures, 2007).

University System of Georgia – The thirty-five State-sponsored schools within Georgia which are governed by the Board of Regents. (Operational Definition, www.usg.edu)

Significance

The significance of this study fell within the development of guidelines and recommendations for the design of more relevant freshman orientation courses suited for nontraditional students. This restructuring of the freshman orientation course was designed to match the needs determined through the institutional survey, literature review, focus group instrument, and nontraditional student online questionnaire; to maximize the effectiveness of the learning objectives and classroom methods employed by instructors to

aid first-year nontraditional students in their transition to higher education. This curricular design may be a model with application for other institutions.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definitions of Nontraditional Students

The definition of adult students at the many institutions of higher education, although similar, encompassed many different ideas which were all based on the perspectives of those institutions and their faculty. Through this study, the adult students were be compared to the traditional students and thus defined as the non-traditional student, non-traditional adult student, and the adult student. Kim (2002) introduced an idea that nontraditional students were defined along three basic premises. These premises included the traditional definition of age, as well as background characteristics, and at-risk behaviors. It was in these three categories that the nontraditional students as a population were defined. This diversity of ideas on the definition of nontraditional students was worth examining before beginning any study designed to assist adult students in their success in college. Susan Mancuso (2001) defined adults as:

Persons who have assumed major life responsibilities and commitments such as work, family, and community activities. In addition, adults are considered those who are no longer dependent upon their parents or guardians, who operate independently in society, and whose principle identities have moved beyond the role of full-time students. The characteristics of these individuals are very different from those of traditional students (pp. 165-166).

This definition of the nontraditional student relied on the responsibility of the adult rather than any chronological definitions. Mancuso defined nontraditional students by their actions and ability to become independent citizens, assigning the category of nontraditional students through actions which were controlled by the students themselves. This type of definition, while useful in its comparison between the nontraditional and traditional student, was not the only definition assigned to these students. Villela and Hu (as cited in Fairchild, 2003) included two additions to the definition of the nontraditional students as they stated, “adult learners’ palette of life experience is colored with older age, full-time employment, and the roles of spouse” (p. 11). Fairchild (2003) went on to state “that the combinations of life experience and family configurations are as plentiful and extraordinary as the number of adults themselves” (p. 11). Saunders and Baurer (1998) also attempted to define the nontraditional student.

There is a set of characteristics that typically define nontraditional students. Adult learners tend to be achievement-oriented, highly motivated, and independent. Because they juggle multiple life roles and often cite financial and family responsibility as major concerns, they require flexibility in instructional and advising schedules...Often, nontraditional students report low self-confidence and fear at the beginning of reentry. Their self-consciousness and fear of not being able to keep up with the younger students may require greater contact and reassurance by college faculty and staff...Mature learners exhibit high levels of motivation and attention to detail and the ability to integrate new classroom information with life and work experience (p. 12).

These definitions expanded upon the idea that adults were defined by their ability to gain independence in their lives, adding the notion of chronological age and the roles of a spouse. In addition to these variables, the definition of the adult student began to take on a richness which compared with the students themselves. These adult students, through their diversity, took shape into a heterogeneous group with similarities, but also with a richness which truly defined the group. Bradley and Graham (as cited in Fairchild, 2003), noted that nontraditional students, in contrast to their traditional counterparts, were not actively involved in student organizations, nor were they residential students. These students identified with “social groups [that] are not associated with the college” (p. 11). This heterogeneous group of students operated on the college campus as autonomous members of the same student body. Benschhoff and Lewis (1992) noted that nontraditional students managed their college experience with the “lack of an age cohort” (p. 2). The adult student had become an independent student in relationship to their outside experience, but it was also their independence within the college campus as suggested by Benschhoff and Lewis, which also critically defined this population group. Adult students continued to set themselves apart from their traditional counterparts.

Maureen White (1990) helped summarize the definition of the adult student, summarizing their complexity.

There is no simple, all-inclusive profile for this nontraditional student... They are typically over 25, with such diverse lifestyles and experiences as single parents, displaced homemakers, disabled, employed, under-employed, unemployed, divorced, widowed, seniors, ethnic minorities, immigrants, professionals, welfare

recipients, and low income. These students pursue education for various reasons (pp. 2-3).

These nontraditional students were often defined as a group by name only, as their definition was so diverse that the diversity was truly what set them apart from the traditional student. Atticia Bundy and Timothy Smith (2004) echoed this diversity among nontraditional students as they “can also be those who are the first in their family to attend college (i.e., first generation college students), students of color, students with disabilities, and students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds” (p. 3). “Nontraditional students do not comprise a single population” within this definition, and yet their specific needs must be addressed as a population that contrasts the needs of many traditional students (Oeternaud, 1990, p. 32). Harouff (as cited in Kinsella, 1998), stated “they are often married, work, and have children, so returning to school means making a significant change in their life style” (1996).

Through all of the definitions including age, independence, marital status, responsibility, employment, and a diversity of experience; it was the adjustment that these students encountered that often defined their presence on a college campus. The idea of becoming a student again and balancing the demands that came with the endeavor often overwhelmed the student and caused concern. These students were not necessarily less prepared than their traditional counterparts, but rather they were focused on behaviors that required effort when assimilating into the collegiate culture. Mabry and Corinne (1992) summarized this idea with the notion of the “new student.”

For the new student, the social life of campus is secondary to getting through college quickly and painlessly. The new student is called many things – non-traditional,

reentry, adult learner. Yet, regardless of the name by which these students are called, they are characterized as older than traditional students, financially independent, and lacking recent experience in the classroom and an understanding of college routines (p. 4).

Nontraditional students were a distinct group of students known for their diversity, outside influences, and commitments; and it was the specific needs which accompanied these traits which truly defined the nontraditional student. Nontraditional students were defined by their need to incorporate a diversity of experience with the experience of education.

Nontraditional students within this category were members of an ever-increasing population. While these students were labeled as nontraditional, they must be seen beyond their label. Ogren (2003) stated:

The term “nontraditional” implies that these atypical students are new to higher education and colleges and universities traditionally have not served people like them. While the intention of research on nontraditional students is to better meet their needs, it may also have the unintended consequence of reinforcing the notion that these students are out of place, indirectly discouraging them from interacting with others on campus (p. 641).

This label was far from intended to label these students as anything unequal to their traditional age counterparts. These students were unique in their needs, but they were far from incapable of assimilating into the college environment and being successful students. Spanard (1990) attempted to focus the definition of the adult student, using the idea of independence, family, and the contrast with traditional students while also including a chronological definition:

The average adult student has been defined as being older than 25, taking a half-time course load or less, living off-campus and commuting to classes (or studying through distance learning means), working part-time or more, and generally having some responsibility for contributing to family finance (p. 317).

The nontraditional student was not defined by one simple measure. Nontraditional students were a heterogeneous group with many complexities defining their nature. Nontraditional students were hereby, defined as those students that were 25 years of age or older, encompassing characteristics that may or may not find similarities with the traditional student for a definition in this study. These nontraditional students were part of an increasing population.

Numbers of Nontraditional Students

The population of the modern college has not been solely composed of the traditional student, ages eighteen to twenty-four. Colleges and universities today were composed of a more diverse population in terms of age. No longer was the institution of higher education a bastion of the traditional age college freshman. Crook (1997) addressed the changing face of today's college and university.

Two decades ago, social scientists tended to over-estimate the orderliness of college attendance. Higher education was often depicted as a full-time continuous process that was begun soon after graduation from high school and completed before adulthood. Since then, however, the growing presence of older students on American campuses has forced researchers to revise their preconceptions. Closer examination of attendance patterns has led to more detailed knowledge of how

postsecondary educational careers are conducted. It is now known, for example, that delayed entry to college is quite common (p. 3).

Students were waiting longer to enter college for the first time, increasing the percentage of nontraditional students at American colleges and universities. Nontraditional students were “one of the fastest growing segments “of today’s college population (Fairchild, 2003, p. 11). In 1980, only thirty years ago, the nontraditional student population numbered 4 million (Chao & Good, 2004). This number dramatically grew to its current high in 2010. The number of nontraditional students continued to grow in the United States, with nearly 40% of the total enrollment being classified as nontraditional (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Fall Enrollment By Age In Higher Education

<i>Total fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions, by age: Selected years, 1990 through 2017 [In thousands]</i>							
Age	1990	1995	2000	2005	2008 ¹	2012 ¹	2017 ¹
Total	13,819	14,262	15,312	17,487	18,200	19,048	20,080
14 to 17 years old	177	148	145	199	191	190	211
18 and 19 years old	2,950	2,894	3,531	3,610	3,953	3,940	3,960
20 and 21 years old	2,761	2,705	3,045	3,778	3,723	3,993	3,958
22 to 24 years old	2,144	2,411	2,617	3,072	3,289	3,584	3,753
25 to 29 years old	1,982	2,120	1,960	2,384	2,531	2,658	3,035
30 to 34 years old	1,322	1,236	1,265	1,354	1,434	1,616	1,813
35 years old and over	2,484	2,747	2,749	3,090	3,080	3,066	3,350

¹ Projected.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

(20Expansion of). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2008* (NCES 2009-020), [Table 190](#).

The American nontraditional student was part of an ever-increasing segment of the American college population. This population of students, as it has grown, has become an ever more important component of the American institutions of higher education. In 2000, approximately 6.5 million students enrolled at America’s colleges and universities were adult students. Of these 6.5 million students, Aslanian (2001) noted several statistics that described the population of these nontraditional students (see Table 2).

Table 2

2000 Statistics of Nontraditional Students

Demographic	Percentage of Nontraditional Students
40+	45%
Female	65%
White	87%
Married	66%
\$70,000+ Income	22%
Employed	79%

The number of nontraditional students would continue to grow as the population of the United States continues to age. According to Garvey (2007), the population continued to age.

Demographically, Yavapai county and other counties across the U.S. in Massachusetts, Florida, and Pennsylvania represent how the nation will look in the year 2020. At that time, one in four Americans will be age 65+. Nationally, there

are 34.8 million people age 65+. In 2020, that number will grow to 53.7 million.

And in 2030, when baby boomers arrive, it will reach 70.3 million (p. 793).

The nontraditional student population continued to increase as more people were turning to higher education, who would not have considered college in the past (Lauber, 1995). The impact of these numbers of nontraditional students was even greater when considering the population of community colleges; with 80% of students enrolled over the age of 25 according to the National Center of Educational Statistics (as cited in Lutes, 2004). No matter the institution, the number of nontraditional students grew and continued to grow. Apps (1981) considered this increase in the early 1980s as a “quiet revolution,” similar to the college environment following World War II when “thousands of veterans flooded college campuses to cash in their Government Issue (GI) Bill of Rights and receive a college education” (pp. 11, 16).

GI Bill & Truman Commission

In the GI Bill and the Truman Commission on Higher Education (President’s Commission on Higher Education for American Democracy, 1947) forever changed the landscape of the American system of higher education. The GI Bill and Truman Commission opened the doors of America’s colleges and universities to a large number of students who would not have had the opportunity otherwise. These two actions by the federal government broke down the ivory tower of higher education. The 1944 Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011, para. 1), brought about the first dramatic change in higher education. According to Vaughan (1995), “the GI Bill was a milestone in the federal funding of education...and did much to break down the economic and social barriers to allow millions of Americans to attend

college” (p. 41). This barrier was shattered by the many veterans returning from World War II. The 2.2 million veterans who attended college thanks to the GI Bill left an indelible impression on the landscape of higher education (Kartje, 2000).

These veterans were to dramatically change the nature of the higher education classroom, bringing with them the life and death experiences of war and the maturity of their years. The war veterans surprised even the most elite institutions by their intelligence, knowledge, and analytic abilities. The standards set by this non-traditional student body opened the higher education door wider for women, minorities, and students of all ages (p. 17).

These large numbers of war veterans were the beginning of the boom of nontraditional students at American institutions of higher education, which continued to this day.

The Truman Commission, two years later, brought about the second great change in the educational landscape of American colleges and universities. The President’s Commission on Higher Education, known now as the Truman Commission, determined that all Americans should have access to higher education. “It is obvious, then, that free and universal access to education, in terms of the interest, ability, and need of the student, must be a major goal of American education” (U.S. President’s Commission on Higher Education, 1948, p. 9). At this point in America’s history, post-secondary education became the natural progression in the education system of America. The finding of this commission greatly impacted the role of the community college in America (Ravitch, 1983).

[The Commission’s recommendations] gave great impetus to the burgeoning community college movement, and especially, to the drive to convert junior

colleges, which had been regarded as either adjuncts to universities or extensions to high schools, to community colleges designed to meet the educational needs of the local community, with comprehensive offerings and little or no tuition (p. 18).

These community colleges, while not being new to higher education, received a boost in their enrollment and an adjustment to their educational purpose.

Community Colleges

The community college, while a component of America's higher education system, had a unique history and mission. Saunders and Bauer (1998) described the community college as follows:

Community colleges are a uniquely American institution, serving a very broad range of students and offering programs ranging from academic transfer programs that duplicate the first two years of four-year institutions to unique, single-focus, short programs tailored to meet the demands of business and industry for specialized training. The diversity and breadth of these two-year schools make the analysis of their campus climates challenging. Instead of one uniform student body with similar goals and objectives, similar programs, and similar lengths of stay, community colleges typically have many subgroups within their student bodies (p. 13).

These various missions reflected the evolution of the community college, but through this evolution there was a consensus among their ultimate purpose.

According to Peters (1980) there were four primary functions of community colleges. These functions included preparation for transfer to four-year institutions, career training, continuing education, and community service. No matter which of the roles that the community college served, its primary role was to serve the citizens of a local

community. These citizens included a large population of nontraditional students. Dougherty (as cited in Bragg, 2001), stated that “the community college today is the single largest and most important portal into higher education” (pp. 94-95). This important function, while playing an essential role in today’s counties and towns, relied on the expansions of a limited system of colleges into an established network. This growth took several steps in Georgia and throughout the nation.

Community colleges owed their history to several beginnings. In the Midwest, community colleges owed their history to the junior and senior college system of the mid 1800s. At the same time in New England and other northeastern states, the normal school was the beginning of community colleges. In Georgia, colleges began as the outgrowths of the state agricultural and mechanicals schools of the early 1900s (Kartje, 2000; Ogren, 2003; Hampton, 1980). Whatever their history, community colleges had evolved into their modern incarnation.

In the Midwest, community colleges dated back to the mid-1800s. William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago, separated “junior” and “senior” colleges after being influenced by Tappan of the University of Michigan and Folwell at the University of Minnesota according to Cohen & Brawer; Rudolph; and Thornton (as cited in Kartje, 2000). “Modeled after the European universities and secondary schools, it was thought that this divided system would strengthen weaker colleges as they adopted junior college roles” (Kartje, 2000, p. 15). Students “would be better off remaining in their home communities until greater maturity enabled a few of them to go to the university in a distant region” (Cohen & Brawer, 1987, p. 9). It was these junior colleges that would later become the modern community college, autonomous of their “senior” counterparts. These junior

colleges were not the only beginning of the current system of community colleges. In the northeast, state normal schools were yet another foundation of today's community colleges.

In 1839 Massachusetts established the first state normal school. Normal schools followed in New York and Connecticut. By 1870, normal schools were located in the Mid-Atlantic States, Midwest, and California. Southern States followed suit in the 1880s and 1890s. By 1897 there were 167 normal schools (Clifford, 1995, p. 4). These normal schools were established to provide elementary-level teacher certification. The roots of these schools “resulted from nineteenth-century education reformers’ efforts to adapt the German teacher seminary and the French *ecole normale*” to train the American teacher (Ogren, 2003, p. 641). Students at these schools came with job experience and many had been teachers prior to their enrollment. These schools catered to the nontraditional student, even in the 1800s. Ogren (2003) stated:

In addition to setting fairly easy standards for admission, many state normal schools assured accessibility by providing detailed directions to campus and individual assistance with settling in. Many normal schools did everything short of printing train schedules in their catalogs (p. 650).

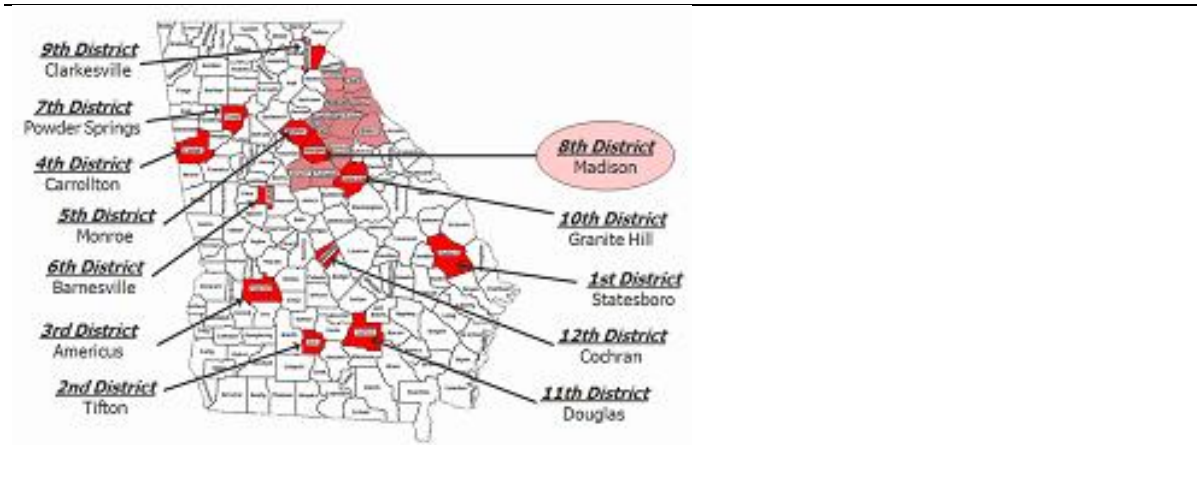
The typical population of state normal schools became the nontraditional population of America's colleges and universities. These schools proved that nontraditional students, while not a part of the mainstream traditional student population, were an early part of the higher education system.

The early community colleges in Georgia owed their establishment to an “outgrowth of the old district agricultural and mechanical schools” (Hampton, 1980, p. 89). In Georgia there were twelve Agriculture and Mechanical schools established in twelve congressional

districts to meet the needs of the population of Georgia as shown in the Madison A&M Story map (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Original Georgia Agricultural & Mechanical Schools



These twelve A&M schools formed the basis of the early community college system in Georgia. These community colleges were invaluable to Georgia's citizens. They were only the beginning and many additional colleges opened across the state. These colleges brought education within the grasp of many nontraditional students (Hampton, 1980).

The establishment of community and junior colleges throughout Georgia has created easy access to higher education for thousands of adults. To complete two-year degrees in specific career areas or the first two years of a four-year degree, most of Georgia's citizen's need to travel no more than 25 miles from their homes (p. 88).

These community colleges in Georgia, from their early roots as off-shoots of the twelve A&M schools, mirrored the national community college system.

In 1908, the second district A&M School opened its doors for the first time in Tifton, Georgia. W.W. Driskell was the first principle of the newly formed college. In June

of 1910, the first class of the second district A&M School graduated. In 1924 the school was renamed the South Georgia A&M College and later the Georgia State College for Men (GSCM) in 1929. In 1933, GSCM officially became ABAC; named after the first president of the University of Georgia and a Georgia delegate to sign the U.S. Constitution. In 1953, ABAC became a part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1972 ABAC became the largest residential junior college in Georgia. On May 17, 2006 ABAC became a state college and on February 20, 2008, ABAC celebrated 100 years (Chason, 2009).

In yet another evolution in the community college system of Georgia, the institutions of Technical College System of Georgia are becoming the new community college in Georgia. These institutions have begun to seek accreditation, and have begun to form the new community college system in Georgia. This evolution is in its early stages with many of the old A&M schools moving into the role of four-year or senior colleges.

It was not until the mid 1960s to mid 1970s that community colleges came into their own. Prior to these years, “the two-year college was such a peripheral part of the total higher education picture that it was simply incorporated into the statistics of colleges and universities or of secondary education” (Peters, 1980, p. 34). These community colleges experienced phenomenal growth during the 1960s and 1970s as did higher education in general. With this phenomenal growth came an increase in the influence of these colleges. According to Peters (1980) the influences specific to community colleges were:

1. An increasing shift from the manufacturing to the service industries produced a larger demand for skilled technicians and paraprofessionals, especially in the allied health fields;

2. Faith in the power of education to open doors to social and economic opportunity caused new entrants into higher education to be more career oriented in their educational goals;
3. The egalitarian spirit of “The Great Society” stimulated federal legislation and aid directed toward the community college as a key institution in bringing social reform and opportunity for minorities;
4. The shorter commuting distances to most community colleges and their lower tuitions make it possible for working people to engage in higher education through part-time study;
5. The “open door” admission policy of most community colleges rendered past academic difficulties less of a barrier to entry; and
6. Competition for admission to four-year colleges has increased, because most community colleges served as “finishing schools” for young women or “prep schools” for young men and women (pp. 34-35).

With the increase in community colleges and in their influence, came the need for these same colleges to increase their focus on the nontraditional student which was the original focus of many early precursors to these colleges. Modern community college populations were not traditionally diverse at their inception. The early student population of these community colleges was “traditional age, male, white, and college-bound” (Bragg, 2001, p. 93). These colleges were now more diverse, which included many more nontraditional students. With this increase in nontraditional students came a new set of rules. Community colleges could not be business as usual and must, as Garvey (2007) stated, apply a “New Rule of Business” (p. 494).

Institutions must wrestle with many issues including their traditional mission, how and on whom taxpayer and other monies are spent, teaching methodology, learning outcome measurements, scheduling, utilization of space, and whether enrichment courses should be considered educational (p. 494).

This “new rule of business” found its primary foundations in adult learning theory, which was built upon the student development theory of Chickering, Perry, and Kohlberg. This framework was established through the First Year Experience program which was to assist traditional and nontraditional students alike.

Student Development Theory

Chickering’s Seven Vectors of Development (Chickering & Reiser, 1993), Perry’s Theory of Intellectual and Ethical Development (Perry, 1970), and Kohlberg’s Cognitive-Stage Theory of the Development of Moral Judgment (Kohlberg, 1984). were three theories upon which the First Year Experience programs were based. These theories suggested the stages that freshmen went through in their transition into college. In Chickering’s theory, the first vector was developing competence. The competencies that Chickering described in this first vector were intellectual, physical, manual, and interpersonal (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). The intellectual included the mind and its development, to include the ability to observe, analyze, and synthesize beyond the most basic of concepts and ideas (Chickering & Reisser). Physical and manual competencies included strength, artistic achievement, and leisure (Chickering & Reisser). Interpersonal competency was the ability to communicate effectively with others and to be in tune with their needs and the needs of the group (Chickering & Reisser). The second vector was managing emotion which included recognition, acceptance, and coping with emotions. It also included healing from

any emotional wounds and learning self-expression and self-control (Chickering & Reisser). Chickering's third vector was moving through autonomy toward interdependence. The steps of this vector were related as dependence, becoming independent, and interdependence. Once autonomy was reached through independence, Chickering included the crucial step of realizing that "one cannot operate in a vacuum" and that to be truly autonomous one must not rely on others for everything, but must know when to ask for help" (Chickering & Reisser, p. 47). Vector four was developing mature interpersonal relationships. These mature relationships included tolerance and the capacity for intimacy. Tolerance according to Chickering went beyond being able to merely cohabitate in the same space, but rather seeking new and diverse experiences as well as a self-awareness of one's own differences and biases. The capacity for intimacy was choosing healthy relationships and the ability to work through the tough times (Chickering & Reisser). The fifth vector was establishing identity. Chickering identified seven areas that must develop before a student truly completed this vector. These areas were:

comfort with the body and appearance, comfort with gender and sexual orientation, sense of social, historical, and cultural context, clarification of self-concept through roles and life-style, sense of self in response to feedback from valued others, self-acceptance and self-esteem, and personal stability and integration (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 49).

Vector six was developing purpose. The three-part purpose that Chickering described were knowing one's career and vocational goals, knowing one's personal interests, and understanding commitments to family and interpersonal relationships (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). The final vector was developing integrity. This final vector as Chickering

described it included the three stages of humanizing values, personalizing values, and developing congruence (Chickering & Reisser).

Perry's Theory of Intellectual and Ethical Development included nine stages that were divided into four groups. The first group which included stages one and two was that of dualism. In these two stages things were black and white and the students relied on authority figures to tell them the right and wrong way to do things (Upcraft, Gardner, & Associates, 1989). The second group which included the next two stages was that of multiplicity. Gardner described these stages as where students acknowledged that there were multiple points of view, but that all of these points of view were equal. They also tended to resist authority during these stages (Upcraft et al.). Stages five and six found the student placing multiple points of view into a larger picture and trying to determine where their own point of view fit. Often times the students would not question other points of view, fearing that they would be putting their point of view above that of another person. In these stages authority figures were valued for the wisdom and experience that they brought (Upcraft et al.). The final three stages of development were grouped as commitment in relativism. In these final stages, Perry described the students as having an understanding of "their responsibility in a pluralistic world, establishing their identities in the process... identity and life-style are established consistent with [the] students' personal themes" (Upcraft et al., p. 44).

Kohlberg's Cognitive-Stage Theory of the Development of Moral Judgment consisted of six stages that were combined into three groups. The first of these groups was the preconventional level in which a person understood right and wrong and good and bad but saw them as a result of rewards and punishments or as the power of the authoritarian. In

the first stage of this group, physical consequences determined right and wrong while in the second stage it was the satisfaction of personal needs or the needs of others that determined right and wrong (Upcraft et al.). The second two stages were comprised within the conventional level in which loyalty and duty determined obedience (Upcraft et al.). Stages five and six were the pre-conventional, autonomous, or principle level. In this stage moral values were defined and a social contract was established with society (Upcraft et al.). It was through these stages and the questioning of morals that Kohlberg argued was the driving force for the development of personal moral and ethical identity. Traditional and nontraditional students were on different stages in their development, but their development followed the same path. This development could also be affected by Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EQ), was grounded in the idea that “we have two very different ways of knowing- the rational and the emotional” (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 381). Goleman’s EQ had “five primary domains”: “knowing one’s emotions, managing one’s emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships” (Goleman, 1995, p. 43). People were not products of their intelligence alone, but rather a combination of intelligence and emotional reactions to life situations. According to Goleman, 80% of life success could be determined by emotional intelligence (p. 34). This idea was even more important as emotional intelligence developed with age and nontraditional students tended to be at a different level in their EQ than their traditional counterparts. Through the works of Gardner, Goleman, Elias et al., and Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (as cited in Liff, 2003), there were six elements of emotional

intelligence identified. These elements were “self-awareness and advocacy, regulation of mood and behavior, goal setting, self-monitoring, empathy, and social skills” (p. 29).

Self-awareness and self-advocacy referred to the students’ ability to “recognize and understand their own feelings” (Liff, 2003, p. 29). Self-regulation of emotions referred to the students’ ability to “tolerate and manage feelings” (p. 30). Goal setting was the ability to control emotions in the establishment of goals. This element was the idea that students could not only set plans, but also create alternate plans for when there were difficulties in reaching their goals (Liff, 2003). Self-monitoring was the idea that students were their own advisor and that they could track their own progress within the college environment (Liff, 2003). Empathy was the ability to both recognize and understand the feelings of others (Liff, 2003). Social skills were the accumulation of the previous five elements.

Self-awareness, regulation of emotions, goal setting, and empathy merge with other psychodynamic elements to generate a capacity to form and maintain relationships, that is, to be social. A college campus is a social arena, both in and out of the classroom. As the active learning process finds its way into the halls of higher education, interpersonal exchange facilitates achievement as well as social abilities (p. 32).

EQ in the nontraditional student was their progress in social integration which allowed for success in institutions of higher education. As a culmination of student development theory and emotional intelligence, adult theory focused the science of teaching onto the specific needs of nontraditional students.

Adult Learning Theory

Rivera and Davis (1988) considered two stages in the evolution of adult learning theory. In the first stage, Lindeman, Overstreet, Meiklejohn, Powell, and Bergevin considered adult education as “a unique form of learning” (as cited in Rivera & Davis, para. 19). This first stage focused on the production of mature behavior. In addition, community development and collaboration were an accumulation of this stage. Lindeman mentored Knowles, who developed the theory of adult education in the second phase. Knowles considered nontraditional students to be self-directed and independent (Stoffel, 1992). Knowles (1962) listed five new perspectives in adult education. Knowles postulated these five perspectives as he considered the need for adult education.

Should it come to pass that education is redefined as a lifelong process rather than as a function of youthful years, then with the emergence into adulthood of the first generation of youth who have been taught how to learn rather than what to think, the role of adult education in society would begin to be transformed (p. 276).

This thought process of Knowles required a complete rethinking of the education process and with such would transform the education of nontraditional students. First, adults would consider education and going to school as normal as any day of going to work. Second, institutions of higher education would increasingly offer programs designed specifically for the needs of the adult student returning to the classroom. Third, “with youth entering into adulthood knowing how to learn, the curriculum of adult education would gradually turn from consisting of a hodgepodge of remedial activities to a positive program of sequential development” (p. 277). Fourth, adult education would become integrated, bringing “a sense of unity and articulation into the field of youth education” (p. 278). Fifth, communities

would become “educative” (p. 278). These perspectives through a complete rethinking of adult education had yet to come to pass, but described the new process of nontraditional student education and mapped a path for adult theory.

The development of an adult learning theory was important as it provided opportunity to the nontraditional student. “Every person must be offered an opportunity to develop fully his unique capabilities as an individual, family member, worker, and citizen to preserve and strengthen the free society” (Liveright, 1968, p. 5). As the traditional student was given *No Child Left Behind* in 2001, so too the nontraditional student had their theory to leave no student behind. Adult theory must also consider change. “During adulthood the meaning of past experiences and the influence they have on the way a person perceives and responds to new events continually change” (Knox, 1977, p. 11). This evolution was based around periods of change in the lives of nontraditional students. These periods of change were often associated with family, work, and community. This change often led the nontraditional student to feelings of vulnerability (Knox, 1977). This change and the vulnerability that came with it often followed “predictable life style shifts” such as affiliation, achievement, expansion, and time orientation (pp. 367-371). Affiliation referred to the need of the nontraditional student to, both formally and informally, associate with others. Achievement was associated with past experiences and the fulfillment of future goals. Expansion referred to an expansion of interests, personality, and values among other things. Last, time orientation was a consideration of how “the number of years remaining begins to take on more significance than the number of years lived” (Knox, 1977, p. 371).

The process of adult learning theory known as andragogy was the “honest attempt to focus on the learner. In this sense, it does provide an alternative to the methodology-

centered instructional design perspective” (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 1). In this theory the nontraditional student directed the educational model. “Andragogy is any intentional and professionally guided activity that aims at change in the adult person” (p. 60). Knowles (1969) described the origin of andragogy and adult learning theory.

American adult education theorists are dipping heavily into theoretical works by European adult educators, especially German and Yugoslavian, which have accumulated since the late nineteenth century under the label andragogy. Derived from the stem of the Greek work for mature male, *Aner (Andros)*, this label distinguishes the study of adult learning and teaching from the study of youth learning and teaching symbolized by the label pedagogy (p. 28).

Gardner (as cited in Mancuso, 2001), related the need for multiple teaching methods for nontraditional students. This need for multiple methods was considered in the work of Peters and Associates (1980) who described adult education as a complex field with many components.

Adult education can be characterized as an amorphous, hybrid field, comprised of a variety of domestic and international components. Its clientele are as varied as the entire adult population, and its methods include all the arrangements between learner and mentor ever contrived by the pedagogist and the andragogist alike (p. 1).

Experience was the key to nontraditional student learning. “The resource of the highest value in adult education is the learner’s experience...Experience is the adult learner’s living text book” according to Lindeman (as cited in White, 1990). “In an adult class the student’s experience counts for as much as the teacher’s knowledge” according to Gessner (as cited in

White, 1990). In adult learning theory, nontraditional students were not in the classroom, but rather a part of the classroom.

Andragogy and pedagogy were two separate theories. Octerlaud (1990) attempted to differentiate between the two separate learning theories. First andragogy created learning objectives in conjunction with adult input while in pedagogy the learning objective were created without personal input from the learner. Second, andragogy was influenced by independent, self-directed learners, while pedagogy considered students as being more dependent with a subject-centered approach as opposed to the adult problem-centered approach. Third, andragogy dealt with a heterogeneous group of learners while pedagogy dealt with a homogeneous group. Fourth, andragogy progressed in subject matter with the readiness of the adult learner while pedagogy advanced with age defined grades. Fifth, andragogy captured the past experience of the adult life and pedagogy directed students early in life with limited experience. Sixth, andragogy provided internal motivators while pedagogy used external motivators. Seventh, “an andragogical setting is relaxed, trusting, collaborative, and supportive. A pedagogical setting often is authority-oriented, formal, and competitive” (p. 31). Eighth, andragogy used criterion referenced evaluation and pedagogy used norm-referenced criteria (Octerlaud, 1990). The adult theory of andragogy was unique from pedagogy, as were the nontraditional students to which it applied. This theory was designed around the unique learning style of nontraditional students.

Nontraditional Student Learning Style

Nontraditional students were not their traditional student counterparts. Justice and Dornan (2001) remarked on the trend to study how nontraditional students learned rather than on their aptitudes, motivations, and backgrounds as earlier noted in Kasworm (1990)

and Smith and Pourchot (as cited in Justice and Dornan, 2001). Nontraditional students came to college with different backgrounds and experiences. Hunter (2006b) noted that students were not static beings entering the classroom just as had the last students. It was important to consider the experiences that each student entered with into college.

According to Kasworm (2005), the adult student had brought their unique and diverse background of personal and career experiences. These experiences created the individual adult and how they related as students, often varying from the traditional student. Adult students required a different approach to maximize their learning. Kasworm and Pike (as cited in Giancola, Munz, and Trares, 2008), called for a “different model for academic performance,” while Bamber and Tett, and Carney-Crompton and Tann (as cited in Giancola, Munz, and Trares, 2008), emphasized the use of “different teaching methods more relevant to adult learners, and distinct support systems within higher education” (p. 215). According to Säljö, and Marton et al. (as cited in Kember, Jenkins, and Ng, 2004), there were six conceptions of learning, with Säljö responsible for the first five. These six categories were: quantitative increase in knowledge, memorization, acquisition of facts, abstract of meaning, interpretive process, and changing as a person (p. 84). It was the last of these that Marton et al. (as cited in Kember, Jenkins, and Ng, 2004), added for the distinct application for nontraditional students. This category of learning could be applied to the distinct experiences that the nontraditional student brought to the classroom. “Higher education for adults is one activity among many in which adults can participate to meet other specific needs, such as learning a new job-related skill or preparing for a new career altogether” (Fairchild, 2003, p. 12). Again, these nontraditional students were looking for a transformational experience.

Time for nontraditional students was valuable. “Adults are busy people. They do not have time for irrelevancies, and are especially resentful when they feel their time is being wasted. Therefore, they want a learning situation to be meaningful to their life’s circumstance” as stated by Gerstner-Horvarth (as cited in Rhodes & Carifio, 1999, p. 522). Teaching for adult students should be focused on their needs and not the needs of the traditional student when those needs diverge. Nontraditional students were also learning goal oriented, as opposed to entering college simply as the next step of their education (Harju & Eppler, 1997). This learning goal orientation, according to the research done by Harju and Eppler (1997) indicated that “intrinsic motivation to acquire knowledge and develop skills is greater for older nontraditional students, whereas younger traditional students are more concerned with external evaluations and living up to the expectations of others” which confirmed the earlier research of Werring, and Wolfgang and Dowling (as cited by Harju and Eppler, 1997).

Nontraditional students, as described by Nunn (1994), were more achievement oriented than their traditional counterparts. Through this need, nontraditional students should be given opportunities for measurable achievement. This motivation was not to be confused with the external influence which motivated traditional students. Nontraditional students were motivated by “gaining new knowledge and skills” as their achievements (Eppler, Carsen-Plentl, & Harju, 2000). Nontraditional students also reported “they prefer active hands on, practical examples and discussions” (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992, para. 16). Holtzclaw (as cited in Bishop-Clark and Lynch, 1992), described the preferred learning experience to be “tangible and realistic” (p. 16).

Schlossberg et al. (1989) identified three parts of the nontraditional students' transition into entering and returning to college. The three phases of an adult's learning transition were "...moving in, moving through, and moving out" (pp. 15-16). Moving in, referred to the familiarization of "rules, regulations, norms, and expectations." The moving through phase consisted of balancing their many commitments with the educational process and finding the support required to be successful. The moving out phase referred to the transition from college to their next intended goal (p. 16). Successful completion of these three phases was needed to successfully navigate the nontraditional student through their college experience with the various life experience they brought to their educational experience and with the unique learning style with which they approached their education. In addition to the classroom needs of the nontraditional student, there were also considerations for their recruitment and enrollment.

Adult Enrollment & Recruitment

Nontraditional students have entered colleges and universities at increasing rates and have become a larger segment of the total enrollment of all institutions of higher education. Cookson (1989) examined this increase in the enrollment of nontraditional students.

A number of factors have influenced this trend in adult enrollment. These factors include changing social norms regarding women's education and participation in the labor force, changing economic conditions and rising standards of living, increasing acceptance of the notion of lifelong learning, and increasing requirements for occupation-related learning during adulthood (p. 50).

Spanard (1990) cited the reason for nontraditional student participation in higher education as not "an end in itself but a means to future change or coping with changes that have

already occurred” (p. 312). These factors illustrated that the increased enrollment of nontraditional students was a permanent trend. One segment of this increased nontraditional student enrollment was that of reentry women. “Today, the reentry female population is much more racially diverse, particularly with growing numbers of African American women of varying socioeconomic status” (Thomas, 2001, p. 140). Mohney and Anderson (1988) conducted a study of these nontraditional female students to discover their motivation.

Interviews with 38 women, ages 25-46, indicated that the timing for women returning to college was determined by the state of their relationships and life events and not solely by motivation. Enrollment was often postponed until children were “old enough,” family responsibilities were lessened, or fellow workers or employers would not be inconvenienced (p. 271).

Mendelsohn (1986) confirmed this idea that nontraditional female students often returned after putting their education “on the back burner” (p. 1).

Smith and Domino (as cited in White, 1990), suggested four factors in recruiting nontraditional students. These factors included intellectual altruism, career orientation, job independence motivation, and personal development. Intellectual altruism was identified as desire to know and have the opportunity to help others. Career orientation referred to the desire to achieve personal career goals. Job independence motivation considered the process of becoming one’s own boss. Personal development was the engagement in activities to better one’s self (p. 33). Kevern et al., and Ofori (as cited in Carney-Crompton and Tan, 2002), spoke directly to the recruitment of nontraditional students and the recruitment efforts of colleges and universities. Colleges and universities should “re-

evaluate their admissions criteria, to devise more appropriate indicators of academic success among nontraditional students” (p. 150). With the admissions standards for nontraditional student enrollment, there was no cookie-cutter approach that would work.

Another distinct population of nontraditional student enrollment was the reverse transfer. Reverse transfer students were those students who transferred to a two-year or community college after having attended a baccalaureate institution of higher education according to Heinze and Daniels; Lee; Mitchell & Grafton; Renkiewicz et al.; and Winter and Harris, 1999 (as cited in Winter, Harris, & Ziegler, 2001). Townsend and Dever (1999) identified 13% of community college students as reverse transfer students (p. 7). Completer reverse transfer students were those students who earned an associate’s degree before transferring while non-completer reverse transfer students were those who transferred with no degree (Winter, Harris, & Ziegler, 2001). These reverse transfer students entered community college for specialized training for employment (Bragg, 2001). To recruit these students, Winter et al. (2001) suggested that:

Efforts that target non-completer students should emphasize programs that contribute to earning an associate’s degree, improving basic skills, and transferring successfully to a baccalaureate institution. Recruitment programs that target completer students would emphasize skill acquisition for career change, training application to current employment, and the convenience aspects of the community college (p. 280).

Nontraditional Student Educational Readiness

Nontraditional students have entered institutions of higher education with varying degrees of educational readiness. Some nontraditional students were distinctly ready for the

challenges that they would face, while others were not quite as prepared. This educational readiness was based upon the strengths and weaknesses that nontraditional students brought to the equation. Draves (1984) spoke to the varying degrees of readiness in which students entered the classrooms.

Some will come with positive expectations about interacting in a group; some will not. Some will come wanting to be leaders in the group; others will have already decided before the class starts to be passive or take a minimal role in group presentations. Some will see the group as an opportunity to display talent and knowledge while others will see it as a possible threat to exposing their lack of talent and knowledge. Some will have a degree of proficiency in the topic; others will have been acquainted more superficially. Some will have gained a negative encounter with the topic, or gained some misinformation (p. 12).

Whomever the nontraditional student, they entered college with strengths and weaknesses.

There was much strength that the nontraditional student entered with into the classrooms of higher education. These strengths were their “maturity, self-discipline, and motivation” (Haponski, 1982, p. 154). Haponski (1982) further emphasized the strengths of the nontraditional student as including more experience, greater eagerness to learn, more intensive commitment, less time to waste, better sense of goals, more willingness to question, greater expectation of good teaching, and greater appreciation upon completion (pp. 153-154). Expectation was also a strength of the nontraditional student upon entering college. These students did not necessarily feel that their methods for preparation in college would be the only path to success. Nontraditional students, while unsure of their potential, were willing to employ many methods for success.

For many traditional students, college is merely four more years of high school with increased freedom to party. And many students who did well in high school by memorizing facts the night before an exam are shattered when the technique fails to work in college...On the other hand, I have rarely heard whines or excuses from adult students (Schindley, 2002, pp. 7-8).

In addition to their expectations, their experience was also a strength. "Older students add a depth to class discussion that can only come from experience - from having lived and coped, tried and failed, tried and succeeded, and survived" (Schindley, 2002, p. 8).

The nontraditional student made sacrifices to attend college, and it was through these sacrifices that the nontraditional student also demonstrated their other strengths. The nontraditional student was settled, responsible, and serious about learning (Schindley, 2002). These students were often focused on their educational endeavor much more intently than their traditional counterparts. Hardin (2000) used the strengths of the nontraditional student to offer a word of encouragement.

You are more well-rounded and at ease with people than traditional age students. Being older, you have had more experiences in life, and these experiences will serve you well as you pursue your degree. You've met more people and been more places. You will be able to interact more easily with others (even professors). As you go further in your academic career, your life experiences will serve you well (p. 8).

Brown (as cited in Orlofsky and Smith, 1997), labeled nontraditional students as willing and eager to work, able to stay on task, goal oriented, analytical, and mature. Gianakos (1996) stated "compared to younger counterparts, adults make more pragmatic education and

career decisions, have more realistic self-concepts based on richer life experience, and are motivated to seek new careers that better fit personal values and involve meaningful work” (p. 3). This common association of adults could be contributed to their life experiences.

Donaldson et al. (1999) described the nontraditional student’s application of information and their processes. The mental schema that the nontraditional student used to process information made “learning more personally meaningful” (p. 5). The application of new information to their “real-life contexts” also provided a strength to the nontraditional student learner (p. 5). These students’ application of information was their strength.

Richardson (as cited in Justice and Dornan, 2001), “found that older students were more likely to adopt a deeper, comprehension-focused approach to learning, whereas younger student tended to adopt a more surface-level, assessment-focused approach” (p. 237).

Nontraditional students desired to understand what they learned and how their life incorporated into that learning. “Nontraditional students actively and positively incorporate their diverse resources, work and life experiences, and high motivation to resolve potential barriers to their college education” (Chao & Good, 2004, p. 8).

In addition to their strengths, nontraditional students also entered college with weaknesses. Nontraditional students entered college with unique weaknesses. Phillips (2000) described these weaknesses in the apprehension of nontraditional students: “What is it really like to be in college at midlife? Ask any adult student and you will most likely get a two-edged answer: It’s as exciting as anything...and scary as hell” (p. 10). Nontraditional students faced greater fears that they would fail in college and greater pressures from external sources such as family and other responsibilities (Haponski, 1982). In addition to this fear of failure and outside pressures, nontraditional students also faced an internal

conflict. These students harbored a feeling of poor self confidence. “In some cases even before reaching age 40, adults lacked confidence in their ability to do things outside the familiar or routine. It has also been noted that “in test situations, highly anxious individuals learned less rapidly than others” (Weldfore, 1951, as cited in Brunner, 1959, p. 9).

Nontraditional students also faced feelings of anxiety. This anxiety took many forms for these nontraditional students. “Making a decision to go to college is a big step – one that will be accompanied by feelings of fear, anxiety, and anticipation of hard work” (Schindley, 2002, p. 55). Nontraditional students faced the major problem areas of exam anxiety, time allotment, and role conflict (Patterson & Blank, 1985). These problem areas which brought anxiety were often related to issues which did not directly relate to their educational experience, but most definitely ran parallel to their experience, and were far closer connected than they initially appeared. These issues were employment problems, limited academic experience, long hiatus from school, and responsibilities which limited change (Claus, 1986). Nontraditional students also reported issues of “lower levels of campus involvement, rusty academic skills, and busy lifestyles” (Donaldson et al., 1999, p. 5). Miller noted (as cited in Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992) that much of these issues faced were related to the negative self-image of nontraditional students. This perception of self-image also translated into their perception of memory.

Memory was yet another weakness that nontraditional students perceived to be an issue. Whether or not this issue actually existed was not completely relevant, it was the perception itself that often hindered the nontraditional student. “Although traditional and nontraditional students reported equal levels of memory ability, however, the data suggested that perceived memory abilities may have affected performance for older students more

than younger ones” (Justice & Dornan, 2001, p. 246). “If older students perceive their memory abilities to be poorer than those of their younger peers, this might affect strategy use and academic performance” (Justice & Dornan, 2001, p. 236). While the perception of memory was most certainly an issue for nontraditional students, in most cases actual memory was not the issue. Nontraditional students, barring illness, had the ability to learn and remember (Thinking About More Education, 1998).

Often times, professors and instructors of adults reported another weakness of nontraditional students in the “willingness [of the nontraditional student] to expose their personal lives – a quality that many instructors find unsettling” (Stoffel, 1992, p. 12). These personal issues often included family, undeveloped skills, poor survival skills, finances, child care, multiple roles, as well as a lack of self-confidence, and lack of self-esteem (White & Smith, 1988, p. 8). As nontraditional students were often much more willing to open-up, the professor needed to understand the uniqueness of the nontraditional student. Often times the nontraditional student, while they found themselves in different roles within the college or university, were peers or even older than the professors themselves (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992). This dynamic required intentional efforts on the part of the professor. This relationship, built by intentional efforts, was even more critical for nontraditional students as they experienced a greater impact from bad classes or teachers (Dill & Henley, 1998).

Barriers

There were many barriers that nontraditional students faced when entering higher educations. These barriers required institutions to implement services to meet the need of nontraditional students (Fairchild, 2003; Mercer, 1993, as cited in Keith, 2007). Such

barriers might have been internal which were often related to the weaknesses of the nontraditional student, or external which may be out of their own control. Tinto (1993) further categorized these barriers as situational, dispositional, and institutional. Situational barriers were those barriers such as employment and family obligations. Dispositional barriers were those that were psychological in nature. Institutional barriers, as they were described, were those barriers within the institutions created through incompatible hours of operation and other issues not congruent with the needs of nontraditional students. The situational and institutional barriers were external in nature while the dispositional barrier was internal. One such internal barrier was the self-image of nontraditional students. “Although most adults come to class mentally ready to learn, at the same time they may be inhibited from learning by poor self-image” (Draves, 1984, p. 8). Another such internal barrier was stress. While all students entered college with certain levels of stress, through a combination of other barriers and weaknesses, stress became an issue with nontraditional students. Schindley (2002) gave advice to nontraditional students as they entered college.

One way to control stress is to really believe in yourself. Since people aren’t born with that ability, it takes a certain amount of effort. In fact, you might need to constantly remind yourself that you are capable of succeeding, that you have what it takes to succeed, and that you are determined to succeed (p. 50).

A key to the success of nontraditional students was their ability to “learn to deal with academic adversity and not let it dissuade them from their goal” (Goldsmith & Archambault, 1997, p. 25). The ability to cope with this barrier according to Goldsmith and Archambault (1997) was the ability to place the adversities that were faced into their proper perspectives.

Nontraditional students were not hindered only by internal barriers, but also by external barriers. Colleges and universities were institutions for the traditional student. As such, these institutions of higher education often overlooked the needs of the nontraditional student. As a nontraditional student arrived on campus, they were often faced with the impression that they did not belong (Tinto, 1993). This feeling was an issue where the internal and external barriers of the nontraditional student met. Schindley (2002) considered this issue as she addressed these adult students.

“Your attitude is all wrong. You’re letting the idea of college intimidate you. You are an adult. You are self-supporting. You make decisions daily. You know who you are...You are a customer. They are there for you. However, the rules, the programs, are all designed for eighteen-year-olds who need guidance to get from here to there. But you, as an adult, can go in and tell them what you want and get it” (p. 15).

These external barriers were faced by the nontraditional students because college was not the next phase of their life as with traditional students. Rather, college played a part in the current phase of the nontraditional student’s life.

Traditional-age students entering a residential college are separated from their old friends and ways of doing things. Adults entering a community college are not separated from their old life but instead are faced with the task of integrating their new life into their old (p. 23).

Nontraditional students needed to face both life and college, integrating both.

Nontraditional students brought far greater responsibilities with them to the college classroom (Tanabe & Tanabe, 2007; Dill & Henley, 1998). According to the Commission

for a Nation of Life-long Learners (1997), as cited in Mancuso, 2001, institutions of higher education have presented barriers through “a lack of flexibility in calendar and scheduling, academic content, modes of instruction, and availability of service” (p. 166). “At present, most institutions are ill equipped to take on the diverse needs of their adult student population” (Fairchild, 2003, p. 14). The nontraditional student had responsibilities vying for access to their time, and the lack of flexibility on the part of colleges did a disservice to the student (Keith, 2007). These students were responsible for their families as well as their class work and homework, and these family responsibilities often included their children and spouse as well as their aging parents (Hart, 2003; Kinsella, 1998). Mohny and Anderson (1988) indicated the demands of family responsibilities were most often cited as the reason for not earlier attending college. Nontraditional students also tended to work full-time jobs more than their traditional counterparts, creating another barrier (Kinsella, 1998, para. 9). This time management barrier was amplified as faculty addressed the issues of a growing number of underprepared traditional students. “Academic policies must be written to both encourage work to be done in a timely manner and to understand the struggles adult students have to undertake to accomplish their goals” (Goldsmith & Archambault, 1997, p. 35). Nontraditional students, in their increasing numbers, were “financial lifesavers for colleges” and for the sake of both the college and the learner, their needs must be met (Patterson & Blank, 1985, p. 3).

Nontraditional Student Motivation

“For these adults, one who delayed the pursuit or completion of college when they were adolescents, returning to college at a nontraditional age is no easy task” (Babineau & Packard, 2008, p. 109). “Returning to school as a nontraditional student...is often a period

of both intense rewards and difficult compromise” (Thomas, 2001, p. 154). This dichotomy of thought required great motivation from the nontraditional student. Nontraditional students were motivated by a pragmatic goal (Tough, 1968, as cited in Cross, 1982; Patterson & Blank, 1985). This motivation to apply the knowledge they received in the institution of higher education dictated the goal of the institution. This idea that there was something valuable at college that could be applied to their life situations indicated that the nontraditional student had an increasingly positive view of higher education. This positive view was a result of “changing beliefs by adults and our society about the importance of a college credential linked to work stability, financial support, and related life opportunities” (Kilgore, 2003, p. 4). These nontraditional students felt that pursuing a college degree would yield “a return on their investment of time, money, and effort” (Tharp, 1988, as cited in Fairchild, 2003, p. 11). This return on investment also translated to the nontraditional student’s ranking of importance of subjects. Nontraditional students were more likely to rank a course based upon its “ability to further their goals” (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992, para. 15).

Bauman et al., (2004) indicated three categories of reasons that nontraditional students pursued higher education. These three categories were career, self-improvement, and family. The category of career included ideas such as career competitiveness and burnout. The category of self-improvement included regret for not having continued an education or being a life-long learner (Bauman et al.). As a category, family included thoughts of becoming the first to receive a college degree and creating a better life for future generations (Bauman et al.; Goldsmith & Archambault, 1997). In these categories,

nontraditional students often found high levels of motivation and the hopefulness brought by this motivation (Chao & Good, 2004).

Burgess (1971), as cited in Spanard, 1990, defined seven groups of motivations for nontraditional students:

1. The desire to know;
2. The desire to reach a personal goal;
3. The desire to reach a social goal;
4. The desire to reach a religious goal;
5. The desire to escape;
6. The desire to take part in an activity; and
7. The desire to comply with formal requirements (p. 321).

These seven groups of motivation for nontraditional students indicated the various areas with which nontraditional students entered higher education. The desires to know and reach a personal goal represented the internal motivation of the learner. The desire to reach a social and religious goal and the desire to take part in an activity represented the external or social motivation of the nontraditional student. The desire to escape and the desire to meet formal requirements represented two opposing views of responsibility.

While the nontraditional student population had increased, colleges were slow to adapt their practices to meet the needs of this unique student population (Mancuso, 2001). These students required colleges and universities to address their specific needs. According to Fairchild and Mercer (as cited in Keith, 2007), nontraditional students experienced difficulties unique to their demographic which required these colleges to respond. Donohue and Wong (1997) stated that “due to the general life experiences of these students, there

may be differences in their achievement motivation, satisfaction with college experience and reason for pursuing an education” (p. 237).

Nontraditional Student Retention

“Without a successful adjustment and transition to college, students may drop out” (Enochs & Roland, 2006, p. 63). Institutions of higher education needed to have made intentional efforts to retain their nontraditional student populations. This retention facilitated the success of the nontraditional student. Nontraditional students who stayed in college, tended to do well in college (Cookson, 1989). The issue at hand was that “despite typically good progress among persisters, adult students have a higher rate of attrition” according to Bean & Metzner (as cited in Cookson, 1989, p. 56). Factors that affected retention of nontraditional students included “a lack of preparedness for higher education, changing personal circumstances, and dissatisfaction with the course or institution (National Audit Office, 2002, p. 7). Cookson (1989) offered five guidelines for the retention of nontraditional students. First, institutions of higher education needed to have provided high quality educational programming outside of the classroom. Second, there must be adequate support services readily available to the nontraditional student. These support services included advising, counseling, “hassle-free registration and admissions,” financial aid assistance, and peer support. Third, the college needed to have provided “high quality instruction.” Fourth, the nontraditional student should be engaged in “program governance.” Fifth, there needed to be program continuity (pp. 108-109). Arbuckle and Gayle (as cited in Mancuso, 2001), recommended that the needs of the nontraditional student be assessed during the first weeks of their first academic terms. This early intervention was paramount to the success of nontraditional student retention. Good

retention programs also brought nontraditional students together with their peers (Goldsmith & Archambault, 1997). This collaboration with peers was an important component of a retention system. Such systems were crucial to the adjustment of nontraditional students and the balancing act of their many responsibilities.

Goldsmith and Archambault (1997) emphasized the need to consider the family of the nontraditional student in any retention plan.

Anything that the college can do to facilitate the integration of family life and college life for adult students would encourage persistence. Some ideas to consider include orientations and programs designed to help re-entry students, affordable and available day care, and ensuring that classes and college services are offered at convenient times for adult students. Designing programs which stimulate the student's academic excitement, including advising which directs students to academically challenging courses and provides the support to help them meet the challenges of such courses, would also encourage persistence (pp. 35-36).

These nontraditional students came to college not separate from their families, but have brought their families into their college careers. Nontraditional students often felt "as though they are living between two worlds" (Kim, 2002, para. 8). These two worlds must not be in conflict or the chance of retention would be jeopardized.

Another important goal for the retention of nontraditional students was the pace of the educational process. "Adults who enroll in college usually set realistic goals for themselves, realizing they do have families and jobs to deal with, and they need some time for themselves too. Too fast a pace can cause burnout for some people" (Schindley, 2002, p. 63). This idea that the pace was set based upon the individual goals of the nontraditional

student coincided with the need to tailor advising to the needs of each individual nontraditional student (Polson, 1994, as cited in Mancuso, 2001). Nontraditional students did not have the luxury of having time to waste.

Institutions needed to have taken a critical look at their retention plans. These plans should have been established with thoughtful consideration. Tinto (as cited in Pitkethly and Prosser, 2001), provided an effective map for retaining all students, traditional and nontraditional alike.

First year programs are successful when they focus on the education of students and on the question, not how to retain our students, but on how to ensure that all students acquire the skills and dispositions to become effective learners at the university (p. 187).

All students benefited from seeking to correct the issues which led to poor retention, rather than tackling the issue of retention as the main problem. Primarily, the main goal of nontraditional student retention was adjustment.

Adjustment

There were many adjustments that nontraditional students have when entering college. These students had not followed the traditional path of education, entering institutions of higher education immediately after graduating from secondary school. In fact, nontraditional students had often postponed their postsecondary education for seven years or more. These adjustments were often based upon the fears of these students, whether real or imagined. Siebert and Gilpin (1996) recorded many fears that these students faced in their own words:

- a) "I haven't studied in years. I'm out of practice. My brain feels rusty;"

- b) "I'm not sure I can read, write, or do math well enough to take college courses;"
- c) "'I was always nervous taking tests in high school. I'll be too upset to do well;"
- d) "I won't be able to compete. Only a few smart students receive high grades;"
- e) "I don't have a high school diploma, how can I take college classes;"
- f) "My past history in school is not good. I'm afraid they won't let me in;"
- g) "I feel like a misfit, like an outsider in a strange world. I won't fit in;"
- h) "Instructor's won't like having an older student in class;"
- i) "I have young children...how can I attend class with children to raise;"
- j) "My friends and family will suffer if I have to spend lots of time with schoolwork and my partner may feel threatened by my attempt to improve myself;"
- k) "I have a heavy load at work. I have too many pressures to take college courses;"
- l) "If I become a student, I'll never have time for family, friends, or outside interests. I can't take courses, study, and still have time for anything else;" and
- m) "I won't know anyone and I'm afraid to start out on my own" (pp. 11-16).

With all of these fears, there was a need for adjustment. This adjustment took time and support from outside groups and could also be facilitated by colleges and universities. "The freshman year is when students establish habits and seek to learn how to do things 'the college way.' (Barefoot, 2006, para. 3). Institutions of higher education needed to use this freshman year not only to prepare the traditional student, but also the nontraditional student, for a successful college career. Students withdrew from college due to environmental factors and a lack of adjustment, rather than a lack of intellectual ability (Williams, 1982; Tinton, 1995, as cited in Pitkethly & Prosser, 2001).

Nontraditional students had to adjust to college and the issues surrounding their success in college. This adjustment began with the classroom environment and the methods of evaluation used in these classrooms. These students had to also learn to adjust to the college environment and the social norms and customs found at the institutions. Nontraditional students, as with their traditional counterparts, needed to learn time-management. This time management for nontraditional students, however, was based upon the fact that they were adding a huge commitment in time to an already busy schedule (Claus, 1986; Ortiz, 1995). Lastly, nontraditional students must learn to cope with the balancing act needed to allow unique outside commitments to coincide with the rigors of the college classroom (Claus, 1986).

Colleges needed to also pay careful attention to the balancing act of family and college if they wished to aid nontraditional students in their adjustment. This family dynamic took many shapes, but it played a role in the success and overall retention of the nontraditional student. The level of this impact might be determined by the family dynamic, or it might also be determined by the gender of the nontraditional student. Female nontraditional students most often reported the conflict between college and family as an issue of adjustment more so than their male counterparts. Often female nontraditional students showed this increase in the need for adjustment in family roles as they “balance the responsibilities and expectations of the many roles they fill” (VanEvery, 1999, p. 108).

Colleges must have also addressed the issue of “academic networks” that the nontraditional student faced. These students had not been in the classroom for some time. As such, these students were not adjusted to the requirements of academic success.

Because of their lack of academic experience, adult students do not have the academic network that exists for their younger counterparts. Adult students often hesitate to speak up in class or seek the instructor outside class. The majority, being commuter students, leave campus as soon as classes end and therefore never establish a network of classmates to call upon when they must miss class or fail to understand instructions. For adult students, everything from vocabulary to the administrative structure of the academic environment is new and foreign (Mabry & Hardin, 1992, p. 6).

Nontraditional students needed to have an established academic network to be successful. This need was also demonstrated as traditional students failed to establish their own academic networks and failed in their academic pursuits.

Another issue of great importance to the adjustment of nontraditional students was the idea that the freshman year was a time to weed out those students who were not capable to complete the demands of a college degree. Professors of the college freshman classroom needed to be driven to motivate their students. “Teachers who believe they have no responsibility for motivating students do not belong in the freshman classroom” (Upcraft & Associates, 1989, p. 78). Institutions of higher education should practice “front loading: putting the strongest, most student-centered people, programs, and services in the freshman year” (p. 79). The freshman year was an investment which required the utilization of an institution’s best assets.

Establishing the vital freshman connection requires that we front load our best services and people in the freshman year. When we help freshmen think through

their futures, explore their talents, and learn, the sense of motivation that is fostered carries our students through to the sophomore year and beyond (p. 81).

These institutions needed to provide feedback to the nontraditional student to “reassure them that they are on the right track” (Mabry & Hardin, 1992, p. 15). This reassurance was essential to the successful adjustment of nontraditional students. Such reassurance and adjustment was fostered by the support systems established by the various institutions of higher education.

Support Systems

Simon (2002) identified many educational resources for nontraditional students. These resources included educational advisors, study skills classes, instructors, classmates, testing services, disability counselors, career counseling, mentoring programs, tutoring networks, writing centers, computer centers, and librarians (pp. 28-34). Nontraditional students were also interested in a place to congregate between classes and to study, such as a commuter student lounge (Kinsella, 1998). This congregating point could also facilitate the organization of nontraditional student groups to support the needs of the nontraditional students and served as a voice for their concerns and desires. In a survey conducted by Bauman et al., 2004, the nontraditional students reported the likelihood of using the following support services (see Table 3).

Table 3

Nontraditional Student Support Service Likelihood of Use

Service	Likely or Very Likely to Use
Counseling Services	76%
Stress Management Workshops	57%

Table 3 continued

Financial Aid Workshops	53%
Lending Library for Nontraditional Students	53%
Orientation for Nontraditional Students	53%
Time Management Workshops	51%
Study Skills Workshops	45%
Personal Counseling	42%
Financial Assistance with Child Care	40%
Support Group for Returning Students	40%

While there were many services that assisted a nontraditional student, these services were not readily available to this student population. Kilgore and Rice (2003) expressed this issue of the availability of services for nontraditional students.

Adult students know that they are a valued member of the institution's community when the financial aid and business offices are open for service at 8pm on Thursday evening or Saturday. They feel a part of the school when they can meet with an advisor at their convenience not the convenience of the advisor (p. 20).

However, this commitment on the part of the institution was not the norm at many colleges and universities around the country.

When working with nontraditional students, higher education institutions needed to consider all needs of the students, including their schedules and when they needed the services that the institution provided. Extended hours were an important feature of a successful support system for nontraditional students (Creange, 1980). "Adult learner

centered institutions have a culture in which flexibility, individualization, and adult-centered learning drive institutional practices” (Mancuso, Strange, & Zakos, 1999, as cited in Mancuso, 2001, p. 169). This customization should come with an introduction. Nontraditional students needed to have been introduced to the college culture and their peers and faculty during a “comprehensive orientation program (Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008, pp. 225-226). This course however was not a one-size-fits-all course that could be administered to both the traditional and nontraditional student without modification (Blumgart, 2006, para. 11).

According to Rhodes and Carifio (1999) nontraditional students needed a different orientation or seminar class as an effective support system.

Data analysis revealed that randomly grouping students with wide-ranging levels of academic abilities and life experiences in a freshman seminar class had a number of drawbacks, as older adult learners differ greatly from younger student learners in attitude, ability levels, maturity, and academic needs. The findings suggest that older adults need a different kind of freshman seminar course than the traditional first-year student (p. 511).

Nontraditional students needed a unique freshman orientation course as an effective support system. This freshman orientation course should be the catalyst to introduce the nontraditional student to all other support systems offered by the campus as this course should cover a wide variety of topics (Roach, 1998). “In this program, classroom content is integrated with campus life; with student services, such as advising and tutoring; and with service-learning opportunities outside the classroom” (Cornell & Mosley, 2006, p. 23).

Mentors and First Year Experience Specialist were one such resource who could be made available to nontraditional students to ease the stressors of their transition into higher education (Olesin, 2007). These mentors and First Year Experience Specialists might not have fit the traditional mold of having a significant age difference with their mentees in the case of nontraditional students (Langer, 2001). Daloz and Galbraith (as cited in Langer, 2001), defined the goal of mentoring: “to help adult learners transform themselves to realize their own full potential” (p. 50). In realizing this potential, mentors and specialist could provide another support system for nontraditional students by hosting workshops for skill building, stress management, various academic skills, and career building. In addition, family workshops and social gathering were also beneficial to assist the nontraditional student in balancing the demands of family and school (Mabry & Hardin, 1992; Flannery & Apps, 1987). Mentoring of nontraditional students should have also taken into account the “demanding work and personal schedules” of the students, and developed procedures that would allow for adequate contact between mentors and their nontraditional student mentees (Langer, 2001, p. 60). Support groups could also become an extension of the mentor and First Year Experience Specialists and serve as an informal support system of the college (Bolton, 1975). In each of these efforts, nontraditional students needed to have felt validated by knowing that someone at the institution took a genuine interest in them.

Librarians also played a role in supporting the nontraditional student as these students, as with many traditional students, were unfamiliar with the cataloging system and electronic resources available (Lauber, 1995). Nontraditional students often felt intimidated by the college experience, and the stacks of books and banks of computers in the library did not alleviate these fears. Few students entered the library without cause, and when

apprehension was a barrier, fewer students utilized the library. Librarians played a crucial role in demystifying the college library for nontraditional students.

Counseling services was yet another support service which nontraditional students often required due to the demands of their situations, but was not specifically designed for their needs. According to Leonard (2002), “traditional counseling models, presumed to be adequate for all students, are still predominant on campuses today” (p. 60). Nontraditional students had “developmental differences and life demands...and they encounter unique barriers” (Hermon & Davis, 2004, p. 32). These developmental differences were also supported by Luzzo (1993), as counselors were encouraged to design interventions designed specifically for the needs of nontraditional-age college students. Leonard (2002) made reference to this narrow focus.

Current counseling interventions, however, have a tendency to focus narrowly on traditional student issues, such as independence, safe sex, and binge drinking; often relying on one-on-one psychotherapy to alleviate symptoms and problems.

Interventions to address broader socioeconomic issues, such as day care, finances, equality and single parenthood, are conspicuously absent (p. 61).

Nontraditional students required counseling services in tune with their specific issues and concerns and counseling services should identify nontraditional students as early as possible to focus on their needs (Bundy & Smith, 2004).

As support systems were offered to nontraditional students, it was important to provide a concise guide of these services for the student (Chapman-Ashley, 1989). A nontraditional student handbook or supplement to the main college handbook was beneficial in presenting these services to the nontraditional student, especially when used in

conjunction with the freshman orientation course. Once set into place, the support systems should be examined with a dedication “for continually updating the instructional and administrative policies” (Arfken, 1981, p. 12). This dedication illustrated the need to continually adapt to the needs of the nontraditional student and that business as usual would not always suffice when supporting the needs of the nontraditional student. Such adaptation was derived from a proper socialization of the nontraditional student.

Social Integration

First Year Experience programs sought to instill values of teamwork, leadership, cultural exploration, and community service (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 2007). In these efforts, colleges attempted to socially integrate its students into the college culture. Nontraditional students often did not become as socially integrated in institutions of higher education as their traditional counterparts. “On average, undergraduate adult students are not very active in on-campus events and activities. About 60 percent report they are not active at all” (Aslanian, 2001, p. 66). Strage (as cited in Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008), stressed the importance for social integration for all students. Giancola, Muz, and Trares (2008) took this idea for social integration and applied it to the needs of the nontraditional student.

Programs that have been used with traditional-age students may not be as effective with first-generation and adult students. These students are more likely to be commuters and/or working full- or part-time, making interpersonal interaction at school more difficult (p. 226).

Adult social assimilation occurred at the classroom level, through the daily interactions with fellow students and faculty (Donaldson & Graham, 1999).

For nontraditional students, institutions of higher education could not rely upon the tried and true methods that worked for traditional students. Nontraditional students required efforts that were brought within the classroom. Rendón (1994) noted that nontraditional students often did not become involved in the campus community on their own. It was recommended that these efforts must have been brought to the students, rather than relying on these students to come to the social integration efforts already in place. Goldberg and Finkelstein (2002) echoed this sentiment that nontraditional students must be socially integrated within the classroom and that these efforts were very much possible. In their study, Goldberg and Finkelstein found that 87.5% of the nontraditional students within their study found positive results in the efforts to socially integrate them within the classroom (p. 243). These efforts were critical to success, as social integration brought adjustment to the college environment and also insulated the nontraditional student from some of the stressors of attending college (Robbins, Lese, & Herrick, 1993).

Institutions of higher education needed to have taken a look at the use of social integration in the success of their nontraditional and traditional students. Social integration could not be an option of the college experience, but rather a requirement. Colleges and universities faced an increasing problem with a lack of participation in activities outside the classroom and apathy from their student populations to get involved (Barefoot, 2000). Barefoot (2000) noted the discrepancy between effort and involvement in today's college culture.

Student affairs professionals expend enormous amounts of creative energy devising ways to get or keep today's students involved. However, student involvement, in spite of its correlation with many positive outcomes of college, is becoming an

increasingly elusive object at institutions where all or the majority of students commute and where off-campus work is the norm rather than the exception (p. 16). For institutions of higher education to compete, they needed have reacted to this trend. Many institutions had now required participation in these events through the syllabi of their freshman orientation courses and other academic classes (Barefoot, 2000). These students must have become a part of the college culture and support groups could be the beginning of this transformation.

Support groups were essential to allow nontraditional students to understand that while their concerns might not be unique to all traditional students; their issues were common among all nontraditional students. Astin noted that “the student’s peer group is the single most potent source of influence on growth and development during the undergraduate years” (1993, p. 15). Pace (1998) examined the peer group of the nontraditional student.

Where are the peer-group influences for older and part-time students? For commuter and nonresidential students, the personal and social benefits of living in campus residential facilities do not exist. Personal contacts between students and faculty may also be less frequent. The range of social, cultural, and recreational facilities that exist on campus are less likely to be used, and are perhaps less relevant...For older students and part-time students, the classroom is the most important behavior setting (p. 32).

One effort by institutions of higher education to bring social integration to the classroom was the learning community, which utilized the influence of the peer group.

These learning communities did not require specific sections of all courses within the blocks be reserved for learning community students, but rather that at least one course

be reserved for only learning community students while the other courses, while the same for all member of the community, were open to any student (Hotchkiss, Moore, & Pitts, 2006). This integration of learning community students into courses open to all students illustrated a common flaw of colleges and universities. This flaw was associated with the practice of an incorrect application of the learning community. Learning communities were to be properly administered for their effectiveness to be realized. When a learning community was organized simply as a block of classes, their effectiveness was diminished. “Too many learning communities are little more than block registration devices, with little alteration of the teaching and learning environment” (Smith, 2001, pp. 7-8). For an effective implementation of learning communities, there must be faculty development (Smith). Oats (2001), noted that “as more and more colleges and universities incorporate learning communities into their curricula, faculty development becomes an increasingly important aspect for their success” (p. 9). Successful social integration required efforts through both interaction between students, and interaction between students and faculty (Tinto, 1993). For learning communities to be used as an effective tool for the adjustment of nontraditional students, institutions of higher education must have invested in their implementation through the rigorous and proper training of the faculty teaching within these communities.

Nontraditional Student Organizations

Nontraditional students needed both informal and formal organizations to look out for their success. Three such historical organizations were the Department of Adult Education, the American Association for Adult Education and, the Adult Education Association of the USA (Knowles, 1962). The first of these organizations was the

Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association, which formed in 1921 as the Department of Immigrant Education. This organization served public school educators as a professional organization. The second of these organizations was the American Association for Adult Education which existed from 1926 until 1951 (Knowles, 1962). This organization had as its main purpose “to promote the development and improvement of adult education in the United States” (p. 194). In 1951 the Adult Education Association of the USA was formed when the American Association for Adult Education merged with the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association. The Adult Education Association of the USA merged with the National Association of Public School Adult Educators in 1982 to become the current organization for nontraditional students, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (Adult Education Association, 1992).

As the current organization to support nontraditional students, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education had as its core mission:

To provide leadership for the field of adult and continuing education by expanding opportunities for adult growth and development; unifying adult educators; fostering the development and dissemination of theory, research, information, and best practices; promoting identity and standards for the profession; and advocating relevant public policy and social change initiatives (American Association, 2005, para. 2).

As nontraditional students continued to enter institutions of higher education, there would be a need for the missions of organizations such as these to meet the demands of these unique students.

Adult Learning Design

Inside the classroom, nontraditional students should also be engaged in the creation of programs and courses as “partners in the activities of inquiry and discovery” (Kilgore & Rice, 2003, p. 21). This partnership with nontraditional students was crucial as these students were “self-directing” (p. 21). When developing a learning design, Moran (1997) provided nine activities when creating the appropriate design. These activities included setting goals, selecting learning and assessment activities, initiating learning activities, assessing and adjusting activities, assessing and adjusting behaviors, assessing achievement and remediating as needed, completing learning activities, assessing final achievement, and identifying effective learning activities for future use (pp. 6-10). In following these steps, a successful learning design could be created to meet the needs of the nontraditional student.

As nontraditional students were unique from their traditional counterparts, it stood to reason that the learning design for nontraditional students should also be unique. Verner (1967) considered this need for a learning design specific to nontraditional students.

Furthermore, it identifies those factors in educating adults that have remained in the foreground of thought for so many years and makes us aware that we cannot “...regard every issue as brand new, unrelated to anything in the past.” Thus it is not merely coincidental that certain problems are recurrent but rather an indication that some aspects of adult education are universal in time and space. From such awareness can come the systematic accumulation of knowledge that will lead ultimately to the more reasonable practice of adult education as a crucial instrument in the evolution of society (p. 41).

These reoccurring problems required a unique learning design for nontraditional students as posed by Verner (1967). Nontraditional learners could not be ignored; institutions must have adapted their methods to meet the unique needs of these learners. “With pressure from changing student demographics and increasing corporate demand for employees to possess appropriate knowledge and skills, institutions are redesigning their programs to meet the needs of the adult learner” (Mancuso, 2001, p. 166).

Galbraith (1991) suggested the following nine goals in facilitating a unique nontraditional student learning design:

1. Help create a positive attitude toward the subject and learning situation;
2. Develop a positive learner self-concept for learning;
3. Establish learner expectancy for success;
4. Ensure responsiveness to learner needs;
5. Build learner interest;
6. Develop learner involvement;
7. Encourage and integrate learner emotions within the learning process;
8. Increase learner awareness of progress, mastery, achievement, and responsibility in learning; and
9. Help learners to be aware of positive changes their learning has produced (p. 10).

In these learning goals was a principle that affected the creation of a unique nontraditional student learning design. A successful learning design would also include motivation which was beneficial to the nontraditional student (Brunner, 1959). In determining this motivation, Brunner (1959) suggested three questions: “What are adult interests? How do

adult interests affect participation, learning, or more generally, personal and social adjustment? How may adult interests be aroused, sustained, modified, or changed” (pp. 62-63).

When developing this learning design, the devices used were important. One such device was the use of group discussion. “The value of group discussion as a technique in adult education is enthusiastically and ceaselessly proclaimed by leaders in the field. Research results clearly indicate successful outcomes from the use of this device” (Brunner, 1959, p. 163). Additional themes to include when selecting learning devices were “promoting autonomy and self-directed learners, acknowledging the experience of the learners, establishing a teacher-learner relationship, meeting the needs of learners, and encouraging collaborative groups” (Peter, 1991, p. 194).

Kilgore (2003) recommended the following nine classroom practices in creating a unique learning design for nontraditional students:

1. Provide opportunities for adults to exercise self-direction in the identification of personal goals, selection of learning strategies, and modes of assessment. This may need to occur incrementally with consideration of learner’s background in the content, developmental stage, and their prior experience with exercising learner control in a formal learning environment (Grow, 1991);
2. Recognize and foster relationships between academic learning and learning in the larger world;
3. Recognize that cognitive development continues well into adulthood (Kegan, 1994, as cited in Kilgore, 2003) and use activities that stimulate cognitive development;

4. Realize that many adults experience life-changing events immediately before or after enrolling in college, and provide the support they need during the transition;
5. Design a curriculum that is inclusive with regard to students' cultural backgrounds, including those from marginalized groups;
6. Recognize that because adult students are immersed in numerous external cultures and may have limited time or need for traditional types of involvement in campus culture, the classroom typically serves as the focal point of the academic experience for adults;
7. Make use of course designs and instructional activities that balance adult students' often mixed preferences for learner-centered (flexible and responsive) and teacher-centered (structured) learning environments;
8. Although most adult students go on to achieve at levels equal or greater than those of traditional-aged students, recognize that many return to college studies with trepidation about their abilities to be successful learners in the academic setting; and
9. Be sensitive to individual differences (49-50).

Evaluation was also an important component of creating an adult learning design. Guba and Lincoln (as cited in Schindley, 2002), defined evaluation as “determining the value or worth of something. The underlying purpose of the learner evaluation is to ascertain the learner’s competence in the learning goals and objectives which have been developed” (p. 97). The purposes of evaluation were multifaceted in that they benefited both student and educator. First, evaluation was provided for self-awareness and to allow for individual growth. Second, evaluation also increased the confidence of the learner and their commitment to the process. Third, evaluation opened lines of communication between

the student and the educator. Fourth, evaluation was used to determine the course of instruction and the pace at which it should proceed. Fifth, learning evaluation was used to assign quantitative measures such as grades and degrees to the students (Dean, 1994).

Evaluation, while important, “is a delicate balancing act” (Young, 2000, p. 409). In Young’s study, the self-esteem issues of the nontraditional student came into play with the need to evaluate. “On the one hand there is the need to grade students’ work and provide feedback: on the other, a concern to protect psychologically vulnerable students and foster positive self-esteem” (p. 409). Young examined this critical need for evaluation: as ““action without feedback is completely unproductive for a learner”” while these nontraditional students were also dealing with self esteem issues (p. 409). This idea brought into question the traditional grading system of A through F as was routinely used with traditional students. This use of grades for nontraditional students was questioned by Knowles (as cited in Young, 2000).

Probably the crowning instance of incongruity between traditional educational practice and the adult’s self-concept of self-directivity is the act of a teacher giving a grade to a student. Nothing makes an adult feel more childlike than being judged by another adult; it is the ultimate sign of disrespect and dependency, as the one who is being judged experiences it (p. 410).

This consideration of the traditional grading system did not completely negate evaluating nontraditional students. Rather, this idea dictated that the self-esteem of the student should be first examined. Students with higher levels of self-esteem were better able to process assessment and the criticism that could be associated with such evaluations (Young, 2000). Conversely, students with low self-esteem required more positive reinforcement tempering

their evaluation. This need of the nontraditional student in regards to their level of self-esteem required that the professor identified the individual needs of their students early in the course (Young, 2000). There was no easy process to identify the needs of these nontraditional students as “the data suggested that students are so varied in this respect that no overall formula can be offered” (p. 417). With such impressionable students, in terms of evaluation, it was Young’s recommendation that “early assignments should not carry too much weight and should allow value-free opportunities for supported re-submission” (2000, p. 418).

With low levels of self esteem and outside responsibility, one positive tool in developing an effective nontraditional learning design was the use of peer groups. Bigrigg (1998) noted that “groups became support systems full of people going through the same ‘hell’ as the others; they became family” (p. 8). These families were already used in institutions of higher education, both formally and informally. These groups came together as study groups, but it was the formal creation of these groups that was much more interesting. These groups came in the form of the cohort system that was used in many graduate programs. These cohorts of students, often older students, became families in which the students faced the same issues. This researcher can personally attest to the connections that were formed in these cohort groups through the several years of classroom attendance, research, and writing. In cohorts, “academic competency is gained along with soft skills: problem solving, communication, flexibility, team work, and critical thinking” (Léger, 2005, p. 641). Benshoof, 1991; Richter-Antion, 1986; Terrell, 1990, as cited in, Thomas 2001, noted that the lack of an age cohort was a barrier to nontraditional students.

Mancuso (2001) conducted a study of Athabasca University, College of New Rochelle, DePaul University, Empire State College, Marylhurst University, and Sinclair Community College to determine the overarching findings which these institutions had in common when relating to nontraditional students. First, the institution had missions that led all aspects of the college and were adopted by all areas of the college. Second, decisions were made quickly, using input from students, staff, and faculty. Third, course curriculum was designed with the adult learner in mind. Fourth, the prior knowledge of adult learners was used. Fifth, no one method of course delivery was used for the adult learner. Sixth, adults became part of the learning experience in a collaborative effort. Seventh, “input was collected from adult learners in an on-going process to acquire continuous feedback” (p. 177). Eighth, student services were made accessible to the adult learner. Ninth, “full-time faculty perform a blended role which combines instruction, student services, and administration” (p. 177). Tenth, technology was fully integrated to communicate with adult learners.

FYE Program/Freshman Orientation Course

First Year Experience programs had been around since the end of the 1980s with their formalization at the University of South Carolina. This history and the development of these programs were based upon the theoretical framework of several scholars and educators as they sought to better understand the development of the students whom all college personnel members and faculty served. The freshmen whom these programs were serving entered college with several apprehensions and deficiencies, all of which affected their success of transition. As colleges and universities sought to implement First Year Experience programs, there must first have been a culture of change that made the creation

of such programs possible. “Student success requires intentional efforts” by the faculty and staff responsible for their education (Hunter, 2006a, p. 4). As any successful First Year Experience program was created, staffing must have been addressed. Through the theoretical framework, and the creation of programs, several common components had been developed to create the all encompassing program that has been known as the First Year Experience. There were also several desired outcomes and goals that all First Year Experience programs sought to reach in the efforts towards the successful transition of new students. These were the areas of the First Year Experience program, from its inception to the desired outcomes, which have driven the creation of new and innovative program upon today’s college campus.

At the end of World War II there were many soldiers returning from war who entered college for the first time. This influx of students increased the role of the modern American College. During the 1950s and early 1960s *In Loco Parentis* began to lose favor as the guiding principle of college administrators in favor of a more developmental approach in which staff members would teach students outside of the classroom rather than just serve as parent figures and authoritarians (Hunter, *Lessons Learned*, 2006). Mortimer (1984) also discussed the study *Involvement in learning: Realizing the potential of American higher education*, in which “Deans and department chairs should assign as many of their finest instructors as possible to classes attracting large numbers of first-year students” (p. 36). “During the Presidency of Thomas F. Jones at the University of South Carolina there was a student riot in which he was barricaded in his office for some time. In response to this upheaval, the President formed a committee that decided something should be done to teach students to love the university rather than be angry and trash it”

(Schroeder, 2003, p. 10). This decision led to a meeting between Jones and John Gardner (Schroeder). In 1972, John Gardner began a University 101 course at the University of South Carolina that would become the First Year Experience movement (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). In 1982, Gardner organized the first annual national conference on the First Year Experience. Although Gardner's first approach was to create a First Year Seminar class, it was his ultimate goal to improve upon "the total experience of students" in their first year (Schroeder, p. 10). The year 1986 saw administrators and researchers begin to formally collect and organize the data that had been collected since the beginning of the First Year Experience program and upon this formalization, Gardner and the University of South Carolina established the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition as a clearinghouse for information related to the First Year Experience (Roach, 1998). Barefoot (2002) indicated that some 95% of four-year colleges indicated that they had some form of First Year Seminar in place (p. 14). In fact, Delaney indicated that the First Year Experience program had grown to become internationally known as countries such as Canada, Russia, Sweden, Australia, and South Africa held conferences on the First Year Experience (2005).

For a college or university to have begun a First Year Experience program through any of its many components, there must first have been a culture of change present on that campus. Many institutions began by saying that they wanted to see freshmen succeed, and yet they did not want to change their time honored traditions. This was not an example of a culture of change. Hunter (2006a) told this story:

Educators with graying hair may recall their first college years as a more Darwinian time. Many tell stories of being asked during their opening collegiate convocation

to ‘look to the left and look to the right’ and then recall being told by the imposing dean that ‘one of these two classmates will not be there this time next year,’ as if that would indicate a job well done by the faculty (*Fostering*, p. 4).

It was this “sink or swim” culture that must have been done away with if there was to be a culture of change that allowed for the successful implementation of a First Year Experience program. Faculty and staff members must have realized that it was their responsibility to help the students whom they served, even the freshmen. Hunter described this responsibility as a “moral obligation to both challenge and support those whom they grant admission” (*Fostering*, 2006, p. 4).

Hunter and Gahagan (2004) emphasized the need to move the first year experience from the first week of classes, throughout the entire first year.

In the first weeks of every academic year, most campuses turn their attention to first-year students. Anyone who works on a campus is familiar with the flurry of activities that typically take place during this time. But what about when those first weeks are over? What happens to these students? Unfortunately, many educators think the transition to college lasts only a few weeks, but those of us whose work focuses on first-year students recognize that this process takes place in phases spread over the entire first college year (p. 31).

Upcraft (1985), as cited in Delaney, 2005, noted that “institutions must subscribe to certain beliefs about the freshman experience” in order to foster success (p. 4). These ten beliefs, presented by Upcraft were:

1. Institutions have an obligation to support and enhance the freshman year;

2. Institutions can intentionally and successfully help freshmen achieve their academic and personal goals;
3. The key to freshman success is involvement;
4. Involvement is enhanced by interaction between freshmen and others in the academic community;
5. Institutions must take into account the racial, cultural, ethnic, age, and gender diversity of freshmen;
6. Faculty involvement is vital to freshman success;
7. Freshmen should be treated with dignity and respect;
8. Institutions should have deliberate goals for freshmen;
9. There are very specific and proven ways of enhancing freshman success, if there is an institutional commitment to doing so; and
10. The freshman seminar is a proven and effective way of enhancing freshman success.

Hunter made eleven suggestions for instituting change. First, the campus should be willing to learn from the experiences of other institutions. Second, the institution should create a plan that addressed the specific problems and situations of their campus. Third, the First Year Experience program that was created should have a mission that was in line with the mission of the college. Fourth, the program must have the full support of the leadership at the institution. Fifth, partnership must be created between departments, divisions, and even the different components of the program. Sixth, the planning group must be diverse in its composition and the ideas that it brought to the table. Individuals on campus who were known for getting things done and never backing down from innovation should be included.

Seventh, the entire planning process must be clear and open for all to see. Eighth, measurable learning outcomes must be built into the program from the very beginning of the planning stage. Ninth, means of assessment must be planned in from the beginning, making a smooth and seamless process. Tenth, feedback should be collected at each step of the planning phase. Eleventh, the pilot program should be small and manageable. Starting too large could lead to failure and discouragement (Hunter, *Lessons Learned*, 2006, pp. 12-14).

Institutions must also use all of the human resources that it had available to make a First Year Experience program successful. This meant that the effort must be shared by faculty, staff, administration, and students. This effort could not be conducted by one group alone; every member of the institution must have taken part. Andersen noted that “it does take a village to make a difference” in the life of a college freshman (2006, p. 22). Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute used this idea of a village in their First Year Experience program as departments such as enrollment management, residence life, alumni relations, computing services, the advising and learning assistance center, academic departments, and the Rensselaer union all worked together in an effort to aid the freshmen that it enrolled.

Jake Blumgart noted in an interview with the Associate Dean, Steve Shapiro, that one size did not always fit all (2006, p. 2). This idea was also important for a culture of change, as each institution should realize that the First Year Experience program must be adapted to fit the needs and the climate of their campus. Just as faculty, staff, and administrators must have been willing to change, so too must the program. There are many components to a First Year Experience program, and each institution should take the individual components and create a program that was right for the students who were

served. When this was done and the climate was ready; student success would follow through a well constructed First Year Experience program.

One such component of the First Year Experience program was the freshman seminar. “The seminars also vary widely in content, duration, structure, pedagogies, and degree credit value, but all have the common goal of promoting academic performance, persistence, and degree completion” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 400). Some seminars provided practical experience for freshmen while others provided academic support. Whatever the design of the seminar, there were five parts that should be considered to make the seminar successful. First, the material that needed to be addressed should have been identified. This material could have been academic, social, or transitional. Next, texts and other readings should have been assembled that would be used as the training materials for the course. Third, the course must have been created with the syllabi being written. From here it was important to market this course as beneficial to success, rather than as a remedial course or merely a required course. Next, the faculty, staff, and administration must be trained to appropriately administer a course with freshmen and their success in mind. Finally, the effectiveness of the program should have been addressed and needed modifications should have been made (Upcraft et al., 1989). Additionally, Nathan (2005) introduced the need to consult the nontraditional students enrolled in the course.

According to student surveys, many disliked the course that followed, in particular the idea that they “had no choice and that they had to take it,” but also because it was abstract and impractical, and they didn’t learn anything “related to their interests” (p. 43).

These students surveyed introduced the idea that the nontraditional student should take an active role in their education process, an idea further described in an examination of the nontraditional student.

There were several different types of seminar programs. According to the *2000 National Survey of First-Year Seminar Programs*, some of the topics covered were academic skills, time management, focus on self, transition to college/community, campus resources, diversity issues, academic planning, wellness issues, critical thinking, goal setting, library, learning styles, college policies, and relationship issues (National Resource Center, 2002, p. 21). One seminar topic was the college library. Barefoot emphasized the need to focus on the library in a 2006 article for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* when she said:

Few first-year college students can easily distinguish fact from fiction in online and print sources, and even fewer have ever been exposed to the scholarly resources that can be found in a college or university library. Most of us in higher education would agree that high on the list of essentials for collegiate success are the abilities to find, manipulate, and use information – not just information that can be easily downloaded from the web, but information that meets standards of accuracy and academic rigor. While colleges generally acknowledge that first-year students are unlikely to develop those skills on their own, we don't do much to help them (p. 2).

These seminars could be connected to the residence life component of the First Year Experience program. Programs could also hold office hours and provide tutoring sessions in the residence halls (Allen, 2004). In addition to these seminars, John Gardner suggested supplemental instruction. According to Gardner, “students who spend a minimum of fifty

minutes a week receiving Supplemental Instruction led by another student typically do much better than like-qualified students who don't participate" (Schroeder, 2003, p. 12).

Faculty

In the utilization of all institutional resources, faculty played an important role in the success of nontraditional students. Faculty must first have addressed their concerns of nontraditional students; such as them being "anti-intellectual, overly practical, and resistant to change" according to David and Hughes (as cited in Lynch & Bishop-Clark, 1998, p. 218). Holtzclaw also noted that faculty also feared nontraditional students to "be on the fringes of academic life due to the demands on their time" (as cited in Lynch & Bishop-Clark, 1998, p. 218). As these initial fears often went unrealized, faculty needed to have moved to better understand their nontraditional students. In this approach to a better understanding, faculty must have initially addressed the backgrounds of the nontraditional student (Draves, 1984). "Faculty should be encouraged to create learning communities in the classroom that facilitate peer learning and encourage practical application to one's life and work experience" (Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008, p. 214). Faculty of nontraditional students needed to also have considered nontraditional students when developing the climate of their classrooms. Nontraditional students valued "autonomy and teaching-learning interactions" requiring that faculty considered the needs and preference of the nontraditional students, while traditional students were more likely to conform to the climate presented by the faculty (Schmidt, 1983, p. 5).

Training for faculty of freshman orientation courses should have been distinct and autonomous. Instructors of freshman orientation course needed training "because most college teachers were not trained in graduate school to teach anything, let alone a freshman

seminar” (Gardner, 1992, p. 3). Gardner suggested four phases to the proper training of instructors in freshmen orientation courses. First, the group of instructor must “establish purpose...and develop a common sense of authentic purpose” (p. 10). Second, once the faculty developed their common sense of purpose, they must have examined the dynamics of their students, particularly those who were nontraditional. Third, campus resources must be identified with which to aid the students. Fourth, faculty must have separated from the training group with “independence, self-reliance, and responsible use of freedom (p. 11). The faculty must be trained effectively because their students’ issues often ranged beyond the door of the classroom. Suffet (1988) described the relationship between freshman orientation faculty and their students.

Freshman seminar teachers and students develop a strong relationship. Incoming freshmen [especially those nontraditional freshmen] have numerous questions and concerns that often develop into major problems if left unresolved. When minor problems can be addressed quickly and efficiently, the resolution can put the student at ease (p. 11).

Hunter (2006b) addressed the required training in FYE orientation courses as being “a focus on student characteristics and demographics, active learning pedagogies, resource development, and evaluation of learning techniques” (p. 11).

Testimonials

Perhaps the most direct of all of the research on the education of nontraditional students, were the testimonials of the nontraditional students themselves. Raspberry (1991) recounted his experience of his wife’s completion of a Bachelor of Arts Degree.

“Those...who followed the traditional route-going directly from high school to college as a matter of course-may have some trouble understanding how we could get so excited about something as routine (for a middle-class family) as a bachelor’s degree. But if you or members of your family have overcome fears of atrophied skills, taken up something truly difficult and made a howling success of it, you’ll understand why we are so proud” (p. A19)

In a study examining nontraditional students in community college, Claus (1986) had the opportunity to interview several nontraditional students. In one interview, Claus spoke with a female nontraditional student regarding her family commitments.

“I feel like I’m going at about 50 directions at once. I have a child. I have to get him off and take him to daycare, then I have to do laundry, and stuff like that, plus I have so much to study...My husband, we’ve been married four years, he has maybe worked six or eight months of the whole time. He’s always laid off or quitting jobs or something...He doesn’t want me going to school. He has these, I guess, dreams that since he hasn’t provided for us in the past and stuff, I’m going to go to school and leave him” (p. 17).

Claus (1986) spoke with another nontraditional student about adjusting to the academic requirements of college.

“It’s hard to get back into the swing of school. It’s coming along, but, I guess it’s taking a lot of extra effort to get back into the groove-to get used to going to school and everything; reading assignments and homework-just things I haven’t been responsible for, for a while. It was hard to adapt after all these years, coming back and, you know, trying to get into a schedule like that. Mostly it’s a problem of

getting yourself oriented...just getting back into the rhythm of going to school. It's been a long time" (p. 28).

Claus (1986) then interviewed a student regarding his self-discipline.

"The most difficult thing, I guess, has been teaching myself to study again. Getting back into studying or making sure I've got this or that in, you know. You're in college; it's a lot of self-reliance. I would be sitting at home and didn't have anything to do and be studying and, you know, after 15 to 20 minutes I might get a little bored with it, and I would go have a beer or something, and it's been hard to break that habit, because I've never been tied down like this since 1970 or something" (p. 29).

Another student discussed the issue of taking notes with Claus (1986).

"I'm not too good at taking notes. I can't tell what's important to take down. That's something I have difficulty with. I've had to do very little note taking on my job; see, I was shown how to do the job. If they needed anything extra, they would write me a note and give it to me and then I would just follow their instructions. But having to write it down myself, I'm sitting there wondering what I should take down and what I should omit. Taking notes, I usually try to take down everything that the teacher says, which is bad, because you really should just get down the main points and then that summarizes what the whole thing's about...I write down too much and then all it does is tire you out...you don't really know what the main point is" (p. 30).

Claus (1986) also had the opportunity to speak with a nontraditional student regarding test anxiety.

“I get sick to my stomach. I really do. I get real nervous. On my first exam I was so sick I thought I was going to pass out. I really did...I was so scared I thought for sure I was going to pass out. I was sweating, my heartbeat was fast; I do that in all my exams. You know, when I get ready to have an exam, I get sick to my stomach. I get butterflies and shaky and sweaty. I go into a panic. I get very nervous before I take a test. And I get sick to my stomach afterwards. Sociology I think scares me the worst, because I just can't comprehend it...Last week, when I was going to get the results of my test, while driving to school...I had to stop alongside the highway and throw up before I even made it to school. I go totally blank on tests. I panic. I feel uncomfortable when I get ready to take a test. I'll know it (the material), but when I get in there and read the questions and try and answer them, I just go blank, totally blank” (p. 31).

Another nontraditional student relayed their issue with lack of confidence to Claus (1986).

“At first I thought of dropping out...The first two weeks I thought it was too hard. I thought I couldn't make it...Like I said (before), history didn't hit too good.” (He failed the first two tests.) “That's the first time I had-the first test I had was history and I said, oh shoot. I saw that and I said, Oh shoot, the other tests are going to be the same way. I've thought about dropping out at least a hundred times. Like I said, I was bringing home very bad grades on my papers. I thought, hey, I don't need to come up here to bring home papers like that. That's just discouraging me. It's disgusting me” (p. 33).

Bigrigg (1998) brought in the testimonial of a faculty member of nontraditional students at Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB).

“After 5 years of teaching on the main campus, the first day of class almost always leaves me with the same primary image: most students are seated in the back of the room, most are white with a sprinkling of Hispanic students, arms closed across their bodies, the average age is 18, no texts out, reading the newspaper or staring off into space, and basically aggressive and antagonistic: everything in body and face translate into: ‘Why do I have to take English 101? I hate English-that’s why I’m going to be’ and fill in the blank. However, I knew the KAFB students were different as soon as I walked in the door, and that first image continues to show me the major difference between those adult learners and the more traditional main campus students: no one seated in the back of the room, several different cultural groups were represented, most were in comfortable and neutral body positions, the average age was 35, all had the appropriate books in front of them, and all were watching the door attentively, waiting for the instructor’s arrival” (p. 3).

Additionally, Bigrigg (1998) discussed his approach to the nontraditional students at Kirtland.

“With my desire for a student-centered classroom, my relationship to the students was already personal. I see myself as a coach in the composition classroom, so I don’t run a strict, lecture-based class; instead, I try to approach them almost as peers. Most of my adult students, because of their ages and previous experience and knowledge, found this choice helpful. They felt comfortable about asking for independent meetings with me...Additionally, because I want more students involved and active in their own learning process, I always provide them with a complete syllabus, with detailed assignments, on the first day of the course. Though

this sometimes decreases my ability to approach student problems immediately, most full-time employed student appreciated it because they were able to work ahead. For example, one of the KAFB composition instructors gives students assignments daily; so their Wednesday response paper is assigned on Monday. However, because of the nature of full-time work, most students get their homework completed over the weekend. Providing them with their assignments at the beginning of course allows them to take responsibility for their own time management” (pp. 6-7).

Chao and Good (2004) recorded the preconceptions of a 32-year-old nontraditional student. “Before I came back to school, I already expected to face a lot of difficulties in school, work, family, and friends. But surprisingly after I started my first semester, I also enjoyed the process of working through so many difficulties. People around me are so proud of me now” (p. 8).

Marino (1997) revealed the thoughts of a nontraditional student while sitting in the first day of class.

Could the teacher be addressing returning students older than herself like me when she explains the rules of the class: “No more than three absences. Bring a note from your doctor. There are no excuses for late papers.” Does a man previously employed as a corporate manager not understand deadlines? Does a woman with two teenage children, a husband, and a part-time job really need to ask her doctor for a note? Isn’t the returning student’s verbal reason for an absence good enough? I find myself wondering if this teacher’s mother knows she’s talking to us like this. Does a democratic classroom filled with adults of varying ages need reminding that

they'll get in trouble if they violate the rules? Although in other circumstances I might find the assumption that I was eighteen flattering, in a classroom I find it disconcerting that teachers sometimes treat the entire class as age peer" (pp. 3-4).

O'Donnell and Tobbell (2007) relayed the story of Maggie.

Maggie's position is of particular interest because before becoming a student she worked in a shop on the university campus as a member of the staff. As a student, Maggie explained that because of her age "when I go up to the main campus, I feel I'm going to stick out like a sore thumb." Yet when she was a member of the staff she was not self-conscious at all (p. 325).

Summary

Nontraditional students were not identical to their traditional counterparts.

Andragogy, as a principle, could be applied to any nontraditional adult learning principle (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). This principle, when applied to the freshman orientation course dictated the need to reconsider the course in relationship to the nontraditional student. As a part of the First Year Experience, the freshman orientation course was created to assist the freshman in their transition to college. As a nontraditional freshman, adult students required attention to issues unique to their situation. Within the curricula of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional student; the barriers, strengths, weaknesses, learning style, recruitment, retention, adjustment, motivation, and social integration of nontraditional students needed to be addressed.

Considerable attention had been paid to the First Year Experience and the Nontraditional Student, but little attention has been applied to the nontraditional student within the First Year Experience. This review of literature suggested that the application of

adult theory and First Year Experience programs, more specifically freshman seminar or orientation courses, was worthy of research. The consideration of nontraditional students within these courses would assist in the overall application of the guiding principles of freshman orientation courses and the First Year Experience program in general. This application would, in part, meet the unique needs of the nontraditional student.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the relevance of the freshman orientation course in meeting the unique needs of the nontraditional student and to make recommendations as to the most beneficial structure and objectives of the freshman orientation course to ensure that the needs of the nontraditional student were met. This study included an institutional survey of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia, both public and private. These ninety-two schools were surveyed to determine the course availability, content, curriculum, and objectives of freshman orientation courses offered. In addition to this institutional survey, the focus group instrument was utilized at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) to discuss the perceived relevance of and solicit recommendations for the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course. In addition to this institutional survey and focus group instrument, a nontraditional student online questionnaire was distributed to nontraditional students enrolled in ABAC 1000 during the 2011-2012 academic year. This nontraditional student online questionnaire served to identify the self-identified needs of the nontraditional students at ABAC and provide a more complete picture from the limited numbers provided by the three focus groups.

This chapter examined the methods and procedures utilized in the collection and analysis of data from institutional survey, focus group instrument, and nontraditional

student online questionnaire. This chapter included research design, populations, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

The research design of this study was a qualitative design with some mixed method quantitative research within the institutional survey of SACS institutions of higher education. The research design was selected based on the purposes of the study. The research objective, to collect rich, descriptive perceptions of the relevance of the freshman orientation course at ABAC and other institutions of higher education in Georgia necessitated the use of qualitative data collection through an open-ended questionnaire administered to nontraditional students at ABAC, a content analysis of syllabi and course objectives collected from the SACS-accredited institution of higher education in Georgia, and three focus groups of ABAC 1000 participants at ABAC. The institutional survey of SACS-accredited institutions of higher education was a mixed method instrument designed to describe the offerings of freshmen orientation courses at these institutions of higher education and the content of the various course objectives and syllabi. Focus groups were formed at ABAC to analyze the perceived relevance of, and solicit recommendations for, the freshman orientation course, ABAC 1000 for traditional and nontraditional students. A nontraditional student online questionnaire was offered to nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC to determine the self-identified needs of the nontraditional student at ABAC.

Methodology

A qualitative approach, utilizing focus groups at ABAC, was implemented to better understand the current perceived effectiveness of the freshman orientation course. The method of data collection was submitted and approved by the Valdosta State University

Institutional Review Board on May 4, 2011 (see Appendix F). The descriptive focus group instrument, institutional survey, and nontraditional student online survey data collected through this study was used to recommend particular curricular content revisions to the freshman orientation course which considered the unique needs of the nontraditional student and deliberately planned for these needs. A qualitative approach was utilized to better understand the personal experiences of the nontraditional students within the freshman orientation course at ABAC. Patton noted in defense of the qualitative method that “the open-ended responses permit one to understand the world as seen by the respondents” (2002, p. 21). The design strategy employed was one of emergent design to allow for situational redirections depending upon the findings within the observation and interviews of the freshman orientation courses at ABAC. Data collection followed a qualitative design with an institutional survey of SACS-accredited institutions in Georgia, document analysis, and direct quotations from the participants within the freshman orientation courses. Analysis included rich descriptions to allow for a deep understanding of the current effectiveness of the freshman orientation course and the perceived benefits from those students enrolled in the courses (Patton, 2002).

Data Collection

The methodology of this qualitative descriptive study consisted of data collection for the five research questions. To insure contextual commonality of responses and face validity of the data collected, nontraditional student online questionnaire respondents, focus group instrument, and individual participants were limited to traditional students and nontraditional students at ABAC, enrolled during the 2011-2012 academic year. The content analysis of syllabi, course descriptions, and objectives were limited to freshman

orientation courses at SACS-accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia, both public and private. The following research questions were addressed through qualitative methods:

1. *To what extent do SACS-accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia, both public and private, develop and teach the freshman orientation course differently for traditional versus nontraditional students?* The structure of the ABAC freshman orientation course was analyzed through a comparison of a collection of the SACS-accredited Georgia institutions' syllabi and course descriptions collected during the institutional survey of the 92 SACS-accredited institutions of higher education.

2. *What are the curricular differences between freshman orientation courses for traditional versus nontraditional students?* A comparison of curriculum was conducted through an institutional survey of the 92 SACS-accredited institutions within Georgia (see Appendix A for examples of institutional survey questions), assisted by a comparison of course descriptions and syllabi. The institutional survey was pilot tested for content validity and readability.

3. *How do traditional and the nontraditional students perceive the relevance of the ABAC freshman orientation course objectives?* Three focus groups were formed to discuss the perceived relevance of the course from the perspective of nontraditional and traditional students. Participants were recruited from ABAC 1000 courses to include five traditional and five nontraditional students in each focus group. Participants in the three focus group volunteered and were purposefully selected. These focus groups also included students from all sections of ABAC 1000 course offerings to gain access to both full-time and part-time students. Focus groups were comprised of students from all ABAC 1000 classes. In

addition to the face-to-face focus group meetings a nontraditional student online questionnaire was sent to all nontraditional ABAC students (see Appendix C for nontraditional student online questionnaire). These questions were pilot tested for content validity and readability.

4. *What are the educational orientation needs of the ABAC freshman orientation nontraditional students?* A qualitative, open-ended nontraditional student online questionnaire was distributed to all nontraditional students at ABAC (see Appendix C for examples of online questionnaire). Nontraditional students were identified through a standard report generated by the college. This questionnaire was distributed to formerly enrolled, currently enrolled, and non-enrolled nontraditional students in the freshman orientation course to garner a wider response from ABAC nontraditional students. The nontraditional student online questionnaire was pilot tested for content validity and readability.

5. *What are the recommended elements and content of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students?* This portion of the study consisted of a content analysis of the syllabi, course descriptions, and objectives collected through the institutional survey of freshman orientation instructors and directors. Institutional surveys were sent to all public and private SACS institutions in Georgia (see Appendix A for examples of institutional survey questions). Once the data from the focus group instrument, nontraditional student online questionnaire, and syllabi were collected; course descriptions and objectives were reviewed, coded, and analyzed. Recommendations were then synthesized to provide a purposeful guide to implementing freshman orientation courses designed with the unique needs of the nontraditional student as the primary motivation.

Recommendations were compiled through the collection of syllabi and course descriptions, focus group instrument, and nontraditional student online questionnaire to determine those elements best suited to meeting the needs of nontraditional students (see Appendixes A, B, and C for examples of questions).

Institutional Survey – Survey data was collected to identify the commonalities, trends, categorization of responses, and uniqueness of answers from nontraditional students in regards to perceptions and needs of this unique student population. This analysis was used to describe common features that could lead to generalization of freshman orientation course design for nontraditional students.

Focus Group Instrument – Focus group data was collected to examine the perceptions of students in the freshman orientation courses at ABAC. This focus group instrument employed naturalistic inquiry to allow the groups to direct the discovery of perceptions and shape the collection of data (Patton, 2002). Perceptions were codified and analyzed to identify underlying perceptions and possible factors affecting these perceptions.

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire – A questionnaire was designed to clarify the responses discovered within the focus group instrument and then added to the results of the focus group instrument.

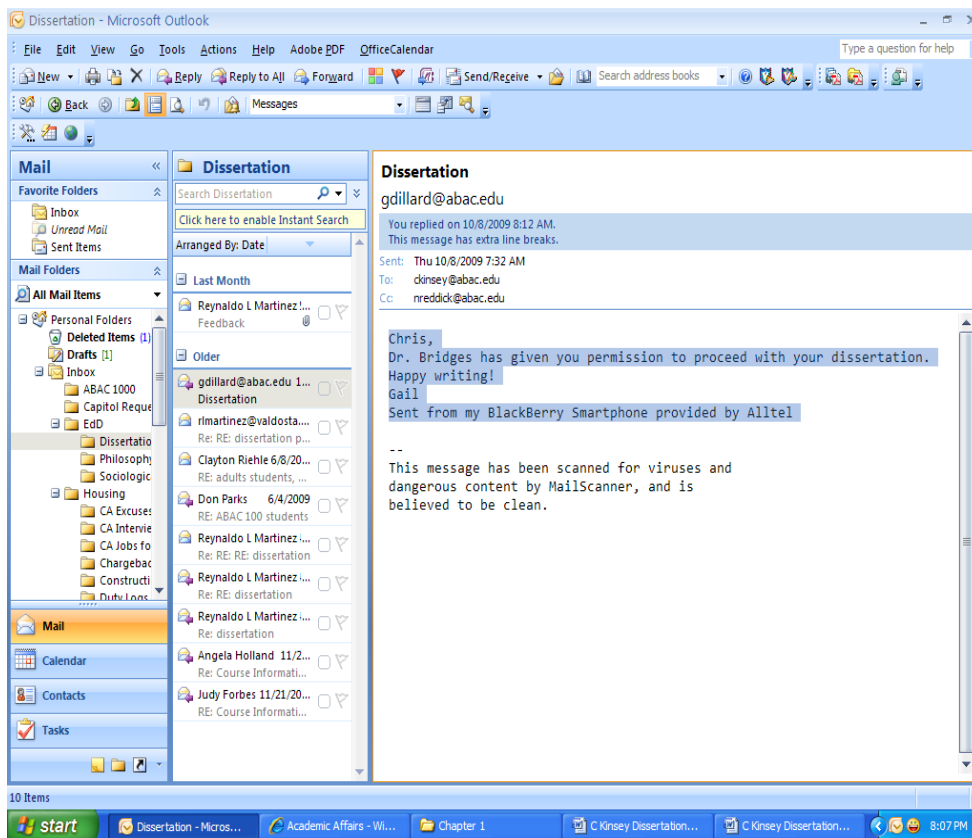
Content Analysis of Syllabi – The content analysis of this study concluded the third part of a mixed-method strategy, including naturalistic inquiry, qualitative data, content analysis, and statistical data (Patton, 2002). An inductive method was employed to determine the “patterns, themes, and categories” within the data (p. 453). These patterns, once coded, were verified through deductive analysis (Patton, 2002).

Preliminary Arrangements

This researcher first contacted the ABAC Vice President for Academic Affairs, Niles Reddick, Ph.D., for permission to conduct research on the freshman orientation course, ABAC 1000. Approval was granted to conduct research at ABAC by the President of the College, David Bridges, Ph.D. through the cabinet and the delivered via the Vice President of Student Affairs, Gail Dillard, Ph.D. (See Figure 3).

Figure 3

Permission To Conduct Research At Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College



Following approval to conduct research at ABAC, including the focus group instrument and a nontraditional student online questionnaire, this researcher sought to identify the SACS-accredited institutions of higher education. These institutions included

both public and private colleges and universities. These institutions were identified through the SACS website, <http://sacscoc.org/searchResults.asp>. Once these institutions were identified, the directors and coordinators of the freshman orientation courses at the individual institutions were identified. These individuals were identified through the individual websites of the respective institutions, and through the data collected by The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (see Appendix D for lists of SACS-Accredited Institutions).

Population

Two separate populations were selected for this study into the relevance of freshman orientation courses in meeting the needs of nontraditional students. Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College ABAC 1000 students were selected to participate in the focus group instrument and a nontraditional student online questionnaire to determine the impact of and solicit recommendations for the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course in meeting the needs of the nontraditional students who were enrolled in the course. These students were selected from the twenty-one course sections offered during the fall 2010 through fall 2011 semesters, with approximately 589 students in open course and additional students in restricted courses (see Appendix E). Three hundred and eighty-four students were identified as being enrolled. An email was sent to solicit participation in these focus groups. From the responses, thirty students were purposely selected to ensure even distribution of nontraditional and traditional participation in three separate focus groups as outlined in Patton (2002) which calls for “6 to 10 people with similar backgrounds who participate in the interview for one to two hours” (p. 385). All nontraditional students at ABAC were sent an online questionnaire (see Appendix C) to determine the needs of the nontraditional

student, nontraditional student perceptions regarding ABAC 1000, and the perceived level of preparation of nontraditional students at ABAC.

The second population included in this study was the 92 accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia by the SACS (see Appendix D). These 92 colleges and universities were divided into six levels. These levels were defined as level I which included associate degree-granting institutions, level II which included baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, level III which included master's degree-granting institutions, level IV which included master's and educational specialist degree-granting institutions, level V which included institution that granted three or fewer doctoral degrees, and level VI institutions which granted four or more doctoral degrees (Commission, 2010). Of these 92 institutions, 33 were level I, 19 were level II, 14 were level III, 6 were level IV, 13 were level V, and 7 were level VI. The level of the SACS institutions did not affect the institutional survey, but may affect the limitations of the implementation of final recommendations due to the variability of these institutions.

Instrumentation

Data was collected in this study in three phases. The first phase included an institutional survey of the 92 SACS-accredited institution of higher education in Georgia to determine the type of freshman orientation course offered at these institutions, their curriculum, and the populations targeted. In conjunction with this institutional survey, syllabi were collected to allow for a content analysis of the various freshman orientation courses offered at these 92 institutions.

The second phase included three focus groups held at ABAC to include students enrolled in the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course. As noted by Patton (2002), focus

groups are “first and foremost, an interview. It is not a problem solving session. It is not a decision-making group. It is not primarily a discussion, though direct interactions among participants often occur. The object is to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others” (pp. 385-386). As the interview questions in this focus group instrument were opened ended, the questions were worded carefully to ensure that maximum detail was achieved using the same cues for each focus group (Patton 2002).

The final phase of the study included a nontraditional student online questionnaire distributed to all nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters. This online questionnaire was modeled after an existing survey (Rhodes & Carifio, 1999). This nontraditional student online questionnaire was included to ensure that all nontraditional student attitudes and opinion were captured as only 4.5% of the nontraditional population enrolled at ABAC were enrolled in the ABAC 1000 course.

Pilot Test

The institutional survey, focus group instrument, and nontraditional student online questionnaire items were pilot tested with a test re-test method to determine reliability. The institutional survey (see Appendix A) was first pilot tested on May 22, 2010, with seven freshman orientation instructors at ABAC, Columbus State University, and Georgia Southwestern State University to determine reliability. Pilot test results were consistent with the questions asked and responses had face validity with the purpose of the research. This data provide support for validation. The follow-up re-test was conducted on March 23, 2011. Results from this test retest indicated that the institutional survey was highly reliable with a retest reliability coefficient of .99.

Focus group instrument questions (see Appendix B) were first pilot tested with students during a residence life staff meeting with student staff (community assistants/resident assistants) on March 7, 2011. Twenty-nine students were asked to answer the focus group questions to determine validity. Based upon their responses, some questions were determined to be valid, while others needed clarification to be valid. Twenty-six of twenty-nine students interpreted question one in a valid manner. To provide more clarification, the question was changed by adding “what do you expect to learn in the course to prepare for college” to the question. Questions 2 resulted in 15 students responding in a manner consistent with the intent of the question and nine students responded in a manner inconsistent with the intent. As a result, question two was changed to emphasize student weaknesses and the need for assistance: “during your first semester in college, what were your areas of educational need in which you felt you were weak and needed assistance?” Question 3 was valid, with 100% of the students responding in a manner consistent with the intent of the question. Question 4 resulted in 28 valid responses and no changes were made. Question 5 resulted in 25 valid responses. Four respondents noted that the question was too wordy and confusing. As a result, the question was simplified to “to what degree has learning about yourself and your learning style helped in learning new things.” A rating scale was also added to Question 5. Six students responded to question 6 in an inconsistent manner. As a result, the question was reworded to read, “what have you learned about yourself in ABAC 1000 that makes you a better student?” Question 7 resulted in twenty-five students responding appropriately, while four students were unclear as to the meaning of the question. As a result, the question was changed to: “what topics and activities of the ABAC 1000 course were not useful in preparing you for

college?” All students responded to question eight with a valid response and no change was needed. Question nine was understood by all students participating in the pilot test, but a 10-point rating scale was added to provide quantitatively measurable results. A re-test was conducted on March 24, 2011, to determine reliability. In this re-test, the original participants answered focus group instrument questions and answered the nine questions in a manner consistent with their original responses. This consistency within their responses provided support for a reliable survey instrument with a retest reliability coefficient of .86.

A pilot test of the nontraditional student online questionnaire (see Appendix C) was conducted on March 7, 2011. A follow-up re-test was conducted on March 24, 2011. Based upon the 12 student responses to the test re-test, the questions returned reliable results, consistent with the intent of the research instrument. The re-test returned responses consistent with the original responses providing support for reliability. The only change made to the nontraditional student online questionnaire was made to Question 4 to clarify the desired response to the rating scale. No value and great value were changed to “not prepared” and “extremely prepared” to clarify the question for the nontraditional student online questionnaire participants. This consistency within their responses provided support for a highly reliable survey instrument with a retest reliability coefficient of .97. Results of the pilot test for the three research instruments indicated reliability and validity.

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected in three distinct phases. Data collected through the institutional survey of SACS-accredited institutions of higher education was divided in two steps. Data was first collected through the institutional survey, with the second step consisting of a content analysis of the freshman orientation syllabi provided through the

institutional survey collection. The second phase included open-ended interviews in three focus groups conducted with the students enrolled in the fall 2010, spring 2011, summer 2011, and fall 2011 sections of the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course at ABAC. The third phase was conducted through a nontraditional student online questionnaire distributed to the nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics measuring the mean were used to summarize the data collected from the 92 institutions in Georgia, measuring the number of institutions which offered a freshman orientation course and the frequency of courses specifically designed for nontraditional students. Qualitative data analysis was applied to the open ended question responses of the three focus groups and the nontraditional student online questionnaire, as well as the content analysis of the syllabi collected during the institutional survey of the 92 accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia by SACS. This qualitative data analysis was conducted as a conventional content analysis with categories and themes developed from the collected data as discussed by Kondracki and Wellman (as cited in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The data from the focus group instrument was coded to determine if the responses were related to the demographic variations of the participants and if there was any significance within the demographic categories of age, gender, ethnicity, first generation college students, individual income, and marital status. The focus group instrument data examined perception of benefits of ABAC 1000, areas of educational need, areas of improvement within ABAC 1000, and the overall ABAC 1000 experience.

The data analysis of the institutional survey sought to determine the variety of freshman orientation courses offered at the 92 SACS-accredited institutions throughout the state. The curriculum was analyzed to determine the frequency and content of courses specifically designed for nontraditional students. Course objectives and syllabi for the freshman orientation courses were collected to analyze the components of the various courses and determine the commonality and differences of the courses offered at the institutions around the state. In addition to course objective; outcomes, goals, texts, resources, assignments, seminars, topics, and activities were also categorized and compared.

The nontraditional student online questionnaire collected data from all nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC. Data was collected to determine the frequency of nontraditional students that enroll in ABAC 1000 and the reasoning for his/her decision, regardless of whether he/she enrolled in the course. Educational readiness was analyzed, as was the perception of the appropriateness of ABAC 1000 in meeting the needs of the nontraditional student. This appropriateness was based upon the actual course content and possible restructuring of the course.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

Introduction

Data collection for the 92 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia began by identifying the institutions and the respective professionals for contact (see Appendix D) regarding the freshman orientation course or its equivalent at the institution. These contacts were sent an email with the solicitation letter (see Appendix G) and the institutional survey (see Appendix A). Of the 92 institutions contacted, 62 responded to the institutional survey for a response rate of 67%. The institutional survey was conducted from May 2011 through September 2011 with six separate solicitations of the survey and three reviews of the contact information to ensure accuracy.

Beginning in May 2011, an email (see Appendix G) was sent to all students identified as having taken ABAC 1000 during the specified semesters to solicit participation in three separate focus groups. Special attention was taken to recruit both traditional and nontraditional students to insure that the focus groups would each be comprised of 50% traditional and 50% nontraditional students. Respondents to the solicitation email were divided into two categories based on their classification and were purposefully selected for the focus groups to ensure both traditional and nontraditional students were included at an even rate. There were three focus groups selections; the first during the summer 2011 semester and the second and third during the fall 2011 semester. Each of the three focus

groups had ten participants; five traditional and five nontraditional students. The first focus group was conducted on June 6, 2011. The second focus group was conducted on August 24, 2011 and the third focus group was conducted on September 9, 2011. All focus group participants completed the consent to participate (see Appendix L). Focus group demographics were conducted for each group and recordings were transcribed (see Appendix J).

The Institutional Survey was solicited on six separate occasions from May 2011 through September 2011. The nontraditional questionnaire was sent to students identified through a report supplied by Dr. Amy Willis. This report was not included in these results to keep the anonymity of the respondents. Six hundred and thirty-one nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters were solicited for the questionnaire (see Appendix G). Of these 631 students, 320 responded for a 51% return rate. Demographic data and the results of this questionnaire were compiled to determine common themes (see Appendix J).

Institutional Survey

The institutional survey was sent to the 92 SACS-accredited institution of higher education in Georgia. These institutions were asked five questions (see Appendix A) regarding the freshman orientation course and a syllabus was requested of those institutions that were identified as having an autonomous freshman orientation course. Institutions with no course were instructed to answer Question 1 only, while those institutions with freshmen orientation courses were directed to answer the remaining four questions. Questions 2, 3, and 4 required an affirmative or negative response. The second question determined whether the identified orientation course was mandatory. The third question determined

whether the institution offered a course specifically designed for nontraditional students and the fourth question inquired as to whether such a course was under consideration by the institutions that did not offer such a course. The fifth question requested the course objectives of the identified freshman orientation course. Additional details regarding the course were determined through an analysis of the requested syllabus.

Sample of Institutional Survey

All 92 SACS-accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia were surveyed as a part of the sample for the institutional survey. The sample size was limited to Georgia for reasons of size, comparability, and regional compatibility. Only those institutions identified as accredited at the time of the Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board approval (Appendix F) were included in the survey. In order to group a common sample, only those institutions accredited by SACS were selected. The institutions sampled differed in funding source, governing body, and SACS accreditation level. Institutions were public and private; independent, members of the University System of Georgia, or members of the Technical College System of Georgia; and were classified as tier one, two, three, four, or five. Professional contacts at each institution were identified through a search of the institutional websites, directories, and college catalogs.

Response Rate of Institutional Survey

A survey was sent to the professionals at the 92 SACS-accredited institutions through email with a letter of solicitation (see Appendix G) and an institutional survey (see Appendix A). The survey data was collected through email with one institution (East Georgia College) responding by mail with a copy of the institution's freshman orientation course text, written by the program directors. Of the 92 emailed institutional surveys, 62 of

the surveys were returned, with a response rate of 67%. Table 4 shows the response rate of the institutional surveys by funding source and governing body.

Table 4

Institutional Survey Response Rate By Funding Source and Governing Body

	Population Surveyed	Response Rate	Percentage
University System of Georgia (public)	35	25	71%
Technical College System of Georgia (public)	23	17	74%
Independent (private)	34	20	59%
Total Institutions Survey	92	62	67%

Table 4 shows the response rates of the University System and Technical College System of Georgia were nearly identical with 71% and 74% respectively. The response rate of the independent, private institutions was 11 points lower at 59%. The response rate of all institutions surveyed was 67% with 62 institutions responding.

Surveys were sent to the identified professionals on six separate occasions to increase the response rate. Surveys were sent at various times during the summer 2011 semester and early in the fall 2011 semester to maximize the return rate based on the availability of respondents and the respective schedules of each respondent. The contacts were also checked on three separate occasions to ensure that the most accurate contact was maintained through the last solicitation for responses in September 2011.

Purpose of Institutional Survey

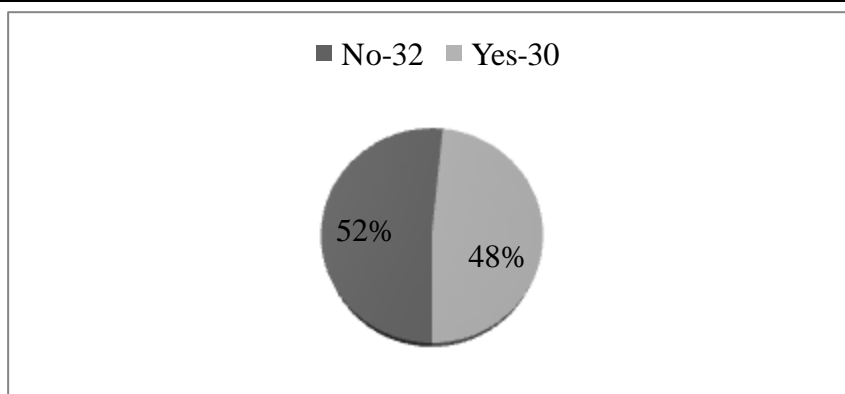
The survey of the 92 SACS-accredited institutions was designed to collect data on the freshman orientation courses offered in Georgia, the focus and course objective of these orientation courses, and the possible plans to develop additional orientation courses specifically designed for nontraditional students. The institutional survey was also designed to collect the syllabi of the freshman orientation courses currently offered by the responding institutions. The institutional survey was designed to address research questions one, two, and five of the study.

Results of Institutional Survey

Question one of the institutional survey determined the institutions that offered an autonomous freshman orientation course. This sampling allowed the identification of the number of courses offered at the institutions responding to the survey. Figure 4 displays the representation of the of freshman orientation courses offered within the 92 SACS-accredited institutions surveyed.

Figure 4

Institutions Offering An Autonomous Freshman Orientation Course



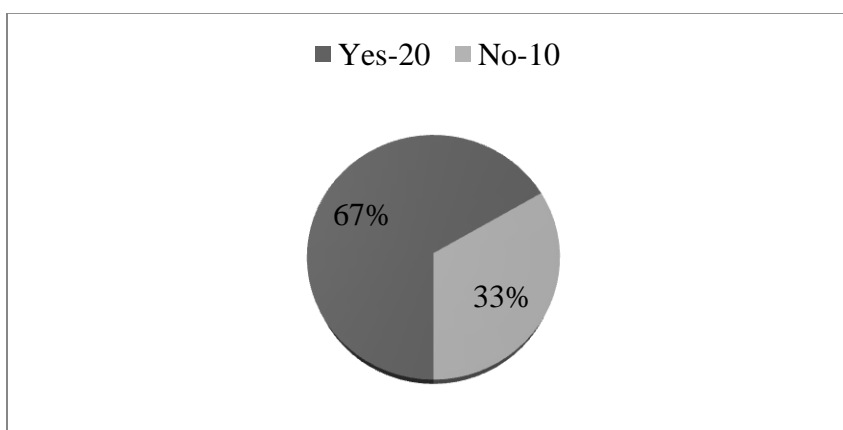
Of the 62 institutions responding, 48% (n = 30) self-identified as having an autonomous freshman orientation course. Fifty-two percent (n = 32) of the institutions responded that there was no autonomous course offered at the institution. Of these 32 institutions that indicated that there was no autonomous freshman orientation course, some indicated that no course was offered, the course was incorporated into a major degree program, or no distinction was made. Those who did respond as having an autonomous freshman orientation course served as the response group of 30 institutions responding to the subsequent questions and those providing syllabi for content analysis.

Question two of the institutional survey established the number of institutions with freshman orientation courses that were mandatory for traditional and nontraditional students. The data was collected from the 30 institutions that responded in the affirmative to question one regarding the offering of an autonomous freshman orientation course.

Figure 5 shows the representation of the freshman orientation courses that are mandatory.

Figure 5

Institutions Requiring A Mandatory Freshman Orientation Course

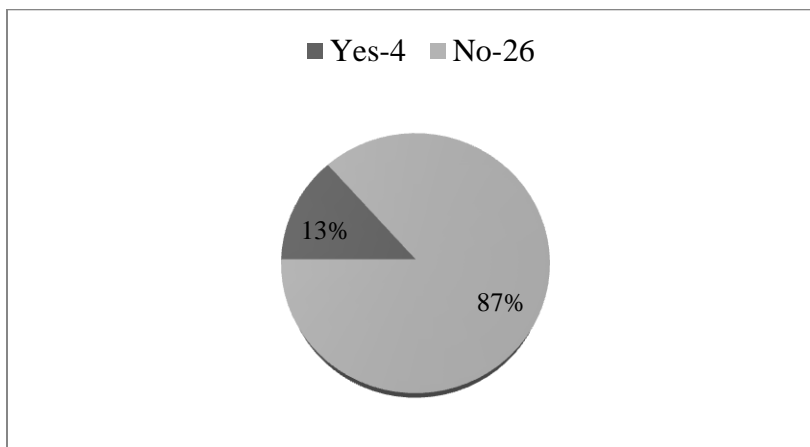


Of the 30 institutions with an autonomous freshman seminar course, 67% (n = 20) required the course as a mandatory component of graduation. Of these 20 institutions with a mandatory course, all required the course for both traditional and nontraditional students entering the institution as beginning freshmen. Thirty-three percent (n = 20) of the institution offered the freshman orientation course, but did not make it mandatory as part of a degree requirement. Of the institutions that did not mandate the course, some allowed the course to be used to meet core requirements while others only offered elective credit.

Question three surveyed the institutions as to the focus of the freshman orientation courses offered. The question was designed to determine those institutions already offering a course designed for nontraditional students. Figure 6 shows the response rate of the 30 institutions responding with autonomous freshman orientation courses.

Figure 6

Institutions Offering A Freshman Orientation Course With Curriculum Designed For Nontraditional Students



Of the 30 institutions offering an autonomous freshman orientation course, 13%

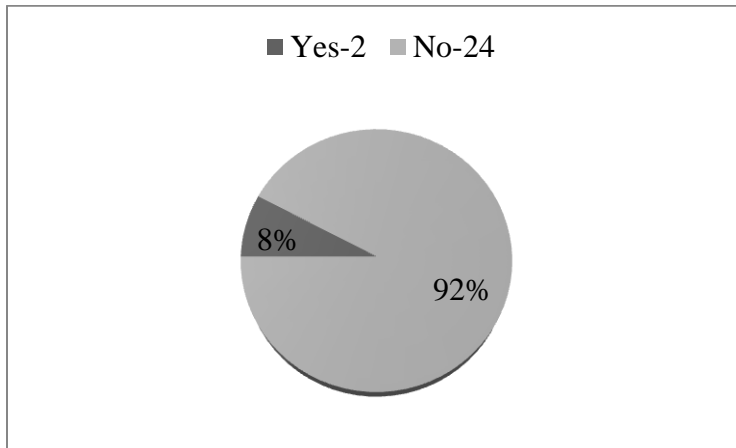
(n = 4) offered a course with curriculum specifically designed for nontraditional students. These institutions were Georgia Southwestern State University, Piedmont College, Shorter University, and Wesleyan College. Shorter University only provided a course with separate curriculum for those students enrolled in the evening program, while the nontraditional students not enrolled in the evening program were enrolled in freshman orientation courses with no unique design for nontraditional students. Eighty-seven percent (n = 26) of the institutions responding offered only one standard freshman orientation course for both traditional and nontraditional students.

The 25 institutions that responded as not having a unique curriculum for nontraditional students were questioned regarding future plans for such a curriculum. Question Four sought to determine the institutions not offering a unique curriculum for nontraditional students that were considering such a curriculum. The question determined the plans for the creation of freshman orientation course curriculum specifically designed for the nontraditional student at institutions across Georgia. Figure 7 displays the institutions not offering a unique curriculum for nontraditional students and the plan for the development of such a curriculum.

Figure 7

Institutions Considering The Design Of A Freshman Orientation Course With Curriculum

Unique To Nontraditional Students



Of the 26 institutions responding to question five, only 8% (n = 2) had any plans to create a unique curriculum for nontraditional students taking the freshman orientation course. These results showed a low interest in the development of such a curriculum. Ninety-two percent (n =2 4) of the institutions responding had no plans to develop a curriculum specifically designed for nontraditional students.

Content Analysis of Institutional Survey

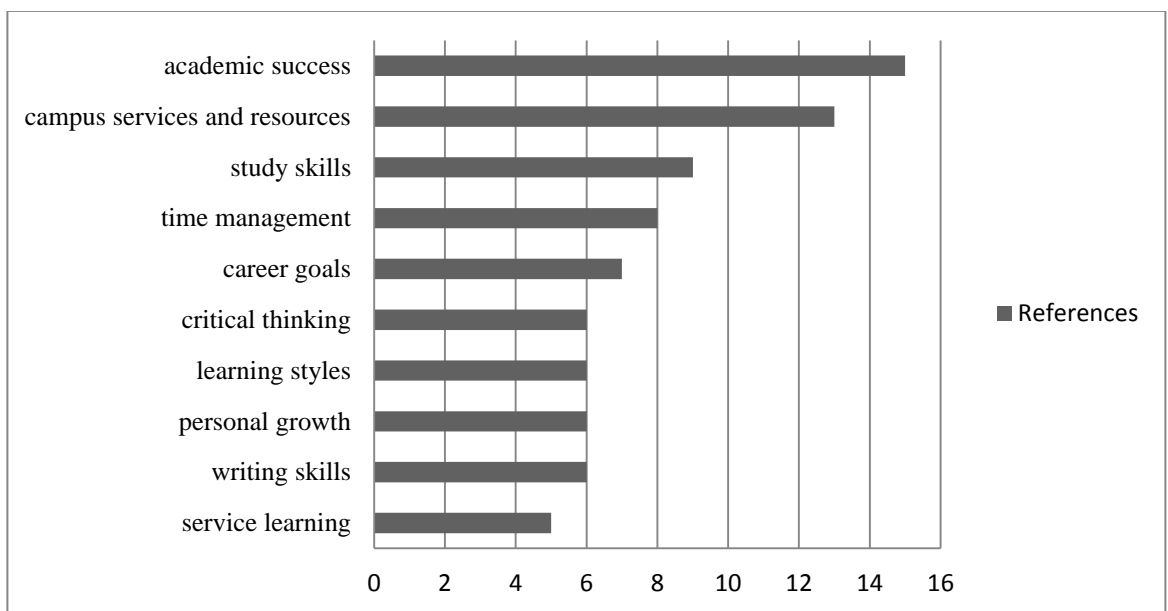
The request for syllabi was designed to allow for content analysis of the course descriptions, course objectives, expectations, and activities. The review of syllabi would also allow for the collection of all texts used for the various freshman orientation courses (see Appendix H). Of the 30 institutions offering an autonomous freshman orientation course, 26 (87%) provided a sample syllabus. A content analysis was conducted on the syllabi.

In question five, institutions were asked to list course objectives and in question six, these institutions were asked to provide a syllabus of the freshman orientation course. The following are findings of the content analysis of questions five and six. A conventional content analysis was conducted on the 26 syllabi provided. This analysis was conducted to determine the common themes within the freshman seminar courses within the study and the reoccurrence of these themes throughout all of the various courses. In addition to the review of the texts required by the courses, the syllabi were broken into three categories: course descriptions, course objectives and expectations, and course activities. Each category was analyzed separately to determine emergent themes and the reoccurrence of such themes (see Appendix K). Figure 8 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of the freshman orientation course descriptions. The complete data set can be found in appendix K.

Figure 8

Emergent Themes Of Freshman Orientation Course Descriptions With Multiple References

(5+)



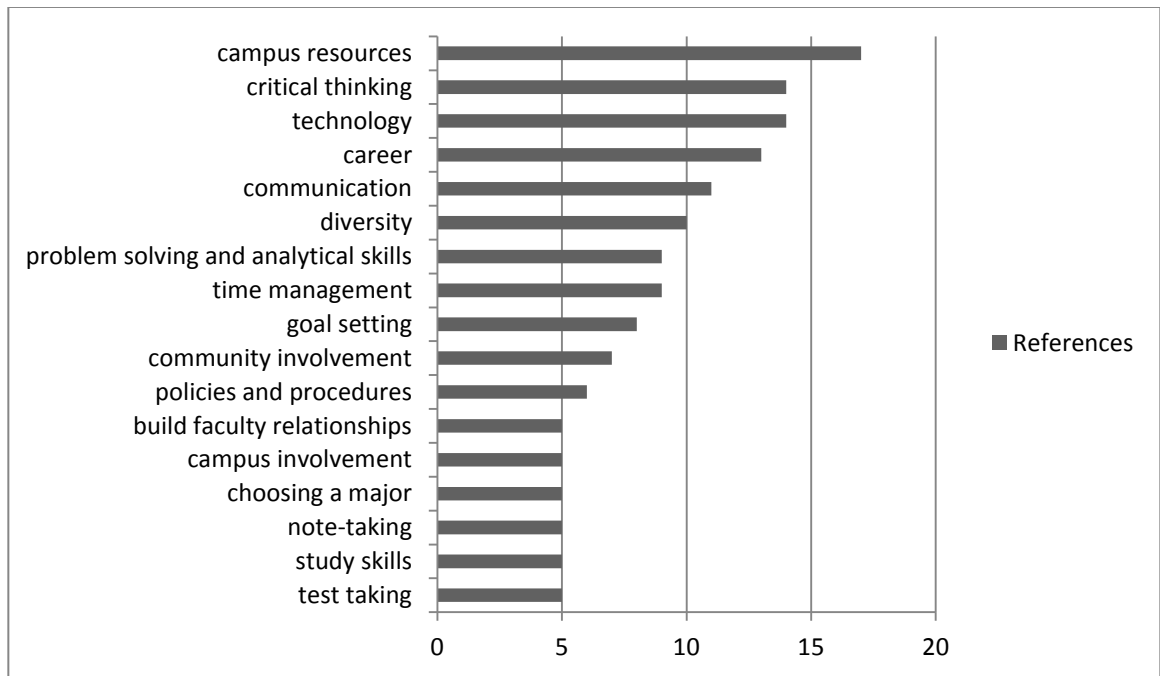
Within this content analysis, 25 reoccurring themes appeared within the course descriptions. The most frequent theme was academic success with 15 references. Campus services and resources had 13 references. Additional themes above five references were study skills, time management, career goals, writing skills, personal growth, learning styles, and critical thinking. With five or less responses, service learning, transition, technology, reading skills, introduction to college, interpersonal relationships, and community involvement. Test taking, student success, self management, policies and regulations, leadership, diversity, develop skills, campus involvement, and adjustment were all referenced three times. There were also 32 other themes which were only referenced once or twice (see Appendix K).

The course objectives and expectations were also analyzed from the responses to question five and specific items in the submitted course syllabi as requested in question six. There were 39 themes extracted during the content analysis with three or more references in the various syllabi. Figure 9 illustrates the themes discovered during the content analysis of the course objectives and expectations. There were also 42 additional themes with only two references or one single occurrence within the syllabi (see Appendix K). The complete data set can be found in appendix K. Course objectives related to campus resources were referenced most frequently with 17 occurrences. Course objectives related to technology and critical thinking each had 14 references; while career, communication, and diversity followed with 13, 11, and 10, respectively. Course objectives related to time management, problem solving and analytical skills each followed with nine references. Course objectives related to goal setting, community involvement, and policies

and procedures each followed with greater than five references. The remaining categories with multiple references were clustered in groups with five, four, and three occurrences.

Figure 9

Emergent Themes Of Freshman Orientation Course Objectives And Expectations With Multiple References (5+)

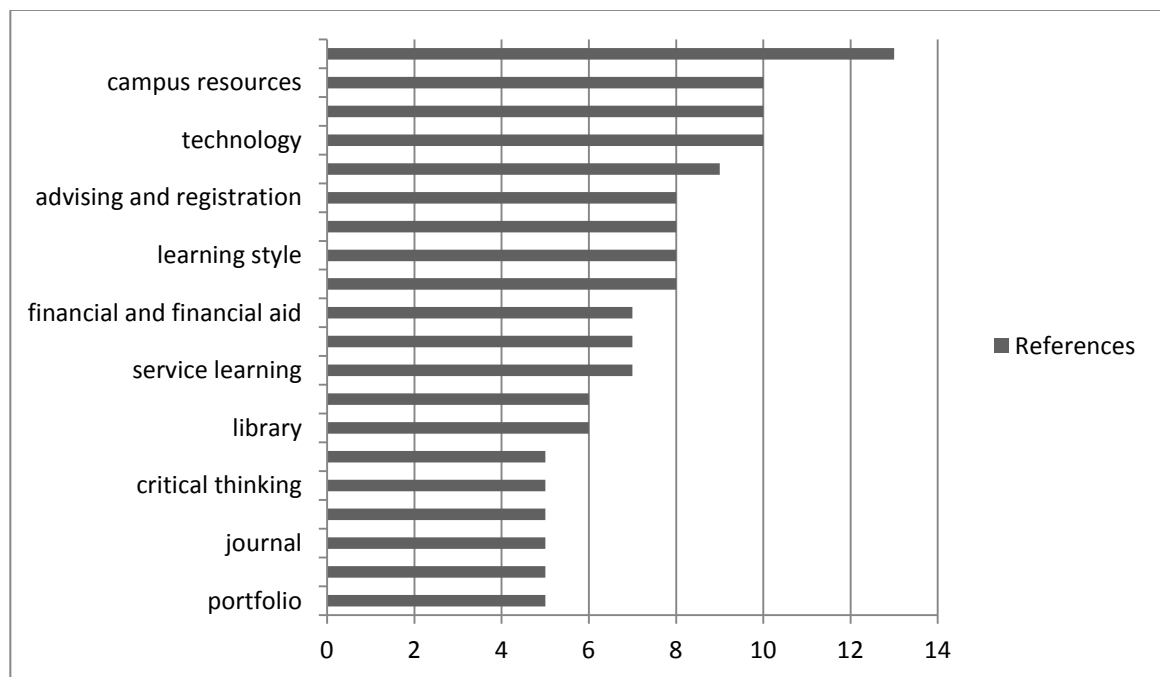


The final content analysis of the freshman orientation course syllabi examined the course activities designed to meet the course descriptions, objectives, and expectations. There were a total of 75 unique activities within the freshman orientation syllabi. Of these 75 references, 29 were referenced three or more times (see Appendix K). The complete data set can be found in Appendix K. Figure 10 represents the most frequently referenced themes. Time management activity was the theme most commonly referenced as a course activity with 13 references. Technology, diversity, and campus resource activities all occurred ten times within the course syllabi. Campus involvement, research and writing,

learning styles, career reflection, and advising activities were reported with seven or more references. Service learning, health and wellness, financial aid, library, and college expectations activities were also referenced with greater than five occurrences. Each additional theme was clustered with five, four, or three references. The portfolio, note taking, journals, goal setting, critical thinking, and communications activities were each referenced five times. Course activities related to reading strategies, leadership, discussions, civics, and alcohol each occurred four times; while test taking, study skills, presentations, and the Myers Briggs test activities occurred three times.

Figure 10

Emergent Themes of Freshman Orientation Course Activities with Multiple References (5+)



The course descriptions specific to a freshman orientation course designed for nontraditional students were similar to those course designed for traditional freshmen students. These course descriptions referred to academic success and campus services, as

well as transition, time management, goal setting, personal strengths, and academic skills. The course objectives were also similar with the common themes of critical thinking, academic planning, technology, and making social and academic connections. The activities of the nontraditional freshman orientation course were also similar with learning style activities, campus resource activities, portfolios, critical thinking, and time management activities. There was however a lack of a campus involvement requirements at campus events in the nontraditional orientation courses.

The content analysis of the course syllabi illustrated the various techniques employed by the institutions surveyed and the uniqueness of each institution. There were, however, many commonalities within the syllabi in meeting the needs of today's college freshmen. Several themes were repeatedly mentioned. Each theme, while adding value to the overall goal of preparing the college freshman for the first year, was weighted by the common references by the many different institutions within the State and this study. The most common themes of the course descriptions were academic success, campus services, and resources. The most common themes for the course objectives were campus resources, technology, and critical thinking. The most common themes for the course activities were time management, technology, diversity exercises, and campus resources.

Focus Groups

Three focus groups were conducted between June 2011 and September 2011. Focus groups were formed by sending solicitation emails (see Appendix G) in May 2011 and August 2011 to all students identified as having taken ABAC 1000 during the past academic years and currently enrolled at ABAC. Both traditional and nontraditional students were asked to volunteer to participate in one of three focus groups. Each focus group was

comprised of five traditional and five nontraditional ABAC students. Students volunteered by responding to the solicitation email and were purposely selected for the focus groups to ensure an even distribution of traditional and nontraditional students, but not to purposely determine individuals. The focus groups were conducted in the classroom of the John Hunt Town Center on June 23, August 24, and September 9. Each focus group was asked nine identical questions with a demographic survey at the conclusion of the focus group meeting. Each focus group was recorded and the recordings were transcribed. The discussion of each focus group centered on various themes depending on the personalities of the participants. These themes, however, did have similarities that were discovered while analyzing and coding the transcriptions. Focus Group Respondents were given names to protect their privacy and anonymity.

Sample of Focus Groups

There were 30 college students who were selected from volunteers responding to the solicitation email sent in May (see Appendix G). The students selected to receive the solicitation email were limited to only those students having completed a section of the ABAC 1000 course. Three-hundred-eighty four students were identified as being currently enrolled at ABAC and having taken the ABAC 1000 course. The sample for the focus group was purposefully selected from those students who volunteered to participate in the focus group. This requirement limited the possible sample group to 12% of the enrolled students at ABAC. These low numbers could be contributed to the elimination of the requirement to complete an ABAC 1000 course as a mandatory course towards degree completion. Making the ABAC 1000 course non-mandatory was instituted during the 2007-2008 academic year. Participants were predominately younger students, even for

nontraditional students, evenly distributed in gender, mainly African American and Caucasian, and evenly distributed in first generation status and marital status. Most students, however, made less than 10,000 in income. Table 5 shows the demographic data for the students randomly selected to participate in the focus groups.

Table 5

Focus Group Demographic Data

	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	1 st Generation	Income	Marital Status
Group 1 (6/23/11)	(5)50%:17-24 (5) 50%:25-32	(6) 60%: female (4) 40%: male	(2) 20%: Hispanic (4) 40%: African American (4) 40%: Caucasian	(4) 40%: yes (6) 60%:no	(6) 60%: >10K (4) 40%: 10K-29,999	(3) 30%: married (2) 20%: divorced (5) 50%: never married
Group 2 (8/24/11)	(5) 50%:17-24 (5) 50%:25-32	(4) 40%:female (6) 60%: male	(6) 60%:African American (4) 40%:Caucasian	(3) 30%:yes (7) 70%:no	(8) 80%: >10K (2) 20%: 10K-29,999	(1) 10%:divorced (9) 90%: never married
Group 3 (9/8/11)	(5) 50%:17-24 (4) 40%:25-32 (1) 10%:33-40	(6) 60%:female (4) 40%: male	(2) 20%: Other (5) 50%: African American (3) 30%: Caucasian	(5) 50%:yes (5) 50%:no	(7) 70%: >10K (2) 20%: 10K-29,999 (1) 10%: 30K-49,999	(2) 20%: married (2) 20%: divorced (6) 60%: never married

Response Rate of Focus Groups

Fourteen percent of the students solicited to participate in the ABAC 1000 focus groups responded to the email. There were additional students that inquired as to the process, but they were unable to participate due to other conflicts. Of the 384 students contacted, 52 students responded to participate and were available to participate in the focus groups. Of these 52, 30 were selected for participation. Of the 30 selected for participation, 15 were purposefully selected as nontraditional students and 15 were purposefully selected as traditional students. In each focus group, there were some respondents that were more vocal and there were others that were less vocal. Each respondent had their area of interests and focused primarily on that area during each focus group meeting.

Purpose of Focus Groups

The ABAC 1000 focus groups were designed to collect qualitative data on the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course. Questions 1 and 2 (see Appendix B) were developed to determine the educational readiness of the student beginning study at ABAC, and any areas of educational need. Questions 3 and 4 were designed to study the usefulness of the current ABAC 1000 curriculum. Questions 5 and 6 were developed to discover student input into learning style and self-discovery as it was currently presented in the ABAC 1000 course. Questions 7 and 8 were developed to inquire as to possible modification in the ABAC 1000 curriculum to improve its usefulness to the students enrolled in the courses. Question 9 was designed to gain a better understanding of the appreciation of the ABAC 1000 course in its entirety. The focus groups were designed to address Research Questions 3 and 5 of the study.

Results of Focus Groups

The focus group results were transcribed (see Appendix I) and varied by each group. There were many common themes discovered through an analysis of the transcripts. The details of themes were discussed in the content analysis of the focus group. However, there were several comments that played a major role in the development of these common themes. These comments ranged from general topics to professor dedication to the ABAC 1000 course. The five areas discussed in the focus groups were educational readiness through questions one and two, the usefulness of the curriculum with questions three and four, student input into learning style and self-discovery with questions five and six, modifications to the course with questions seven and eight, and appreciation of the course with question nine.

With regards to questions one and two and the educational readiness of the students there were those who were prepared and those who were not. Looking across the three focus groups, the majority of students felt that there were some areas in which they had educational need in preparing for college. While only one student in focus group two stated that he/she was completely ready for college, the remaining participants did not indicate that they were not completely ill-prepared for college. The majority of the participants were somewhere between the two extremes of preparedness. In focus group one, John made the comment “I never really had a major problem with time management, but it was something that I definitely needed to work on; to do school work first, play around and then do more school work, to break everything up so it would not overwhelm you. I think that was the skill that I needed most because I was pretty good at studying.” According to Shauna in focus group two, “I felt I was ready for college,” but David was not, “they assume you took

math all four year in college, but some didn't." In focus group three, Marie discussed a common issue for nontraditional students, "I felt I needed help in math; I started out in learning support, MATH 97. My professor in ABAC 1000 was really good. I stayed after class one day because I was nervous for a test and he told me about the Academic Achievement Center" (see Appendix I).

With regards to questions three and four and the usefulness of the curriculum of ABAC 1000 there were students who found the course useful and those that did not. Looking across the three focus groups, approximately 16 students felt that the curriculum of the ABAC 1000 course was useful and 11 felt that the curriculum was not useful. There were several themes that were specifically discussed in regards to this usefulness. Several respondents discussed the theme of history within the ABAC 1000 course. In focus group one; Molly commented that "I do still agree the history is still important especially if you want to be an alumnus" (see Appendix I). These students considered the topic of college history to be an integral part of the development of the ABAC student. These students thought that it was important for the students of ABAC to know something about the history of ABAC and to develop a sense of pride in the college (see Appendix I). This theme corresponded to a major emphasis in the development of the first freshman orientation course design at the University of South Carolina. Thomas F. Jones, President of the University of South Carolina "wanted to develop a process to redo the first year and teach students to love the university rather than be angry and trash it" (Schroeder, 2003, p. 10).

Students also wanted the experience of working in groups to develop that skill for future courses.

There was a lot of group work in ABAC 1000 class, a lot more than you usually had in any other class. It taught you how to communicate on a project with people that you never met; it got you comfortable with that. I have been glad for that because I have had classes where I had to work with people (Sally, Focus Group One).

Nontraditional students had similar opinions of the usefulness of the curriculum as did the traditional students, specifically addressing time management and working with others.

While the course was useful for nontraditional students, they did not think that it should be mandatory. Heidi was in the minority when she commented in focus group three “I do think that making ABAC 1000 a required course would be beneficial. It helped us to get to know the campus.” Focus group participants most often commented on history and group work, while additionally discussing time management as useful components of the curriculum (see Appendix I).

In regards to ineffective activities, students also discussed the lack of application of principles. These students expected practical application to the theory being discussed. Heather in focus group two commented, “I expected to be going on and doing things in the leadership community, but we just talked about doing things and never really did anything hands-on.” The focus group participants considered ABAC 1000 to be an opportunity to get hands on and truly develop the skills that would be required for success in college. Focus group participants also discussed the use of the book as an ineffective component of the ABAC 1000 course. Jennifer in focus group two commented, “We didn’t do anything except read a book and do journals, the book wasn’t useful, it was too general.” Elizabeth in focus group three said, “We read a book and then had a guest speaker, but we never had time to discuss the book” (see Appendix I).

With regards to questions five and six and the student input into learning theory and self-discovery, there were several student comments addressing the effectiveness of this portion of the curriculum. Looking across the three focus groups, the majority of students felt that learning about themselves and their learning style was important. There were a few students that did not feel that this was beneficial, but most students that did not rate this high were in ABAC 1000 classes where this topic was not covered. Most of the students appreciated the self-discovery and learning style.

Well, it was more of a realization moment for me because I had been studying like that for while. I just didn't understand how I had been working. It was a weird mixture of them all, but my highest was auditory. Listening to people talk was how I learned the best, so being in the classroom was really important to me. It gave me an added sense that I should not be out of class if I really didn't need to. Listening to the teacher is where I am going to learn the best, and reading and writing, I can learn that way but it is not as effective (sic). It just opened my eyes to that (John, Focus Group One).

Shauna, in focus group two, commented that "it taught me how I could change to be successful." There were several students, however, who did not have a favorable opinion of the learning style and self-discovery components of the course. Five participants ranked this component of the ABAC 1000 course as a five or less on the rating scale of question five. Sara in focus group one said she "didn't learn a whole lot about myself that was new." Again, in focus group two, Jennifer remarked she "didn't really learn anything." In focus group three, Jill stated, "we didn't do learning style, had they offered it I would have rated it

a five, even if you do know your learning style I don't feel it would help unless your teachers recognize your learning style and work with it" (see Appendix I).

With regards to questions seven and eight and suggested modifications for ABAC 1000, there were several. Looking across the three focus groups, the majority of students felt that there were some areas which could be improved, but there were only one or two which felt that the course could not be improved to make it useful. Respondents discussed the design of the course. Within each focus group, students discussed the teaching style of the ABAC 1000 course. The common theme was that there needed to be more hands-on activities and less lectures. "It shouldn't be taught like a course-course. It needs to be more interactive." The focus group participants seemed to agree upon the idea that theory was no substitute for practical application within the ABAC 1000 course. Heather commented to this in focus group two "I expected going on and doing things in the leadership community, but we just talked about doing things and never really did anything hands-on." This hands-on approach to the ABAC 1000 course led to a discussion of the professors teaching the course. There were several comments that the ABAC 1000 course's success depended on the effort given by the professor teaching the course. Max stated in focus group three, "If there were major adjustments made it could be very beneficial, my professor was thrown in to the course at the last minute and just gave us the minimum. We did not go over specific processes, like forms, transferring, finding a major." Lucy in focus group three also commented, "My professor cared, but he was only teaching the course because he had to and rushed through the material" (see Appendix I).

It appeared that there was a lack of consistency within the ABAC 1000 courses. Lucy in focus group three noted, "I think the topics varied from professor to professor, I

know people that took ABAC 1000 that got information that I did not receive, such as study skills and paperwork.” For the ABAC 1000 course to be successful and meet its full potential, there needed to be a buy-in to the course. The respondents also discussed the need to cover information that was detailed and specific to ABAC rather than information general to all college success. Sara of focus group one commented, “students would be more open minded to what the school had to offer if the course was really teaching what needed to be known about ABAC. We would have more insight into what was available for us basically, academically, financially” (see Appendix I).

Nontraditional students did focus on financial aid more during their suggestions for modification. There were many nontraditional students that were relying on a confusing process to return to college. This process was noteworthy in the fact that there were very few people available to help, many regulations, constant changes to the system, and far too many students with questions with little time to have their questions answered.

Financial aid is one of the most important things because if you can't pay for school you won't have the ability to go to school. [Students should learn] about loans, and the grace periods. Loans do help you, but they also have consequences. Like for the nurses for Georgia if you go to school and work for a certain period of time they will pay your school back for you. (John, Focus Group One).

Most frequently reported as areas where modification was needed was course preparation and consistency, the need for a more hands-on course, and the need for a far greater level of financial aid assistance and preparation (see Appendix I).

With regards to question nine and student appreciation for ABAC 1000, students were on either side. Looking across the three focus groups, the majority of students felt that

the course was beneficial, although not perfect. Only five students rated the course as a five or lower. The respondents commented that the course was very useful because it included information that was not discussed in other courses. “There was a lot of group work in ABAC 1000 class, a lot more than you usually had in any other class. It taught you how to communicate on a project with people that you never met; it got you comfortable with that. I have been glad for that because I have had classes where I had to work with people” (Sally, Focus Group One). This information, however, needed to be more specific to ABAC with the details needed for a thorough understanding of the campus and its resources and policies. Lucy, in focus group three commented, “The good parts were good, the lecturing brought it down. If it were more interactive it would have been a ten.” Brandon, however, stated “it would have been a better nap time.” Most often reported was that the course needed to be more interactive with less lecturing. Participants also noted that the course was useful, if not during the course, after. Those that did not find the course useful felt that it was unmemorable, and most commonly less than challenging.

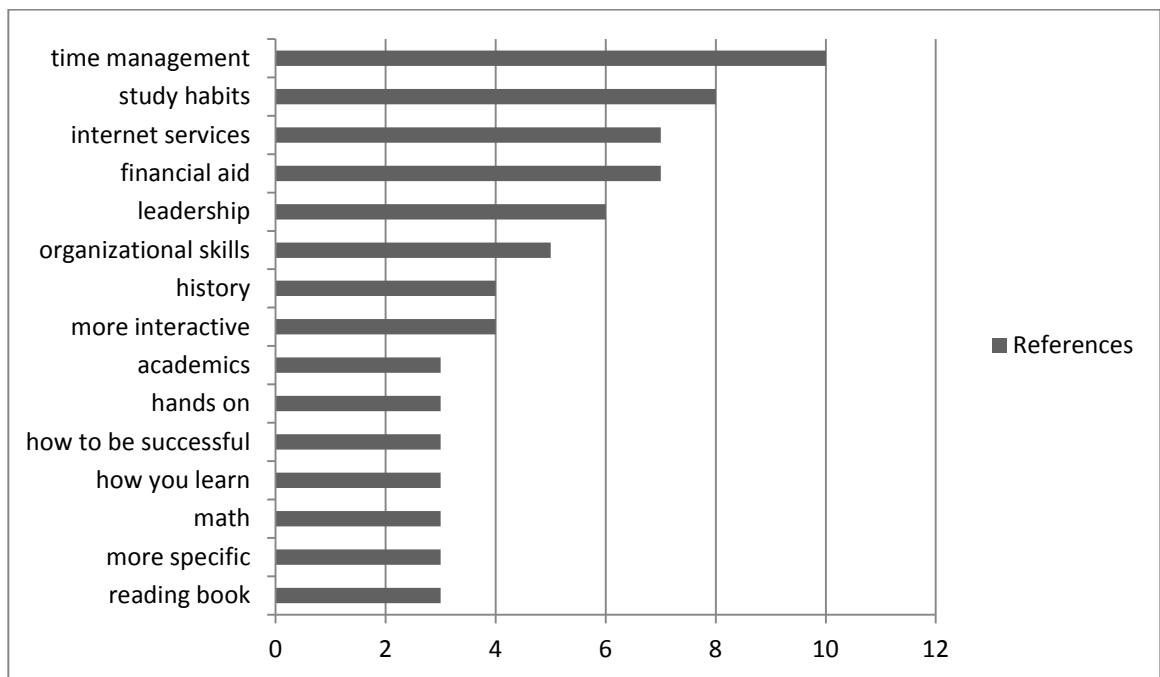
Content Analysis of Focus Groups

A conventional content analysis was conducted on the transcripts of the three ABAC 1000 focus groups. This analysis was conducted to determine the common themes within the ABAC 1000 freshman seminar courses within the study and the reoccurrence of these themes throughout ABAC 1000. The most beneficial topics from the perspective of the students were time management, study habits, and financial aid. Each focus group was analyzed separately to determine emergent themes and the reoccurrence of such themes (see Appendix K) and these themes were compared within the entirety of the focus group process. Figure 11 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of the

focus group comments. The top 15 themes with a minimum of three references are included in Figure 11. The complete data set can be found in appendix K. These common themes ranged from three references to ten references.

Figure 11

Emergent Themes Of Most Beneficial Topics In ABAC 1000 From The Focus Groups With Multiple References (3+)



Time management was the most commonly mentioned beneficial theme with ten references, with study habits following with eight references. Brandon in focus group three commented, “Something that I would emphasize would be time management skills, because I know several people who’s GPA has dropped because of poor time management.” Rosa in focus group one stated, “A lot of the stuff that I learned in that class hasn’t been covered in any other class. It really helps a student to go over things. It seems silly at first that they are going to teach you how to study or manage your time, but when you sit down and think

about it. It is really useful” (see Appendix I). Financial aid and internet services each occurred seven times within the focus group discussion. Leadership and organizational skills were referenced as beneficial six and five times, respectively. History and making the course more interactive each occurred four times. With three references each; reading book, more specific, math, how you learn, how to be successful, hand-on, and academics finalize the content analysis list of those themes with three more references. There were an additional 52 themes that emerged during the focus groups discussion with only a single mention or two occurrences (see Appendix K).

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

The nontraditional student online questionnaire was emailed to the 631 nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC during the summer and fall 2011 semesters. These students were asked six questions (see Appendix C) regarding the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course, their educational preparedness, and any assistance the college could offer to help the nontraditional student to succeed at the college. Nontraditional students who had taken the ABAC 1000 course were asked questions specific to their experience, while all students were asked about their educational preparedness and the topics that would be most beneficial to success.

Sample of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

There were 320 nontraditional students who responded to the nontraditional student online questionnaire (see Appendix J). These 320 students were 51% of the 621 nontraditional students identified as being currently enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters. The sample of 320 nontraditional students included 50 students who had taken the ABAC 1000 course and 270 who had not taken the course. The

students were solicited to complete the questionnaire through six separate emails between May 2011 and September 2011. Table 6 shows the demographic data for the nontraditional students who completed the questionnaire with the mode highlighted.

Table 6

Nontraditional Student Demographic Data

Age	Gender	Ethnicity	1 st Generation	Income	Marital Status
(113) 35%: 25-32	(216) 68%: female	(25) 8%: African American	(169) 53%: no	(95) 30%: >10K	(213) 67%: married
(60) 19%: 33-40	(104) 32%: male	(275) 86%: Caucasian	(151) 47%: yes	(154) 48%: 10K-29,999	(57) 18%: divorced
(147) 46%: 40+		(9) 3%: Other		(35) 11%: 30K-49,999	(44) 14%: never married
		(11) 3%: Hispanic		(26) 8%: 50K-69,999	(6) 1%: widowed
				(9) 3%: 70K-89,999	
				(1) 0.3%: 100K+	

Response Rate of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was sent to the nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters with a letter of solicitation (see Appendix G) and a nontraditional questionnaire (see Appendix C). The questionnaire data was collected electronically and results were compiled. Of the 631 solicitation emails sent, 320 of the online questionnaires were completed, with a response rate of 51%. This response rate created a possible limitation in generalizability as non-respondents could possibly have answered questions differently than respondents. However, having the additional data sets from the focus groups substantiated the data collected. An email with solicitation letter (see

Appendix G) was sent on six separate occasions to increase the response rate. Surveys were sent at various times during the summer 2011 semester and early in the fall 2011 semester to maximize the return rate based on the availability of respondents and the schedule of each respondent. The contacts were checked at the beginning of the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters to insure that all nontraditional students enrolling late would be included in the final number of 631.

Purpose of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

The nontraditional student online questionnaire was designed to gather nontraditional student input into the current ABAC 1000 curriculum, educational readiness of nontraditional students, and suggestions for improvements to the curriculum of the ABAC 1000 and general freshman orientation courses. Questions 1 and 2 (see Appendix C) were designed to discover the attitudes of nontraditional students at ABAC as related to the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course. Questions 3 and 5 were developed to collect data on the educational readiness of the nontraditional students at ABAC. Questions 4 and 6 were designed to analyze the current and future curriculum of ABAC 1000 and general freshman orientation courses. The nontraditional student online questionnaire was designed to address Research Questions 3, 4, and 5 of the study.

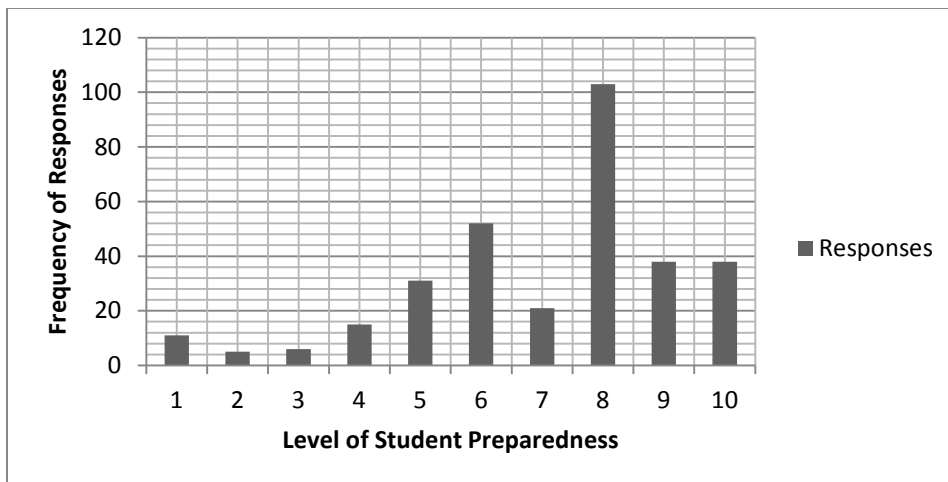
Results of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

The nontraditional student online questionnaire resulted in both quantitative and qualitative data. Questions 2-7 all produced qualitative data that would result in a content analysis for the discovery of common themes. Question one requested an affirmative or negative response as to whether the respondent had taken the ABAC 1000 course with 50 respondents who had taken the ABAC 1000 course and 270 who did not take the course.

This indicated that 16% of the nontraditional students responding to the questionnaire had taken the course. Question 2 provided insight for content analysis into the reasons nontraditional students did or did not take the ABAC 1000 course. Question 3 addressed the qualitative responses regarding educational preparedness. Question 4 provided for a qualitative analysis of the recommendations for beneficial topics within the ABAC 1000 course. Question 5 used a rating scale to rate the level of preparedness that each nontraditional student experienced when entering college. Figure 12 shows the results of the rating scale for Question 5.

Figure 12

Nontraditional Student Educational Preparedness Question Five Rating Scale Results



There were 22 (6.8%) respondents who indicated that their educational readiness was within the lowest three ratings. There were 119 (37.2%) respondents rating their educational preparedness as a four, five, six, or seven who were moderately prepared. The top three ratings were indicated by 179 (55.9%) respondents. This indicated that the majority of respondents were highly prepared. The greatest frequency of response was

indicated as an eight, with 103 respondents using this rating. A rating of six followed as the next most frequent rating with 52. The least frequent rating was two with a frequency of five. Question six provided qualitative data for content analysis regarding the least beneficial topics within the ABAC 1000 curriculum. Question seven addressed the demographic composition of the responses (see Table 6).

Content Analysis of Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

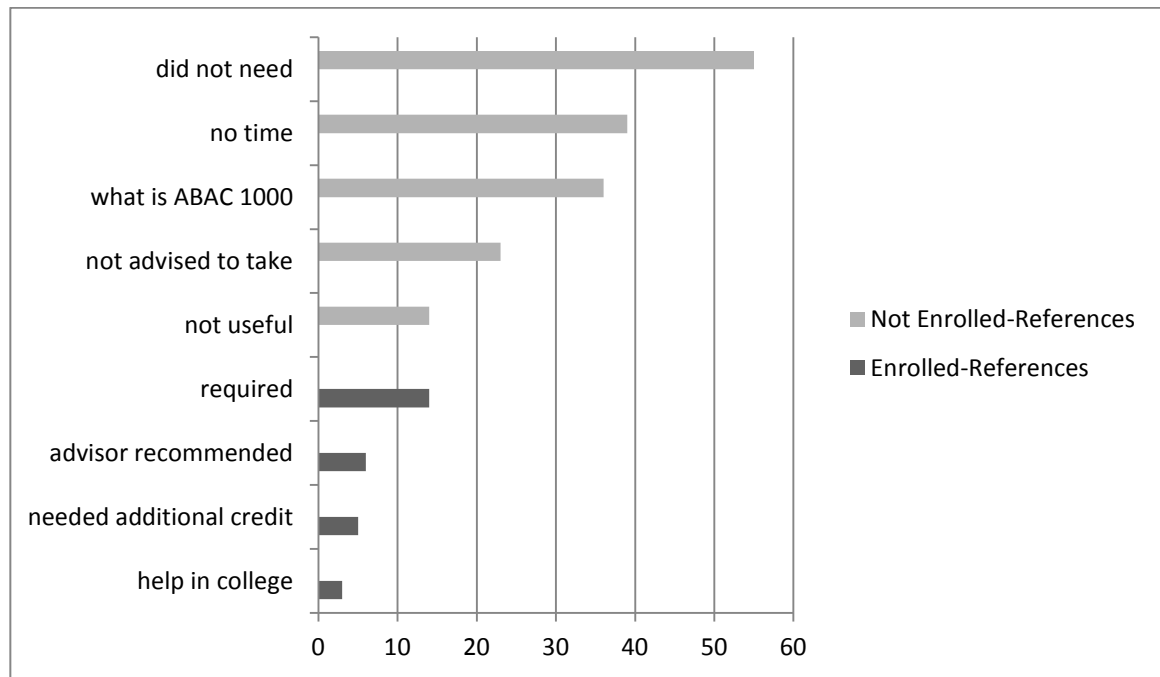
A conventional content analysis was conducted on the responses of the nontraditional student online student questionnaire. This analysis was conducted to determine the common themes within the responses of each nontraditional student responding to the questionnaire. Each question containing qualitative data (Questions 2-6) was analyzed separately to discover the common themes within the varying questions.

Figure 13 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of question two of the online questionnaire. These common themes represented the reasons that the nontraditional students did or did not enroll in the ABAC 1000 course. The top nine themes with a minimum of three references are included in Figure 13. The complete data set can be found in Appendix K.

Figure 13

Most Frequent Reasons Nontraditional Students Did Or Did Not Enroll In ABAC 1000,

Question Two With Multiple References (3+)



The most frequent themes for students who did not take the ABAC 1000 course were that they did not need the course, had no time, did not know what the course was, were not advised to take the course, and thought the course was not useful. Respondent 33 noted, “I already earned a bachelor’s degree from another university, so I wouldn’t take freshmen orientation class.” Respondent six commented “I only have time to take the classes that my advisor tells me that I need.” Respondent four, with 15 others echoing the response clearly asked, “What is ABAC 1000?” Respondent 273 considered ABAC 1000 “a waste of time.” The most frequent themes for the students who did indicate they had taken ABAC 1000 were that the course was required, their advisor recommended the course, they needed additional credit, and thought it would help in college. Respondent 73

noted that “it was mandatory at the time.” Respondent 140 said “It was recommended by my advisor.” Respondent 79 indicated that “I needed the course to be considered a full time student.” Respondent 199 “needed help coming back to college” (see Appendix J).

The most frequent theme for those not enrolled in ABAC 1000, with 55 references, was that they did not need the course. In fact, respondent 195 commented “I dropped the class during drop add when I found out I didn’t need the class.” This varied from not needing it due to educational preparedness to those not needing it because it was not a degree requirement. Respondent 28 shared that he “had received an associate’s degree from another college and was told [he] exempted ABAC 1000 because [he was] married with 2 kids” (see Appendix J). The most frequent theme for those that had enrolled in an ABAC 1000 course was that it was required (14 references). The second most common response was that it was recommended by an advisor. In addition to the nine most frequent themes; there were an additional eight themes with fewer than three references.

Figure 14 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of question three of the online questionnaire. These common themes represented the areas of educational need that the nontraditional students indicated were areas that would require assistance. The top 17 themes with a minimum of three references are included in Figure 14. The most frequent theme was the need for assistance with financial aid with 44 references. This theme was represented in the comment by respondent 35, as “a counselor specifically assigned to nontraditional students would be helpful, especially because our financial aid status and transcript status are treated differently. This person would be our one point of contact and lessen any confusion.” Assistance with math occurred over 30

times. Respondent 111 commented, “I needed help in math, it had been ten years since I took an algebra course” (see Appendix J).

Help with admissions and advising followed with the frequency of references with each having over 20 occurrences.

I was deeply disappointed about how the Office of Admissions did not accurately communicate with me. Depending on who I spoke with in the office, I got different answers to the same questions, such as needing to pay the registration fees. My record was not updated correctly, so on orientation day I spent more than 45 minutes in line to pay a fee that I wasn't required to pay and had been informed about by the Office of Admissions (Respondent 35).

Respondent 102 also noted “I needed and sought personal advising regarding the classes I needed to take and to understand which courses from my previous education had transferred” (see Appendix J).

Assistance with studying, time management, and paperwork followed with 17, 12, and 11 responses, respectively. Respondent 86 commented on studying by saying “Learning new ways to study and feeling it was ok as an older student to go to the learning center.” Respondent 131 addressed time management, “I needed help managing my time between ABAC, work and my two children at home.” The next most frequently mentioned theme was help with the orientation process with eight references. Assistance with what to expect, science, and scheduling all occurred seven times. Technology, where to start, and recognition of nontraditional student issues were mentioned as needs six, five, and five references, respectively. Help with writing, transfer credits, rusty, and available resources appeared as the next set of themes with four references each. Assistance with testing,

scheduling around work, registration, and note taking each had three references. In addition to the top 17 themes, there were 43 themes with two or fewer references. The complete data set can be found in Appendix K.

Figure 14

Most Frequent Educational Needs Of Nontraditional Students, Question Three With Multiple References (4+)

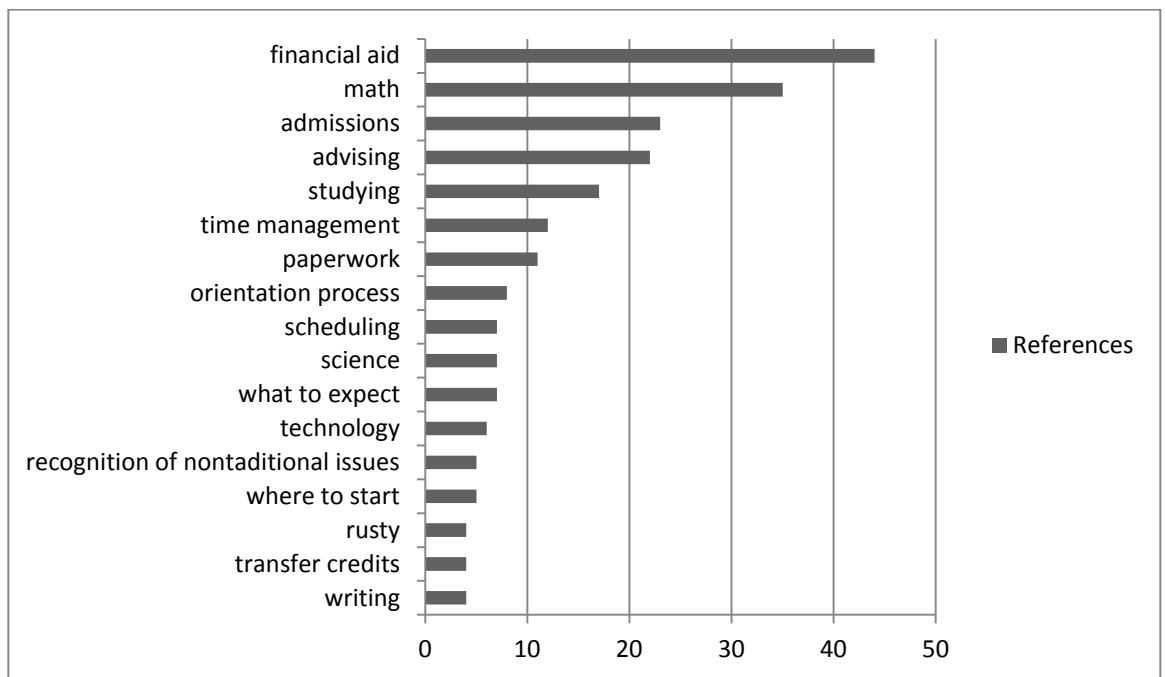
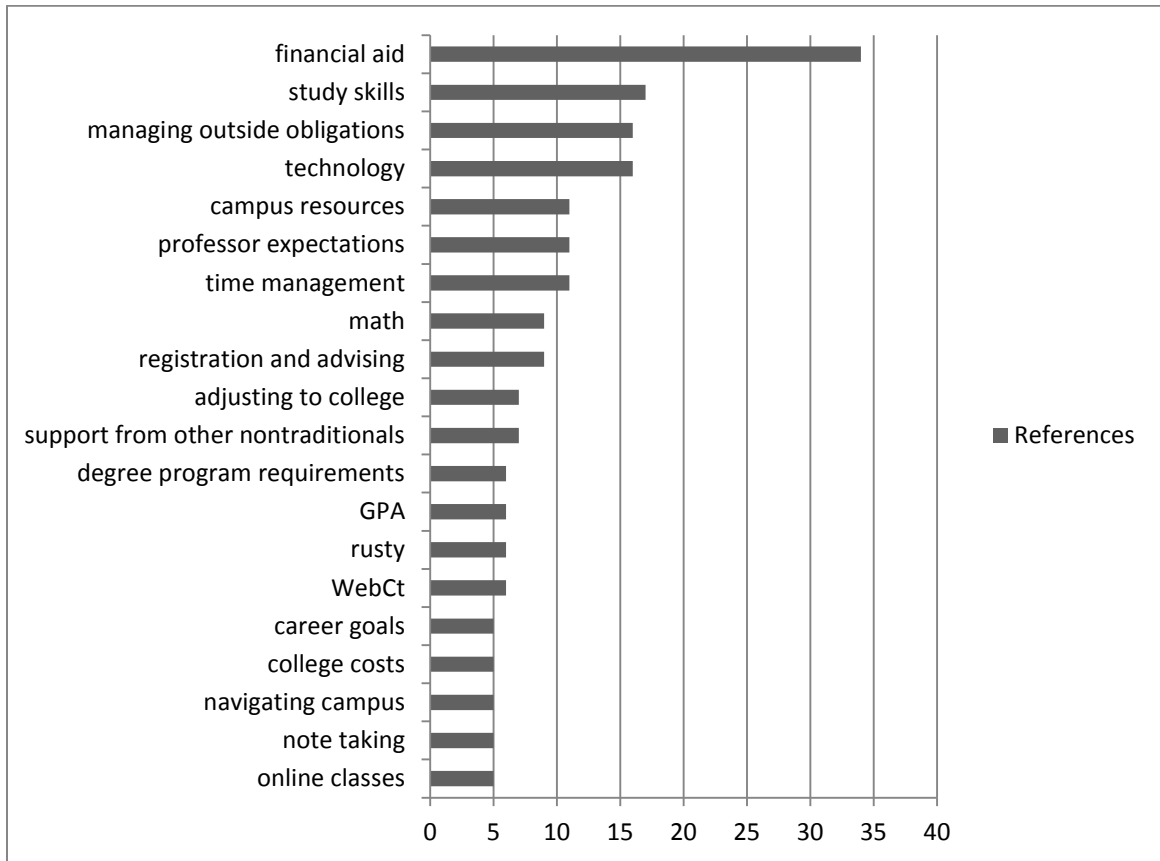


Figure 15 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of question four of the online questionnaire. These most frequent themes represented the topics which could be included in an ABAC 1000 course to most benefit the nontraditional student. The top 29 themes with a minimum of three references are included in Figure 15. The complete data set can be found in Appendix K. The most frequent theme was the need for assistance with financial aid with 34 references.

Figure 15

Most Frequent Recommended Topics By Nontraditional Students For ABAC 1000, Question Four With Multiple References (5+)



Financial aid assistance was double the second most referenced them of study skills which had 17 occurrences. Respondent 94 commented on the cost of college.

How to get financial aid to pay for the extremely high costs of college and especially the books you have to pay extremely high prices for. Need to set up a program so NTs can let other NTs use their books for a small fee instead of having to pay the loan shark price at the school book store.

This comment about “loan shark price” illustrated the great need for financial aid assistance by the nontraditional student. Study skills were referenced as respondent 285 commented; “Adjusting to the demands of college and all of the studying and homework that comes along with it” would be beneficial. The topics of technology and managing outside obligations were each referenced 16 times. Respondents 138 and 295 addressed each of these issues, “I don’t need to know about goal setting and self-esteem. I need help with time commitments and using technology that doesn’t come as second nature to me.” “I would like to see more emphasis on balancing college and family.” Respondent 185 also commented, “I need to talk with someone about attendance policies, if my children are sick, sometimes I just can’t come to school” (see Appendix J).

References to time management, professor expectations, and campus resources each occurred on 11 separate occasions. Respondent 53 elaborated on the unique need for time management for the nontraditional student. “As a non-traditional student with a career and a family, topics focusing on juggling the different aspects of an adult's life, but also being able to have some of that college student experience with regards to participating in events and clubs on campus would be most beneficial.” In regards to professor expectations, respondent 122 noted “The course should focus on expectations of nontraditional students and expectation that professors have on nontraditional students.” Respondent 150 mentioned campus resources, “It would be nice to learn about all of the resources that are available to adult students and the resources specifically for adult students if there are any” (see Appendix J). Registration and advising, math, support from other nontraditional students, and adjusting to college followed with nine and seven references. Table 7

illustrates the remaining themes and the associated references. In addition to these 18 themes, 38 themes were referenced three time or fewer.

Table 7

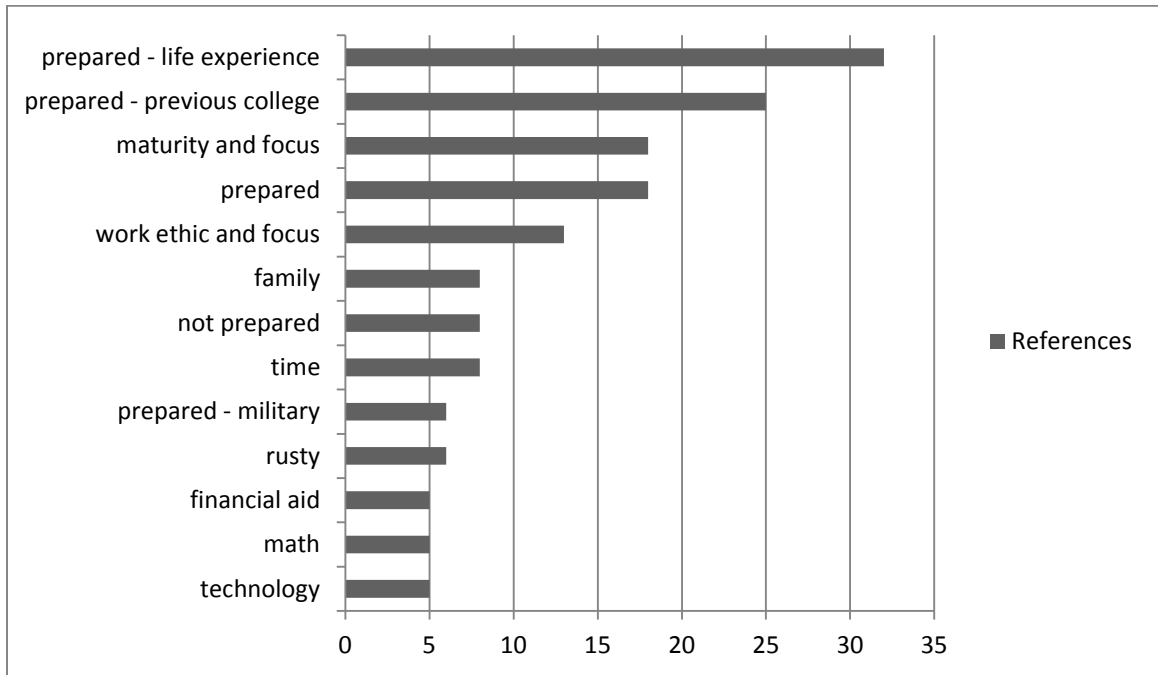
Further Recommended Topics For Inclusion In ABAC 1000 Question Four

Name	References	Name	References
WebCt	6	tutoring	4
rusty	6	transcripts	4
GPA	6	science	4
degree program requirements	6	resources for nontraditional students	4
online classes	5	paperwork	4
note taking	5	organization	4
navigating campus	5	class scheduling	4
college costs	5	banner	4
career goals	5	admissions	4

Figure 16 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of question five of the online questionnaire. These common themes represented the level of preparedness of the nontraditional student compared to the traditional student. The top 20 themes with a minimum of five references were included in Figure 16. The complete data set can be found in Appendix K. The most common theme was that the nontraditional student was more prepared based on life experience with 32 references.

Figure 16

Most Frequent Basis For Level Of Preparedness Of Nontraditional Students Compared To Traditional Students, Question Five With Multiple References (5+)



This preparation based on life experience was illustrated through the comment by a nontraditional student. The second most referenced theme was that the students were prepared based on previous college experience, echoed by the nontraditional student above. Respondent 59 addressed both life experience as the most frequent response and previous college experiences, “I feel I was more so prepared than traditional students in some ways because I am past my partying stage, I’m focused on my education, I graduated from Moultrie Tech and already know about study habits, work ethics, stuff they don’t teach you in high school. I have however struggled financially and struggled balancing my family life with my college career.” This comment, however, did illustrate the need for assistance

even for the students reporting preparedness. Eighteen references for being prepared and having more maturity and focus followed in the themes. Respondent 90 commented:

I had also been working at a law firm, using technology that prepared me for college work. Overall, I think that I was well-prepared for college. I think the only thing that revealed that I was a little older than most was that I could carry on adult conversations with my professors. I really believe the time I took to work after high school helped me in the long run. I knew more about what to expect from the 'adult' world.

Work ethic and focus was commented upon 13 times, and more specifically by respondent 23, "being I am an older adult and have lived in this hard world without a college education, I have a better work ethic than most traditional students." The topics of time, not being prepared, and the role of the family each occurred with eight references. Six nontraditional students commented that they felt "rusty" compared to the traditional student, while another six felt more prepared based on military experience (see Appendix J). The topics of technology, math, and financial aid each occurred five times. Four nontraditional students commented that there was greater preparedness just by not being fresh out of high school while another four referenced a good experience with the admissions process. Not being prepared due to a lack of help on the telephone was also referenced four times. The topics of receiving tour, great help, professor expectations, having better grammar, and expectations rounded out the list with three references. In addition to the 21 most common themes, there were also 31 less referenced themes.

Figure 17 illustrates the themes that emerged from the content analysis of question six of the online questionnaire. These common themes represented topics presented in the

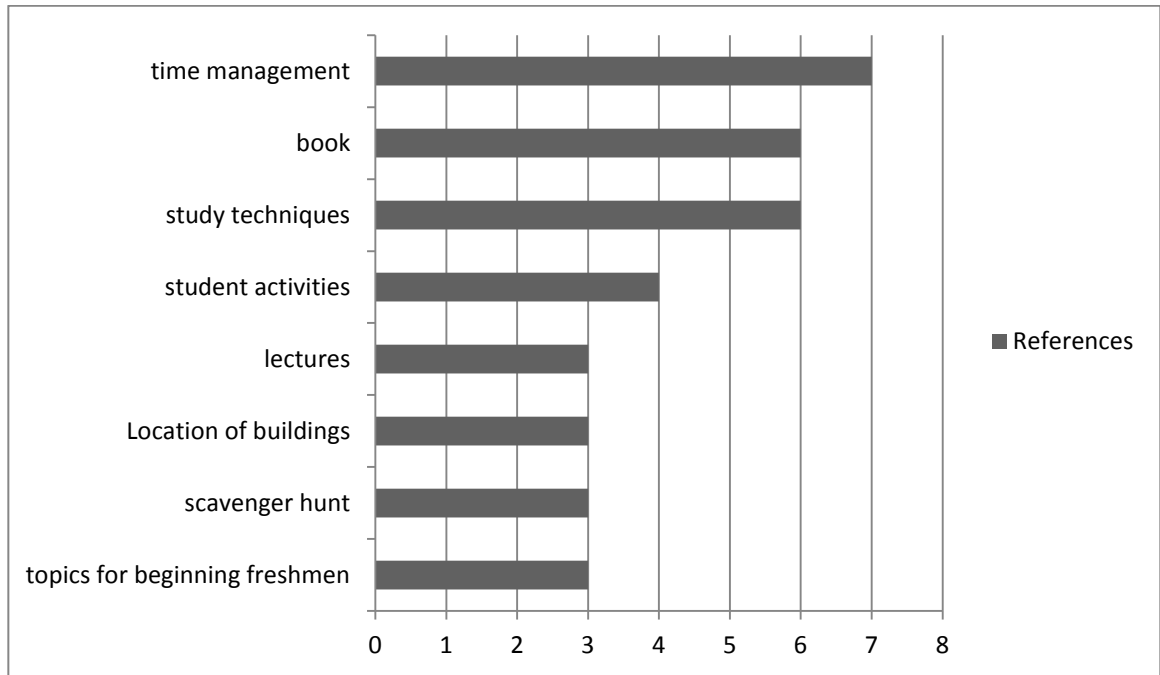
ABAC 1000 course of least value to the nontraditional students. The top eight themes with a minimum of three references are included in Figure 17. The complete data set can be found in Appendix K.

The most frequent theme was time management with seven references. “I know how to manage time; I manage the time of a family of four” (Respondent 79). This sentiment indicated why time management was the least beneficial theme. It also indicated the reasons three of the additional seven themes were listed. These themes being book, student activities, and scavenger hunt. Book was referenced six times, student activities four, and scavenger hunt three. Respondent 101 questioned, “How does reading a book help me in college?” These three themes required time that the nontraditional students felt did not maximize their limited time. Study techniques were referenced seven times as the second most frequent theme. Respondent 52 was pleased with the ABAC 1000 course, with one exception. “I think that everything we covered in ABAC 1000 was helpful to some extent. I think the only topic that I found least beneficial was "Why studying is important, I already knew that” (see Appendix J). Topics for beginning freshmen, location of buildings, and lectures were each referenced three times. In addition to the eight most common themes, there were eleven themes which were only referenced two or less times.

Figure 17

Most Frequent Topics Of Least Value In ABAC 1000, Question Six With Multiple

References (3+)



Research Question One

To what extent do SACS-accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia, both public and private, develop and teach the freshman orientation course differently for traditional versus nontraditional students?

With only four institutions responding to the institutional survey that there was a separate course for nontraditional students and two institutions indicating that there was a plan for such a separate course, the evidence revealed that there were very few institutions that targeted nontraditional students with a separate freshman orientation course. However, of the twenty institutions of higher education that required freshman orientation as a mandatory course, all required this course for both traditional and nontraditional students.

This lack of differentiation indicated a possible perceived need for both the traditional and nontraditional student. This finding indicated also a lack of differentiation between the two groups of students and their different needs.

Research Question Two

What are the curricular differences between freshman orientation courses for traditional versus nontraditional students?

According to the results of the analysis of the syllabi, there seemed to be very little curricular differences between the freshman orientation course for traditional and nontraditional students. Of the four institutions offering a separate curriculum, one only offered the separate curriculum to students in an evening program and the others used the same basic structure with minor changes such as an inclusion of life experiences and differences in the transition topic. There was no major difference in curriculum; there were mainly differences in presentation style and limited discussion between the differences in high school and college.

Research Question Three

How do traditional and the nontraditional students perceive the relevance of the ABAC freshman orientation course objectives?

Based on the results of the focus groups and nontraditional student online questionnaire, the majority of traditional and nontraditional students did not perceive a relevance of the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course objectives due to the lack of emphasis placed on the design and execution of the course by administration and faculty members. This lack of emphasis was evident in the elimination of the requirement to take the ABAC 1000 course and the motivation of the faculty teaching the course as commented

on by Max of focus group three, “If there were major adjustments made it could be very beneficial; my professor was thrown in to course at last minute and just gave us the minimum.” Those students who did take the course were divided over the relevance of the course objectives, depending primarily on the preparedness of the instructor, the design of the course, and the lack of consistency in the course. Those courses which were theory based, general, non-participatory, and lacked instructor enthusiasm received minimal appreciation by both traditional and nontraditional students. The courses which were practical, specific to ABAC, hands-on, delivered enthusiastically received high marks. “[I would rate it a] seven, the good parts were good, the lecturing brought it down. If it were more interactive it would have been a ten” (see Appendix J).

Research Question Four

What are the educational orientation needs of the ABAC freshman orientation nontraditional students?

Based on the results of the focus groups and nontraditional student online questionnaire, financial aid, math, admissions, and advising topped the list of themes mentioned by nontraditional students at ABAC. In total there were 61 areas recommended by nontraditional students. Three of the top four areas noted were very specific to ABAC, while general topics of success were noted less frequently. Even within these general areas of success, the emphasis should be shifted to align with the priorities and backgrounds of the nontraditional students. Respondent 92 commented on both financial aid and the need for assistance in math, the two most referenced themes.

After having graduated from college ten years ago, and now returning, I forgot a lot of my algebra. Even though I had successfully passed college algebra class years

ago, it was not recognized as ABAC's college algebra course which put me having to re-take the course. However, I really needed learning support again as I just forgot algebra because it's not something you use every day. The Pell Grant would not pay for me to take learning support because according to my transcripts I did not need it... but I KNEW I did. It put me attempting the college algebra class at ABAC twice only to drop the course within the first couple weeks because I was struggling so badly. Tutoring was not enough... I really needed to GO BACK and refresh my memory with learning support which I could not do (see Appendix J).

Research Question Five

What are the recommended elements and content of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students?

Based on the results on the institutional survey, focus groups, and nontraditional student online questionnaire, there were many topics discussed within the focus groups and nontraditional student online questionnaire which provided a basis for recommended content of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students. This content must take into the consideration of the life experiences and motivations of the nontraditional students. One nontraditional student illustrated the need for a course for nontraditional students while demonstrating the difficulty in designing such a course. Respondent 45 of the nontraditional student online questionnaire commented, “It seems like it's marketed towards 18-year-olds and I don't think you can ever make that appealing to people over the age of 25.” Respondent 50, however, commented that “I think that first of all, it should be very clearly made known that it exists to non-traditional students. Second of all, it should include tips about balancing school with raising children, working, etc” (see Appendix J).

These opinions indicated the need, while demonstrating the challenges. Such challenges suggested the need for a deliberate effort to recommend content specifically designed for the nontraditional student.

Based on these findings, the following course objectives were recommended.

1. Understand the financial aid process.
2. Develop a detailed understanding of campus resources and the campus personnel affiliated with those resources;
3. Refine note-taking, test-taking , and study skills to best suit personal experiences and learning style;
4. Utilize tutoring to build upon academic skills;
5. Understand the expectations of technology usage, the availability of technological resources, and the general skill required to navigate the technological requirements of the college;
6. Develop a support network and skill set to manage the time commitments of family, work, and college;
7. Develop an action plan for success;
8. Understand the history and mission of the institution;
9. Develop communication skills between peers, professors, and the campus community;
10. Network in the community and profession;
11. Develop critical thinking skills through practical application in life experiences and how those examples can translate to the college and career;

12. Expand problem solving and analytical skills through research and hands-on practices;
13. Develop an understanding of career requirements and professional associations;
and
14. Invest in campus involvement as a part of a portfolio project.

Chapter V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative study was to investigate the extent and relevance of the freshman orientation course in meeting the unique needs of the nontraditional student and to make recommendations as to the most beneficial curricular structure and learning objectives of the freshman orientation course to better meet the unique needs of nontraditional students. There were five research questions for the study:

- 1) To what extent do SACS-accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia, both public and private, develop and teach the freshman orientation course differently for traditional versus nontraditional students;
- 2) What are the curricular differences between freshman orientation courses for traditional versus nontraditional students;
- 3) How do traditional and the nontraditional students perceive the relevance of the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College freshman orientation course objectives;
- 4) What are the educational orientation needs of the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College freshman orientation nontraditional students;
- and 5) What are the recommended elements and content of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students?

This study was conducted through three primary research instruments. The first set of information was gathered through three focus groups. The sample for these focus groups was the students who had taken the ABAC 1000 course and were enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters. There were a total of 30 focus group participants, with fifteen being traditional students and fifteen being nontraditional students.

These students were purposefully selected from 52 students which voluntarily responded to a solicitation email of 384 students. The information gathered from these focus groups was used to gain insight into the educational preparedness of the students enrolled in the ABAC 1000 course, student perceptions of ABAC 1000, and student recommendation for future ABAC 1000 curriculum. The second set of information was gained through an institutional survey of the 92 SACS-accredited institutions of higher education in Georgia. There were 62 institutions which participated in this institutional survey. This information gathered was used to analyze the freshman orientation curricula from institutions across the state and to determine the usage of the freshman orientation course across the state. The third set of information was garnered through a nontraditional student online questionnaire. The sample for the online questionnaire was the nontraditional students who were enrolled at ABAC during the summer 2011 and fall 2011 semesters. There were a total of 320 nontraditional student participants. These students voluntarily responded to a solicitation email of 621 students. The information gathered from this questionnaire was used to gain insight into the educational preparedness of the nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC, nontraditional student perceptions of ABAC 1000, and nontraditional student recommendations for future ABAC 1000 curricula.

A conventional content analysis was conducted to determine the common themes and the references to these themes within the focus groups, institutional survey, and nontraditional student online questionnaire. This content analysis provided information into educational readiness, student needs, student perceptions, institutional practice, and curriculum recommendations. This information provided the basis for recommendations for freshman orientation curriculum development.

Freshmen Orientation Courses

Within a review of the institutional survey of the 62 SACS-accredited institutions in Georgia and through a content analysis of the syllabi of the various freshman orientation courses provided through the institutional survey, course objectives and activities were retrieved. In a review and comparison of the course objectives and corresponding course activities, it would seem that the activities should match with the objectives. While this was the case with some objectives and activities, it was not with all. The ten most frequent course objectives in order of frequency are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Comparison Of Freshman Orientation Course Objectives And Activities

Objectives	Activities
Campus Resources	Time Management
Technology	Technology
Critical Thinking	Diversity Exercise
Career	Campus Resources
Communication	Campus Involvement
Diversity	Research and Writing
Time Management	Learning Style
Problem Solving	Career Reflection
Goal Setting	Advising and Registration
Community Involvement	Service Learning

Within the top ten course objectives there were five corresponding course activities within the top ten. These course objectives and activities were campus resources, technology, career, diversity, and time management. The discrepancy between the frequency of course objectives and the corresponding frequency of course activities raised questions regarding

the development of the freshman orientation curriculum. While the remaining course objectives within the top ten were found with less frequency in the course activities, there were questions as to the appropriateness of the course development based on stated objectives with the freshman orientation courses and the lack of similar frequencies.

Nontraditional Student Perceptions

During the analysis of the three focus groups of the ABAC 1000 students and the nontraditional student online questionnaire the most beneficial topics of ABAC 1000, most frequent educational needs, most recommended topics, basis for level of preparation, and least beneficial topics of ABAC 1000 were gathered. Through a comparison of these themes and topics, a view of the current structure of the ABAC 1000 course and the nontraditional students it served was developed. Time management, study habits, financial aid, Internet services, and leadership emerged as the five most frequent topics which were considered beneficial by the focus groups (see Figure 11). In comparison, the five most frequent areas of educational need as identified by nontraditional students in the online questionnaire were financial aid, math, admissions, advising, and studying (see Figure 14). Within these two lists, financial aid was the only topic which appeared within the top five of each list. Nontraditional students that both took and did not take the ABAC 1000 course recognized and reported the need for financial aid assistance. This was an important key for the inclusion of financial aid assistance as a major component of any nontraditional student freshman orientation course.

While nontraditional students did participate in the focus groups, each focus group was composed of five nontraditional and five traditional students. In the online questionnaire, responses were only from nontraditional students. Table 9 compares the most

frequent areas of educational need with the most frequently recommended topics for ABAC 1000 by nontraditional students.

Table 9

Comparison of Most Frequent Educational Needs of Nontraditional Students and the Most Frequently Recommended Topics for ABAC 1000 by Nontraditional Students

Educational Need	Recommended Topics
Financial Aid	Financial Aid
Math	Study Skills
Admissions	Technology
Advising	Managing Outside Obligations
Studying	Time Management
Time Management	Professor Expectations
Paperwork	Campus Resources
Orientation Process	Registration and Advising
What to Expect	Math
Science	Support from Other Nontraditional Students

Within the most frequent areas of educational need and recommended topics there were five direct links and the remaining areas of educational need and recommended topics had similarities which linked topics and areas of need with the exception of science.

Where there did seem to be some area of contradiction was within the topics listed most frequently as those of least value, and those listed as the areas of greatest educational

need by the results of the nontraditional student online questionnaire and the three focus groups. The eight topics mentioned most frequently as being of the least value were time management, study techniques, book, student activities, topics for beginning freshmen, scavenger hunt, location of buildings, and lectures (see Figure 17). While six of these topics of least value did not appear in the most frequent areas of educational need or beneficial topics, the two most frequent did appear. The two topics most frequently identified as being of the least value were time management and study techniques (see Figure 17). Time management and study habits were the first and second most frequently mentioned beneficial topics in the focus groups and the sixth and fifth most frequent areas of educational need as noted by nontraditional students in the online questionnaire. As the most frequently recommended topics, study skills was the second most frequent and time management was the fifth. This discrepancy was very noteworthy and presented the question as to how the two least beneficial topics were also most needed and recommended.

These questions regarding time management and study techniques raised several possible issues. First, if study techniques and time management were considered important, was there a flaw in the presentation of these topics which diminished the perceived value of the topics? Second, was the focus of time management and study techniques too narrowly defined towards the traditional student, preventing its successful application for nontraditional students? Third, what were the differences between the nontraditional students that participated in the focus groups and those that remained anonymous within the online questionnaire? These issues are to be addressed in future research.

Theoretical Framework

Andragogy was used as the theoretical framework of this study. In a review of the study, the areas of this framework were addressed. The core concepts of andragogy, as defined by Knowles were the need to know, the learner's self-concept, the role of the learners' experiences, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, pp. 64-68). The need to know was demonstrated with the vast number of nontraditional students that did not enroll in the ABAC 10000 course. Nearly 100 students did not enroll in the course because it was perceived that it was not needed or that there was a lack of an understanding of the course. As nontraditional students wished to know the why of education, this lack of knowledge of the course apparently limited their participation. This type of response led to the position that many students had questions which were not addressed by the traditional orientation course. The learner's self-concept was demonstrated by respondent 158; "I wish that my advisor knew a little more about adult students and their challenges" (see Appendix J). The role of the learners' experiences, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation was demonstrated in the basis for their level of preparation as illustrated in Figure 16. The five most frequently mentioned basis for level of preparation was life experience, previous college, prepared, maturity and focus, and work ethic and focus. These self-disclosed bases validated the four final concepts of andragogy and the theoretical framework of this study.

Conclusions

This study provided a history of the freshman orientation course; the current practices; the educational readiness of the nontraditional student; the needs of the nontraditional students; and the recommendations for the future development of freshman

orientation courses. The need for these recommendations was evident in the infrequency of freshman orientation curriculum designed for the nontraditional student. The institutions of higher education seemed to underestimate the trend of education in the need to retrain and retool nontraditional students for new career paths; this being a trend that will not reverse. The data gathered through the online questionnaire of ABAC nontraditional students documented the lack of interest in the freshman orientation, but no real lack of need. Institutions of higher education have underestimated the needs of nontraditional students. As a result of this data, the following conclusions have been made:

1. The institutions of higher education in Georgia, accredited by SACS do not consistently offer the freshman orientation course. Less than half of the institutions participating in the study offered an autonomous freshman orientation course. Of these institutions, only two-thirds made this course mandatory for all students, both traditional and nontraditional. Additionally, only 13% (n = 4) of the institutions participating offered a freshman orientation course with a curriculum unique to the nontraditional student. These institutions included Georgia Southwestern State University, Piedmont College, Shorter University, and Wesleyan College.

2. There seemed to be little curricular differences between the freshman orientation course designed for the traditional student and the course designed for the nontraditional student. The main differences seemed to be in presentation style and the exclusion of topics primarily focused towards the traditional student such as the transition from high school to college. "It seems like it's marketed towards 18-year-olds and I don't think you can ever make that appealing to people over the age of 25." (Respondent 85, Online Questionnaire, Appendix J). These limited curricular differences did not match the

needs that were self-identified by the nontraditional students in the online questionnaire. Managing time between family, work, and college was a primary concern of the nontraditional students which felt underprepared for college. Nontraditional students also experienced a feeling of being “rusty” at skills which they once have excelled. These same students identified issues with technology, math skills, and financial aid as issues which limited their level of college preparedness. Finally, nontraditional students identified the theme of expectations and more specifically expectations of professors as area of need. Respondent 292 of the online questionnaire commented, “Professors do not know how much I have to sacrifice just to make it to class, much less to do anything extra. It is not always easy to find a babysitter” (see Appendix J). These students identified needs which were sometimes addressed in curriculum designed for traditional students, but not universally.

3. The ABAC 1000 freshman orientation was not widely recognized as a beneficial course and the relevance to the needs of both the traditional and nontraditional students were often considered less than desirable. Seventeen percent (n=55) did not need the course, 12% (n = 39) had no time for the course, 11% (n = 36) did not have any knowledge of ABAC 1000, 7% (n = 23) were not advised to take the course, and 4% (n = 14) felt that ABAC 1000 was not useful. These students constituted over 50% (n = 167) of the students responding to the questionnaire. Only 2% (n = 6) of the respondents favorably viewed the relevance of the course. Respondent 31 enrolled in the ABAC 1000 course “because it was recommended by my advisor and was a very helpful course.” These students, however, were outnumbered by nontraditional students “who didn’t feel that the services offered in ABAC 1000 would benefit me in any way,” and students who “did not

know if this was for me or for only the [students] fresh out of high school” (Respondents 13 and 66, Online Questionnaire, Appendix J).

4. The areas of educational need for nontraditional college orientation students included financial aid, math skills, admissions help, advising, studying skills, time management for family and college, paperwork polices, science, scheduling courses, technology, recognition of nontraditional issues, writing, transfer credits, and the feeling that they are “rusty” in their academic skill sets. These topics, while many overlap the needs of the traditional freshmen, were unique due to the diverse and rich backgrounds of the educational and life experiences of the nontraditional students. Respondent 104 said, “If nontraditional students do not have to attend orientation, ABAC should make available to those students materials outlining the resources and procedures of the school. It is important to remember that each nontraditional student is different, and the intake process should be as individualized as possible.” The unique nontraditional students could have also benefitted from the support group of other students going through the same process, challenges, and successes. “Just having the same group of students around helped me feel at ease during my first semester, I got to know and feel comfortable with them” (Respondent 43, Appendix J).

5. Through the recommendations of the nontraditional student online questionnaire, focus group comments, and a review of the institutional survey there were many suggested content pieces for the curriculum of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students. This content must take into account the needs of the nontraditional students, the goals of the college, and the life experiences and motivation of the nontraditional students enrolled in the course. These considerations provided the basis for a

recommended curriculum for the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students. This curriculum should lead to a freshman orientation course designed specifically and deliberately for the growing number of nontraditional students enrolling as beginning freshmen in higher education.

6. There seemed to be little interest in the nontraditional student as a separate and unique population group of students. This was demonstrated in the lack of freshman orientation courses designed for nontraditional students. While the research indicated that this group of students is a growing and increasingly important population group, it has failed to achieve widespread recognition through the development of unique curricula. Whether this is due to the fact that it has not reached the appropriate size or an ingrained culture of the traditional students has yet to be determined.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study focused on the 92 SACS-accredited institutions in Georgia and the ABAC 1000 freshman orientation course, as well as the 631 nontraditional students enrolled at ABAC. The data gathered in this study may operate as guide for future studies. The following recommendations are made for future research in order of importance in the opinion of this researcher.

1. Conduct research to determine the discrepancy between areas of educational need for nontraditional students and the current activities presented to meet those needs;
2. Conduct a study to determine the perception institutions of higher education have for nontraditional students and the actual applications of these perceptions;

3. Conduct a study to determine the educational needs of nontraditional students at a wider range of institutions of higher education with a variety of nontraditional student groups;
4. Conduct a study to discover all forms of assistance for nontraditional students and the effectiveness of such efforts.
5. Conduct a Delphi study to create a comparable curriculum for a nontraditional student freshman orientation course;
6. Conduct a study to determine if nontraditional students enrolled in a freshman seminar course specific to their needs experience improved success in all levels of educational attainment;
7. Conduct a study to measure the success of freshmen student at institutions mandating a freshman orientation course in comparison to institutions with no such mandate;
8. Conduct a study to investigate if there are any difference in the needs of nontraditional students at institutions at varying SACS tier levels and governing bodies;
9. Conduct a case study to determine the educational success of a small number of nontraditional students. The focus of this study should be to compare two groups of nontraditional students who are and are not enrolled in a freshman orientation course;
10. Conduct a study with both pre and post interviews of students participating in a freshman orientation course;
11. Conduct a study to determine the evolution of the freshman orientation course and its curriculum;

12. Conduct a follow-up study to determine if the suggestions made within this research were beneficial and provide higher rates of nontraditional student success and satisfaction; and

13. Conduct a regional or national study to examine the practices of institutions of higher education outside Georgia in regards to the freshman orientation course.

Recommendations for Practice

While this study is not inclusive of all nontraditional students at institutions across the state, region, and nation; this study does allow for recommendations with the curriculum development of the freshman seminar course for nontraditional students. In consideration of these recommendations, it must be noted that institutions currently face budget woes which require the most efficient possible use of resources. With this understanding, the following recommendations are made for application. While, these recommendations were made with the intent of creating a separate freshman orientation course for nontraditional students, these recommendations, may also be incorporated into existing or evolving programs. This consideration, however, should be made with the knowledge that the freshman orientation course is a time tested and proven means of improving retention, persistence, and graduation at a time when these are important areas of focus for the University System of Georgia and higher education in general. This study identified several areas of educational need, expectations, activities, and course descriptions. Figure 18 provides categories of recommended areas of focus with corresponding course objectives and activities for a nontraditional student freshman orientation curriculum. Within these recommendations, the focus of the instructor is paramount. These areas of focus should be

applied with the theoretical framework of andragogy, with each class being customized to the students enrolled.

Figure 18

Recommendations For Nontraditional Student Freshman Orientation Course Curriculum

Category	Course objective and activities
Campus Services	<p>Nontraditional students enrolled in the freshman orientation course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the financial aid process; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Financial aid presentation • develop a detailed understanding of campus resources and the campus personnel affiliated with those resources; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff panel for campus resources and campus resource guide presentations
Academic Skills	<p>Nontraditional students enrolled in the freshman orientation course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refine note-taking, test-taking, and study skills to best suit personal experiences and learning style; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learning style inventory and practical applications • utilize tutoring to build upon academic skills; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In-class tutoring • understand the expectations of technology usage, the availability of technological resources, and the general skill required to navigate the technological requirements of the college; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ VISTA WebCt Discussion and technology quiz
Transitions	<p>Nontraditional students enrolled in the freshman orientation course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a support network and skill set to manage the time commitments of family, work, and college; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interpersonal development workshop • develop an action plan for success; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Action plan and success mapping • understand the history and mission of the institution; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Campus history tour

Figure 18 Continued

Communication	<p>Nontraditional students enrolled in the freshman orientation course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop communication skills between peers, professors, and the campus community; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Group discussions and faculty mentoring program • network in the community and profession; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Membership in a professional club and service learning report
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	<p>Nontraditional students enrolled in the freshman orientation course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop critical thinking skills through practical application of life experiences and how those examples can translate to the college and career; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Major specific problem solving activities • expand problem solving and analytical skills through research and hands-on practices; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Problem solving activities based upon student feedback
Marketability	<p>Nontraditional students enrolled in the freshman orientation course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of career requirements and professional associations; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Career testing and career presentations • invest in campus involvement as a part of a portfolio project; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creation of online portfolio

Additionally, the freshman orientation course should be offered in conjunction with the college orientation program. Nontraditional students should meet prior to the first week of class in an orientation meeting, online or in person, to discuss professor expectations, technology expectations, books, financial aid, and degree requirements. This first meeting prior to the first week of class would be designed to prepare the nontraditional student for the college culture. Respondent 58 remarked, “I think overall that the assistance provided before entering college was mediocre to say the least.” This mediocrity in preparation was echoed by another student:

I graduated Summa Cum Laude the first time I went to college at South University in Savannah, GA. I have always been someone who is thorough in what I do and exercise good studying plans, etc. In other words, I take my college seriously, and I am not someone who just doesn't do my part. However, even with that, I found myself somewhat unprepared for college this time around. One reason is that the use of technology in the college system has changed significantly since I was in college the first time. For example, on my VERY FIRST DAY of class in Political Science, the instructor asked the class to pass our homework forward. I was thinking, "What homework? It's the first day of class." It didn't take long for me to learn that there was something called WebCt in which students are to look for homework assignments, etc. When I was in college the first time, the instructor just told the students what their homework assignments were... we didn't have to go looking for them. Please understand that my problem is not with the use of technology as I have a degree in Computer Information Systems. My problem was that I was never told by anyone in the registration process at ABAC what WebCt was or what was expected of me in using it. I simply didn't know (Respondent 102, Online Questionnaire, Appendix J).

With this initial preparation, the nontraditional student should be prepared to begin college and this preparation could be expanded upon through the freshman orientation course. Additionally, this first class could be used to help define student expectations for the course to design a course unique to their life experiences.

The nontraditional student, while unique, was also similar to the traditional student in the need for assistance with college orientation. There was a need from both the

traditional and nontraditional student in regards to campus services and critical thinking. Transition and marketability were also important to both population groups, but with different emphasis from each population group. These similarities between the traditional and nontraditional students found variance in the application of the course objectives and activities of the recommended areas of focus.

Significant Outcomes

This study was of value as it contributed to the body of knowledge in preparing nontraditional students for higher education while examining the specific needs of the nontraditional student in the first year of college. The study also examined the current curriculum development of the freshman orientation course and the perceived and recognized value of the course when addressing the specific needs of the nontraditional student. The importance of the information collected and the potential impact on the field also contributed to the significance of the study.

The contributions to body of knowledge began with the nontraditional student perceptions of educational need. This study of perceived educational need tied in to the examination and evaluation of the current freshman orientation course design and the potential recommendations for a course design developed to match the perceived needs of the nontraditional student. Additionally, the study also focused the evaluation of the freshman orientation course as it was related to the specific and unique needs of the nontraditional student. This focus brought attention to the importance of the development of freshman orientation courses design with a tailored approach for nontraditional students, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

The importance of information collected in this study included the areas of educational need for nontraditional students, the course design of freshman orientation courses for nontraditional students, and the matching course design with the areas of educational need of nontraditional students. This importance also related to the potential impact of the study in the improvement of the freshman orientation course design for nontraditional students. The improved course design would lead to increased academic success for nontraditional students. A major emphasis in the University System of Georgia and higher education in general is the emphasis on retention, graduation, and persistence. It is critical that institutions use all means necessary to improve these measures of success through retention and completion. With only four institutions reporting a focused effort on the nontraditional freshman population, it seems that there is a large population that has been overlooked which is a shortcoming in the effort to improve retention, graduation, and persistence. Overall, the potential impact of this study would be the focus on the nontraditional students as a separate and unique learner group with the objectives for courses tailored to their needs.

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APPENDIX A:

Institutional Survey

Institutional Survey

1. Do you offer an autonomous freshman orientation course?

Yes No If no, please stop, save your response, and submit this survey

2. Is your freshman orientation course mandatory and if so, for what population of students?

Yes No Population: Traditional (17-24) Nontraditional (25+)

3. Do you have a separate curriculum for nontraditional adult students (25+) as compared to traditional students (17-24) within the freshman orientation course?

Yes No

4. If yes to question 3, please skip to question #5; if no, do you have any plans or recommendations for such a curriculum?

Yes No

5. List your freshman orientation course objectives in the box below.

6. Please send the syllabus for the freshman orientation course as an attachment to this email survey.

Appendix B:

Focus Group Instrument

Focus Group Instrument

1. What do you expect to learn in the course to prepare for college?
2. During your first semester in college, what were your areas of educational need in which you felt were weak and needed assistance?
3. What would be the benefits of making ABAC 1000 a required course for all ABAC students?
4. What aspects of the ABAC 1000 course have been useful for you?
5. On a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, to what degree has learning about yourself and your learning style helped in learning new things? Please elaborate.

<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<u>10</u>
no value									great value
6. What have you learned about yourself in ABAC 1000 that makes you a better student?

7. What topics and activities of the ABAC 1000 course were not useful in preparing your for college?
8. How could ABAC 1000 be changed to better meet your educational needs?
9. Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, how do you value your ABAC 1000 experience? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value great value

(Adapted from Rhodes and Carifio, 1999)

Demographic Information Collection for Focus Group Participants

Age: 17-24 25-32 33-40 40+

Gender: Male Female

Ethnicity: African American/Black Caucasian/White Hispanic
 Native American/Native Alaskan Other

1st Generation College Student: Yes No

Individual Income: Less than \$10,000 \$10,000 to \$29,999 \$30,000 to \$49,999
 \$50,000 to \$69,999 \$70,000 to \$89,999
 \$90,000 to \$109,000 \$110,000+

Marital Status: Married
 Widowed
 Divorced/Separated
 Never married

Appendix C:

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire

1. Did you enroll in ABAC 1000? Yes No

2. If you did enroll in ABAC 1000, why? If you did not enroll in ABAC 1000, why not?

3. What are the main areas in which you felt that you needed assistance for preparation when you began college at ABAC?

4. What topics do you think would be most beneficial for you as a nontraditional adult learner from an ABAC 1000 course?

5. Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being not prepared and ten being extremely prepared, how would you describe your college preparation level as compared to the traditional student at ABAC?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

not prepared

extremely prepared

Please explain your level as indicated above.

6. If enrolled in an ABAC 1000 course, what topics were of least benefit to you as a student?

7. Demographic Information:

Age: 17-24 25-32 33-40 40+

Gender: Male Female

Ethnicity: African American/Black Caucasian/White Hispanic

Native American/Native Alaskan Other

1st Generation College Student: Yes No

Individual Income: Less than \$10,000
 \$10,000 to \$29,999

- \$30,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$89,999
- \$90,000 to \$109,000
- \$110,000+

- Marital Status:
- Married
 - Widowed
 - Divorced/Separated
 - Never married

Appendix D:

SACS-Accredited Institutions of Higher Education

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Accredited Institutions of Higher Education in Georgia

	Institution	Institution Info	Seminar Director/Coordinator
1	Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Dr. Don Parks (left college 2011) dparks@abac.edu
2	Agnes Scott College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Tracey Laird tlaird@agnesscott.edu
3	Albany State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: IV	Sherrell Byrd sherrel.byrd@asurams.edu
4	Albany Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Drenda Davis-Jackson Djackson@albanytech.edu
5	Altamaha Technical College	State: GA Status: Applicant Level: I	Sandra Williams swilliams@altamahatech.edu
6	Andrew College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Christie Cotie christiecoty@andrewcollege.edu
7	Armstrong Atlantic State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Greg Anderson greg.anderson@armstrong.edu
9	Athens Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Tawana Mattox tmattox@athenstech.edu
10	Point University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Jennifer Clotfelter jclotfelter@acc.edu
11	Atlanta Metropolitan College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Joan Clark jclark@atlm.edu
12	Atlanta Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited	Ronald E. Laws, Jr. rlaws@atlantatech.edu

		Level: I	
13	Augusta State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: IV	Blake Pierce fye@aug.edu
14	Augusta Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Charles Hall chall@augustatech.edu
15	Bainbridge College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Connie Snyder csnyder@bainbridge.edu
16	Bauder College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Roger Davis rdavis@bauder.edu
17	Berry College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: IV	Katherine Powell kpowell@berry.edu
18	Brenau University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: IV	Renee Agner ragner@brenau.edu
19	Brewton-Parker College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Gareth Jones gjones@bpc.edu
20	Central Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Sheila Pennyman spennyman@centralgatech.edu
21	Chattahoochee Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Dr. Trina Boteler tboteler@chattahoocheetech.edu
22	Clark Atlanta University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Dr. Cynthia Auzenne Clem cclem@cau.edu
23	Clayton State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Mark May MarkMay@mail.clayton.edu
24	College of Coastal Georgia	State: GA	Georgia Wessinger

		Status: Accredited Level: II	gwessinger@ccga.edu
25	Columbia Theological Seminary	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Dr. Deborah Mullen mullend@CTSnet.edu
26	Columbus State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Dr. Carl Wallman Wallman_Carl@columbusstate.edu
27	Columbus Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Donna Emmons demons@columbustech.edu
28	Covenant College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Brad Voyles Brad.Voyles@covenant.edu
29	Dalton State College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Jody Trost jtrost@daltonstate.edu
30	Darton College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Kristi Stimpson kristi.stimpson@darton.edu
31	DeKalb Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Larry Teems teemsl@dekalbtech.edu
32	East Georgia College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Dr. David Bartram dbartram@ega.edu
33	Emmanuel College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Dan Darcy darcy@emmanuel.edu
34	Emory University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Ryan Roche rroche@emory.edu
35	Fort Valley State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Wallace Keese keesew@fvsu.edu

36	Gainesville State College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Kelly Deasy kdeasy@gsc.edu
37	Georgia College and State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: IV	Mike Augustine mike.augustine@gcsu.edu
38	Georgia Gwinnett College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Dr. Evelyn Doman edoman@ggc.edu
39	Georgia Health Sciences University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Thomas Fitts TFitts@georgiahealth.edu
40	Georgia Highlands College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Dr. Diane Langston dlangston@highlands.edu
41	Georgia Institute of Technology	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Dr. Steven Girardot steven.girardot@vpss.gatech.edu
42	Georgia Military College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Susan Isaac sisaac@gmc.cc.ga.us
43	Georgia Northwestern Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Alexander LaJuana LAlexander@gntc.edu
44	Georgia Perimeter College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Lisa Fowler lfowler@gpc.edu
45	Georgia Southern University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Chris Caplinger caplinca@GeorgiaSouthern.edu
46	Georgia Southwestern State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: IV	Linda Randall lrandall@canes.gsw.edu
47	Georgia State University	State: GA Status: Accredited	Dhanfu Elston delston@gsu.edu

		Level: VI	
48	Gordon College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Tonya Coleman tcoleman@gdn.edu
49	Gwinnett Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Tom Travis ttravis@gwinnetttech.edu
50	Interdenominational Theological Center	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Dr. Temba Mafico tmafico@itc.edu
51	Kennesaw State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Dr. Stephen Braden sbraden1@kennesaw.edu
52	LaGrange College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Dr. Joe Cafaro jcafaro@lagrange.edu
53	Lanier Technical College	State: GA Status: Applicant Level: I	Lisa Wilson lwilson@laniertech.edu
54	Life University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Brian Sheres registrar@life.edu
55	Macon State College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Tim Vick tim.vick@maconstate.edu
56	Mercer University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Tony Kemp kemp_t@Mercer.edu
57	Middle Georgia College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Mary Wilson mwilson@mcg.edu
58	Middle Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Bruce Foster bfoster@middlegatech.edu

59	Morehouse College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Harry S. Wright, Jr. hwright@morehouse.edu
60	Morehouse School of Medicine	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Adrienne Wyatt awyatt@msm.edu
61	North Georgia College and State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Todd Campbell tcampbell@northgeorgia.edu
62	North Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Mike King mking@northgatech.edu
63	Oglethorpe University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Linda Taylor ltaylor@oglethorpe.edu
64	Okefenokee Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Karen Boyle kboyle@okefenokeetech.org
65	Paine College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Tina Marshall-Bradley tmarshallbradley@paine.edu
66	Piedmont College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Dr. James Mellichamp jmellichamp@piedmont.edu
67	Reinhardt University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Michelle Harlow LMH@Reinhardt.edu
68	Richmont Graduate University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Philip Coyle pcoyle@richmont.edu
69	Savannah State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Crystal Locke lockec@savannahstate.edu
70	Savannah Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited	Jim Nordone

		Level: I	jnordone@savannahtech.edu
71	Shorter University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Tracy Batchelor tbatchelor@shorter.edu .
72	South Georgia College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	We Brown wes.brown@sgc.edu
73	South Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Applicant Level: I	Don Smith dsmith@southgatech.edu
74	South University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Kari Pahno kpahno@southuniversity.edu
75	Southeastern Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Barry Dotson bdotson@southeasterntech.edu
76	Southern Crescent Technical College	State: GA Status: Applicant Level: I	Dawn Hodges dhodges@sctech.edu
77	Southern Polytechnic State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Nancy Reicher nreicher@spsu.edu
78	Southwest Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Joyce Halstead jhalstead@southwestgatech.edu
79	Spelman College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Dr. Geneva Baxter gbaxter@spelman.edu
80	The Art Institute of Atlanta	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Janet Guse jguse@aia.edu
81	The Savannah College of Art and Design	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	-- involvement@scad.edu

82	The University of Georgia	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: VI	Dr. Hugh Ruppensburg hruppers@franklin.uga.edu
83	Thomas University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Robin Ouzts rouzts@thomasu.edu
84	Toccoa Falls College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Dr. William Hyndman whyndman@tfc.edu
85	Truett McConnell College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Jonathan Morris jmorris@truett.edu
86	University of West Georgia	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Helen Steele hsteele@westga.edu
87	Valdosta State University	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: V	Dr. Cheri Tillman cgtillma@valdosta.edu
88	Waycross College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Ronni Tyger rtyger@waycross.edu
89	Wesleyan College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: III	Lisa Rouleau lrouleau@wesleyancollege.edu
90	West Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Perrin Alford perrin.alford@westgatech.edu
91	Wiregrass Georgia Technical College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: I	Dr. Ron O'Meara ron.omeara@wiregrass.edu
92	Young Harris College	State: GA Status: Accredited Level: II	Dr. Bryan Hayes cbhayes@yhc.edu

Appendix E:
ABAC 1000 Course Selections

ABAC 1000 Course Sections

Fall 2010 Section

Schedule - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.abac.edu/schedule/display.cfm

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Schedule

Fall 2010 Class Schedule

Last Update: 05/22/2010 at 04:31 PM (17 sections selected.) Note: Best viewed at 1024x768 resolution. Schedules will be completed by the end of February for Summer and Fall and the end of September for Spring. (V) is the Vista section number in parentheses behind the CRN. ViP replaces GSAMS delivery.

C denotes Closed Class. A denotes available. M denotes maximum enrollment. Green denotes a class at a location other than Tifton. Blue denotes an Internship.

[Go to Select Schedule Criteria](#) [Go to Select Archived Schedule Criteria](#)
[Registration Instructions](#) | [Academic Calendars](#) | [Final Exam Schedule](#) | [Semester Fees](#)
[Fee Payment Deadlines](#) | [Graduation Information](#) | [Building Codes](#) | [Catalog](#) | [Notes](#)

CA M Camp	CRN (V)	Course	Hrs	Course Title	Day(s)	Time	Location	Instr.
C 0 0	TIF 20566 (3)	ABAC 1000	1	LLCFreshman Seminar	T	500 pm 615 pm	Lakeside 0141A	Spicer, W
C 0 0	TIF 20567 (0)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	T	800 am 850 am	Bowen 0212	Sims, A
C 0 0	TIF 20568 (1)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	T	1100 am 1150 am	Lakeside 0141A	Hughes, B
C 0 0	TIF 20569 (2)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	W	200 pm 250 pm	Bowen 0212	Dillard, G
C 0 0	TIF 20570 (4)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	T	1230 pm 120 pm	Conger 0228	Ross, C
C 0 0	TIF 20573 (6)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	R	300 pm 350 pm	Britt 0105	Shurley, J
C 0 0	TIF 20574 (05)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	M	1000 am 1050 am	Town 0320	Barber, K
24 25	TIF 20575 (7)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	W	900 am 950 am	Carlton 0105	Galentine-Steis, M
C 0 0	TIF 20584 (8)	ABAC 1000	1	LLC Freshman Seminar	T	1000 am 1050 am	Carlton 0105	Parks, D
23 25	MOU 20586 (09)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Session A)	T R	1100 am 1150 am		Slocumb, A
23 25	TIF 20587 (10)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Session A)	M W	100 pm 150 pm	Bowen 0206	Njoroge, J
30 30	TIF 20589 (0)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Session A)	T R	930 am 1020 am	Bowen 0212	Martin, M
24 25	TIF 20599 (11)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Session A)	T R	200 pm 250 pm	Conger 0231	Weaver, J
25 25	TIF 20600 (12)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	R	1100 am 1150 am	Carlton 0105	Bridges, A
25 25	TIF 20601 (13)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	R	200 pm 250 pm		Auger, E
25 25	TIF 20602 (14)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	W	100 pm 150 pm	Town 0320	Kinsey, C
25 25	TIF 20603 (15)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Sem Ag Majors Only	W	1100 am 1150 am	Ag 0147	Dowd, L

Spring 2011 Section

CA M Camp	CRN (V)	Course	Hrs	Course Title	Day(s)	Time	Location	Instr.
C 0 25	TIF 30002 (02)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	T	200 pm 250 pm	Conger 0326	Walker, V
3 25	TIF 30538 (5)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	M W	400 pm 430 pm	Carlton 0105	Parks, D
					AND M W	400 pm 430 pm	Carlton 0105	Sutton, C
12 25	TIF 30554 (1)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Session A)	T R	1000 am 1050 am	Conger 0325	Jackson, D
21 25	TIF 30555 (4)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Session B)	T R	1000 am 1050 am	Conger 0325	Jackson, D

CA	M	Camp	CRN (V)	Course	Hrs	Course Title	Day(s)	Time	Location	Instr.
51	150	TIF	20108 (3)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Sess A: 8/15/2011-10/4/2011)				Sutton, C
						AND				Willis, M
2025	MOU	20517 (6)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar (Sess A: 8/15/2011-10/4/2011)	M W	1100 1150 am am	Moultrie 0111	Dillard, G	
C 0 0	TIF	20532 (7)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	M	230 320 pm pm	Town 0320	Barber, K	
C 0 0	TIF	20533 (8)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	T	800 850 am am	Bowen 0213	Sims, A	
C 0 0	TIF	20595 (0)	ABAC 1000	1	Freshman Seminar	R	400 450 pm pm	Town 0320	Turner, T	

Appendix F:
IRB Approval

IRB Approval



Abraham Baldwin
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

University System of Georgia

Office of Institutional Research and Planning

ABAC 37, 2802 Moore Highway
Tifton, GA 31793-2601
Telephone (229) 391-4980
Fax (229) 391-4981

April 5, 2011

Mr. Chris Kinsey
Assistant Director of Housing
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
Tifton, Georgia

Dear Mr. Kinsey

Please consider this letter as official notification of site approval of your project by the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Title/Purpose of Proposal: A Descriptive Study of Freshman Orientation Courses and Their Relevance in Meeting the Needs of Nontraditional Students

Date of IRB Approval: April 4, 2011

If you have any questions, please contact us at ir@abac.edu or 229-391-4983.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Howell".

Amy Howell, Chair
Institutional Review Board
Director of Institutional Research and Planning
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

CC: Dr. Maggie Martin, Primary Reviewer, ABAC IRB



*Institutional Review Board (IRB)
for the Protection of Human Research Participants*

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-02681-2011

INVESTIGATOR: Christopher Kinsey

PROJECT TITLE: A descriptive study of freshman orientation courses and their relevance in meeting the needs of nontraditional students

DETERMINATION:

- This research protocol is exempt from Institutional Review Board oversight under Exemption Category(ies) 1. You may begin your study immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.
- Exemption of this research protocol from Institutional Review Board oversight is pending. You may **not** begin your research until you have addressed the following concerns/questions and the IRB has formally notified you of exemption. You may send your responses to irb@valdosta.edu.
-

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

Although not a requirement for exemption, the following suggestions are offered by the IRB Administrator to enhance the protection of participants and/or strengthen the research proposal. If you make any of these suggested changes to your protocol, please submit revisions so that IRB has a complete protocol on file.

Barbara H. Gray _____ Date: 5/5/11
Barbara H. Gray, IRB Administrator

*Thank you for submitting an IRB application.
Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-259-5045*

cc: Dr. Revnaldo Martinez (Deot. Head & Advisor)

Form Revised: 09/02/2010

Appendix G:
Research Solicitation Emails

Institutional Survey Solicitation Email

Dear (insert coordinator name),

My name is Chris Kinsey and I am the Director of Housing Operations at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College located in Tifton, GA. I am a doctoral student and currently conducting a research study concerning the freshman orientation course and its ability to meet the needs of the nontraditional student. The title of my research is “A Descriptive Study of Freshman Orientation Courses and Their Relevance in Meeting the Needs of Nontraditional Students.” This research is being conducted through Valdosta State University, and has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards of Valdosta State University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. This study is being conducted to examine the relevance of the freshman orientation course in meeting the needs of nontraditional students and to develop recommendations for a restructuring of the course to better meet the needs of nontraditional students.

Your institution was selected to be surveyed as a SACS-accredited institution in Georgia. If no freshman orientation course or its equivalent is offered at your institution, you may indicate such with no additional information requested on the survey. If your institution does offer such a course, your participation will be helpful in meeting the objectives of this study. The results of this research will lead to recommendations for the curricular structure and objectives of the freshman orientation course that will best meet the unique needs of the nontraditional student.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this research, simply do nothing. If you are willing to participate, your completion of the attached survey will indicate your consent. If you are not the appropriate individual to respond to this survey, please forward to this document to the appropriate individual. Final recommendations for the content of the freshman orientation course for nontraditional students will be sent to all participants.

All records of this research will be secured under lock and key and on a password protected computer with firewall and antivirus/antispysware protection. All research material will be transcribed for the final version of the report and originals will be kept for three years before being destroyed.

Thank you for taking time to assist me with this research. If you have any questions, please contact me at 229-391-5139 or cskinsey@valdosta.edu. You may also contact the Valdosta State Institutional Review Board at 229-333-7837 or irb@valdosta.edu.

Christopher S. Kinsey
VSU Doctoral Student
2802 Moore Hwy.
Tifton, GA 31793
229-391-5139
cskinsey@valdosta.edu

Focus Group Instrument Solicitation Email

Dear ABAC 1000 Student,

Are you interested in participating in a focus group to improve the ABAC 1000 course? If so, sign up now at ckinsey@abac.edu.

My name is Chris Kinsey and I am the Director of Housing Operations here at ABAC. I am also a doctoral student and currently conducting a research study concerning the freshman orientation course and its ability to meet the needs of the nontraditional student. The title of my research is "A Descriptive Study of Freshman Orientation Courses and Their Relevance in Meeting the Needs of Nontraditional Students." This research is being conducted through Valdosta State University, and has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards of Valdosta State University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

You were identified to participate in this study as a student that enrolled in an ABAC 1000 course section during the 2010-2011 academic year. If you are interested in contributing to the improvement of ABAC 1000 for nontraditional students (25 years old and older), as well as for all students, please contact me at cskinsey@valdosta.edu.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this research, simply do nothing. If you are willing to participate, please reply to this email by (insert date).

Thank you very much for your consideration. I hope you will participate in the study.

Christopher S. Kinsey
VSU Doctoral Student
2802 Moore Hwy.
Tifton, GA 31793
229-391-5139
cskinsey@valdosta.edu

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire Solicitation Email

Dear ABAC Student,

My name is Chris Kinsey and I am the Director of Housing Operations at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College located in Tifton, GA. I am a doctoral student and currently conducting a research study concerning the freshman orientation course, ABAC 1000 and its ability to meet the needs of the nontraditional student. The title of my research is "A Descriptive Study of Freshman Orientation Courses and Their Relevance in Meeting the Needs of Nontraditional Students." This research is being conducted through Valdosta State University, and has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards of Valdosta State University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

The results of this research will lead to recommendations for the curricular structure and objectives of the freshman orientation course that will best meet the unique needs of the nontraditional student.

You were identified to participate in this study as a nontraditional student (25 years old or older).

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this research, simply do nothing. If you are willing to participate, your completion and submission of the attached survey will indicate your consent.

All records of this research will be secured under lock and key and on a password protected computer with firewall and antivirus/antispysware protection. All research material will be transcribed for the final version of the report and originals will be kept for three years before being destroyed.

Thank you for taking time to assist me with this research. If you have any questions, please contact me at 229-391-5139 or cskinsey@valdosta.edu. You may also contact the Valdosta State Institutional Review Board at 229-333-7837 or irb@valdosta.edu.

Christopher S. Kinsey
VSU Doctoral Student
2802 Moore Hwy.
Tifton, GA 31793
229-391-5139
cskinsey@valdosta.edu

Appendix H:
Institutional Survey Data

Institutional Survey Data

Survey Compilation

Institution	Q 1	Q2	Q 3	Q 4	Q5	Q 6
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate goal setting and time management skills. • Demonstrate acceptance of academic responsibilities and policies to include punctuality, regular attendance, appropriate classroom behavior, homework preparation, note taking, textbook reading, and exam preparation. • Demonstrate an awareness of learning resources available on campus. • Demonstrate knowledge of resources and procedures for advisement, registration, and financial aid. • Demonstrate awareness of concerns and issues related to civic responsibility and cultural diversity. 	X
Agnes Scott College	N					
Albany State University	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain skills necessary for a seamless transition from high school to college. • Identify and clarify their personal, professional, and academic goals and develop an individualized action plan for success. • Understand the role played, both 	X

					<p>historically and contemporarily, by African-American leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and examine social problems on the campus and community. • Develop plans for correction of previously identified social problems through service and volunteerism. • Engage in critically reflective placements with campus services and/or community organizations. 	
Albany Technical College						
Altamaha Technical College	N					
Andrew College	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. To establish and strengthen your academic, social, and personal success while at Andrew College. 	X
Armstrong Atlantic State University	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course prepares first-year students to become active, effective participants in the AASU experience. 	X
Athens Technical College	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Motivation in regards to college and career success • Demonstrate a process of researching a degree • Demonstrate self-awareness in the areas of learning and personality styles • Use strategies to improve time management • Utilize strategies for setting goals, scheduling and planning • Experiment with concentration and memory techniques • Exercise appropriate listening and note taking techniques 	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and employ library skills • Use the various campus resources • Use different strategies and methods for improving test-taking skills • Communicate effectively with peers and faculty 	
Atlanta Christian College						
Atlanta Metropolitan College						
Atlanta Technical College						
Augusta State University	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitate the development of academic survival skills necessary for success in college level course work; • enhance the students' college experience through familiarity with college resources and services; • support the development of constructive connections with programs, departments and schools of the university, to assist in students' selection of appropriate majors and development of career plans; • enhance academic performance, particularly in the areas of mathematics and science; and • encourage self-assessment and the development of a positive self-direction in academic and personal 	X

					growth.	
Augusta Technical College	N					
Bainbridge College	N					
Bauder College	N					
Berry College						
Brenau University	N					
Brewton-Parker College						
Central Georgia Technical College						
Chattahoochee Technical College	N					
Clark Atlanta University						
Clayton State						

University						
College of Coastal Georgia	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student will demonstrate knowledge of academic skills (note taking, textbook reading, listening and test-taking) by completing appropriate exercises and/or tests on academic skills. • The student will demonstrate knowledge of the nature and purpose of higher education, campus rules and regulations and the history and mission of CCGA through completion of classroom exercises and/or tests. • The student will demonstrate knowledge of facilities, programs and the various resources of College of Coastal Georgia by participating in activities and reporting on such activities. • The student will demonstrate an awareness of the library resources and available services by completing a library assignment. • The student will demonstrate the ability to explore career options and interests as well as setting goals by completing a career assignment. • The student will demonstrate knowledge of registration and advisement procedures and the CCGA College catalog through assignments. 	X
Columbia Theological Seminary	N					
Columbus State	Y	Y-T/	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List and discuss various study skills 	X

University		N			<p>techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the correct procedure for advising, advance registration, and registering. • Know the name and location of, or how to find this information, your academic advisor. • Identify the classes that make up the core curriculum. • Identify the roles and locations of: the Center for Academic Support (Tucker Hall), various Academic Departments related to your major, Campus Police, the Registrar's Office, Counseling Center, Financial Aid Office, Career Center, Computer Center, Writing Labs, Student Health Services, Campus Recreation Office, Student Services Office, among others. • Sign onto a computer in the Computer Center and read/send e-mail. • Complete a simple library assignment using Galileo. • Attend one campus-sponsored event AND one campus sponsored workshop and provide proof of attendance by means of a brochure, playbill, certificate of attendance, etc... 	
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Columbus Technical College	N					
Covenant College	N					
Dalton State College	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt appropriate academic strategies to course and learning experience • Demonstrate how to use DSC Roberts Library and DSC Technology for academic inquiry • Identify and apply strategies to effectively manage time and Priorities • Identify appropriate campus resources and opportunities that contribute to educational and campus engagement • Develop stronger Critical Thinking Skills • Develop and apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with faculty, staff, and peers • Develop concepts of diversity and investigate global perspectives • Understand the importance of the advising process, that academic plan, and the advisor/advisee relationship • Understand the principles of sound financial management as it relates to student life and beyond. 	X
Darton College						

DeKalb Technical College	N					
East Georgia College	Y	Y-T/N	N			
Emmanuel College						
Emory University						
Fort Valley State University						
Gainesville State College						
Georgia College and State University	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: These are objectives commonly used for GCSU0001 (for undeclared students). For the First Year Academic Seminars that are based in Academic Departments (ex: BIOL0001, MUSC0001, POLS0001, etc.), objectives may differ. Know the general education or core curriculum requirements. Utilize available academic support services (Learning Center, Writing Center, Counseling Center, Career Center, Office of Disability Services, etc.) when appropriate to enhance their educational experience. 	X

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply critical thinking and decision-making skills during the academic advising process. • Demonstrate an awareness of the various educational opportunities (study abroad, undergraduate research, internships, and co-curricular activities) offered at Georgia College. • Utilize appropriate technology including PAWS, Degree Works, MAP-Works, Appointment Plus, Bobcats email and other tools to self-register, generate degree audits, locate university policies and procedures, interpret academic requirements, and manage academic progress. • Identify an academic major and field of study based on self-awareness and insights into their background, personal characteristics, skills, academic interests, aspirations and values. 	
Georgia Gwinnett College						
Georgia Health Sciences University	N					
Georgia Highlands College	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will demonstrate knowledge of GHC's initiatives, resources, policies, and services. • 2. Students will acclimate to college life through and understanding of general academic language, expectations, and procedures. 	X

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3. Students will reflect on developing self-awareness that will help them recognize, understand, and adjust to changes in life, college, and work. • 4. Students will practice study skills to improve academic performance. • 5. Students will develop communication skills that display a clear and correct expression and critical analysis. • Students will demonstrate knowledge of career or transfer planning. • Students will display an understanding of their role and contribution to workplace and community. • Students will reflect on diversity in ways that help toward a growing appreciation of it in college and workplace. • Students will contribute to meeting the goals of a group or organization. • Students will practice goal-setting and decision-making steps. • Students will develop problem-solving and analytical skills while demonstrating appropriate and professional social behaviors. 	
Georgia Institute of Technology						
Georgia Military College						

Georgia Northwestern Technical College	N					
Georgia Perimeter College	Y	N	N	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing Student Learning Through Engagement <i>Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive involvement with students in their seminar group, the faculty seminar leader, and the college. • Identify and participate in college clubs and organizations and campus and community social, academic, or cultural events. • Distinguish and participate in various forms of engagement, including volunteerism, civic engagement, or service learning. • Define and participate in intercultural and international factors or events at play at the college, locally, nationally, or globally. • Understanding Self and Planning for the Future <i>Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify their core values to demonstrate an understanding of self that guides personal, academic and career decision-making and goal setting. • Apply individually appropriate study skill strategies to enhance their academic success. 	X

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying Behaviors and College Resources that Promote Success <i>Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore effective time management strategies and develop personal and academic time management processes. Identify and utilize college resources appropriately. Demonstrate appropriate classroom and campus etiquette according to the Student Code of Conduct and generally expected academic behaviors. Demonstrate effective problem-solving and decision-making skills. Utilize relevant skills used in the classroom and apply them to career and personal endeavors. Achieving Information Literacy for Academic Success <i>Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and articulate a question or questions associated with a research topic or problem. Find, evaluate, and manage information through the use of technology tools and library resources. Locate a variety of information resources/types. Evaluate the quality of information resources. Manage and organize information for use in academic assignments. 	
Georgia Southern University	Y	Y-T/ T/	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically evaluate print and electronic information for its current, 	X

		N			<p>relevancy, authority, accuracy, and purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply documentation guidelines for print and electronic information used in assignments. • 3. Articulate what constitutes plagiarism and avoid representing the work of others as their own. 	
Georgia Southwestern State University	Y	Y-T/N	Y		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will gain an understanding of what to expect from their first college classes and realize the value of higher education. • Students will become acquainted with each other and realize the importance of making connections with their peers, upperclassmen, faculty, and staff. • Students will engage in activities to build success in their academic careers and discover strategies that enhance their personal development. 	X
Georgia State University	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Life—students will become familiar with the academic resources, procedures and student code of conduct policies of Georgia State University; they will exhibit familiarity with the location, use, and content of official university documents relevant to these issues. • Community Life— students will have an understanding of the community and environment on and around the university campus, as well as the general Atlanta community; they will engage in at least one dimension of the Atlanta-Based Learning Program. • Personal Life—students will engage in activities designed to improve their study and learning skills and to enhance their personal growth and development. 	X

Gordon College	N					
Gwinnett Technical College	N					
Interdenominational Theological Center	N					
Kennesaw State University	Y	Y-T/ N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage opportunities for students to explore their attitudes, beliefs, and values about education. • To learn strategies for coping and communicating in the campus environment. • To assist student in developing skills needed for success in college such as reading, study strategies, communication skills, time-management, note taking, test taking, and goal setting. • To familiarize students with campus resources and support services, particularly the library, technological support, career information, advising, registration, and student services. • To broaden the students' college experience through the participation in college activities and /or community services. • To provide support for the development of peer and faculty academic relationships. • To design and implement a <i>reflective (private)</i> and <i>best of-show (public) portfolio</i> mapping the college learning experience. 	X
LaGrange College						

Lanier Technical College	N					
Life University	N					
Macon State College	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three, overarching objectives or intended outcomes of the Freshman Year program are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To connect students with other students—i.e., to facilitate student formation of peer-support networks and peer-learning communities; 2) To connect students with Macon State College—i.e., to foster student appreciation of the meaning and relevance of the college curriculum (liberal arts & sciences), to promote student involvement in the co-curriculum (out-of-class experiential learning), and to increase student utilization of campus support services (academic-support and student-development services); and 3) To connect students’ present college experience with their future goals/plans—i.e., to enable students to integrate their current curricular and co-curricular experiences with their decisions about their college major and their future career path. 	X
Mercer University						

Middle Georgia College	N					
Middle Georgia Technical College						
Morehouse College						
Morehouse School of Medicine	N					
North Georgia College and State University						
North Georgia Technical College	N					
Oglethorpe University						
Okefenokee Technical College						
Paine College	Y	Y-	N	N	• This course is designed to provide	X

		T/ N			<p>opportunities for students to develop skills, values, behaviors, and attitudes necessary for success at Paine College. The course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide students with a general orientation to Paine College; • improve students' metacognitive skill; • assist students in managing their time; • assist students in their transition from high school to college; • identify and create specific techniques to help students develop the skills to achieve their academic goals; • acquaint students with diversity as an integral part of their university education; and • assist students in developing a support group among their peers and a network within the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ college community. 	
Piedmont College	Y	Y- T/ N	Y			
Reinhardt University						
Richmont Graduate University	N					
Savannah State University	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ultimate goal of the FYE Program is to encourage students to establish new relationships, build 	X

					<p>upon their academic and life skills, find opportunities for personal growth and the broadening of perspectives, and better understand what it means to be an educated person. Various faculty/staff teach the FYE courses. While there will be differences in each section's approach, all sections share the following common objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Students will be introduced to Savannah State University's history and traditions, policies, procedures and resources. · Students will make initial exploration of the general/or core curriculum, major studies, career choices, and academic study skills such as time management, note taking, test strategies, classroom etiquette, and other helpful skills. · Students will develop an initial awareness of institutional expectations, including policies, programs and services. · Students will develop their critical thinking skills and awareness of social issues and issues relevant to 	
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					<p>college life with an emphasis on understanding diversity among peers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Students will learn how to initiate interaction with faculty and be instructed on how to make the transition to a college advisor and major declaration. · Students will learn how to research financial options for school and learn financial management as a way to stay in school and prosper as a U.S. citizen. 	
Savannah Technical College	N					
Shorter University	Y	Y-T/N	Y*	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Thinking Outcome: Students will be able to synthesize various ideas from academic disciplines, peers, class material, and outside input. • Skills for Success Outcomes: Students will develop social interaction skills and community-building skills through service learning and other opportunities. Students will become integrated into 	X

					<p>the University environment through a Learning Community experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Outcome: Students will be able to understand communication as a continual process of drafting and revising, as well as learn and use correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and delivery techniques for a variety of audiences. • <i>Technology Application Outcome:</i> Students will be able to use electronic tools to solve problems and make informed decisions by incorporating online research. • Christian Community Outcome: Students will participate in at least two chapel services, one intellectual event, one cultural event, and one service project in FCS 1010 and FCS 1020. 	
South Georgia College						
South Georgia Technical College	N					
South University	N					

Southeastern Technical College	Y	Y-T/N	N	N		
Southern Crescent Technical College	N					
Southern Polytechnic State University						
Southwest Georgia Technical College	N					
Spelman College	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the value of a liberal arts education • Develop strong written communication skills • Develop critical thinking skills • Identify the value of a global education • Learn about Spelman’s legacy of academic excellence, leadership, and service • Interact with a faculty mentor who will provide academic guidance and support • Engage in community service and reflect on civic engagement 	X
The Art Institute of Atlanta	N					

The Savannah College of Art and Design	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savannah College of Art and Design’s FYE course is an extended orientation model and is appropriate for both traditional and non-traditional students. It is only required for incoming freshmen, 95% of which are 17-14. We have exempted non-traditional freshmen on some occasions. • Course Outcomes: The First Year Experience course is designed to further success in the college environment. Upon successfully completing this course, students will work with their instructor to declare a major. As a result of First Year Experience, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and understand strategies to enable academic success, enhancing their educational experience at SCAD • identify appropriate campus resources and develop relationships with students and staff, thus contributing to campus engagement • understand majors and curriculum requirements available at SCAD and recognize career options 	X
The University of Georgia	N					
Thomas University	Y	Y-T/N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how he or she is responsible for his or her experience in college; • Identify resources and personnel on the TU campus including faculty, administration, staff and student activities. • Retrieve information from appropriate resources available on 	X

					<p>campus and in the community that can be of assistance to the student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively through university e-mail. • Send an assignment as an attachment by e-mail. • Utilize the online course management system, Blackboard, effectively. • Post responses and replies to a Discussion Board, either on Blackboard or a similar forum. • Examine personal ideas and decisions regarding issues typically faced by college students; • List guidelines for making effective plans that help guarantee success; • Interact in small groups, reporting college problems, frustrations and successes; 	
Toccoa Falls College						
Truett McConnell College	N					
University of West Georgia	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote for first-year students a positive adjustment and assimilation into the University • To help students learn to balance their freedom with a sense of responsibility as part of the process of enhancing self-knowledge and self-confidence • To develop a network of colleagues • To involve students in the total life of the University • To reduce student anxiety about 	X

					<p>written and oral communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enhance college-level and analytical reading and provide supplemental practice in applying the knowledge students gain in other first-year courses (Journaling will play an important role in achieving this objective.) To provide students additional training, practice, experience, and knowledge in the following skill areas: decision-making, goal setting, planning, time management, and group/teamwork 	
Valdosta State University	Y	N	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate how education promotes success. (General Education Outcomes 1, 6, 7 & 8) 2. Analyze their personal learning style. (General Education Outcomes 4 & 7) 3. Demonstrate goal setting and time management skills. (General Education Outcomes 1, 2 & 5) 4. Use critical thinking to help solve problems and make decisions. (General Education Outcomes 7 & 8) 5. Explain and apply the SQ3R. (General Education Outcome 5) 6. Explain how to take lecture notes effectively and efficiently. (General Education Outcome 4) 7. Distinguish how to prepare for objective and essay tests more effectively and efficiently. (General Education Outcomes 4 & 7) 	X
Waycross College	N					

Wesleyan College	Y	Y-T/ N	Y		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two-semester WISE (Wesleyan Integrated Seminar Experience) has the following goals: • To provide students with an understanding of the nature and value of a Wesleyan education, including Wesleyan’s history, the value of the liberal arts, our role as a women’s college, and our role as a Methodist college. • To expose students to juxtaposed disciplinary methods including women’s studies and the philosophical, literary, historical, and aesthetic perspectives foundational to a liberal arts education. • To provide students with the skills and strategies needed to make a successful transition to college, such as time management, study skills, and research skills. • To provide students with the academic skills needed to be successful in college, particularly writing, critical thinking, speaking, and quantitative reasoning. • To encourage students to see learning as the active construction of knowledge as part of an academic community committed to the free and open exchange of ideas. • To ask students to reflect critically on their beliefs and frames of reference as women in the context of a diverse world. • To help students start to discover their talents and passions and explore applying them beyond 	X
West Georgia Technical College	Y	Y-LS	N	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting Off to a Good Start • Learning and Personality Styles • Time and Money Management 	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress Management and Wellness • Study and Test Taking Skills • Communication Skills 	
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College	N					
Young Harris College						

*Shorter: Yes, if the nontraditional students are in our nontraditional program, evening classes at an accelerated pace for working adults, but NO if they are in the traditional program and they are occasionally case-by-case exempt from the orientation course.

Syllabus Compilation

Course Descriptions:

- Albany State:
 - This course is designed primarily to introduce students to college life and develop skills necessary for their success. It serves to promote scholastic attainment, the value of education, self-actualization, involvement in the campus and local community, and leadership skill development. One component of the course focuses on the mastery of study skills, writing skills, critical thinking, health issues, etc. This component also includes a lecture series, which brings nationally recognized community leaders and scholars to campus for engaging and intellectually stimulating discourse. The second component of this course addresses service learning and leadership.
- Andrew College:
 - This course acquaints new students with the policies and regulations of Andrew College while providing students with a firm foundation in the skill sets needed to be a successful college student.
- Armstrong Atlantic

- This course prepares first-year students to become active, effective participants in the AASU experience.
- Augusta State
 - ASUO 1000 is a three-hour credit course designed to familiarize students with the services and resources of Augusta State University and to assist students in developing the study skills and self-management skills that will facilitate academic success and personal growth.
- Coastal Georgia
 - CCGA 1101 is a two-hour credit course designed to present the incoming student with strategies for developing personal, academic, and career-directed goals. The course helps students understand the purpose of higher education and introduces them to the available resources and programs of the college and encourages them to participate in such programs. CCGA 1101 emphasizes the management and improvement of reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. In addition, the course aids students in making career decisions and developing good interpersonal relationships with students and college faculty and staff. Although the primary intention is to equip students to succeed in college, CCGA 1101 encourages students to examine their personal goals and to develop skills that are necessary for success in college and beyond.
- Columbus State
 - The primary focus of CSUS 1106 is to teach you how to survive in college. In addition, the course will introduce you to various learning styles and study skills, and will survey the University's resources. This course is also designed to emphasize applications of technology, while other aspects of the course will encourage participation in various aspects of university life.
- Dalton State
 - FYES1000 is a required two-hour course for all first-time, full-time four year degree seeking students. The goals of the First Year Experience Seminar are to assist students to develop strategies and attitudes to maximize academic success, to familiarize students with campus resources and how to use them, to assist students in developing positive relationships with faculty, student leaders, and peers, and to increase student retention of first-time students. **STUDENTS CANNOT DROP FYES1000 WITHOUT DROPPING ALL CLASSES.**
- East Georgia
 - Introduces new students to the necessary skills to succeed in college. Topics include study skills, time management, test taking, use of library resources, and general campus interactions to increase awareness and understanding of

the college experience. (Students may exempt this course if they have taken an equivalent transferable course at a prior college or have 12 transferable hours)

- Georgia College
 - The First Year Academic Seminar course is for students who have not yet declared a specific area of study. It is a one credit hour course that is a required component of students' schedules during their first term at Georgia College & State University. The course is designed to assist students in adapting to college life at Georgia College, to become familiar with available resources/services, and to provide opportunities to research majors and career fields. Concurrently, the course is structured in a manner conducive to assisting students in the development of academic skills, including such concepts as improving studying and learning strategies, setting and achieving academic goals, time management, and self management.
- Georgia Highlands
 - The purpose of this course is to give students an opportunity to create and change their habits and vision, to allow themselves a rich, full and rewarding personal, scholastic, and professional life. Through the adoption of positive strategies and techniques, students can dramatically change their college experience and prepare themselves for life beyond the classroom. You will use eFolioWorld, an ePortfolio system, to explore and showcase these strategies and learn to express yourself effectively in writing. The Citizen Project offers an experiential Service Learning opportunity, which gets you outside of the classroom and into your community. You may never again have an opportunity quite like this one to discover how to create a rich, personally fulfilling life. I urge you to make the most of this extraordinary opportunity! If you do, you will dramatically change your college experience and help prepare yourself for life beyond the classroom.
- Georgia Perimeter
 - The goal of this course is to promote student success at Georgia Perimeter College and beyond. Students will be introduced to study at the college level through a seminar focused on a chosen theme and guided by a faculty leader. Through exploration of the theme, students will become engaged with the college and the community, gain knowledge of themselves, learn about strategies, behaviors, and college resources that will optimize their personal and academic success, plan for their future at the college and in their careers, and build their information literacy skills.
- Georgia Southern
 - Thematic seminar designed to promote information literacy skills and support students' cognitive and affective integration into the University community. Required during the first semester for all students new to the

University (except for transfer students with 30 hours or more); students may not withdraw.

- Georgia Southwestern
 - UNIV 1000, also known as “The GSW Experience” is designed to help you learn skills that will make you a better college student – not only academically but also socially. Some of these skills include discovering what’s at GSW – buildings, services available, and other resources. Other aspects of the class will focus on helping you identify your strengths as a student and find the right opportunities to build upon those strengths.
- Georgia State
 - The GSU 1010 New Student Orientation course provides first-year students at Georgia State University with a general orientation and introduction to: Georgia State University and the Atlanta community; resources and skills helpful in the transition to college life and culture; and personal growth skills to assist in long term academic and personal success. As the anchor course in every Freshmen Learning Community, GSU 1010 also provides the academic course content related to the specific theme of its learning community.
- Kennesaw State
 - Coming to college is a significant step in becoming a productive citizen. The thematic mission of this course is to connect college success to productive citizenship. Productive citizens need excellent written and oral communication skills, ability to think critically, organize, research, and work effectively and compassionately with others. KSU 1101 anchors your learning through the production of a *College Student Portfolio*, which contains a *reflective section* and a *presentation section* designed to honor and empower your learning journey. The *reflective section* assists students in mapping their learning using university resources, general education classes, and making decisions about their college major and future careers. The *presentation section* assists students in the mission, design, and implementation of their public portfolio used for internships, co-ops, scholarships, and employment.
 - The purpose KSU 1101: First-Year Seminar is to guide the student in the self-management process during the university experience. The course assists the student in understanding the purpose of higher education and his/her role as academic citizen. The course introduces the student to the available resources and programs at the university.
 - The course emphasizes the development of skills such as test taking, time management, reading, writing, note-taking, communication skills, technology skills, wellness management and critical thinking skills. The

- course assists in understanding campus life, which includes the issues of diversity, relationships with stakeholders in the educational process.
- Critical decision making skills are developed in the areas of curriculum, career, and community service. KSU 1101 encourages students to enhance both personal development and academic partnership at this institution. The goals of the course are to assist in the acculturation process, as the student becomes an academic citizen.
 - Macon State
 - This course is designed to provide students with the academic, personal, and leadership skills necessary for success in their academic and personal lives. The course will facilitate students' acculturation and social integration into the college environment, develop students' understanding of the learning process, and help students acquire essential college survival skills. The focus of this course is on the college student for the purpose of promoting success – both in college and in life after college – by fostering the development of skills or strategies that are valuable and applicable across subjects (transferable, cross-disciplinary skills) and across time (durable lifelong learning skills).
 - Paine
 - Acquaints new students with aspects of college life and assists them in making adjustments required of all new and first time students.
 - SCAD
 - This course is designed to aid the transition to college and to prepare students for academic success and professional careers. A variety of success strategies, college policies, and information regarding major and career options are addressed through group and individual exercises, projects, and lectures. First Year Experience is a one credit hour course that is required of all first year students during their first quarter at SCAD.
 - Savannah State
 - The Freshman Year Experience I (FRES 1101) is a one-hour seminar course open primarily to freshmen and transfer students that provides both an introduction to the nature of the University education and a general orientation to the function and resources of Savannah State University as a whole. The course is designed to assist freshmen in their adjustment and assimilation into the University environment.
 - Students will be introduced to a series of individual and group experiences which will enhance their self-motivation, increase their self-motivation, clarify their value systems, identify learning styles and develop a set of adaptive study skills for college survival.

- The course includes units that cover the University's history and traditions, organization and structure, academic resources, student academic policies and conduct codes. It further provides directed peer relational experiences which enhance a sense of community among the students. It also seeks to facilitate increased retention and eventual graduation among University students. The course is not a lecture course, but a seminar in which everyone takes an active part, and it provides a support group for students by examining problems common to the first year experience in an atmosphere somewhat less formal than that of traditional classroom courses.
- Shorter University
 - Seminar designed to facilitate each student's transition to college within the Learning Community experience. The seminar will provide opportunities for students to build personal connections in a classroom environment, to develop the skills necessary to succeed academically, to become proficient in Microsoft Word, and to become integrated into the life of Shorter University. The seminar provides content integration with the linked courses. In addition, the first-semester seminar will focus intentionally on adjusting to college life, time management skills, personal goal setting, understanding diversity, social integration, and mental health. All LCS participants will design and execute a community service project related to the LC theme. Required of all freshmen. Co-requisite: the two linked Learning Community courses.
- Spelman
 - First year experience exposes students to the tenets of academic excellence, leadership and service, which are the cornerstones of Spelman College. This academic year, the seminar will focus on the theme "When and Where U Enter: Becoming a Free Thinking Spelman Woman." During the first semester, students will attend seminars, lectures, assemblies, and convocations, which emphasize the theme and focus of principles of leadership and ethics.
- Thomas University
 - This is a Student Success course which reinforces skills for understanding and succeeding in the culture of higher education. UNV 101 provides an introduction to the college experience, including the knowledge and use of Thomas University facilities and services, as well as specific college success designed to help students meet their academic goals. Topics in the course include motivation and goal setting, time management, learning styles, library/research skills, critical thinking skills and current student issues.
- Valdosta
 - Open only to first-year and first-semester transfer students. Introduction to lifelong learning with emphasis on college study skill strategies. Topics include learning styles, time management, learning and memory skills, learning from texts and lectures, note-taking, objective and essay

examinations, and critical thinking skills.

- Wesleyan
 - The Wesleyan Integrative Seminar experience consists of two courses (WISE 101 and 102). WISE 101 encourages us to look at ourselves and examine who we are, what we value, and what we plan to do with our college experiences. By contrast, WISE 102 gives us the opportunity to focus on the world around us and to examine how we can contribute to our communities through scholarship, careers, or service.(Traditional)
 - WTS 201 is designed to introduce you to Wesleyan's campus, curriculum, and community. It will also help you acquire skills and strategies for success here. This course is graded on a credit/non-credit basis. (Nontraditional)

- West Georgia
 - UWG 1101 is designed to help students succeed at West Georgia: succeed academically as well as personally and socially. The fundamental focus of the class is to provide an understanding of the basic structure of critical thinking and of academic disciplines in order to increase learning in the university classroom. In addition, the course will provide an overview of resources, which will help to ensure student success in the university classroom. Furthermore, UWG 1101 provides students with essential information about the University as a whole, its rules, procedures, and resources. UWG 1101 classes include subjects that cut across the academic and nonacademic lines of school; these subjects include time management, college student skills, and computer and portal skills. Students are required to attend class and to interact with their instructors and classmates. While students must take responsibility for their own learning, the course attempts to support and enhance that responsibility by making the class a learning community within the University.

- West Georgia Tech
 - This course is designed to provide tools to assist students to acquire skills necessary to achieve academic and professional success in their chosen occupational/technical program of study. Topics include: Getting off to a Good Start, Learning and personality Styles, Times and Money management, Study and Test taking Skills, Stress management and Wellness, Communication Skills, and Career Exploration.

Course Texts:

- Albany State
 - Albany State University/New Beginnings: 2007-2008. Littleton, MA. Tapestry Press.
 - Morrison, Tony. The Nobel Lecture in Literature, 1993. New York: Knopf.

- Andrew
 - Keys to Success: Building Analytical, Creative and Practical Skills, Brief Edition, 6/E
Authors: Carter, Bishop, Kravits
- Armstrong Atlantic
 - How to Win at College: Surprising Secrets for Success from the Country's Top Students
- Augusta State
 - Your College Experience 9th by Gardner, Jewler & Barefoot ed. (concise)
- Coastal Georgia
 - Ellis, Dave. *Becoming A Master Student-13th Edition*
- Columbus State
 - College Portfolio For Success. Lexington, Kentucky: International Organization for Student Success, 2003.
- Dalton State
 - *Thriving in College and Beyond: Designed specifically for Dalton State College* – Joe Cuseo Third Edition. (ISBN 978-0-7575-6533-5)
- East Georgia
 - Bartram, D. & Strickland, D. (2010). *Student Success*, 2nd Edition, BVT Publishing: Redding, CA. (in house text)
- Georgia College
 - College specific
- Georgia Highlands
 - *Becoming a Master Student, 13th Edition*, Book Bundle (Text and CourseMate Software), by Dave Ellis
- Georgia Perimeter
 - No text
- Georgia Southern
 - Assigned Readings
- Georgia Southwestern
 - No text
- Georgia State
 - Your Blueprint to Success: Orientation to College Life and Culture. Carolyn Codamo, Editor. Pearson Custom Publishing, 2006.
- Kennesaw State
 - Matthews, K. (et al.). (2002). *Making connections, achieving success, and understanding others: The first-year experience at Kennesaw State University*.
- Macon State

- Cuseo, Joe. *Thriving in College and Beyond*. 2nd Ed. Dubuque: Kendall-Hunt, 2010.
- Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis*. New York: Pantheon, 2003.
- Paine College
 - Gardner, J. N., Jewler, A.J. & Barefoot, B.O. (2011), *Your College Experience: Strategies for Success*, Ninth Edition.
 - The Freshman Reading: A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius by Dave Eggers (Vintage Books)
<http://www.paine.edu/events/orientation/readinglist.aspx>
- SCAD
 - No Text
- Savannah State
 - Freshman Year Experience textbook (available in bookstore)
- Shorter University
 - *Thriving in College & Beyond* (CONCISE VERSION); Cuseo, Fecas & Thompson; 2nd Edition *Pinnacle 2011-2012*; Shorter University's student handbook
- Spelman
 - No text
- Thomas University
 - Staley, C. & Staley, S. *Focus on College and Career Success*. Boston: Wadsworth, 2012.
- Valdosta
 - *Keys to Success: Building Analytical, Creative, and Practical Skills, Valdosta State University, Fourth Edition*
 - *Valdosta State University Undergraduate Catalog (2010-2011)*
- Wesleyan
 - Monk-Kidd, Sue. *The Secret Life of Bees*. New York: Viking, 2002 (traditional)
 - Hacker, Diana. *Rules for Writers*: 6th Ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008. (traditional)
 - No text (nontraditional)
- West Georgia
 - University of West Georgia: Cornerstone
- West Georgia Tech
 - CORNERSTONE: Creating Success Through Positive Change (concise edition) ISBN 0132135434 6th edition: Sherfield, Moody; Pearson/Prentice Hall, available at the bookstore

Course Objectives/Expectations

- Albany State
 - Gain skills necessary for a seamless transition from high school to college.
 - Identify and clarify their personal, professional, and academic goals and develop an individualized action plan for success.
 - Understand the role played, both historically and contemporarily, by African-American leaders.
 - Identify and examine social problems on the campus and community.
 - Develop plans for correction of previously identified social problems through service and volunteerism.
 - Engage in critically reflective placements with campus services and/or community organizations.

- Andrew
 - To establish and strengthen your academic, social and personal success while at Andrew College.
 - Complete assignments on time
 - Treat others with respect and courtesy
 - Show up and participate!

- Armstrong Atlantic
 - This course prepares first-year students to become active, effective participants in the AASU experience. Topics to be considered are :
 - Goal setting & time management
 - Campus resources & support services
 - Campus policies & procedures
 - Introduction to campus technologies
 - Career exploration & choosing a major

- Augusta State
 - Facilitate the development of academic survival skills necessary for success in college level course work;
 - Enhance the students' college experience through familiarity with college resources and services;
 - Support the development of constructive connections with programs, departments and schools of the university, to assist in students' selection of appropriate majors and development of career plans;
 - Enhance academic performance, particularly in the areas of mathematics and science; and
 - Encourage self-assessment and the development of a positive self-direction in academic and personal growth.

- Coastal Georgia
 - The student will demonstrate knowledge of academic skills (note taking, textbook reading, listening and test-taking) by completing appropriate exercises and/or tests on academic skills.
 - The student will demonstrate knowledge of the nature and purpose of higher education, campus rules and regulations and the history and mission of CCGA through completion of classroom exercises and/or tests.
 - The student will demonstrate knowledge of facilities, programs and the various resources of College of Coastal Georgia by participating in activities and reporting on such activities.
 - The student will demonstrate an awareness of the library resources and available services by completing a library assignment.
 - The student will demonstrate the ability to explore career options and interests as well as setting goals by completing a career assignment.
 - The student will demonstrate knowledge of registration and advisement procedures and the CCGA College catalog through assignments.
- Columbus State
 - List and discuss various study skills techniques.
 - Discuss the correct procedure for advising, advance registration, and registering.
 - Know the name and location of, or how to find this information, your academic advisor.
 - Identify the classes that make up the core curriculum.
 - Identify the roles and locations of: the Center for Academic Support (Tucker Hall), various Academic Departments related to your major, Campus Police, the Registrar's Office, Counseling Center, Financial Aid Office, Career Center, Computer Center, Writing Labs, Student Health Services, Campus Recreation Office, Student Services Office, among others.
 - Sign onto a computer in the Computer Center and read/send e-mail.
 - Complete a simple library assignment using Galileo.
 - Attend one campus-sponsored event AND one campus sponsored workshop and provide proof of attendance by means of a brochure, playbill, certificate of attendance, etc...
- Dalton State
 - Adapt appropriate academic strategies to courses and learning experiences.
 - Demonstrate how to utilize DSC Roberts Library and DSC Technology for academic inquiry.

- Identify and apply strategies to effectively manage time and priorities.
- Identify appropriate campus resources and opportunities that contribute to educational and campus engagement.
- Develop stronger Critical Thinking Skills.
- Develop and apply skills that contribute to building positive relationships with faculty, staff, and peers.
- Develop concepts of diversity and investigate global perspectives
- Understand the importance of the advising process, the academic plan, and the advisor/advisee relationship.
- Understand the principles of sound financial management as it relates to student life and beyond.
- East Georgia
 - Students who take this course will read, write, speak, and listen with competence necessary to succeed in higher education.
 - Students who take this course will participate for cultural enrichment.
 - Students who take this course will access, manage, and present information available through traditional and electronic media.
 - Students who take this course will apply the study and learning strategies necessary to succeed in higher education.
- Georgia College
 - Know the general education or core curriculum requirements.
 - Utilize available academic support services (Learning Center, Writing Center, Counseling Center, Career Center, Office of Disability Services, etc.) when appropriate to enhance their educational experience.
 - Apply critical thinking and decision-making skills during the academic advising process.
 - Demonstrate an awareness of the various educational opportunities (study abroad, undergraduate research, internships, and co-curricular activities) offered at Georgia College.
 - Utilize appropriate technology including PAWS, Degree Works, MAP-Works, Appointment Plus, Bobcats email and other tools to self-register, generate degree audits, locate university policies and procedures, interpret academic requirements, and manage academic progress.
 - Identify an academic major and field of study based on self-awareness and insights into their background, personal characteristics, skills, academic interests, aspirations and values.
- Georgia Highlands
 - Students will demonstrate knowledge of GHC's initiatives, resources, policies, and services.
 - Students will acclimate to college life through and understanding of general academic language, expectations, and procedures.

- Students will reflect on developing self-awareness that will help them recognize, understand, and adjust to changes in life, college, and work.
- Students will practice study skills to improve academic performance.
- Students will develop communication skills that display a clear and correct expression and critical analysis.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of career or transfer planning.
- Students will display an understanding of their role and contribution to workplace and community.
- Students will reflect on diversity in ways that help toward a growing appreciation of it in college and workplace.
- Students will contribute to meeting the goals of a group or organization.
- Students will practice goal-setting and decision-making steps.
- Students will develop problem-solving and analytical skills while demonstrating appropriate and professional social behaviors.
- Georgia Perimeter
 - Enhancing Student Learning Through Engagement
 - Demonstrate positive involvement with students in their seminar group, the faculty seminar leader, and the college.
 - Identify and participate in college clubs and organizations and campus and community social, academic, or cultural events.
 - Distinguish and participate in various forms of engagement, including volunteerism, civic engagement, or service learning.
 - Define and participate in intercultural and international factors or events at play at the college, locally, nationally, or globally.
 - Understanding Self and Planning for the Future
 - Identify their core values to demonstrate an understanding of self that guides personal, academic and career decision-making and goal setting.
 - Apply individually appropriate study skill strategies to enhance their academic success.
 - Identifying Behaviors and College Resources that Promote Success
 - Explore effective time management strategies and develop personal and academic time management processes.
 - Identify and utilize college resources appropriately.
 - Demonstrate appropriate classroom and campus etiquette according to the Student Code of Conduct and generally expected academic behaviors.
 - Demonstrate effective problem-solving and decision-making skills.

- Utilize relevant skills used in the classroom and apply them to career and personal endeavors.
- Achieving Information Literacy for Academic Success
 - Identify and articulate a question or questions associated with a research topic or problem.
 - Find, evaluate, and manage information through the use of technology tools and library resources.
 - Locate a variety of information resources/types.
 - Evaluate the quality of information resources.
 - Manage and organize information for use in academic assignments.
- Communicate effectively through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- Students will develop their speaking skills by speaking with and giving formal presentations to their instructor and students in their seminar group.
- Students will develop their listening skills by listening to ideas of fellow students, the instructor, and various other auditory sources of information.
- Students will develop their reading skills by completing reading of assigned texts and articles.
- Students will develop their writing skills through writing assignments that may include journals, essays, papers, and essays on exams.
- Demonstrate effective problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- Students will develop critical thinking skills through in depth exploration of the topic that provides the central theme of the seminar, exploring that topic through discussion and debate, writing opinion essays, and interacting with people that hold a varied viewpoints on the theme.
- Students will develop problem solving skills by applying knowledge gained in the course to problems related to the theme.
- Locate, organize, and analyze information through the use of a variety of computer applications.
- Students will learn to locate, organize, and analyze information related to the seminar theme as part of the course goal for students to find, evaluate, and manage information through the use of technology tools.
- Apply the knowledge of personal, societal, and cultural development to living and working in a culturally diverse

- environment.
 - Students will learn to apply the knowledge of personal, societal, and cultural development to living and working in a culturally diverse environment as part of the course goal for students to define and participate in intercultural and international factors or events at play at the college, locally, nationally, or globally.
- Georgia Southern
 - Critically evaluate print and electronic information for its currency, relevancy, authority, accuracy and purpose.
 - Apply documentation guidelines for print and electronic information used in assignments.
 - Articulate what constitutes plagiarism and avoid representing the work of others as their own.
 - Student Learning Outcomes for Modern Political Debate
Students will be able to . . .
 - Articulate—both verbally and in writing—multiple perspectives on a contemporary political issue of their choosing.
 - Disagree with each other and others (including their professor) in a manner that promotes civility without stifling passionate exchange.
- Georgia Southwestern
 - Students will gain an understanding of what to expect from their first college classes and realize the value of higher education.
 - Students will become acquainted with each other and realize the importance of making connections with their peers, upperclassmen, faculty, and staff.
 - Students will engage in activities to build success in their academic careers and discover strategies that enhance their personal development.
- Georgia State
 - Academic Life—students will become familiar with the academic resources, procedures and student code of conduct policies of Georgia State University; they will exhibit familiarity with the location, use, and content of official university documents relevant to these issues.
 - Community Life— students will have an understanding of the community and environment on and around the university campus, as well as the general Atlanta community; they will engage in at least one dimension of the Atlanta-Based Learning Program.
 - Personal Life—students will engage in activities designed to improve their study and learning skills and to enhance their personal growth and development.
 - Communication—students will effectively use appropriate writing conventions and formats, and oral or signed conventions and formats.

- Collaboration—students will participate effectively in collaborative activities.
- Critical Thinking—students will formulate appropriate questions for research; effectively collect appropriate evidence and evaluate claims, arguments, evidence and hypotheses; and use the results of analysis to construct appropriately new arguments and formulate new questions.
- Contemporary Issues—students will effectively analyze contemporary issues within the context of diverse disciplinary perspectives and effectively analyze contemporary multicultural, global and international questions.
- Quantitative Skills—students will effectively perform arithmetic operations, as well as reasons and draw appropriate conclusions from numerical information, and they will effectively translate problem situations into symbolic representations and use those representations to solve problems.
- Technology—students will effectively use computers and other technology appropriate to the discipline.
- Kennesaw State
 - To encourage opportunities for students to explore their attitudes, beliefs, and values about education.
 - To learn strategies for coping and communicating in the campus environment.
 - To assist student in developing skills needed for success in college such as reading, study strategies, communication skills, time-management, note taking, test taking, and goal setting.
 - To familiarize students with campus resources and support services, particularly the library, technological support, career information, advising, registration, and student services.
 - To broaden the students' college experience through the participation in college activities and /or community services.
 - To provide support for the development of peer and faculty academic relationships.
 - To design and implement a reflective (private) and best of –show (public) portfolio mapping the college learning experience.
- Macon State
 - *To connect students with other students* – i.e., to facilitate student formation of peer-support networks and peer-learning communities;
 - *To connect students with Macon State College* – i.e., to foster student appreciation of the meaning and relevance of the college curriculum (liberal arts & sciences), to promote student involvement in the co-curriculum (out-of-class experiential learning), and to increase student utilization of campus support services (academic-support and student development services); and
 - *To connect students' present college experience with their future goals/plans* – i.e., to enable students to integrate their current curricular and co-curricular

experiences with their decisions about their college major and their future career path.

- Paine
 - This course is designed to provide opportunities for students to develop skills, values, behaviors, and attitudes necessary for success at Paine College. The course will:
 - provide students with a general orientation to Paine College;
 - improve students' metacognitive skill;
 - assist students in managing their time;
 - assist students in their transition from high school to college;
 - identify and create specific techniques to help students develop the skills to achieve their academic goals;
 - acquaint students with diversity as an integral part of their university education; and
 - assist students in developing a support group among their peers and a network within the college community.
 - At the end of the course students will be able to:
 - provide evidence that they have become a co-operative, yet independent, learner with a competency in information delivery systems and technology;
 - demonstrate a basic level of expertise in critical inquiry which broadens experience and increases understanding;
 - articulate his/her role as a contributing member and agent for change in the Paine College community; and
 - present a comprehensive academic and career development plan leading to graduation
- SCAD
 - The First Year Experience course is designed to further success in the college environment. Upon successfully completing this course, students will work with their instructor to declare a major. As a result of First Year Experience, students will be able to:
 - identify and understand strategies to enable academic success, enhancing their educational experience at SCAD
 - identify appropriate campus resources and develop relationships with students and staff, thus contributing to campus engagement
 - understand majors and curriculum requirements available at SCAD and recognize career options
- Savannah State
 - The ultimate goal of the FYE Program is to encourage students to establish new relationships, build upon their academic and life skills, find opportunities for personal growth and the broadening of perspectives, and better understand what it means to be an educated person. Various faculty/staff teach the FYE courses. While there will be differences in each section's approach, all sections share the following common objectives.

- Students will be introduced to Savannah State University's history and traditions, policies, procedures and resources.
 - Students will make initial exploration of the general/or core curriculum, major studies, career choices, and academic study skills such as time management, note taking, test strategies, classroom etiquette, and other helpful skills.
 - Students will develop an initial awareness of institutional expectations, including policies, programs and services.
 - Students will develop their critical thinking skills and awareness of social issues and issues relevant to college life with an emphasis on understanding diversity among peers.
 - Students will learn how to initiate interaction with faculty and be instructed on how to make the transition to a college advisor and major declaration.
 - Students will learn how to research financial options for school and learn financial management as a way to stay in school and prosper as a U.S. citizen.
- Shorter University
 - Critical Thinking Outcome: Students will be able to synthesize various ideas from academic disciplines, peers, class material, and outside input.
 - Skills for Success Outcomes: Students will develop social interaction skills and community-building skills through service learning and other opportunities. Students will become integrated into the University environment through a Learning Community experience.
 - Communication Outcome: Students will be able to understand communication as a continual process of drafting and revising, as well as learn and use correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and delivery techniques for a variety of audiences
 - Technology Application Outcome: Students will be able to use electronic tools to solve problems and make informed decisions by incorporating online research.
 - Christian Community Outcome: Students will participate in at least two chapel services, one intellectual event, one cultural event, and one service project in FCS 1010 and FCS 1020.
 - Wellness Outcome: Students will understand how to achieve physical wellness by taking HPE 1010 by their junior year, unless they are exempted.
 - Spelman
 - Identify the value of a liberal arts education
 - Develop strong written communication skills
 - Develop critical thinking skills
 - Identify the value of a global education
 - Learn about Spelman's legacy of academic excellence, leadership, and service

- Interact with a faculty mentor who will provide academic guidance and support
- Engage in community service and reflect on civic engagement
- Thomas University
 - At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:
 - Discuss how he or she is responsible for his or her experience in college;
 - Identify resources and personnel on the TU campus including faculty, administration, staff and student activities.
 - Retrieve information from appropriate resources available on campus and in the community that can be of assistance to the student.
 - Communicate effectively through university e-mail.
 - Send an assignment as an attachment by e-mail.
 - Utilize the online course management system, Blackboard, effectively.
 - Post responses and replies to a Discussion Board, either on Blackboard or a similar forum.
 - Examine personal ideas and decisions regarding issues typically faced by college students;
 - List guidelines for making effective plans that help guarantee success;
 - Interact in small groups, reporting college problems, frustrations and successes;
- Valdosta
 - Evaluate how education promotes success. (General Education Outcomes 1, 6, 7 & 8)
 - Analyze their personal learning style. (General Education Outcomes 4 & 7)
 - Demonstrate goal setting and time management skills.(General Education Outcomes 1, 2 & 5)
 - Use critical thinking to help solve problems and make decisions. (General Education Outcomes 7 & 8)
 - Explain and apply the SQ3R. (General Education Outcome 5)
 - Explain how to take lecture notes effectively and efficiently. (General Education Outcome 4)
 - Distinguish how to prepare for objective and essay tests more effectively and efficiently. (General Education Outcomes 4 & 7)
- Wesleyan
 - Traditional:
 - To provide students with an understanding of the nature and value of a Wesleyan education, including Wesleyan's history, the value of the liberal arts, our role as a women's college, and our role as a Methodist college.

- To expose students to juxtaposed disciplinary methods including women’s studies and the philosophical, literary, historical, and aesthetic perspectives foundational to a liberal arts education.
 - To provide students with the skills and strategies needed to make a successful transition to college, such as time management, study skills, and research skills.
 - To provide students with the academic skills needed to be successful in college, particularly writing, critical thinking, speaking, and quantitative reasoning.
 - To encourage students to see learning as the active construction of knowledge as part of an academic community committed to the free and open exchange of ideas.
 - To ask students to reflect critically on their beliefs and frames of reference as women in the context of a diverse world.
 - To help students start to discover their talents and passions and explore applying them beyond Wesleyan College through study, work and service.
 - Nontraditional
 - To provide students with an understanding of the nature and value of a Wesleyan education, including Wesleyan’s history, the value of the liberal arts, our role as a women’s college, and as a Methodist college.
 - To provide students with the skills and strategies needed to make a successful transition to college, such as time management, study skills, and research skills.
 - To provide students with the academic skills needed to be successful in college, particularly writing, critical thinking, speaking, and quantitative reasoning.
 - To help students start to discover their talents and passions and explore applying them beyond Wesleyan College through study, work, and service.
 - Determine an academic plan including resources and graduation map.
- West Georgia
 - Students will identify and utilize a set of adaptive study, coping, critical thinking, logical problem solving, and other academic/personal/social success skills;
 - Students will demonstrate an understanding of some of the most typical pedagogical strategies of their professors' teaching and presentation styles;
 - Students will identify and understand their own personal learning style and how to best adapt to different instructional strategies in the classroom;
 - Students will demonstrate their understanding of the function of a mentor and how to go about finding one;

- Students will summarize basic information about UWG: its purposes, organization, rules and regulations, people, services, resources, and opportunities for student development;
- Students will utilize the following resources available to them at UWG: the Library, the EXCEL Center, and the Health Center; students will also identify the location and function of other important offices on campus, such as the Student Development Center, the Writing Center, the Mathematics Tutoring Center, and the Career Services Office;
- Students will identify some of the major health and wellness issues for students;
- Students will document their personal goals for careers and academic majors and their plans for achieving these goals;
- Students will demonstrate basic skills in computer literacy through activities involving the use of e-mail and the Internet;
- Students will demonstrate personal responsibility and self-direction regarding their education;
- Students will identify the benefits of a college degree;
- Students will identify and demonstrate an appreciation of the value of diversity and of a liberal arts perspective in their education;
- Students will identify elements of democratic structures within which they will be civically engaged on the UWG campus, in the larger community and in the State of Georgia;
- Students will examine and discuss ways in which UWG students, faculty, and staff identify, prioritize and debate issues in ways that allow and support the principles of civic engagement and democracy.
- West Georgia Tech
 - Apply appropriate reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills to express information, ideas, and opinions.
 - Collaborate effectively with others to share information, solve problems, or complete tasks.
 - Use everyday mathematical concepts and basic mathematical tools to obtain or convey information.
 - Develop critical thinking and reasoning skills for problem solving.
 - Apply the principles of purposeful, organized thinking.
 - Practice analytical, explorative, and innovative thinking.
 - Develop technological literacy.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the applications of technology in everyday life.
 - Develop an understanding of gender, ethnic, minority, multicultural, and global issues.
 - Possess a sense of personal, social, professional, and work ethics.
- Effective communication
- Critical and creative thinking
- Technological literacy
- Respect for diversity

- Apply appropriate reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills to express information, ideas, and opinions.
- Collaborate effectively with others to share information, solve problems, or complete tasks.
- Use everyday mathematical concepts and basic mathematical tools to obtain or convey information.
- Develop critical thinking and reasoning skills for problem solving.
- Apply the principles of purposeful, organized thinking.
- Practice analytical, explorative, and innovative thinking.
- Develop technological literacy.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the applications of technology in everyday life.
- Develop an understanding of gender, ethnic, minority, multicultural, and global issues.
- Possess a sense of personal, social, professional, and work ethics.
- The student will demonstrate computer skills using online software program.
- The student will evaluate their academic success skills by using the assessment provided in the textbook and writing a reflective essay.

Course Activities:

- Albany State
 - Reflection
 - Service/Leadership brief
 - In-class quizzes
 - 32 hours of service learning
 - Final Paper
- Andrew
 - College Expectations Paper, PowerPoint Presentations, Outcats United Journals, Daily Assignments, Attendance, Learning Style Paper, Healthy Choice Paper
- Armstrong Atlantic
 - Vista Assignments
 - Career Article Reflection
 - Resume & Cover Letter
 - Myers/Briggs Reflection
 - Presentation
- Augusta State
 - Determine their personal Learning Style
 - Understand essential strategies to process information
 - Understand how memory functions

- Establish strong schedules to enhance personal and academic time management strategies
- Set personal and academic goals and understand what motivates the student to complete these goals
- Utilize strategies to improve concentration
- Understand and utilize an effective reading system for academic work
- Create elaborative rehearsal techniques to comprehend textbook information and terminology
- Employ effective note taking techniques and systems
- Understand Test-Taking Strategies for various types of tests
- Develop College-level Computer Literacy
- Identify and utilize the various student services and resources at Augusta State University including the Academic Advisement Center, the Career Center, the Counseling Center, Information Technology Services (ITS), Media Services, Reese Library and Financial Aid.
- Coastal Georgia
 - Understanding College
 - Learning styles, personality types, personal values and goals
 - Diversity and relationships
 - Overview of study skills
 - Information literacy and navigating technology
 - Critical thinking
 - Time Management
 - Academic and career planning
 - Communicating
 - Health
 - Money
- Columbus State
 - E-Mail exercise
 - Galileo exercise
 - Attendance at a Workshop
 - Attendance at a Campus Sponsored Event
 - Journal entries
 - Participation Points
 - Campus Services Group Report (3 to 5 minutes)
 - Midterm Examination
 - Final Examination
- Dalton State

- Questionnaires
- college success how to
- value of LA Ed.
- Library visit
- advising/academic plan
- Learning styles
- diversity
- strategic plans
- higher level thinking/bridge activity
- food festival and diversity movie
- career management
- life management
- student activities/student conduct
- financial planning
- semester projects
- East Georgia
 - Pre and Post Test
 - Adjusting to college
 - Time management
 - Listening and note-taking
 - Internet technologies
 - Learning
 - Learning style
 - Research and writing
 - Designing academic program
 - Library
 - Student Loans and credit
- Georgia College
 - AlcoholEdu
 - Purpose paper
 - Time management calendar
 - MAP-works survey
 - cultural and athletic events
 - majors fair attendance and reflection
 - academic event
 - dear freshman letter
 - pre-test
 - campus life
 - being healthy and safe
 - exploring majors

- FERPA
- Financial Aid
- Post Test
- Registration
- Georgia Highlands
 - Citizens project
 - efolioWorld
 - World Leader profile
 - Coursemate exercise
 - Surveys
 - Vista
 - Participation
- Georgia Perimeter
 - Introduction to the higher education system
 - Expectations in college courses
 - Expectations for college behaviors
 - Strategies for achieving academic and personal success
 - Georgia Perimeter College
 - Resources
 - Structure
 - Clubs and organizations
 - Volunteerism, civic engagement and service learning
 - Communities
 - Ethnic and cultural differences
 - Personal and academic goal setting
 - Career directions
 - Time management
 - Using and evaluating information resources
- Georgia Southern
 - Introductions
 - Course overview; “Labels and Alignments in American Politics”; how to read an article in this course (what it says and what it does statements)
 - Issue 12: Is America becoming more unequal?
 - Library Tour (meet on first-floor foyer off Pedestrium)
 - CRAAP criteria; scholarly vs. non-scholarly; issue for 10/4 decided; course project topics finalized
 - Issue 6: Is Congress a “broken branch”?
 - Student issue choice; sign up for individual meetings, 10/5-14
 - Meeting with course project partners
 - Academic Honesty
 - Class Presentations
- Georgia Southwestern

- time management
- critical thinking
- note taking
- test taking
- communicating
- use of resources.
- orientation to the library
- introduction to career counseling services
- Challenge Course, or “ropes” course, which provides team-building and problem solving activities.
- GSW portfolio
- meeting your professors
- wellness inventory
- student health 101
- student success alcohol program
- Georgia State
 - Advisement, Atlanta-Based Learning, Sexual Signals and Alcohol-Edu.
- Kennesaw State
 - Reflective portfolio
 - College portfolio
 - Best of show portfolio
 - Campus field trips
- Macon State
 - first impressions
 - VISTA
 - managing time
 - integrity and civility
 - active listening and note taking
 - reading, comprehension, and retention
 - holistic development
 - student development services and student activities
 - interest inventory
 - Banner and advising
 - Information literacy
 - communication
 - dating, romance
 - counseling
 - stress management
 - managing money
- Paine

- Assembly Journal
- Introduce Yourself
- Time management
- information literacy
- campus resources
- interview a professor
- service project
- discussion board
- SCAD
 - Getting things done
 - SCAD resources
 - group advising
 - career services
 - professionalism
 - Passport booklet
 - scavenger hunt
 - major open house
 - library tour
 - student support service
 - student activities council event
 - athletic event
 - intramurals
 - writers studio (writing consultation)
 - residence life FYE event
 - individual peer tutoring
 - international student services
- Savannah State
 - Email
 - Journal entries
 - Mentor
 - Cultural Events
 - Assemblies
 - Seminars
 - Service Learning
- Shorter University
 - Skills for Success Portfolio
 - Community Service Project
 - Alcohol Awareness
 - Adjusting to College Life
 - Personal Goal Setting

- Time Management
- Learning Community Content
- Social Integration and Health
- Diversity
- Spelman
 - Opening convocation
 - LEADS convocation
 - Service convocation
 - MLK convocation
 - Founders convocation
 - Awards convocation
 - portfolio
 - weekly meetings with academic facilitators
 - public health survey
 - academic profile
 - Strong interest inventory
 - Watson-glaser critical thinking appraisal
 - collegiate learning assessment
 - survey of college advising
- Thomas University
 - Portfolio
 - e-journals
 - discussion board
 - Myers Briggs
 - Learning style inventory
 - multiple pathways to learning
 - personality spectrum
 - campus activities report
 - guest speaker summary
 - tutoring session
- Valdosta
 - service-learning
 - career paper
 - personality survey
- Wesleyan
 - Traditional:
 - use academic texts to promote self-reflection and to improve your critical thinking, writing, and speaking.
 - challenge you to question and elaborate on ideas presented in course readings.

- consider perspectives that differ from your own.
- focus on thesis-driven summary, explanation, analysis, and synthesis.
- incorporate source material smoothly and correctly using MLA style citation.
- approach writing assignments through the stages of planning, drafting, revising, and editing.
- give and receive feedback in peer writing groups.
- encourage your participation in class discussion.
- teach personal transition skills to promote self-efficacy and to improve your academic performance.
- encourage you to become an engaged learner who fully participates in the campus community.
- help you to recognize your strengths and weaknesses as a learner and a leader.
- make you conscientious about how you spend your time.
- guide you through the process of exploring and setting academic, career, and personal goals.
- provide a context for you to consider the value of Wesleyan's unique history as a liberal arts women's college affiliated with the United Methodist Church.
- promote your use of campus resources including academic computing, the library, the Academic Center, the Writing Center, and services offered by Student Affairs professionals.
- support your development as a college student through an intensive, holistic approach to advising.
- reflect on opportunities and challenges that face you as a citizen in our global society;
- consider your responsibilities to a larger, global community;
- consider perspectives different from your own;
- explore multiple aspects of an issue;
- gain experience in framing research questions;
- develop your research and writing skills;
- and enhance your oral communication skills.
- Nontraditional
 - Computer Proficiency
 - Plagiarism Exercise (in class)
 - MBTI Completion
 - VARK Learning Styles Inventory
 - Library Proficiency
 - Final Project
 - Graduation Plan (in class)
- West Georgia
 - project on topic of interest
 - 3 campus events (academic, social or service, cultural)
 - journal

- West Georgia Tech
 - Getting Off to a Good Start
 - Apply knowledge to use Banner Web, email, registration and withdrawal procedures.
 - Utilize the service of Financial Aid and Student Affairs Offices.
 - Understand the policies and procedures of the college.
 - Discuss what it means to be a responsible student in a college environment.
 - Identify potential personal stumbling blocks and available resources to help students experience college success.
 - Demonstrate effective research techniques.
 - Evaluate information by judging currency, relevancy, authority, accuracy and purpose.
 - Demonstrate use of ANGEL, e-books, and electronic media.
 - Learning and Personality Styles
 - Identify learning styles and best learning styles for the individual student.
 - Anticipate ways to utilize individual learning styles and strategies to adapt to various teaching methods.
 - Identify personality styles and understand students' individual personality style.
 - Identify and adapt personality styles to classroom situations.
 - Time and Money Management
 - Identify effective time management strategies.
 - Utilize specific time management strategies to include: self-evaluation, action plan, color coding, planners, home organizers and scheduling appointments.
 - Understand the importance/ramifications of a budget and prepare a personal budget.
 - Stress Management and Wellness
 - Identify stress levels and stressors.
 - Demonstrate stress-reducing techniques.
 - Identify emotional triggers and develop coping skills to manage emotional and behavioral reaction to challenging environments.
 - Develop a nutritional plan that promotes self-care for a healthy body.
 - Describe the importance physical activity to maintain wellness and develop a personal fitness plan.
 - Discuss the effects products such as alcohol, drugs, and tobacco usage on health and fitness.
 - Study and Test Taking Skills
 - Demonstrate effective note-taking skills.
 - Describe and implement effective study strategies.
 - Describe effective test-taking strategies and identify strategies to use under various testing situations.
 - Communication Skills

- Identify effective communication techniques utilizing listening skills; body language; verbal, written and electronic communication.
- Demonstrate appropriate etiquette in all forms of communication.
- Utilize effective communication techniques when dealing with conflicts and diversity.

Appendix I:
Focus Group Instrument Data

Focus Group Instrument Data

Focus Group One (6/23/11)

1. What do you expect to learn in the course to prepare for college?

Rosa- All about ABAC, the history, getting to know my way around the school, all that it has to offer with academics and athletics, financial aid

Vickie- same thing that Rosa said, and there was one thing that I did not hear a lot of was the history of the school, but they did show us where all of the building were at, where the library was at, how to get everything activated

John – the scavenger hunt to find our way around

Vickie- the scavenger hunt was really nice, we got to see where everything was at

Sally – the scavenger hunt was too quick

2. During your first semester in college, what were your areas of educational need in which you felt were weak and needed assistance?

John – the one thing that they addressed in the ABAC 1000 class that they addressed that I was glad they addressed was time management. I never really had a major problem with time management, but it was something that I definitely needed to work on; to do school work first, play around and then do more school work, to break everything up so it would not overwhelm you. I think that was the skill that I needed most because I was pretty good at studying.

Tremaine- I would agree with time management because you have such a high school mind about things. I wished I had listened more to the time management part because college is so different from high school. You need to know how to manage your time or you are going to fall somewhere in between, and also organizational skills, because whether you are doing a work study job or not, each class you will need a place for your notes, PowerPoint, papers you will need to write, anything like that. You have to know how to organize your time and all that belongs to you.

John- Those are really the two things that you don't need in high school, but once you get to college, they are really important.

3. What would be the benefits of making ABAC 1000 a required course for all ABAC students?

Sara – Students would be more open minded to what the school had to offer if the course was really teaching what needed to be known about ABAC. We would have more insight into what was available for us basically, academically, financially.

Malcolm- It is really something that opens you eyes as to how much more involved college is. If you live on campus, this becomes your life. You don't have parents breathing down your neck, and the ABAC 1000 course teaches you that you need to stay on top of things; you need good study habits, good time management.

Rosa – If there is more about the history of the college it give you a sense of pride about coming here. You know something about the college.

John – If you are going to call yourself alumni of a college, you need to know what it is about and to be proud of the college, not just to obtain your degree. You know you are sitting there in the future telling friends and family members about the college, you can know a little more about it. Plus family members have a strong sway on a college that a student may choose. So it is the stories that my college was built in so in so years, we had this many achievements, things like that influence people.

4. What aspects of the ABAC 1000 course have been useful for you?

John – time management

Rosa – most definitely time management. That is really a skill that is underdeveloped in a high school because that is something that your parents do for you. “No you can’t do this until you finish your homework, you can’t go anywhere because you made this kind of grade.”

Sally- There was a lot of group work in ABAC 1000 class, a lot more than you usually had in any other class. It taught you how to communicate on a project with people that you never met; it got you comfortable with that. I have been glad for that because I have had classes where I had to work with people.

John – I would agree with that. I think college is all about diversity, and getting into the habit of group work helps you work together and meet new people. Whether you stay on campus or not, you are going to work with different people. This is college; there are different types of people here.

Molly – Organization, because where I was in high school, my teachers told me things will be much, much harder so you will need to organize, but they really did not focus on time management skills. ABAC 1000 at least warned me about it, even if I was not paying attention all of the way.

5. On a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, to what degree has learning about yourself and your learning style helped in learning new things? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value

great value

Vickie – ten, to be honest. Because in high school I learned basically by just comparing my notes to other student, but in college I did not know anybody. I found out that I learn better by reading and also by taking in what the teacher teaches me in the class and adding in. I have developed a little more complicated learning style and it has helped me get this far, so I am sticking with it.

John – Nine

John – I would say about an eight because when I did it. Well, it was more of a realization moment for me because I had been studying like that for while. I just didn't understand how I had been working. It was a weird mixture of them all, but my highest was auditory. Listening to people talk was how I learned the best, so being in the classroom in the classroom was really important to me. It gave me an added sense that I should not be out of class if I really didn't need to. Listening to the teacher is where I am going to learn the best

and reading and writing, I can learn that way but it is not as effecting. It just opened my eyes to that.

Rosa – Seven

Sara – Five, I didn't learn a whole lot about myself that was new.

Tremaine - Eight

6. What have you learned about yourself in ABAC 1000 that makes you a better student?

Vickie – Well, because you learn a lot about yourself and present the material that other people have learned, it gives you a sense that you are not like everyone else. You have your own uniqueness. It taught me to embrace that. Not to be ashamed of where you came from, or frightened that someone has more money than you. Because everyone is different, it made me proud of whom I was.

Tremaine- It taught me to basically be more aware of the assistance you have around you, whether financial or academic, or dealing with professors. Usually when I am at a school, I just depend on me. But I have had professors help me relate better of better understand work, so the assistance is definitely a big part for me.

7. What topics and activities of the ABAC 1000 course were not useful in preparing your for college?

Sara – That is actually a pretty hard one to answer.

Molly – I do still agree the history is still important especially if you want to be an alumnus, but it puts a lot of emphasis on the history of college and I am going forward at ABAC, the history of the school is not really relevant. It is more like I need more assistance in academics and financial aid. Don't take history away, but cut back on the emphasis, and appeal more to the information a student really needs to know like GPA and attempted hours because I had no clue about stuff like.

Rosa – For me, everything that they taught me has helped me in college, even if it did not seem useful at the time. After you have been in college for two years, the things that you did not think were important then are important now, like teamwork.

Sally- I don't really know how to answer that one because I thought everything we went over was really important, even history.

8. How could ABAC 1000 be changed to better meet your educational needs?

Molly – Details, details because like I just said about GPA. There are attempted hours and earned hours and that was not emphasized. I don't think people really know about stuff like that and it is really, really important.

Chris – Providing more emphasis on where we can go to make college life my comfortable for us, like asking for a better academic tutoring center. Something as simple as lunch would help. Even though lunch doesn't affect you getting your degree, but you are still paying to be here.

Vickie- Like Molly said, the details of the class. It doesn't need to be made a really hard class or stress inducing class. Something we went really in-depth in like learning about you,

but financial aid was more of a broad overview, and whereas all of that information has been really useful, I wish I knew more about it. I had a friend that did not know they cut off your financial aid once you have taken so many classes. The detail on that is very important.

John- Not only about school. Financial aid is one of the most important things because if you can't pay for school you won't have the ability to go to school. About loans, and the grace periods. Loans do help you, but they also have consequences. Like for the nurses for Georgia if you go to school and work for a certain period of time they will pay your school back for you.

Malcolm- Help people to determine your major, because people do come to college and change their major.

9. Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, how do you value your ABAC 1000 experience? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value

great value

Rosa – Definitely a ten, because a lot of the stuff that I learned in that class hasn't been covered in any other class. It really helps a student to go over things. It seems silly at first that they are going to teach you how to study or manage your time, but when you sit down and think about it. It is really useful.

John – I would have to say a six because while it did warn me for what I was in for, most of the stuff I learned I just let go over my head, because I just viewed it as an easy A. I have learned some stuff, but I really think I already know a lot about myself.

Sara – There wasn't anything I found really challenging here, but it was thoughtful of the school to offer a course.

(Adapted from Rhodes and Carifio, 1999)

Demographic Information						
	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	1 st Generation	Income	Marital Status
1 Rick	25-32	Female	Hispanic	Yes	>10,000	Married
2 Vickie	17-24	Female	African American	No	>10,000	Never Married
3 John	17-24	Male	Caucasian	No	>10,000	Never Married
4 Sally	25-32	Female	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
5 John	25-32	Male	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
6 Tremaine	17-24	Male	African American	No	>10,000	Never Married
7 Molly	17-24	Female	Caucasian	No	>10,000	Married
8 Chris	25-32	Male	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Never Married
9 Malcolm	25-32	Female	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
10 Sara	17-24	Female	Hispanic	Yes	>10,000	Never Married

Focus Group Two (8/24/11)

1. What do you expect to learn in the course to prepare for college?

Alicia- As an incoming freshmen I thought it was going to teach me time management skills and how to study, in high school you really didn't have to study as much, or hit the books as much as you did in college. That is what I expected.

Jennifer- Same thing, basically what you were going to need to be successful.

Rick- Something about college, something about ABAC and its college.

2. During your first semester in college, what were your areas of educational need in which you felt were weak and needed assistance?

Shauna – time management, study skills

Luke – learning about the student development center, that has you before mid semester

David- organization

Heather- learning how to live on campus, learning about school and taking care of you

Shauna- I felt I was ready for college

Tom- Biology

David- Math

Scott- English, writing skills

Alicia- difference between a high school paper and a college paper

David- they assume you took math all four year in college, but some didn't (8 took three years and 1 took two years)

3. What would be the benefits of making ABAC 1000 a required course for all ABAC students?

Heather- A lot of people when they come here will need to learn skills to be more successful

Jennifer- how to organize a notebook efficiently, paper officially, hands on instruction

Shauna- if it were more like a study hall

4. What aspects of the ABAC 1000 course have been useful for you?

Jennifer- time management

Jeff- organization

Luke – responsibility

Tom – leadership

5. On a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, to what degree has learning about yourself and your learning style helped in learning new things? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value

great value

Jeff- five

Alicia – seven

Tom- ten

Rick- eight

Luke- five

Jennifer- three

Tom- It is important to study how you are going to learn

Jennifer- I think my learning style changed when I got in college

6. What have you learned about yourself in ABAC 1000 that makes you a better student?

Scott- being able to trust people to help you

David- asking for help is ok

Alicia – how to be successful

Jennifer- I didn't really learn anything

Heather – I expected going on and doing things in the leadership community, but we just talked about doing things and never really did anything hands on

Shauna- It taught me how I could change to be successful

7. What topics and activities of the ABAC 1000 course were not useful in preparing your for college?

Heather- making the movie

Scott- I loved making the movie, it helped me learn people in class

Heather – but I had to step up and make it myself, it was hard because you didn't know anyone

Jennifer- we didn't do anything except read a book and do journals, the book wasn't useful, it was too general

Rick- It needed to be more specific to ABAC and the individuals and more hands on.

David- some days it was, and some days it was not, watching a power point was not useful

8. How could ABAC 1000 be changed to better meet your educational needs?

Tom- add budgeting

Jennifer- set standards at a higher level

Shauna- hype it up

Luke – take more action about what the book and class are really about

9. Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, how do you value your ABAC 1000 experience? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value

great value

Jennifer- three

Jeff- four

David- two

Rick- seven

Shauna- It is not perfect

Scott- I didn't remember mine

Heather- It was just books, readings, and journals

Alicia- seven

Luke – eight

David – needed more activities

Rick- I think learning community ABAC 100 classes were better; we got to be with the same students

Luke – I became a leader working with a Habitat for Humanity community service project.

(Adapted from Rhodes and Carifio, 1999)

Demographic Information						
	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	1 st Generation	Income	Marital Status
1 Rick	17-24	Male	Caucasian	No	>10,000	Never married
2 Shauna	17-24	Female	African American	No	>10,000	Never married
3 Jennifer	17-24	Female	Caucasian	No	>10,000	Never married
4 David	25-32	Male	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Never Married
5 Alicia	25-32	Female	African American	Yes	>10,000	Divorced
6 Jeff	17-24	Male	African American	No	>10,000	Never married
7 Scott	25-32	Male	African American	No	10K-29,999	Never Married
8 Tom	17-24	Male	African American	No	>10,000	Never Married
9 Heather	25-32	Female	Caucasian	No	>10,000	Never Married
10 Luke	25-32	Male	African American	Yes	>10,000	Never Married

Focus Group Three (9/8/11)

1. What do you expect to learn in the course to prepare for college?

Lucy- I wanted to learn about banner, my email, WebCt, I didn't know how to use that

Kim- I really wasn't looking for anything specifically because I had not heard of ABAC 1000 until I was in the class

Brandon- I expected to learn everything about ABAC, the ins and outs, what to do to end here graduating

Heidi- I took the leadership LLC course, and I expected to learn about leadership, the internet services ABAC offers, and to become a better leader through experiences in course

Lucy- to take what I learned in class and apply it to any situation at ABAC. I expected to learn about financial aid, various didn't academic affairs, transfer processes

2. During your first semester in college, what were your areas of educational need in which you felt were weak and needed assistance?

William- mine was English, I needed help with grammar

Marie – I felt I needed help in math; I started out in learning support, MATH 97. My professor in ABAC 1000 was really good. I stayed after class one day because I was nervous for a test and he told me about the Academic Achievement Center.

Heidi- I think my area of need was approaching people, when I first came here I was shy and afraid to ask for help

Max- I took the reins and jumped into clubs, but being social and making friends was an area that took me a few semesters

Lucy – same thing, social

Max- study skills have been improved upon

3. What would be the benefits of making ABAC 1000 a required course for all ABAC students?

Heidi- I do think that making ABAC 1000 a required course would be beneficial. It helped us to get to know the campus. If you needed something you would know who does this and who does that.

Lucy- I agree. I learned about who I would need to go to if I had a specific need. We were given lists and that was really helpful.

Marie – I don't think it should be required, I learned but nothing I didn't already know.

Max- I don't think it should be required, I went into that class and didn't leave really knowing anything more than I know now

William- I think as it stands now, it shouldn't be required, personally I think course for majors designed to be specific for schools would be useful and then it should be required.

Max- If there were major adjustments made it could be very beneficial; my professor was thrown in to course at last minute and just gave us the minimum. We did not go over specific processes, like forms, transferring, finding a major

Marie – nursing LLC ABAC 1000 was not specific enough for nursing student and if it had been, I would have liked it better.

4. What aspects of the ABAC 1000 course have been useful for you?

Max – when we did research in steps (Read, recite, review)

Heidi – I actually learned pretty good stuff from ABAC 1000 (study techniques and taking notes). I was pretty good at taking notes, but I found out what kind of learner I was. I learned I was a visual learner and by finding pictures on the internet related to the text, I learned better. I learned about how to apply for scholarships and I did get a scholarship.

Max- I really enjoyed the book we read during the leadership ABAC 1000 course, I kept it and read it constantly (*The Travelers Gift*, by Andy Andrews). I also took away new leadership skills from the speakers that we had that I did not have before.

Brandon- I didn't take anything with me. To be honest my class was a waste of an hour, I could have been doing something that was better suited for my academics. If I had done something different with that hour I could already have my Associates by now.

5. On a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, to what degree has learning about yourself and your learning style helped in learning new things? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value

great value

Heidi – definitely ten, For me sometimes I have to read things over and over. If it is a process I have to read it over and over because I have to visualize. If I can see a picture or video, I can get it done quicker. That helped me as far as studying; it took less time to study if I could just look at a picture.

Marie – I did not do a learning style assessment, but I think it would have been helpful. I would have rated it an eight or nine had we done one.

Jill- we didn't do learning style, had they offered it I would have rated it a five, even if you do know your learning style I don't feel it would help unless your teachers recognize your learning style and work with it

Brandon- we didn't do learning style, I would have rated it an eight had they offered the assessment because it would have better allowed us to align ourselves with our teachers.

6. What have you learned about yourself in ABAC 1000 that makes you a better student?

William- I think learning about resources you have, like for academic support, extracurricular activities, clubs and organizations, I think all around it made me a better student. Because I got involved on campus, which also got me scholarships. I was involved before, but ABAC 1000 opened the door

Max- I learned a lot of leadership skills and was able to hone them in a campus and community setting

Lucy- I think this topic varied from professor to professor, I know people that took ABAC 1000 that got information that I did not receive, such as study skills and paperwork

7. What topics and activities of the ABAC 1000 course were not useful in preparing your for college?

Max- there was an 80s video for diversity and it was really boring and nobody watched it. I think an interactive activity or discussion would have been more useful.

Bill- everything in ABAC 1000 was good, we learned out of a book and everything seemed useful (*Seven Keys to Success*)

William- I know one thing we did was a skit about what we thought coming to college would be about, but it wasn't useful to us

Brandon- My professor just walked in, said you guys have a copy of the book, read it, and we will discuss it in class; and that was our entire class. Most people did not read the book, and it was just the professor discusses the book.

Elizabeth- we read a book and then had a guest speaker, but we never had time to discuss the book

8. How could ABAC 1000 be changed to better meet your educational needs?

William- length of class was ok, maybe if it was optional, but there were students in there that didn't care. It shouldn't be taught like a course-course. It needs to be more interactive

Heidi- My course was more interactive, it was good

Lucy- My professor cared, but he was only teaching the course because he had to and rushed through the material. The best thing about the course was a time management exercise.

Marie- I would leave in the study skills and make it a mandatory topic, and would improve the book because I never really knew the point of ABAC 1000

Brandon- Something that I would emphasize would be time management skills, because I know several people who's GPA has dropped because of poor time management.

Jill- If I had a blank slate I would set it up with each course being major specific and also set up an undeclared with the study skills that you learn being major specific. Maybe in the beginning they could do core specific, but also get into what your major will entail. Also work with WebCt, enrollment services, and student financial services and knowing the

forms you will have to use. I know I lost my scholarship because I did not realize the deadline was so soon.

Brandon- resume, how to make a resume, and some general pointer on what to do when you get you degree. What to do not because the unemployment rate for college graduates in outrageous, because they have a degree, but don't know what to do next.

9. Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being no value and ten being great value, how do you value your ABAC 1000 experience? Please elaborate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

no value

great value

Max – ten

Lucy- seven, the good parts were good, the lecturing brought it down. If it were more interactive it would have been a ten

Brandon- one, it would have been a better nap time

Marie- two

William- seven, it helped be to become a better leader and I got to know the campus, I really enjoyed the class, I didn't like not being able to discuss the book

(Adapted from Rhodes and Carifio, 1999)

Demographic Information						
	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	1 st Generation	Income	Marital Status
1 Lucy	17-24	Female	Caucasian	Yes	>10,000	Never Married
2 Jill	17-24	Female	Other	No	>10,000	Never Married
3 Max	25-32	Male	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
4 Kim	25-32	Female	African American	Yes	>10,000	Married

5 William	17-24	Male	African American	No	>10,000	Never Married
6 Bill	17-24	Male	African American	No	>10,000	Never Married
7 Heidi	33-40	Female	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
8 Brandon	25-32	Male	African American	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
9 Elizabeth	17-24	Female	Caucasian	Yes	>10,000	Never Married
10 Marie	25-32	Female	Other	No	>10,000	Never Married

Appendix J:
Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire Data

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire Data

Demographics

R	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	LS	Q5	Q6	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	1st Generation	Income	Marital Status
1	yes	X	X	X	9	X	X	25-32	M	African American	Yes	>10K	Never Married
2	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
3	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Divorced
4	no	X	X	X	10	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
5	yes		X	X	10	X	X	25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
6	no	X	X	X	4	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
7	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
8	no	X	X	X	3	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
9	no	X	X	X	8			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
10	no	X	X	X	10	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
11	no	X		X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
12	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
13	no	X	X	X	8			25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
14	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Never Married
15	yes	X	X	X	9		X	25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
16	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Divorced
17	no	X	X	X	7	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
18	no	X		X	5	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
19	no	X	X	X	6	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
20	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	M	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Divorced
21	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
22	yes		X	X	6	X	X	33-40	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
23	no	X		X	8	X		25-32	F	Other	No	10K-29,999	Married
24	no	X	X	X	9			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
25	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married

26	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
27	no	X	X	X	10			25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
28	no	X	X	X	7	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
29	yes		X	X	6		X	25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
30	no	X	X	X	10			40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
31	yes	X	X	X	9	X	X	33-40	M	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
32	yes		X	X	8	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
33	no	X	X	X	5			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
34	no	X	X	X	10			40+	F	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
35	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
36	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
37	no	X	X	X	4	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
38	no	X	X	X	9	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
39	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
40	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Married
41	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
42	no	X	X	X	10			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
43	no	X	X		5	X		25-32	F	African American	Yes	>10K	Married
44	no	X			7			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
45	yes	X	X	X	6	X	X	33-40	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
46	yes	X	X	X	3	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Divorced
47	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
48	no	X	X	X	7	X		40+	M	African American	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
49	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Divorced
50	yes	X		X	9		X	25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
51	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
52	yes	X	X	X	6	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
53	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married

54	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
55	no	X	X	X	10	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
56	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
57	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
58	no	X	X	X	10			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
59	no	X	X	X	5	X		25-32	F	African American	Yes	>10K	Married
60	no	X	X	X	6			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
61	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Never Married
62	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
63	no	X	X	X	3	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
64	no	X	X	X	9			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
65	yes		X	X	8		X	25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Never Married
66	no	X	X	X	5	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
67	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	African American	Yes	>10K	Married
68	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Divorced
69	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
70	no	X	X	X	7			25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
71	no	X	X	X	1			25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
72	no	X		X	10	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
73	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
74	no	X	X	X	9	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
75	no	X	X	X	10			40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
76	no	X	X	X	5			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
77	no	X	X	X	1			25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
78	no	X	X	X	10			40+	F	African American	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
79	yes	X	X	X	4	X	X	33-40	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
80	no	X	X	X	7	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married

81	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
82	no	X	X		6	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Never Married
83	no	X	X	X	6			25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
84	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Other	No	10K-29,999	Married
85	yes	X	X	X	10		X	33-40	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
86	no	X	X	X	6			25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
87	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
88	no	X	X	X	9			25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
89	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	African American	No	>10K	Married
90	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
91	yes	X	X	X	8		X	25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
92	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
93	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
94	no	X	X	X	10			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
95	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Divorced
96	yes	X		X	10	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Married
97	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	African American	No	>10K	Married
98	no	X	X	X	6			40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
99	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
100	no	X	X	X	1			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
101	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
102	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	African American	No	>10K	Never Married
103	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
104	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
105	yes	X	X	X	8		X	25-32	F	African American	No	>10K	Married
106	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
107	no	X	X	X	6			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Married
108	no	X	X	X	6			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-	Married

												29,999	
109	yes	X	X	X	7	X	X	25-32	F	African American	No	>10K	Never Married
110	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
111	no	X	X	X	10	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Married
112	yes	X	X	X	9		X	25-32	F	Hispanic	No	>10K	Never Married
113	no	X		X	5	X		40+	F	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
114	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Divorced
115	yes	X	X	X	10	X	X	25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
116	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Divorced
117	no	X	X	X	8			25-32	M	African American	No	>10K	Married
118	yes	X	X	X	5		X	33-40	F	African American	No	30K-49,999	Married
119	no	X	X		9			25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
120	no	X		X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
121	yes		X	X	8	X	X	25-32	F	African American	No	>10K	Never Married
122	no	X	X	X	6	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
123	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
124	yes	X	X	X	6		X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Never Married
125	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
126	no	X	X	X	10	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Divorced
127	yes	X	X	X	1		X	25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
128	no	X	X	X	2	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
129	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
130	yes	X	X	X	7	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
131	no	X	X	X	6			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
132	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Other	Yes	>10K	Never Married
133	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
134	no	X	X	X	5			40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
135	no	X	X	X	9	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married

136	no	X		X	6	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
137	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
138	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
139	yes	X	X	X	6	X	X	33-40	M	African American	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
140	yes	X	X	X	5	X	X	25-32	F	African American	No	>10K	Never Married
141	no			X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
142	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
143	no	X	X	X	8			25-32	F	Other	Yes	>10K	Married
144	no	X	X	X	9	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
145	no	X	X	X	4	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
146	no	X	X	X	7			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
147	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
148	no		X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
149	no	X	X	X	5	X		33-40	F	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
150	no	X	X	X	10			33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Divorced
151	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
152	no		X	X	4	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
153	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	70K-89,999	Married
154	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Other	No	10K-29,999	Married
155	no	X		X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
156	no			X	10	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
157	yes		X	X	8		X	25-32	F	Hispanic	Yes	>10K	Never Married
158	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	70K-89,999	Married
159	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
160	no	X	X	X	9	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
161	no	X		X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
162	no		X	X	10	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married

163	no	X	X	X	5			33-40	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
164	no	X	X	X	7	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
165	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
166	no	X	X	X	10	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
167	no	X	X		3	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
168	no	X	X	X	8			33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
169	no		X	X	6			40+	F	Other	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
170	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Hispanic	Yes	>10K	Married
171	no	X		X	5	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
172	no	X	X	X	2	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	70K-89,999	Married
173	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
174	yes		X	X	10		X	25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
175	no	X	X	X	4	X		33-40	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
176	no		X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
177	no	X	X	X	8			25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
178	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
179	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
180	no	X	X	X	5	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
181	yes	X	X	X	1		X	25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
182	no	X		X	10			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
183	no	X	X	X	7			33-40	F	Hispanic	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
184	no		X	X	3	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
185	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Hispanic	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
186	no	X	X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
187	no	X	X	X	9			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	70K-89,999	Divorced
188	yes	X	X	X	5	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
189	no	X	X	X	7			33-40	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married

190	no		X	X	8	X		33-40	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
191	no	X	X	X	9			33-40	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
192	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Other	No	10K-29,999	Married
193	yes	X	X	X	6	X	X	25-32	M	Hispanic	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
194	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Never Married
195	no	X		X	4	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
196	no	X	X	X	4	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
197	no	X	X	X	10	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
198	no	X	X	X	1			40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
199	yes	X	X	X	6	X	X	25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
200	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Hispanic	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
201	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	African American	No	10K-29,999	Married
202	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
203	no	X		X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
204	no	X	X	X	6			33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
205	no	X	X	X	10	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
206	no	X		X	9	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
207	no		X	X	7	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
208	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
209	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Never Married
210	no	X	X	X	9	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Never Married
211	no	X	X	X	6			25-32	F	Other	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
212	no		X	X	6	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	70K-89,999	Married
213	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
214	no	X	X		10	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
215	yes	X	X	X	7	X	X	33-40	M	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
216	no	X	X	X	6	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Divorced

217	no			X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
218	no	X	X		9	X		25-32	M	Hispanic	No	>10K	Never Married
219	no		X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
220	no	X	X	X	6	X		33-40	F	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
221	no	X	X	X	7			33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
222	no	X	X	X	8			25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
223	no	X	X	X	10	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
224	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
225	no	X	X	X	6			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
226	yes	X	X	X	8	X	X	25-32	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
227	no	X	X	X	1			33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Married
228	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
229	no	X	X	X	4	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
230	no	X	X		9	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	70K-89,999	Divorced
231	no	X	X	X	7	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
232	no	X	X	X	10	X		33-40	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
233	no	X		X	8			25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
234	no	X	X	X	9	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
235	no		X	X	9	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
236	yes	X	X	X	8		X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
237	no	X	X		8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
238	no	X	X	X	5	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
239	no	X	X	X	2	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	50K-69,999	Married
240	no	X	X	X	1			25-32	F	Hispanic	No	10K-29,999	Never Married
241	no	X	X	X	3	X		40+	F	African American	Yes	30K-49,999	Divorced
242	yes	X		X	10	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
243	no	X	X	X	8			33-40	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married

244	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Never Married
245	no	X	X	X	4	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
246	no	X	X	X	1			25-32	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
247	no	X	X	X	6	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
248	no	X	X	X	10			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
249	no	X	X	X	2	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
250	no		X	X	5	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
251	no	X	X	X	5	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
252	no	X			8	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
253	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	M	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Married
254	yes			X	8	X	X	40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
255	no	X	X		6	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
256	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Widow
257	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
258	no	X	X	X	9			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
259	no	X	X	X	10			25-32	F	Hispanic	Yes	>10K	Married
260	no	X	X	X	7	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	70K-89,999	Married
261	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Married
262	yes	X	X	X	6	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
263	no	X		X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
264	no	X	X	X	9	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
265	no	X	X	X	8	X		33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
266	no	X		X	2	X		40+	F	Other	No	10K-29,999	Married
267	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
268	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Widow
269	no			X	7			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
270	yes	X	X	X	1	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	Yes	50K-69,999	Divorced

271	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
272	no	X		X	4	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
273	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Hispanic	No	>10K	Never Married
274	no	X	X	X	4	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Widow
275	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
276	yes	X	X	X	10		X	33-40	M	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
277	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	30K-49,999	Divorced
278	no	X	X	X	9	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
279	no	X		X	4	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
280	no	X	X		5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
281	no	X	X	X	5	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
282	yes	X	X	X	9		X	25-32	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Divorced
283	no	X	X	X	4	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Widow
284	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
285	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
286	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
287	yes		X	X	9		X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
288	no	X		X	10	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	110K+	Married
289	no	X	X		8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
290	no	X	X	X	9	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
291	no	X	X	X	8			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
292	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Widow
293	no	X	X	X	10	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
294	no		X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
295	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
296	no	X		X	7			40+	F	African American	Yes	30K-49,999	Divorced
297	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
298	no	X	X	X	10	X		25-	F	Caucasian	No	10K-	Divorced

								32				29,999	
299	no	X	X	X	1			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
300	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
301	no	X	X	X	7	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
302	no	X	X		9			40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
303	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Never Married
304	no	X		X	10	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	No	>10K	Married
305	no		X	X	8			40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
306	no	X	X	X	6	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Widow
307	no	X		X	9	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
308	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
309	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	M	African American	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
310	yes	X	X	X	10	X	X	33-40	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
311	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	No	70K-89,999	Divorced
312	no	X	X	X	7	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
313	no	X	X	X	8	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married
314	no	X	X		5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	30K-49,999	Married
315	no	X	X	X	4	X		25-32	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
316	no	X		X	8	X		40+	F	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Divorced
317	no		X	X	9	X		40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	70K-89,999	Never Married
318	no	X	X	X	8	X		25-32	M	Caucasian	Yes	>10K	Married
319	no	X	X	X	5	X		40+	F	Caucasian	No	10K-29,999	Married
320	no	X		X	6			40+	M	Caucasian	Yes	10K-29,999	Married

Summary

Q 2	Did you enroll in ABAC 1000?	Yes -50 (15.6%)	No-270 (84.4%)	See narrative (291 responses)							
Q 3	What are the main areas in which you felt that you needed assistance as you prepared to begin college at ABAC?	See narrative (285 responses)									
Q 4	What topics do you think would be most beneficial for you as a nontraditional adult learner from an ABAC 1000 course	See narrative (305 responses)									
Q 5	Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being not prepared and ten being extremely prepared, how would you describe your	1-16 (5%)	2-2 (0.6%)	3-8 (2.5%)	4-17 (5.3%)	5-34 (10.6%)	6-51 (16%)	7-9 (2.8%)	8-101 (31.6%)	9-42 (13.1%)	10-40 (12.5%) See Narrative (217 responses)

	college preparation level as compared to the traditional student at ABAC?										
Q 6	If enrolled in an ABAC 1000 course, what topics were of least benefit to you as a student?	Responded- 50 (15.6%)	No Response- 270 (84.4%)	See Narrative (50 responses)							
Q 7	Age	17-24: 0 (0%)	25-32: 113 (35.1%)	33-40: 60 (18.9%)	40+: 147 (45.9%)						
Q 7	Ethnicity	African American: 25 (7.9%)	Caucasian: 275 (85.9%)	Hispanic: 11 (3.4%)	Native American/ Native Alaskan: 0 (0%)	Other: 9 (2.8%)					
Q 7	Demographics	Male: 104 (32.4%)	Female: 216 (67.6%)								
Q 7	First Generation	Yes: 151 (47.1%)	No: 169 (52.9%)								
Q 7	Individual Income	>10K: 95 (29.7%)	10K-29,999: 154 (48.1%)	30K-49,999: 35 (10.8%)	50K-69,999: 26 (8.1%)	70K-89,999: 9 (2.8%)	90K-109,999: 0 (0%)	110K+: 1 (0.3%)			
Q 7	Marital Status	Married: 213 (66.7%)	Widowed: 6 (2.0%)	Divorced: 57 (17.6%)	Never Married: 44 (13.7%)						

Details

Question Two:

Yes

1. It was required.
5. ---
15. my advisor recommended it
15. was looking for help in college.
22. ---
29. ---
31. Because it was recommended by my advisor and was a very helpful course.
32. ---
39. I was looking for help starting college
45. required freshman year
46. It was mandatory at the time
50. It was mandatory.
51. I initially enrolled simply because it was required of my attendance at ABAC.
52. I enrolled because I needed one more credit to be a full time student
65. ---
73. It was mandatory at the time.
79. I NEEDED THE COURSE HOURS TO BE CONSIDERED A FUULTIME STUDENT.
85. I was told it was mandatory
91. Is this the orientation? I may have had it in '89 but, after that many years, a few things have changed but I figured it out.
- 96 It was required when I began ABAC
101. required course
105. it seemed like a good idea
106. required
109. needed another hour
112. mandatory
115. recommended by advisor
118. mandatory
121. ---
124. It was recommended by another student/friend
127. I needed it to be a full time student
130. I liked the course description
133. It was mandatory
139. a friend was taking the course
140. It was recommended by my advisor
157. ---
174. ---

- 181. mandatory
- 188. required class
- 193. No clue what I was doing at the time
- 199. I needed help coming back to college
- 215. required course
- 226. My advisor signed me up for it
- 236. I needed it
- 242. It was a mandatory course
- 254. ---
- 262. it was a filler course
- 270. mandatory
- 276. don't know why
- 282. required course
- 287. ---
- 310. my advisor told me I needed it

No

- 2. I don't think it was required for me.
- 3. Didn't know what it was / was not advised to take it
- 4. what is ABAC 1000?
- 6. I only have time to take the classes that my advisor tells me that I need
- 7. I didn't need it
- 8. It did not seem like something that I would need as it was not a required class
- 9. I felt that I didn't need it and my schedule was tight
- 10. N/A
- 11. I was a readmit from 1992 and was told I did not have to take this course.
- 12. Did not know about it.
- 13. I am a nontraditional student who didn't feel that the services offered in ABAC 1000 would benefit me in any way.
- 14. Because I did not need the course...
- 16. as a nontraditional student I did not think that it would have beneficial information for me. I already graduated technical school and know about study habits, time management, etc.
- 17. no extra time
- 18. I did not know about it
- 19. I don't know what that means
- 20. nontraditional student, work schedule, what is ABAC 1000?
- 21. I am not a freshman student. I am a returning student.
- 23. I was completing course work for the RN bridge program, unaware of ABAC 1000
- 24. Never hears of it
- 25. What is it?

26. Didn't need it
27. Didn't want to take the class.
28. Had received associates degree from another college and was told I exempt ABAC 1000 because I am married with 2 kids.
30. Because I didn't have too
33. I already earned a bachelor's degree from another university, so I wouldn't take freshmen orientation class
34. It was not offered at the Moultrie Campus during my first few semesters at a time that I could take it (due to my working two jobs at the time).
35. I have not heard of ABAC 1000
36. I was never told about the course when I enrolled at ABAC... there was no mention of it at all.
37. I didn't enroll because I knew I didn't need it. It would have been a waste of my time.
38. Not required b/c I have a BA
40. I felt that the majority of topics covered by ABAC 1000 would not be helpful to me.
41. Having a limited budget, I also felt that spending tuition money on an ABAC 1000 course would be wasteful.
42. I did not enroll, because I took it previously when I completed my associate degree.
43. I am a return student and I have already taken the class
44. Did not feel like I needed too.
47. I am not sure what that is. I went straight to the RN bridge program
48. was not aware of an ABAC 1000 course
49. I work and didn't feel I had the time. I am a returning student.
53. I was not aware of this class.
54. I have already taken the class in Fall 2009
55. Plan to next semester
56. Apparently I did not need it...I believe I have met this requirement at GMC.
57. Did not enroll because I felt I could navigate the intricacies of student live on my own.
58. Already took this course when I was a freshman.
59. I had taken a class similar to that before.
60. no need
61. I transferred to ABAC from VSU.
62. I felt that it was not needed and that it would only hinder me in managing my time.
- 63 I already completed an orientation class at a previous school
64. I wasn't sure if it was required for older non-traditional students. I also do not know if it is required for graduation.
66. I felt I did not need to since I came from another college. Plus I did not know if this was for me or for only the ones fresh out of high school.

67. I don't know what ABAC 1000 is. Apparently it's not something I was required to have and that's why I didn't enroll in it.
68. wasn't really aware of it
69. I did not know about it. My advisor selected the classes I signed up for.
70. Did not need another class
71. I do not know what ABAC 1000 is.
72. Was not offered at the time that I could take it.
74. Didn't seem necessary.
75. Never heard of it.
76. conflicted with other course times
77. What is ABAC 1000?
78. I didn't need it
80. no need
81. what is ABAC 1000?
82. my schedule was already full
83. It was not required
84. I did not think that I would need it
86. what is that course?
87. no one told me to take it
88. my advisor recommended against it
89. I was paying out of pocket and I did not have the money for an extra course
90. transfer student
92. not required
- 93 what is ABAC 1000
94. ABAC 1000?
95. NA
97. no time
98. The course did not work into my schedule
99. Did not know about the course
100. not required
102. do I need to take it?
103. I didn't enroll because I knew I didn't need it. It would have been a waste of my time.
104. I do not know what ABAC 1000 is
107. I have never heard of ABAC 1000 and do not know what it is
108. I enrolled in honor seminar
110. did not need the class
111. I thought it would be a waste of time
113. someone told me not to take it
114. I did not need it
116. I transferred from a school out of state and did not need it
117. no time

119. no need for course
120. It did not fit in my schedule
122. my advisor did not suggest the course
123. n/a
125. I didn't have to
126. not mandatory
128. what is it?
129. it was a filler course and I did not need it
131. I already took a similar course at another college
132. my advisor told me not to
134. not required
135. optional and I opted not to
136. what?
137. did not need the class
138. a friend told me about the course and I didn't think it would help me
141. ---
142. not mandatory
143. I did not need the class
144. NA
145. never got around to it
146. transferred in
147. I already know how to be a college student; this is my second time at college
148. ---
149. not required
150. wasn't mandatory
151. advisor did not sign me up for the class
152. ---
153. I didn't need the class
154. no extra time
155. did not need it
156. ---
158. what is ABAC 1000?
159. It was not a mandatory class.
160. I did not have the time to waste on a common sense class.
161. Advisor told me that I did not need it
162. ---
163. not required course
164. NA
165. I owned my own business; I thought I could figure out ABAC on my own
166. no need for the class
167. It was not mandatory
168. not required

169. ---
170. My advisor told me I did not need it
171. I took a similar class at another school
172. What is ABAC 1000?
173. n/a
175. It did not fit into the times that I had in my schedule.
176. ---
177. I didn't need the course
178. It was not required
179. No time
180. optional
182. I only had time to take classes that I needed
183. It was a waste of time.
184. ---
185. I didn't need it
186. not a required course
187. It didn't fit
189. N/A
190. ---
191. what is ABAC 1000?
192. I did not need it
194. My advisor did not recommend the class
195. I dropped the class during drop add when I found out I didn't need the class
196. I already had enough hours
197. it was not required at the time
198. I was a transfer student
200. didn't need it
201. a professor told me not to take it
202. I did not like the professor that was teaching at the time I had free
203. what is that?
204. not required
205. I already had an associate's degree
206. not required
207. ---
208. not needed
209. ABAC 1000?
210. My advisor told me not to take it.
211. I could not take it at the time it was offer on ABAC on the Square in Moultrie
212. ---
213. n/a
214. I thought it would not be useful
216. I didn't need it'

217. ---
218. I did not have time to take another class
219. ---
220. what is it?
221. N/a
222. I have a full time job and a family and it seem useful from what I heard and saw about it.
223. why, was I supposed to?
224. my advisor said no
225. I just didn't take it
227. I already have a college degree
228. what is ABAC 1000?
229. No one told me about ABAC 1000?
230. I did not need it for my degree.
231. I was exempt.
232. Never heard of it
233. no extra time
234. I did not see the need for me to take it
235. ---
237. n/a
238. did not need it
239. waste of time for me
240. I transferred from another college.
241. I took it at Macon State
243. ABAC 1000?
244. I did not need it
245. It was not mandatory when I started
246. I didn't need another class
247. my advisor recommended that I didn't need that class
248. what is ABAC 1000?
249. I have never heard of that class.
250. ---
251. No free time
252. I am busy and mainly go to class at night
253. I didn't need the class
255. I already knew everything that they were going to talk about
256. it wasn't required
257. no time
258. not interested in the class
259. My advisor didn't sign me up for that class
260. I only needed my agriculture classes when I transferred to ABAC
261. 3 kids and no time

263. not required
264. It wasn't mandatory for me?
265. what is ABAC 1000?
266. N/A
267. didn't need the class
268. no time
269. ---
271. It wasn't required for me, I think
272. not mandatory
273. waste of time
274. I already took a similar class
275. My schedule is mapped out to the hour
277. no need for the class
278. They did not offer the class when I had free time
279. required class at the time
280. no time
281. My advisor told me not to
283. not required when I was a freshman
284. Not a good fit for my schedule
285. What is ABAC 1000?
286. I didn't need it
288. I transferred in and I was told that I didn't need to take the course
289. n/a
290. not required
291. What is it?
292. My advisor said not to take the class
293. no time to take it
294. ---
295. It didn't fit in my free time
296. not a required class
297. what is ABAC 1000?
298. I didn't need the class
299. My advisor said not to take it
300. I took it at GSW
301. NA
302. ---
303. I did not need another class
304. It wasn't required when I was a freshman
305. ---
306. I didn't need ABAC 1000
307. My advisor said no
308. what is ABAC 1000?

- 309. I did not need the class
- 311. There was no time in my schedule.
- 312. My advisor advised me not to
- 313. I have never heard of the class
- 314. My advisor said I didn't need it
- 315. N/A
- 316. It did not fit into my class schedule
- 317. ---
- 318. I didn't need it
- 319. My advisor said not to take ABAC 1000
- 320. what is ABAC 1000?

Question Three

- 1. Because it has not been very long since I attended college in the past, I felt I was very prepared in all areas.
- 2. Time management
- 3. Math
- 4. Not sure
- 5. knowing what to do in the area/ where to go for things (food, auto service, doctors)
- 6. Before everything was paper and people. The financial aid was a little tricky to begin with.
- 7. My family to support my decision, they did!
- 8. financial aid requirements for nontraditional students
- 9. I needed advisement about what to take, and when.
- 10. Getting enrolled was the biggest problem.
- 11. ---
- 12. The ins and outs of all the programs here on campus
- 13. financial aid
- 14. Financial Aid
- 15. Scheduling
- 16. None
- 17. studying and time management
- 18. ---
- 19. I needed guidance on how things were done at ABAC
- 20. financial aid
- 21. financial aid
- 22. advisement!!
- 23. ---
- 24. Financial Aid
- 25. Financial aid, any learning support classes and knowledge of the classes required in my chosen degree (maybe a checklist of classes would have been very helpful).

26. n/a
27. scheduling around work
28. Academic Advisement Financial Aide Opportunities
29. Financial aid
30. The financial aid, what exact meal plans were for the commuter, and what was available to me for my own needs.
31. Looking at my whole major and the classes required for that and making sure I could take them and still work.
32. classes and determining my what my GPA would be for ABAC
33. a tour of the campus, a tour of the library.
34. Math, English
35. I was deeply disappointed about how the Office of Admissions did not accurately communicate with me. Depending on who I spoke with in the office, I got different answers to the same questions, such as needing to pay the registration fees. My record was not updated correctly, so on orientation day I spent more than 45 minutes in line to pay a fee that I wasn't required to pay and had been informed about by the Office of Admissions. A counselor specifically assigned to nontraditional students would be helpful, especially because our financial aid status and transcript status are treated differently. This person would be our one point of contact and lessen any confusion.
36. To understand the whole enrollment process and the credits required to graduate.
37. Getting information before hand. We had orientation and registration 2 days before class started. It was over whelming to get everything together in time.
38. None
39. none more so than anyone else...
40. financial aid
41. Study recommendations.
42. How to use my ID card for the different things on campus like printing and so forth
43. Just having the same group of students around helped me feel at ease during my first semester, I got to know and feel comfortable with them.
44. ---
45. It would have been helpful to have someone explain just how things are done at ABAC.(Registering for classes, getting your books, etc)
46. I didn't feel this was necessary being that I've been to college before.
47. I needed help in math; it had been so since I took algebra, I was rusty on those skills. I had no idea where to turn to for help.
48. nothing
49. math and writing
50. ---
51. I feel prepared
52. technology and math
53. I was lost when it came to all of the paperwork that needed to be done in college. All of the regulations and the different course catalogs confused me.

54. I really did not need assistance
55. registration for classes
56. Financial Aid Enrollment
57. Financial Aid and class scheduling to insure Graduation in a certain time period.
58. I think overall that the assistance provided before entering college was mediocre to say the least. I believe more time should have been spent with advisor discussing class schedules and/or hour limits pertaining to each degree.
59. Study habits and switching my brain back into learning mode.
60. What services were available to me, and where I could access those services?
61. financial assistance was the main thing. as an independent student I didn't have help from parents.
62. algebra
63. math
64. studying and technology
65. To understand that you will basically have to be your own advisor. The advisors do not do a good job at detailing what you need or the fact that most classes will be full.
66. studying/time management
67. financial aid
68. leadership and confidence building
69. No areas.
70. math
71. None
72. ---
73. nothing everything was great
74. I found that I needed to learn to use my time more wisely for studying and preparing for test with my free time at school and any spare time between job and children.
75. financial aid paperwork
76. None
77. Money and money
78. how to study and time management, fear of failure, stress
79. Financial Aid and What classes to take?
80. With the paperwork and what classes were best to take together
81. Math
82. The help of what classes to take
83. I'm not completely sure if this is asking from the enrollment side or academic side. I think I needed most assistance with getting financial aid, Banner, and WebCt.
84. I had been away from college for 5 years and have gotten married and had 2 kids since then, so time management was my biggest issue.
85. NONE
86. Learning new ways to study and feeling it was ok as an older student to go to the learning center

87. I would've liked more communication as to what facilities the school has, where they are, what hours they're open, etc.
88. I had been out of school for some time and needed some direction as to what I needed to take and what was required of me as a student.
89. study habits, someone to let me know what that first day was going to be like. that could get overwhelming pretty quick
90. Financial Aid. When you are out of school for so ,many years, everything changes, including the fact that HOPE does not kick in until you complete so many hours(possibly 32)
91. It would benefit adult students if it were geared towards managing work and studying.
92. After having graduated from college ten years ago, & now returning, I forgot a lot of my algebra. Even though I had successfully passed college algebra class years ago, it was not recognized as ABAC's college algebra course which put me having to re-take the course. However, I really needed learning support again as I just forgot algebra because it's not something you use every day. The Pell Grant would not pay for me to take learning support because according to my transcripts I did not need it... but I KNEW I did. It put me attempting the college algebra class at ABAC twice only to drop the course within the first couple weeks because I was struggling so badly. Tutoring was not enough... I really needed to GO BACK & refresh my memory with learning support which I could not do.
93. I didn't really feel like I needed any assistance.
94. Navigating the campus, how to use my ABAC card to print, and applying for ABAC Scholarships
95. The same issue I had with studying when I first enrolled in a college fresh out of high school plague me now - how to focus, how to find time to study, the best way to study certain topics. Note taking would have also been beneficial - when an instructor uses a PowerPoint to supplement his lectures, how do you choose the most important parts of what is on the screen and what he is saying to write down?
96. ---
97. I needed help with picking a major and how to find a job after college.
98. I didn't really feel like I needed any assistance.
99. What courses I would need, how to get credits to transfer, how to get financial aid.
100. Financial Aid. When you are out of school for so ,many years, everything changes, including the fact that HOPE does not kick in until you complete so many hours(possibly 32)
101. Being a transfer student, needed help with determining what classes to take and what would be covered by transfers.
102. I needed and sought personal advising regarding the classes I needed to take and to understand which courses from my previous education had transferred.

103. I was upset by the lack of attention I received from the Administration and Enrollment Services Offices. My records were not updated online, which caused much confusion on orientation day. Additionally, I was told repeatedly on orientation day that I didn't need to attend. Instead, I had to run from department office to department office to register for classes. ABAC needs to evaluate how they handle nontraditional students and make sure that each nontraditional student receives accurate information. Clear and accurate communication will lessen the frustration and benefit the initial impression of the school.
104. If nontraditional students do not have to attend orientation, ABAC should make available to those students materials outlining the resources and procedures of the school. It is important to remember that each nontraditional student is different, and the intake process should be as individualized as possible.
105. living with others,
106. I needed help navigating all of the paperwork to get registered and into classes on the first day
107. financial aid process was long and confusing
108. which course would transfer and which would not
109. I had no idea where to start
110. none
111. I needed help in math, it had been ten years since I took an algebra course
112. When I got to ABAC I had no idea who to go to talk to with questions, I did not know who my advisor was since I did not see him during orientation
113. ---
114. Financial aid expected us to be able to navigate through their process, but I need help and they did not have time to help me
115. I needed support from family and coworkers
116. math
117. It took me two weeks to get adjusted to ABAC. All of the traditional students had a welcome week, but I did not have time to come out and then I just got lost in the confusion.
118. I had no idea how to take notes, the professor was talking about so much and I didn't have time to write it all down.

119. I didn't feel like I needed any help with anything.
120. ---
121. college algebra
122. I needed someone to walk me through the orientation process, some people were helpful, but others just seemed too busy to help.
123. n/a
124. I needed assistance with math.
125. financial aid seemed foreign to me
126. The offices were never open when I had time to stop by and when I did take time off to come out to ABAC, the lines were so long with the students fresh out of high school that I never was able to get all of my questions answered. I wish there was someone that we could have gone to for help.
127. technology was a big issue for me. I barely use email and then WebCt gets thrown at me, I had no idea.
128. foreign language
129. I needed help with the mountain of paperwork for financial aid and getting everything paid for at college.
130. I had no idea what to expect when I got to ABAC, I wish there had been someone to walk me through the process before I got too involved.
131. I needed help managing my time between ABAC, work and my two children at home.
132. I did not need any assistance
133. I was not ready for the papers I needed to write
134. math
135. Financial aid was a blur
136. ---
137. Orientation was a waste of time, they did not answer the questions that I had, and everything was geared for the high school students there.

138. I needed help just getting into ABAC
139. I had no idea what to expect from my classes
140. I had time management and organization down since this was my second time going to college, but everything seems more complicated now. There is more paperwork that needs to be done and everything is done on a computer.
141. ---
142. college algebra
143. nothing
144. I was placed in learning support math, but I needed more support to help me get through, It had been years since I used that type of math
145. enrollment services was a maze that I needed help with.
146. I needed someone to walk me through the financial aid process.
147. I thought financial aid would just take care of everything, I didn't realize there were some many hoops to jump through.
148. I needed to spend more time with my advisor than they were able to give.
149. I was ready for college
150. The enrollment service office was confusing and things seemed to keep getting lost.
151. Everyone helped me some much when I started, I was very grateful.
152. n/a
153. I needed someone that had an idea of what I was going through to help me get through it.
154. I needed help with financial aid
155. ---
156. ---
157. I got lost in the orientation process
158. I wish that my advisor knew a little more about adult students and their challenges.
159. nothing

160. financial aid
161. ---
162. getting through all of the paperwork
163. I needed help managing all of my responsibilities.
164. The enrollment services office was a great help, but financial aid seemed to take forever to wade through.
165. I had no idea that financial aid would not pay for everything.
166. I did not know what WebCt was, much less how to use it.
167. I would have liked to see someone at orientation that was dedicated to answering the questions of adult students.
168. paperwork
169. n/a
170. I needed help figuring out all of the required classes that I would need to take without wasting any time.
171. ---
172. I needed more time with my advisor.
173. enrollment services and financial aid.
174. I would have liked someone to continue helping me after I started classes. Everyone was very help when getting me into school, but after that I had no idea who to go to.
175. I lived on campus as an adult student, I wish that they had some housing set aside just for students my own age.
176. I needed help with all of the paperwork that was required.
177. My math skills were very rusty.
178. I was glad that ABAC 1000 was there, it helped me through thing that I did not even know I needed.
179. I needed help with my study skills, everything that I studied did not seem to be on the test.

180. I came back to school to be a nurse, no one told me how expensive the books were going to be.
181. admission process
182. ---
183. math
184. I needed help with all of the paperwork
185. the admissions process was confusing to me
186. college algebra
187. I had no idea what to expect from college
188. I wish there was someone assigned to adult students to help answer all of our specific questions.
189. I did not need any help.
190. I needed to see my advisor sooner than the end of the first semester.
191. I did not know what to expect.
192. I needed guidance through all of the required paperwork.
193. financial aid
194. nothing
195. ---
196. The admissions process was confusing to me.
197. I had no idea how to use all of the required computer programs for my classes.
198. I thought the PELL grant and HOPE was automatic, it wasn't.
199. I needed someone to answer more of my questions at orientation rather than just get me registered and tell me to come back for welcome week. I did not have time to come back for welcome week.
200. n/a
201. math
202. financial aid and other paperwork

203. ---
204. I wanted someone to sit down and talk to; I was tired of getting directed to a computer and a phone menu.
205. college algebra.
206. ---
207. It has been year since I cited anything, I knew I could write, but I was afraid it would not be like my teachers wanted.
208. nothing
209. I needed someone to walk me through all of the processes required to get through admissions.
210. I was just frightened that I had been out of school too long.
211. I needed someone to talk to that understood what I was going through as an adult student.
212. math
213. I had no idea what to expect
214. I was prepared
215. It had been seven years since I took math and I wasn't that good in it then.
216. I needed help with all of the paperwork.
217. ---
218. I did not know all of the regulations about financial aid, which would have been nice to know at the beginning.
219. I did not know what my teachers would expect.
220. I needed help to mange my time between family and school.
221. I needed a lot of help with college algebra.
222. I was nervous about taking science classes again.
223. I did not have a good experience the first time I started college twelve years ago and I was nervous about the process this time. Things were a little better, but they still did not take the time that I needed to get my questions answered.

224. I needed help with note taking
225. n/a
226. financial aid
227. I needed help with study skills
228. I just felt like I was rusty with everything
229. I needed advisement assistance.
230. The whole process of becoming a college student at ABAC
231. registering for classes and figuring out which classes I really needed
232. time management and study skills
233. ---
234. I needed a lot of help
235. math and science assistance
236. It would have been nice to have a dedicated contact for adult students.
237. I spent a lot of time in financial aid; there must be a more efficient way to get through this process.
238. I just had no idea what to expect.
239. I needed someone to talk with that knew what I was going through.
240. I needed help and I got it from a very helpful admissions staff.
241. I needed help in science and writing.
242. ---
243. I needed advising help
244. math
245. all of the computer programs we were going to be required to use
246. I needed help with testing.
247. financial aid

248. I would have liked someone to walk me through the entire process.
249. enrollment services
250. I did not know how to find my advisor or who to go to get my questions answered
251. algebra
252. ---
253. schedules
254. ---
255. I had no ideas which courses would transfer from the last time I was in college and I did not know who to ask.
256. I was not comfortable getting all of my information on a computer, I wanted to talk to someone
257. I was afraid of biology
258. computers
259. I did not even know that I had an email address, much less that I needed to be checking it
260. math
261. financial aid
262. I was lost with all of the paperwork that needed to be done
263. ---
264. choosing the right classes
265. time management with everything that I have going on at work, home, and college
266. ---
267. scheduling
268. math
269. ---
270. financial aid and admissions

- 271. picking the right classes
- 272. ---
- 273. test anxiety and study habits
- 274. enrollment services and just becoming a college student
- 275. paperwork and red tape
- 276. college algebra
- 277. financial aid
- 278. study tips
- 279. ---
- 280. admissions
- 281. I needed help getting through the whole orientation process. Things were too confusing for me.
- 282. I was prepared
- 283. I needed help finding scholarships
- 284. n/a
- 285. I needed help in the application process.
- 286. math and science
- 287. college algebra
- 288. ---
- 289. financial aid
- 290. I was afraid that I would not be ready for college, but the admissions and financial aid staff were very helpful. Unfortunately, that help started to dwindle after I started classes.
- 291. I needed help with math and I still do.
- 292. I have no idea what to expect, but I am feeling my way through.
- 293. The paperwork

294. financial aid
295. The admissions process was confusing.
296. ---
297. Time management
298. I have always had test anxiety and I needed help with this.
299. choosing the correct classes
300. scheduling
301. NA
302. I needed help with the financial aid process. Not only was the process confusing, but all of the regulations were also confusing.
303. college algebra and science
304. ---
305. nothing
306. I needed help with the admissions process.
307. ---
308. college algebra
309. I needed help making it through the financial aid process.
310. scheduling
311. time management
312. I needed help finding all of the right courses to get me prepared for the nursing program on time.
313. I didn't know what to expect from college.
314. I was prepared for college already and I did not need any additional help.
315. college algebra
316. ---
317. I am scared to death of taking a science class.

318. I had a bad experience with the whole admission process. I wish someone would spend more time helping us.

319. financial aid

320. ---

Question Four

1. Navigating the campus and how to use the resources available
2. career goals, program length, requirements
3. Not sure
4. none
5. Younger students are fresh out of high school, as an older student, I felt lost when it came to math and navigating all of the policy on campus.
6. .
7. translating every day skills into something the professors expect
8. how to manage so many outside obligations
9. refresher courses, study skills, how to get the resources that a nontraditional student needs as many resources seem to be geared for the younger student
10. How to get the most out of college as an older student. What are the resources that are available to a student like me?
11. how to deal with teenage roommates
12. N/A
13. When and how often they should fill out FASA
14. see above
15. The hour limit to each major became an issue in the summer semester. I had taken classes not necessary to my degree but was never told about the hourly limit.
16. A practice faux Web CT course would help familiarize adult students with the new style of learning.
17. Balancing school work, home life, kids, etc.
18. financial aid, scholarship information, balancing family life and student life, information about tutoring
19. how to study math
20. refresher course on rusty academic skills
21. using technology such as math lab
22. Don't know
23. n/a in most cases; I believe this class is better suited for right out of high school students that need help adjusting to college. Maybe computer skills could help an adult learner.
24. financial aid
25. fitting in and refreshing in subjects it's been a while in
26. none
27. I do not believe that nontraditional students should have to take this course.

28. Not sure what the course is.
29. Didn't take course
30. I think simple topics as to how to navigate properly through financial avenues, study time, how to speak to instructors and how to understand a potential class better before signing up for a class (in order to know if I'm prepared for that class) would be the most beneficial. Many non-traditional students like me are much uninformed as to how the newer process works.
31. did not take course
32. Do not know, did not take ABAC 1000
33. I wish I had known about Darton's online curriculum.
34. how to do research on a college level and what to expect as I enter into the nursing program
35. Required Classes
36. good study habits
37. How to best manage time between work, family, and school.
38. I did not take the class
39. I think anything on how to use the online programs and networks such as Banner, WebCt, eStallion, etc. would have been beneficial.
40. More information about where to find help and what services are available to adult students.
41. NONE
42. Not sure
43. ---
44. ---
45. it seems like it's marketed towards 18 yr olds and I don't think you can ever make that appealing to people over the age of 25
46. ****How to use a Scientific Calculator ;) ***** I think also a class that would encourage skills to balance both work and class work.
47. did not take ABAC 1000 was not required
48. Financial AID. Maybe a class on the differences between being a nontraditional student and being a traditional student. A refresher class on studying and note taking (It has been a long time).
49. How to manage your time with work
50. I think that first of all, it should be very clearly made known that it exists to non-traditional students. Second of all, it should include tips about balancing school with raising children, working, etc.
51. How to do good research
52. navigating the campus, printing using my ABAC card, and scholarships.
53. As a non-traditional student with a career and a family, topics focusing on juggling the different aspects of an adult's life, but also being able to have some of that college student experience with regards to participating in events and clubs on campus would be most beneficial.
54. N/A
55. Time management skills.

56. Don't really see the need. As a nontraditional I have to balance a work and school schedule. Adding to one subtracts from the other.
57. Did not take ABAC 1000
58. knowing what to do in the area/ where to go for things (food, auto service, doctors.....) anything any adult needs to know when moving to a new area. Personally, I didn't look at my move here like I would have if I planned on "living" here. I came to Tifton for one reason; education. I lacked the Information that I would have normally looked into.
59. Financial aid options
60. N/A
61. I don't think an orientation course is a good idea for a nontraditional student.
62. Financial aid, other resources offered at ABAC, such as tutoring.
63. The enrollment, student aid, and student loan processes.
64. The availability of people trying to help you no matter the situation.
65. Financial aid
66. Financial Aid, Learning Support
67. Not sure....
68. Not sure
69. We did a book report...from what I remember; we didn't do a lot back then.
70. Exactly what is available to them even though they don't live on campus?
71. don't know what the ABAC 1000 is.
72. NA
73. class hours required for chosen degree
74. Career development
75. n/a
76. Degree information.
77. time maintenance
78. Financial Aide opportunities
79. study techniques, time management, and how to balance family life
80. I am not sure.
81. I do not know.
82. ---
83. not sure
84. the tour of campus, to know where certain recourses are located.
85. N/A
86. I do not know what ABAC 1000 is and cannot comment.
87. Most nontraditional need more computer skills. I believe that I am one of several exceptions to this need since I have worked on computers for years. A lot of my classmates have been lost though when it comes to using a computer. The first class that all adult students should be required to take, should be a computer literacy class.
88. How to cope with a campus and system still set-up for traditional learners.
89. I have no idea.

90. I'm not sure... I haven't attended ABAC 1000
91. not sure
92. N/A
93. How to do good research
94. How to get financial aid to pay for the extremely high costs of college and especially the books you have to pay extremely high prices for. Need to set up a program so NTs can let other NTs use their books for a small fee instead of having to pay the loan shark price at the school book store
95. Financial AID.
96. Maybe a class on the differences between being a nontraditional student and being a traditional student.
97. A refresher class on studying and note taking (It has been a long time).
98. Again, I do not know what an ABAC 1000 course is, and, therefore, cannot appropriately answer this question.
99. How to get around the college and the town, what is there to offer, what are the resources?
100. how to use WebCt and other technologies
101. how to fill out all of the forms
102. I don't know, I am not familiar with the course
103. I would like some information on how to plan my schedule appropriately, I want to schedule farther in advance than one semester.
104. I would like a refresher course.
105. College is not the same as I remember it; I would like to know the differences.
106. I want to know how to deal with teachers that are my same age or younger
107. I know how to use the library, but people keep telling me there are so many more resources online and I do not know all about them.
108. I need some information on financial aid.
109. I think someone needs to instruct the older students on what resources are available and where to find them.
110. Working with younger student s for group projects
111. I need a refresher on study skills
112. adjusting to college
113. Managing time between school and family.
114. I need to know how to study for math classes; it has been too many years.
115. study and note taking skills
116. financial aid
117. I am not sure what the class is about
118. tutoring
119. ---

120. I would like to know where everything was at
121. how to use math lab
122. The course should focus on expectations of nontraditional students and expectation that professors have on nontraditional students
123. how to balance family and college
124. study tips
125. how to figure GPA and register for classes
126. financial aid
127. all of the required paperwork and deadlines
128. don't think it should be required
129. I have always needed help with test anxiety, how can I go about getting this help.
130. Working with teenagers in classes
131. I need someone to go to when I have questions; most offices are closed when I take classes at night.
132. financial aid
133. the enrollment and registration process
134. balancing my time
135. I need a support network
136. I want to know more about online classes and how to take them
137. I would like a course designed for older students.
138. I don't need to know about goal setting and self-esteem. I need help with time commitments and using technology that doesn't come as second nature to me.
139. I want help with advising and registering for classes
140. did not take ABAC 1000
141. financial aid
142. Where to go to get the help that I need.
143. I don't know
144. I would need help with enrollment services
145. NA
146. not sure
147. I wouldn't know without taking the course
148. I need help with math and other skills that I am rusty with.
149. I don't really know
150. It would be nice to learn about all of the resources that are available to adult students and the resources specifically for adult students if there are any.
151. I am not sure
152. I want to get involved outside of class, but I do not have the time that other students have, how do I still get involved.
153. no clue
154. I need to know how to select my classes ahead of time
155. NA
156. I haven't taken the class

157. We need information on financial aid.
158. N/A
159. I do not know
160. I need help with my math and science classes.
161. technology
162. scholarships and other ways to pay for college
163. I am not sure
164. I want to learn how to save money in college, especially for book.
165. What professors expect from students
166. don't know
167. ---
168. I need someone to take some time to discuss the specific requirements of financial aid; they require paperwork, and the deadlines for the paperwork.
169. what is ABAC 1000
170. I am spending a lot of time and money on college; I want someone to make sure that I am getting a return on my investment.
171. I need advising assistance
172. Did not have to take that class, so I am not sure
173. what is ABAC 1000
174. financial aid
175. banner and advising
176. I would like someone to go over all of the computer information
177. I don't have an opinion on this
178. I do not know
179. Time management and study skills could be helpful.
180. I need to know the new rules about HOPE.
181. financial aid and scholarships
182. I want to hear stories of how other nontraditional students made it through the class.
183. -----
184. not sure
185. I need to talk with someone about attendance policies, if my children are sick, sometimes I just can't come to school
186. I was a construction worker for years and now I am going back to school to be a nurse, math and science refreshers would be good.
187. n/a
188. I think a discussion on what teacher are looking for would help adult students
189. how to control the costs of college
190. I have no idea about everything I am supposed to use my student ID for, that would be helpful
191. Planning for classes
192. WebCt, it is confusing

193. I need help with all of the financial aid policies.na
194. whatever has been taught
195. specifics
196. Organization, specifically for nontraditional students and their commitments
197. I wish there was a way for us to communicate with other nontraditional students
198. I left my husband and now I am on my own, I need help finding the resources that are available when I am on campus.
199. scholarships and financial aid would be nice
200. time management, how to sign up for classes
201. I need to know about note taking and test taking
202. how to relate to teachers younger than myself
203. transcripts and resume building
204. I would like to know about learning types, because the way that I am learning is not necessarily working now
205. transcripts
206. I need help with study tips
207. How to get through the financial aid process
208. advising and registration
209. I would like to meet other nontraditional students
210. enrollment services and the lawful presence thing
211. I need help using WebCt and taking other online courses. I would like to do more online if I could figure out exactly how it worked.
212. learning about GPA and how that all works
213. technology
214. ---
215. financial aid and all of it requirements
216. time management
217. getting involved as a nontraditional student
218. ---
219. organization and time management
220. I think study skills would be good
221. We would like help learning how to successfully adapt to the expectations of college
222. no recommendation
223. GPA and other policies
224. working with computers and the specific programs that ABAC uses
225. expectation
226. I would like help with those skills that have gotten rusty since I have been out of class for a while
227. I need to know expectation of the nursing program so I can be
228. I want to know more about the grading and GPA policy
229. technology and things like MathLab

230. ---
231. how to find cheaper books
232. I want to know how other adult students and parents manage the time commitments that come with being both a student and a parent.
233. computers
234. not sure
235. I think more time should be spent on how to transition to being a college student from being a full-time employee
236. time management
237. ---
238. study techniques
239. I need help with math and reading
240. I think it would be beneficial to meet with other adult students
241. It would be good to sit down and discuss all of the financial aid requirements and deadlines.
242. The course should teach adult students what they need to know to fit in on a college campus
243. how to meet professors' expectations
244. Writing in APA format
245. I want to be able to use the experience that I have to be successful and I would like a course that helps with that.
246. I need help with all of the programs that professors make us use on campus.
247. I have gone through orientation and registered for class, now what do I do to map out all of my other classes.
248. Things seem to be designed for teenagers, I am not a teenager and I want something that takes my age and experience in account.
249. I need to learn about how to read and study for college level classes.
250. I definitely would like a refresher on math skills.
251. setting goals in college
252. ---
253. Career planning and resume development, I haven't done a resume in many, many years.
254. I don't know what to expect from college and it would be nice for someone to sit down and let me know what to expect.
255. ---
256. I have no suggestions
257. we need help with financial aid
258. I need assistance with science
259. transitioning
260. Some time needs to be spent on the entire computer things that we need to use as college students.
261. transcripts
262. I am not sure adult students need to take ABAC 1000

263. I think each adult student should be allowed to give input into what is offered in each ABAC 1000 course.
264. We need information on how to be successful in whatever major we choose.
265. I want to know how to best market my degree once I graduate from ABAC.
266. I need help with becoming a college student and what is expected of me.
267. reading and taking notes to be successful in a college course
268. banner and My ABAC
269. how to pay for college
270. filling out all of the forms
271. FAFSA
272. finding and using your advisor
273. Are there any professional organizations that will help me get a job after college?
274. we should have a question and answer session with faculty.
275. Time management and organization would be beneficial
276. financial aid
277. Who do I go to when I need help with classes, how do I find out who I would need to go and see?
278. adjusting to being a college student after so many years out of school, it is confusing.
279. finding a support network
280. ---
281. grading and GPA
282. I do not have an opinion because I am not sure what is offered in ABAC 1000
283. financial aid
284. getting used to being in college
285. Adjusting to the demands of college and all of the studying and homework that comes along with it.
286. I think that there should be some type of study skills workshop.
287. I would like to know more about online courses.
288. I do not plan to graduate from ABAC, I plan to transfer after a year or two and I would like some help choosing the correct program.
289. ---
290. I need help with preparing for the nursing program and I am sure that other students would like help preparing for their programs as well.
291. time management and financial aid
292. There are some many guidelines that I do not know about and I think it would be good if someone would help guide us.
293. online classes
294. WebCt and banner, I do not really know if I am using those two thing right
295. I would like to see more emphasis on balancing college and family
296. time management
297. I am not even sure of what I am doing; much less I am doing it right. I would like someone to guide me that knows how lost I feel at times.

298. I would like to see more organization skills workshops as I feel overwhelmed with work, home, family, and college.
299. study tips and skills
300. All of those topics that we are rusty at after ten plus years out of high school
301. I think we need to know more about financial aid and all of it regulations
302. ---
303. I do not have an opinion
304. tutoring
305. deadlines
306. GPA and other transcripts things
307. help with math
308. I want to know exactly who to go to when I have a question or problem.
309. biology help
310. financial aid
311. I don't even think this should be a mandatory course
312. I know that I am missing something about college because I keep hearing the younger students talking about things that I have no clue about.
313. college algebra
314. ---
315. where to go to get all of my questions answered
316. banner and how to register for classes
317. computer skills and help with the FAFSA
318. study skills and computer skills
319. college survival skills
320. technology/computers

Question Five

1. Because it has not been long since I attended college in the past, I feel I was extremely prepared to begin college again.
2. I am a nontraditional, but I started ABAC straight out of high school. I feel that I am as prepared as most.
3. I was extremely prepared for anything, being that I am a former Marine. I could have used some assistance, but I wisely used my resources and found what I needed. If ABAC offered such information as listed above (see answer 3), it would make any nontraditional student's life easier
4. Being older with work and family I knew what I needed to do to succeed. Of course more hours in a day are not an option
5. I had attended technical college in the early eighties. I have attended three semesters and have a 4.0 so I think I was prepared but I also think I work harder than younger students. I think if ABAC is going to offer more four year degrees then adding more night classes and more online classes would attract more nontraditional students such as me. Valdosta State University offers credits for work experience. For example I took microbiology years ago I have worked in microbiology for over

twenty years but I am still required to take microbiology for the nursing program at ABAC.

6. I had very little time to get everything coordinated because of my job. Traditional students usually have lots of time to kick around and find out about things.
7. I have attended college before, but your enrollment process is different and more difficult.
8. Haven't been in school in 25 years, a lot has changed and I was very overwhelmed at the speed in which the instructors teach the classes.
9. ---
10. It was fairly easy to get enrolled at ABAC...no problems.
11. I knew working here would add to my ability to succeed here and was surrounded by helpful faculty and staff that wanted me to succeed.
12. I'm not sure how prepared any college student is.
13. ---
14. had previous college
15. ---
16. ---
17. had everything that was need just needed financial aid assistance
18. It's not hard to read and realize dates and times as to when items need to be submitted. It's just whether you can get someone at the school to answer a phone or even know the answer to your questions. I also avoided student workers; they tend to be less then helpful. Also I tried to do as little with the one stop shop as possible, that department is a joke.
19. I was prepared in all areas except information regarding a learning support class and all requirements for my degree. Learned it all on my own.
20. better study habits due to the lack of trying to socialize
21. ---
22. I had college and world experience that many traditional students may not and that prepared me more for the unexpected things that came up.
23. Being I am an older adult and have lived in this hard world without a college education, I have a better work ethic than most traditional students.
24. ---
25. I was not sure what to exactly expect coming from Wiregrass Tech college. This was my first time actually attending a true college atmosphere. The orientation really didn't answer all my questions and I wasn't sure who to ask either. Even though the Academic Support Counselors have been a world of help. I am still a little unsure about some things.
26. I do not know what it's like for traditional students but my registration process has been easy. I didn't run into any hang-ups. I think ABAC does a great job.
27. ---
28. I have attended college before as a nontraditional student, even though some requirements are not the same for all colleges, I pretty much knew what to expect over all.
29. ---

30. ---
31. Not being fresh out of school
32. Having a college degree and work experience, I feel confident that I know how to approach my course work.
33. ---
34. ---
35. I feel that since all three of my children have attended ABAC, they have assisted me with some of my concerns and questions. So I probably have had an advantage over some other non-traditional students.
36. I think because of my maturity and focus, I am actually far better prepared for the actual day to day work of college.
37. last minute decision
38. This is not my first college experience however every campus is different and I believe I did well for my first term at ABAC.
39. I am going to college with a specific goal in mind, to further my education. This is not something I'm doing because it's what I'm supposed to do like many traditional students. I am doing it because I want to and I know it will better me and my family.
40. I needed a refresher course; it had been so long since I was in any type of classroom.
41. I was okay
42. ---
43. I thought that I was prepared, until I took my first test. The professors ask me to write in a certain way and complete math problems in a certain way. That is not how I have been used to doing these things. I found I need help figuring out how to meet expectations more so that the actual skill needed.
44. ---
45. I believe that I am ready for college; I just never had time to go until I lost my job.
46. I was scared to take math classes and the technology demands of college. It has been a long time since I took a math class. I also use technology on a daily basis, but my use is limited to email and basic word processing functions. I am afraid that I am behind in my skills compared to the younger students.
47. ---
48. I felt prepared for college; I just needed help with the process of college.
49. ---
50. ---
51. I researched had my books a lot before I enrolled. I had everything I needed before I started
52. needed on site tour
53. ---
54. ---
55. I managed thanks to the help of many teachers, my advisor (C.Dent), and Rebecca Coefer. They are all great. ABAC is a terrific college and very helpful. everyone is
56. As a nontraditional student working in construction, returning to school was a unique experience. The transition for work to school was easy, finding the time to study material seemed to be difficult at first and there are some things that I am still

- struggling with but the instructors have been available and capable of answering and/or explaining any questions that I have had. (Thanks to Dr. K. Weeks and Dr. Kingsley Dunkley).
57. Generally speaking, adults have more resources at their disposal and are more willing to use the ones ABAC provides. We can always catch up with technology and are prepared to put in more study time.
 58. ---
 59. I feel I was more so prepared than traditional students in some ways because I am past my partying stage, I'm focused on my education, I graduated from Moultrie tech and already know about study habits, work ethics, stuff they don't teach you in high school. I have however struggled financially and struggled balancing my family life with my college career.
 60. ---
 61. ---
 62. I felt prepared in all areas except math
 63. It has been 20 years since I took classes, I am spending all my time trying to catch up
 64. ---
 65. ---
 66. I was not prepared for the technological resources
 67. my high school experience and previous college experiences helped me the most in prep. for a return to ABAC to complete my bachelors.
 68. ---
 69. good academic student, unsure about college
 70. ---
 71. ---
 72. Being a nontraditional student, you have more life skills which able you to be more focused on the end result and not just going to school for that semester and then decide what to do next.
 73. I have more life experience than the majority of college freshmen and was much more determined to do what I needed to do in order to finish college.
 74. This is my second time attending college. I'm an LPN upgrading to an RN :)
 75. ---
 76. ---
 77. ---
 78. ---
 79. I have been out of high school for almost 17 years before seeking a proper and formal education. Many things have change since then. I had good high school training, but the adjustments to reacquainting myself with a classroom environment proved to be a difficult task in the beginning. I also realized that 99 % of instructors expect you to automatically know what questions to ask... such as what classes to take? will there be any field trips required of this class? (being a single mom, I must prepare ahead of time in many ways), and understand that the double standard of instructor's absences has absolutely no trade off for any absences that I may deem

- necessary)... Basically, ABAC 1000 is almost useless because it gives you a set of written guidelines, but teaches you absolutely nothing about reality.
80. I made sure that all financial aid paperwork was turned in time. Can to class early in case any preparations needed to be made. Did not use cell phone in class.
81. Schedule, complete, repeat. It's not that hard.
82. I read a lot and have had the good fortune to pass Cisco's CCNA exam. It made things easier for me in regards to taking online courses. Most of the courses I have taken at ABAC are basically online courses with the exception of labs. Most lectures are nothing more than reading power points prepared by an educational company that ABAC proxy for. Eg. Pearson, Evolve and others.
83. ---
84. I have more experience about life and reality of the real world because I already have a husband and kids. I am better prepared because I made a lot of mistakes while I was young and I have learned from most of all of them. I am very focused and have total support from my husband and kids.
85. ---
86. ---
87. I have attended college before, and I kind of knew what to expect.
88. ---
89. I had already been to a tech school before. ABAC was just slightly different but the principle is the same.
90. I had also been working at a law firm, using technology that prepared me for college work. Overall, I think that I was well-prepared for college. I think the only thing that revealed that I was a little older than most was that I could carry on adult conversations with my professors. I really believe the time I took to work after high school helped me in the long run. I knew more about what to expect from the "adult" world.
91. ---
92. I THINK THAT MOST NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS ARE MORE FOCUSED.
93. ---
94. ---
95. I think I was more prepared in that I know it couldn't just be about fun and games
96. I had helped my children with their college work and also had gone to a Technical college within a few years of entering ABAC so I feel I was more prepared than some students of my age but not as prepared as a student fresh out of high school.
97. having everything that I need I was more prepared than most of the traditional I had my paper work done four months in advanced I know the importance of having things done in early. as for as the classes themselves I was not prepared for that at all first day there was so much going on I did not know whether I was coming or going.
98. ---

99. I feel that I was more prepared than many nontraditional students only because I have two daughters in college and one that graduated three years ago. But being nontraditional is definitely different.
100. ---
101. I have already been to college in the past, and I knew what to expect.
102. I graduated Summa Cum Laude the first time I went to college at South University in Savannah, GA. I have always been someone who is thorough in what I do & exercise good studying plans, etc. In other words, I take my college seriously, & I am not someone who just doesn't do my part. However, even with that, I found myself somewhat unprepared for college this time around. One reason is that the use of technology in the college system has changed significantly since I was in college the first time. For example, on my VERY FIRST DAY of class in Political Science, the instructor asked the class to pass our homework forward. I was thinking, "what homework? It's the first day of class." It didn't take long for me to learn that there was something called WebCt in which students are to look for homework assignments, etc. When I was in college the first time, the instructor just told the students what their homework assignments were... we didn't have to go looking for them. Please understand that my problem is not with the use of technology as I have a degree in Computer Information Systems. My problem was that I was never told by anyone in the registration process at ABAC what WebCt was or what was expected of me in using it. I simply didn't know.
103. ---
104. I have better grammar than most students with whom I am familiar. Being older, I also feel I'm more experienced and better equipped for reading comprehension and creative writing. I'm old enough to take school very seriously. People my age going to college know what they want.
105. ---
106. Since I have been to college before, I believe that I am prepared. I just had to inquire about these areas for assistance.
107. ---
108. ---
109. I think that a certain level of maturity is needed to be successful as a college student, and not all fresh out of high school students have that. Life experience also brings a richer set of ideas and perspectives to the classroom setting that traditional age students will not have.
110. I have better grammar than most students with whom I am familiar. Being older, I also feel I'm more experienced and better equipped for reading comprehension and creative writing. I'm old enough to take school very seriously. People my age going to college know what they want.
111. I have attended previous colleges and my military experience also had I prepared for the unexpected; and allowed me to properly plan my schedule.
112. ---

113. It was extremely hard to figure out what courses I would need to take and what had already transferred
114. ---
115. I feel that I was more prepared than many nontraditional students only because I have two daughters in college and one that graduated three years ago. But being nontraditional is definitely different.
116. I knew what I wanted to take and how long it should take to complete the degree.
117. ---
118. ---
119. ---
120. I have previously obtained college degrees and have held corporate administrative positions. I am returning to school to pursue a new career path in medicine.
121. I had had previous college, just lived at home during the time, living so far from my home took some adjustment
122. I was much more focused as an older student than I was when I first graduated from college.
123. I had more life experience to draw upon.
124. ---
125. I felt rusty and I was not sure that I was more prepared, only prepared differently.
126. I have been in college on and off and I feel that I have kept my skills up to date.
127. ---
128. I am not all that prepared.
129. ---
130. I had been in the military and feel that I was ready for college because of that. ABAC just needed to put all of the information that I needed in one place.
131. ---
132. I did not have a choice of not being prepared; I had a family depending on me.
133. I feel that I work harder because I am an older student.
134. ---
135. It would be nice to get credit for work experience. I have owned my own business for the past twenty years, but I still have to take intro to business.
136. I needed more time to get things done because I do not have as much free time as the traditional students.
137. ---
138. ---

139. Every college that I have attended has had a different process for enrollment and with all of these differences I could have used a little help.
140. I need help catching up with the professors, thirty years out of school makes it difficult to get adjusted.
141. ---
142. Everything seemed easy enough.
143. ---
144. I got a job at ABAC which made everything a little easier to understand.
145. I wasn't really prepared, but who is?
146. ---
147. I went to school straight out of high school, this was my second attempt.
148. I just needed someone to take my hand and walk me through the financial aid process.
149. I needed someone to answer a phone, there is only so much that can be done over the internet.
150. ---
151. ---
152. I had no idea what classes I needed for my degree.
153. I needed better study skills, everything else was okay.
154. ---
155. My life experience prepared me for more than most traditional students.
156. A lot can be said about a good work ethic that cannot be taught.
157. ---
158. I was not sure what to expect from college and was never really prepared, I still have some questions. I know there are people here that can answer my questions, but it would be nice not to have to go and find the answers.
159. Everything went smoothly.
160. I knew what to expect from previous experiences.
161. Not coming straight from high school helped me a lot.
162. I already have an associate's degree, so I felt prepared.
163. ---
164. My son attended ABAC, so I knew what to expect.
165. ---
166. I am more prepared as an older student, so that has helped me with a much of my experience here at ABAC.
167. I only came to college because I was laid-off, so I really did not have time to prepare much.
168. ---
169. ---
170. Being my second try at college I think I was relatively prepared. I came to college to become a nurse and help provide for my family. This focus and motivation helped me prepare.

171. It has been many years since I was in a college classroom; I felt like I needed to ease into things, ABAC 1000 was very helpful.
172. I was not all that prepared.
173. ---
174. ---
175. I thought I was prepared until my first C. I need to practice more to meet my professors' expectations.
176. The job that I held for many years helped prepare me for college.
177. ---
178. I use a computer every day, but I only use the programs that I am comfortable with; I don't know how quickly I will be able to pick up on new programs.
179. I needed help getting in to college.
180. The bookstore was an eye opener.
181. ---
182. ---
183. ---
184. I physically got lost when I stepped on campus.
185. I was prepared for college thanks to a few very helpful people on campus.
186. ---
187. ---
188. Finding time to study and read was the most difficult part.
189. ---
190. I think that I was able to use my experience more to help understand what I was learning in the classrooms.
191. ---
192. I am much more focused than I would have been at 18.
193. My family sometimes doesn't understand all of the long hours that I have to put into my studies.
194. ---
195. It is now time to catch up; my professors are younger than I am.
196. Banner and math lab have confused me, and I haven't even needed to use WebCt yet.
197. I understand history a lot more than I did twenty five years ago.
198. ---
199. I feel smart, but must not be smart enough.
200. having run my own business makes it easier to understand business classes.
201. I am more determined now than ever to finish college this time.
202. I got laid-off and I heard there were jobs in nursing, so I must succeed.
203. I need to know what to expect from ABAC, I can handle the rest.
204. ---
205. I have never been a procrastinator, so I was prepared for college.
206. I can read and study, so I should be ok.

207. I was prepared for college; I just was not prepared for all of the paperwork that it takes to get into college.
208. I have learned from past mistakes which makes me more prepared.
209. This was my second time at college, so I was prepared.
210. Third time going to college, ABAC was a little different but not enough to throw me off.
211. ---
212. Using technology at my job prepared me for college, and having worked full time prepared me for the rest.
213. I was more focused and more prepared.
214. I did not have time to socialize, which may have been a good thing.
215. I was prepared, but having been out of school for a while I was a little rusty in the classroom.
216. I did not procrastinate like the younger students, so I was much better off.
217. Having seen my children go to college and succeed, I knew what to expect. Although seeing it and doing it is two different things.
218. 2nd time to college
219. I was an honors student in high school and I didn't lose all that much, although if I had waited many more year I may have.
220. I am much more prepared that today's high school student.
221. ---
222. ---
223. This was my second time at college so I felt prepared, although I did need to know where to go to get my questions answered.
224. I feel that my maturity was my advantage.
225. ---
226. I am more serious about my college experience.
227. ---
228. Being in the army was a plus for things. I took everything more seriously, did not procrastinate, and planned ahead to do my best in classes.
229. I had no idea what classes I needed.
230. I was much more focused as an older student than the younger students that I was in class with.
231. My maturity was my advantage for college.
232. The work ethic that I learned from working a full time job has prepared me the most for college classes.
233. ---
234. Real world experiences have been the key.
235. My study habits are much better than when I was younger. I partied a little too much then.
236. ---
237. Now that I have to pay for everything myself, I take it more seriously.

238. Learning support is something that I never really expected. I wished I had been able to sit down and figure out what I was getting into.
239. I need more people to take the time and answer questions, I should be important too.
240. ---
241. I needed help with all of the financial aid regulations
242. The last time I went to college helped me this time as I learned from my mistakes.
243. ---
244. The faculties in my classes are the people that motivated me to succeed.
245. I wasn't all that prepared.
246. ---
247. College has been easy enough.
248. ---
249. Having been out of college so long has been a challenge now that I have started back.
250. The enrollment process was difficult.
251. I needed more time to study.
252. I have failed and I have succeeded, so I know what it takes to succeed.
253. The air force prepared me for college.
254. I have been in college on and off, so I have it down now.
255. This being my second time in college has seemed to make it easier than it was the first time.
256. The tech school and ABAC have been a different experience, but I am making it.
257. Everything has run smooth.
258. ---
259. ---
260. I knew what to expect having worked as a paraprofessional before.
261. Being older has made it easier.
262. I just try to apply my work experience to my classroom experience.
263. My children have been my motivation to succeed.
264. I am more mature and focused than a teenager.
265. I will become a nurse, so I know I will have to succeed at ABAC.
266. I am not fully prepared
267. I only needed help getting into college.
268. It has been a long time since I was in any type of classroom.
269. ---
270. not ready
271. ---
272. This math book made no sense; I think I will need tutoring.
273. Having lost my job, I now have the time and motivation to succeed in college unlike when I was 18.

274. I am afraid that I will get left behind in a class when I am not sure of what is going on.
275. I need a tour; I didn't know where anything was.
276. ---
277. Finding time to do everything is the biggest issue.
278. My past life experiences have prepared me for what to expect at ABAC.
279. I need help finding money for college and finding time for my family.
280. Math seemed to be my trouble area.
281. I am rusty having been out of the class for so long.
282. ---
283. The technology has been difficult to grasp so quickly.
284. College is much easier than it was ten years ago.
285. I really didn't know what to expect about college when I decided to go back. I chose to return to college because I wanted to pursue my RN.
286. My life skills have prepared me for college. I seem to understand my professors more than the first time that I went to college. Then, everything seemed like a waste of time.
287. ---
288. When you go to college because you need to get a degree, to get a new job, to support your family; it means a lot more than when you just go to go.
289. My work skills have really assisted me in college.
290. Work ethic is the key to success.
291. ---
292. Professors do not know how much I have to sacrifice just to make it to class, much less to do anything extra. It is not always easy to find a babysitter.
293. Doing everything early has made things much easier than when I was a procrastinator.
294. My reading and writing skills are what have really prepared me for college.
295. Real world experience equal success in college, or at least I hope.
296. ---
297. Being my third time at a college, things get easier each time.
298. ABAC was easier than I expected.
299. ---
300. I was a young nontraditional student so I was not that removed from school/
301. No one can be fully prepared for college classes.
302. ---
303. I now know what is most important about college, and the parties do not top my lists like they did when I was younger.
304. I have seen many others go to college, so I think that I can now.
305. ---
306. Doing everything ahead of time has made things much easier.
307. My only choice is to be successful.
308. This is not my first time in college.

309. No one told me how to prepare or what to expect.
310. My writing skills are leagues better than most traditional age students.
311. If I can take care of a family, I can make it through college.
312. I could have been more prepared, but I seem to have done fairly well so far in my first year of college classes.
313. Being in the military has prepared me more for college than I was when I first graduated from high school.
314. I was rusty with my reading and writing skills.
315. I wasn't really prepared.
316. I took what I have learned from twenty years out of school and applied it to college, so I feel relatively prepared.
317. I felt very prepared for college.
318. My experience in the real world has really prepared me for the college experience.
319. Even though it was not easy to make it through the financial aid process, I did. There has to be a better way than what is required now. If it took so much work for me I don't know how the younger students that procrastinate do it.
320. ---

Question Six

1. To me the less beneficial things were the location of certain buildings. ABAC already provides a map for that purpose
2. ---
3. ---
4. ---
5. study techniques, I already felt comfortable in my study habits
6. ---
7. ---
8. ---
9. ---
10. ---
11. ---
12. ---
13. ---
14. ---
15. Time management???
16. ---
17. ---
18. ---
19. ---
20. ---
21. ---
22. student activities, I was interested, but just did not have time for them
23. ---

24. ---
25. ---
26. ---
27. ---
28. ---
29. getting involved in student activities, how can someone in my position have time for this when I have a family, job, and an education to worry about
30. ---
31. Housing
32. It was hard to group together with the younger students to complete the presentation.
33. ---
34. ---
35. ---
36. ---
37. ---
38. ---
39. Book report on a book by a local author. WHY did we need to do that to prepare us for college????
40. ---
41. ---
42. ---
43. ---
44. ---
45. lectures
46. Do not remember as it has been a long time since I took the course.
47. ---
48. ---
49. ---
50. Topics such as being told there is a copier in the library, duh huh! lol.... many students don't know that there is a ten dollar credit to their ID card so that they can print things in the library, and that if you don't use it, that's ten dollars that the school gets to keep at your expense... that knowledge would have been more helpful. Or being told that the library has books, double duh!!! I would have much rather been told how to use the journals and any online resources that the library can offer, which I didn't learn until my third year.
51. how to study
52. I think that everything we covered in ABAC 1000 was helpful to some extent. I think the only topic that I found least beneficial was "Why studying is important." I already knew that.
53. ---
54. ---
55. ---

- 56. ---
- 57. ---
- 58. ---
- 59. ---
- 60. ---
- 61. ---
- 62. ---
- 63. ---
- 64. ---
- 65. TOPICS CONCERNING BEGINNING FRESHMEN.
- 66. ---
- 67. ---
- 68. ---
- 69. ---
- 70. ---
- 71. ---
- 72. ---
- 73. I did not need to do a scavenger hunt; I can find things on my own.
- 74. ---
- 75. ---
- 76. ---
- 77. ---
- 78. ---
- 79. I know how to manage time; I manage the time of a family of four.
- 80. ---
- 81. ---
- 82. ---
- 83. ---
- 84. ---
- 85. I did not need to be lectured to.
- 86. ---
- 87. ---
- 88. ---
- 89. ---
- 90. ---
- 91. I need to know the things that aren't obvious.
- 92. ---
- 93. ---
- 94. ---
- 95. ---
- 96. study tips
- 97. ---

98. ---
99. ---
100. ---
101. How does reading a book help me in college?
102. ---
103. ---
104. ---
105. I like to know there was a soccer game, but I watch soccer when I take my daughter to practice.
106. I already know how to study, except for math.
107. ---
108. ---
109. The book was a waste of time because it did not teach me anything about college or how to be successful.
110. ---
111. ---
112. time management
113. ---
114. ---
115. I don't need to be told that I am an introvert; I need to be told how to pass my classes.
116. ---
117. ---
118. I know where all of the offices are, I needed to know what was done in each of those offices.
119. ---
120. ---
121. study techniques
122. ---
123. ---
124. time management
125. ---
126. ---
127. The library presentation was boring, but it was useful.
128. ---
129. ---
130. I did not need to know how to get involved.
131. ---
132. ---
133. the book
134. ---
135. ---

136. ---
137. ---
138. ---
139. It was hard to relate to the younger students in my class
140. ABAC 1000 was geared toward the younger students.
141. ---
142. ---
143. ---
144. ---
145. ---
146. ---
147. ---
148. ---
149. ---
150. ---
151. ---
152. ---
153. ---
154. ---
155. ---
156. ---
157. a book report did not help me prepare for college
158. ---
159. ---
160. ---
161. ---
162. ---
163. ---
164. ---
165. ---
166. ---
167. ---
168. ---
169. ---
170. ---
171. ---
172. ---
173. ---
174. I need help with financial aid, not help with student activities
175. ---
176. ---
177. ---

- 178. ---
- 179. ---
- 180. ---
- 181. the scavenger hunt
- 182. ---
- 183. ---
- 184. ---
- 185. ---
- 186. ---
- 187. ---
- 188. I was glad to see civics, but not for someone my age
- 189. ---
- 190. ---
- 191. ---
- 192. ---
- 193. time management
- 194. ---
- 195. ---
- 196. ---
- 197. ---
- 198. ---
- 199. everything designed for students 18-21
- 200. ---
- 201. ---
- 202. ---
- 203. ---
- 204. ---
- 205. ---
- 206. ---
- 207. ---
- 208. ---
- 209. ---
- 210. ---
- 211. ---
- 212. ---
- 213. ---
- 214. ---
- 215. I know about alcohol and drugs, tell me about the health center and insurance
- 216. ---
- 217. ---
- 218. ---
- 219. ---

- 220. ---
- 221. ---
- 222. ---
- 223. ---
- 224. ---
- 225. ---
- 226. the book report
- 227. ---
- 228. ---
- 229. ---
- 230. ---
- 231. ---
- 232. ---
- 233. ---
- 234. ---
- 235. ---
- 236. lectures
- 237. ---
- 238. ---
- 239. ---
- 240. ---
- 241. ---
- 242. I am not living on campus and I did not need to know about housing.
- 243. ---
- 244. ---
- 245. ---
- 246. ---
- 247. ---
- 248. ---
- 249. ---
- 250. ---
- 251. ---
- 252. ---
- 253. ---
- 254. healthy relationships
- 255. ---
- 256. ---
- 257. ---
- 258. ---
- 259. ---
- 260. ---
- 261. ---

- 262. the tour around campus
- 263. ---
- 264. ---
- 265. ---
- 266. ---
- 267. ---
- 268. ---
- 269. ---
- 270. Reading the book and doing a presentation on the book was useless.
- 271. ---
- 272. ---
- 273. ---
- 274. ---
- 275. ---
- 276. Why are we in classes with younger students when are questions are different from theirs?
- 277. ---
- 278. ---
- 279. ---
- 280. ---
- 281. ---
- 282. studying
- 283. ---
- 284. ---
- 285. ---
- 286. ---
- 287. I did not need help with time management
- 288. ---
- 289. ---
- 290. ---
- 291. ---
- 292. ---
- 293. ---
- 294. ---
- 295. ---
- 296. ---
- 297. ---
- 298. ---
- 299. ---
- 300. ---
- 301. ---
- 302. ---

- 303. ---
- 304. ---
- 305. ---
- 306. ---
- 307. ---
- 308. ---
- 309. ---
- 310. the scavenger hunt was not useful to me and a little young for me.
- 311. ---
- 312. ---
- 313. ---
- 314. ---
- 315. ---
- 316. ---
- 317. ---
- 318. ---
- 319. ---
- 320. ---

Appendix K:
Content Analysis

Institutional Survey Content Analysis

Course Descriptions		Course Objective & Expectations		Course Activities	
Theme	Ref.	Theme	Ref.	Theme	Ref.
academic success	15	campus resources	17	time management	13
campus services and resources	13	technology	14	technology	10
study skills	9	critical thinking	14	diversity exercise	10
time management	8	career	13	campus resources	10
career goals	7	communication	11	campus involvement	9
writing skills	6	diversity	10	research and writing	8
personal growth	6	time management	9	learning style	8
learning styles	6	problem solving and analytical skills	9	career reflection	8
critical thinking	6	goal setting	8	advising and registration	8
service learning	5	community involvement	7	service learning	7
transition	4	policies and procedures	6	health and wellness	7
technology	4	test taking	5	financial and financial aid	7
reading skills	4	study skills	5	library	6
introduction to college	4	note-taking	5	college expectations	6
interpersonal relationships	4	choosing a major	5	portfolio	5
community involvement	4	campus involvement	5	note taking	5
test taking	3	build faculty relationships	5	journal	5
student success	3	skills	4	goal setting	5
self management	3	service learning	4	critical thinking	5
policies and regulations	3	self awareness	4	communications	5
leadership	3	research	4	reading strategies	4
diversity	3	math	4	leadership	4
develop skills	3	library	4	discussion	4
campus involvement	3	decision making skills	4	civics	4
adjustment	3	build peer relationships	4	alcohol	4
survive	2	advising and registration	4	test taking	3
scholastic attainment	2	action plan	4	study skills	3

organization	2	value college	3	presentations	3
note taking	2	transition to college	3	Myers Briggs	3
library resources	2	success	3	understanding college	2
goal setting	2	social success	3	tutoring	2
campus interactions	2	self exploration	3	strategic plan	2
adapting to college	2	personal growth	3	relationships	2
acculturation	2	personal goals	3	project	2
working with others	1	learning strategies	3	professionalism	2
value of education	1	financial management	3	personality types	2
transferable cross-disciplinary skills	1	core	3	paper	2
support group	1	academic growth	3	interest inventory	2
strengths	1	academic goals	3	history of college	2
social integration	1	wellness	2	higher level thinking	2
self actualization	1	rules and regulations	2	Daily Assignments	2
retention	1	reading	2	class participation	2
research	1	personal success	2	choosing a major	2
purpose	1	personal responsibility	2	campus services	2
professional growth	1	curriculum	2	adjustment	2
productive citizenship	1	collaboration	2	academic honesty	2
prepare	1	civic involvement	2	team building	1
oral communication	1	work ethic	1	surveys	1
opportunities	1	transfer	1	strategies to process information	1
motivation	1	timely completion of assignments	1	self-efficacy	1
mental health	1	text book reading	1	resume	1
memory skills	1	self assessment	1	reflection paper or journal	1
lifelong learning	1	science	1	quizzes	1
lecture series	1	respect	1	questionnaires	1
history and tradition	1	registration and advising	1	pre and post test	1
health issues	1	purpose	1	personal values and goals	1
foundation	1	professional goals	1	Outcasts United Journal	1
effective	1	positive self direction	1	midterm	1
discourse	1	positive relationships	1	mentoring	1
develop community	1	plagiarism	1	memory	1
community leaders	1	pedagogical strategies	1	MAP-works	1
communication skills	1	orientation	1	life management	1
cognitive integration	1	organization	1	interpersonal relationships	1

clarify value system	1	metacognitive skills	1	Identify campus resources	1
change habits	1	listening	1	holistic development	1
active	1	leadership	1	healthy choices	1
		interpersonal skills	1	first impressions	1
		interact in small groups	1	final	1
		history of college	1	FERPA	1
		global education	1	culture of higher education	1
		faith	1	concentration	1
		exchange of ideas	1	college success how to	1
		examine social problems	1	civic responsibility	1
		educational opportunities	1	campus conduct	1
		develop portfolio	1	attendance	1
		cultural enrichment	1		
		contemporary issues	1		
		college expectations	1		
		classroom etiquette	1		
		active participants	1		
		academic strategies	1		

Focus Group Content Analysis

Name	References	Name	References
time management	10	tour	1
never married	10	teamwork	1
study habits	8	taking notes	1
financial aid	7	study hall	1
internet services	7	student development center	1
leadership	6	resume	1
	8	responsibility	1
	7	realization	1
organizational skills	5	reading	1
	10	paperwork	1
nothing	4	need to know	1
more interactive	4	more time for discussion	1
history	4	more hype	1
	5	making movie	1
reading book	3	living on campus	1
more specific	3	library	1
math	3	learning style changed	1
how you learn	3	learn skills	1
how to be successful	3	involvement	1
hands on	3	independence	1
academics	3	higher standards	1
writing skills	2	group work	1
transfer process	2	GPA	1
specific to majors	2	diversity	1
something about ABAC	2	communication	1
other	2	comfort	1
learning community	2	college time commitment	1
learned better	2	budgeting	1
Hispanic	2	biology	1
everything	2	better book	1
English	2	be aware of assistance	1
details	2	athletics	1
choosing a major	2	asking for help	1
academic resources	2	approaching people	1
	3	admissions	1
	2	academic achievement center	1
you are unique	1		9
where to go for help	1		6
unmemorable	1		4
trust	1		1

Nontraditional Student Online Questionnaire Content Analysis

2	If you did enroll in ABAC 1000, why? If you did not enroll in ABAC 1000, why not?	
	Name	
	did not need	55
	no time	39
	what is ABAC 1000	36
	not advised to take	23
	required	14
	not useful	14
	advisor recommended	6
	needed additional credit	5
	help in college	3
	no clue	2
	took with friend	1
	recommended by another student	1
	plan to take	1
	not required	1
	like course description	1
	helpful course	1
	good idea	1

3				
	Name	References	Name	References
	financial aid	44	family support	2
	math	35	different office hours	2
	admissions	23	books	2
	advising	22	very prepared	1
	studying	17	Tifton resources	1
	time management	12	stress	1
	paperwork	11	picking a major	1
	orientation process	8	organization	1
	what to expect	7	meal plans	1
	science	7	living with others	1
	scheduling	7	library	1
	technology	6	leadership	1
	where to start	5	individualized process	1
	recognition of nontraditional issues	5	ID card	1
	writing	4	graduation	1
	transfer credits	4	GPA	1
	rusty	4	getting information early	1
	available resources	4	getting enrolled	1
	testing	3	foreign language	1

	scheduling around work	3	fear of failure	1
	registration	3	English	1
	note taking	3	email	1
	WebCt	2	dedicated contact for nontraditional	1
	tour	2	credits to graduate	1
	speaking to an individual, not computer	2	confidence	1
	paperwork and regulations	2	campus programs	1
	managing responsibilities	2	Banner	1
	long time since attending college	2	adult housing	1
	learning support	2	accurate communication	1
	feeling comfortable	2	ABAC processes	1

4	What topics do you think would be most beneficial for you as a nontraditional adult learner from an ABAC 1000 course?			
	Name	References	Name	References
	financial aid	34	college policies	3
	study skills	17	campus policies	3
	technology	16	books	3
	managing outside obligations	16	working with traditional students	2
	time management	11	test anxiety	2
	professor expectations	11	resume	2
	campus resources	11	math lab	2
	registration and advising	9	goal setting	2
	math	9	getting involved as nontraditional student	2
	support from other nontraditional	7	expectations of nontraditional students	2
	adjusting to college	7	differences between traditional and nontraditional students	2
	WebCt	6	deadlines	2
	rusty	6	community resources	2
	GPA	6	younger roommates	1
	degree program requirements	6	what to expect	1
	online classes	5	using experiences to be successful	1
	note taking	5	transitioning	1
	navigating campus	5	transferring	1

	college costs	5	support network	1
	career goals	5	specifics	1
	tutoring	4	self esteem	1
	transcripts	4	promote ABAC 1000 better	1
	science	4	longer office hours	1
	resources for nontraditional students	4	library resources	1
	paperwork	4	learning types	1
	organization	4	learning support	1
	class scheduling	4	how to use scientific calculator	1
	banner	4	how to be successful	1
	admissions	4	getting return on investment	1
	should not be mandatory	3	fitting in	1
	research	3	coping in a campus for traditional students	1
	reading	3	college survival skills	1
	design for nontraditional students	3	better availability of people to help	1
			APA	1

5	Overall, on a scale of one to ten, with one being not prepared and ten being extremely prepared, how would you describe your college preparation level as compared to the traditional student at ABAC? Explain			
	Name	References	Name	References
	prepared - life experience	32	learning support	2
	prepared - previous college	25	how prepared is anyone	2
	prepared	18	cost of college	2
	maturity and focus	18	children went to ABAC	2
	work ethic and focus	13	adjusting to college	2
	time	8	work at ABAC	1
	not prepared	8	WebCt	1
	family	8	transfer credit and scheduling	1
	rusty	6	study skills	1
	prepared - military	6	study habits	1
	technology	5	realities of nontraditional students	1
	math	5	process	1
	financial aid	5	prepared - more resources	1
	not fresh out of high school	4	paperwork	1
	good experience with	4	okay	1

	admissions			
	getting help on phone	4	not all questions answered	1
	tour	3	need refresher course	1
	received great help	3	last minute decision	1
	professor expectations	3	finding times	1
	have better grammar	3	financial obligation	1
	expectations	3	consolidate information	1
	bad experience with admissions	3	college services	1
	unsure	2	class pace	1
	should consider life experience	2	can anyone be fully prepared	1
	registration and advising	2	bookstore - costs	1
	need help catching up	2	balancing college and family	1

6	If enrolled in an ABAC 1000 course, what topics were of least benefit to you as a student?	
	Name	References
	time management	7
	study techniques	6
	book	6
	student activities	4
	topics for beginning freshmen	3
	scavenger hunt	3
	Location of buildings	3
	lectures	3
	relating to younger students	2
	library	2
	housing	2
	the obvious	1
	personality type	1
	healthy relationships	1
	group projects with traditional students	1
	getting involved	1
	civics	1
	book report	1
	alcohol and drugs	1

Appendix L:
Consent to Participate

Consent to Participate

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY Consent to Participate in Research

You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled "A Descriptive Study of Freshman Orientation Courses and Their Relevance in Meeting the Needs of Nontraditional Students." This research project is being conducted by Christopher S. Kinsey, a student in Adult and Career Education at Valdosta State University. The researcher has explained to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask the researcher any questions you have to help you understand this project and your possible participation in it. A basic explanation of the research is given below. Please read this carefully and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have. The University asks that you give your signed agreement if you wish to participate in this research project.

Purpose of the Research: This study involves research. The purpose of the study is to investigate how the freshman orientation course (ABAC 1000) meets the unique needs of the nontraditional student and to make recommendations as to the most beneficial design and objectives of the freshman orientation course to better meet the unique needs of nontraditional students.

Procedures: You, as the participant, will be part of a focus group of ten students which have been enrolled in ABAC 1000 to discuss the benefits and structure of ABAC 1000. There are no experimental components of this research. Participation in these focus groups is completely voluntary and will in no way affect your grade in ABAC 1000 or any other academic course.

You will be asked to participate in one focus group discussion that will meet in the John Hunt Town Center of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and will last for no more than 90 minutes.

Possible Risks or Discomfort: Although there are no known risks associated with these research procedures, it is not always possible to identify all potential risks of participating in a research study. However, the University has taken reasonable safeguards to minimize potential but unknown risks.

If you experience psychological distress as a result of your participation in this study, please contact Christopher S. Kinsey at 229-391-5139. Neither the researcher nor Valdosta State University has made special provision for services required to treat any psychological distress that results from participation in this research study.

By agreeing to participate in this research project, you are not waiving any rights that you may have against Valdosta State University for injury resulting from negligence of the University or its researchers.

Potential Benefits: Your participation in this study may research in changes to the ABAC 1000 course to benefit future students enrolled in the course. Although you may not benefit directly from this research, your participation will help improve the knowledge of the nontraditional student at ABAC and the objectives and methods of the ABAC 1000 course, with the possibility of application to freshman seminar courses at other institutions.

Costs and Compensation: The cost to you is limited to transportation to the ABAC campus. Focus groups will be scheduled to minimize any extra travel. Participants may receive extra credit for participation in this research at the discretion of their instructor. Courses giving extra credit should also offer an additional option for extra credit not associated with this research. There is no other compensation for your participation in this study.

Assurance of Confidentiality: Valdosta State University and the researcher will keep your information confidential to the extent allowed by law. Members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a university committee charged with reviewing research to ensure the rights and welfare of research participants, may be given access to your confidential information.

Names will not be collected for the purpose of focus group discussions. Identities will be coded to limit connection of data with your identity. Data will be recorded in written and audio format. Data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet; electronic data will be kept on a password protected computer with firewall and antivirus/spyware protections. Notes and audio data will be transcribed for the purpose of reporting data. Originals of notes and audio data will be kept for a minimum of three years and will be destroyed. Audio data will be erased as it will be in electronic format and files will be deleted from computer trash. Notes will be shredded. Age, gender, marital status, individual income, and ethnicity will be recorded, but will not be linked to any names to ensure confidentiality. You will be identified as a traditional or nontraditional student with the aforementioned demographic information, but no names.

Data will be reported in combination with participant responses and no names will be included. You will be referred to as a focus group participant or respondent at all times.

Voluntary Participation: Your decision to participate in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you agree now to participate and change your mind later, you are free to leave the study. Your decision not to participate at all or to stop participating at any time in the future will not have any effect on any rights you have or any services you are otherwise entitled to from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College or Valdosta State University.

You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer.

Information Contacts: Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Christopher S. Kinsey at 229-391-5139 or ckinsey@abac.edu. This study has been approved by the Valdosta State University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Research Participants. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the VSU IRB Administrator at 229-333-7837 or irb@valdosta.edu and the ABAC IRB Administrator at 229-391-4980.

Agreement to Participate: The research project and my role in it have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this study. By signing this form, I am indicating that I am 18 years of age or older. I have received a copy of this consent form.

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this study: _____ Yes _____ No

Mailing Address: _____

e-mail Address: _____

Printed Name of Participant

This research project has been approved by the
Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board
for the Protection of Human Research Participants
through the date noted below:

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

