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# Student-Outcomes Questionnaires: 

An Implementation Handbook

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## Preface

The Hamblow presents a set of general gudelines for using the Student-Outcomes Questionnaires. The guidelines were developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NC.HEMS) and the College Board to conduct student-outcomes assessment studies in wo-year colleges and in four-year colleges and universities. ${ }^{1}$ It also presents a set of procedures for using the questionnaire response-ana'vsis service that is provided through the NCHEMS-College Board Student-Outcomes Information Services (SO'S) program. It is intended for use by researchers working in the area of student-outcones assessment, by institutional administrators and faculty concerned with program plaming and evaluation and institutional self-study, and by practitioners interested in obtaining information about student outcomes for decisionmaking purposes.

The Handbook and the Student-Outcomes Questionnaires ha:e been developed over the past two and a half years. The initial version was published by NCHEMS as a field-review euititon under the title A Handbook for Using the Student Outcomes Questionnaires (Bower and Renkiewicz 1977). The procedures presented in the initial version have since been pilot tested along with the field-review editions of the Student-Outcomes Q.estionnaires at four wo-year colleges and three four-year colleges and universities. The four two-year colleges were Cuyahog:. Community College, Clevelanن, Ohio; Colorado Mountain College, Glenwood Springs, Colorado; the Penr. Valley Campus of the Mettopolitan Community College District

[^1]in Kans.s City, Missouri; and the Yakima Valley Community College in Yakima, Washington. The lour-vear colleges and untrersities that seried as pilot-test schools were Florida Tecmological C'niversity in Orlando. Florida: Fort Hays State College in Fort Hass. Kansas: and Souh Dakota State University in Brookings, South Dakota. The current Hambook and the Suden-Outcomes Questionnaire are based on what was learned in the pilot-test activities and on suggestions from practitiones and researchers who reviewed them.

NCHEMS and the College Board decided to jointi, derelop the Handbook, the Student-Outcomes Questionnaires, and the new Questionnatre ResponscAnalysis Service because both organizations recognized that postsecondary-cducation practitioners and rescarchers need improved approaches or ootaining and using student-outcomes information. As a rest:lt of this foin : enture, NCHEMS and the College Board have tormed the Studen-Outcomes Information Service program. The SOIS program is incoded to acomplisin the following objectives:

1. To present users with a stratey for collecting student-outcomes information and integrating suat information itto a student-outcomes information system
2. To presem guidelines for conducting hoth cross-sectional and longirudinal studes designed ic witain student-outcomes information
3. To present wo sets of yucstion nates, one to be used b $\because$ th -year wiveges and the other to be used by four-ver colieges and universitics, for conducting student survess of (a) entering students, (b) continuing students, (c) former or nonreturning st:adents, (d) progiam completers' graduating st dedents and (c) recent alun mi
4. To provide a Questionmare Response-Analysis Service for facilitating use of the questionaites and providing casy-torese computer printouts
5. To provide asers with comparative studentoutcomes data for use in interpreting their studies results.

N(:iAIEMS and the College Board hope that the Hadbook will be vewed as a flexible gade for implementine the otuden-()utcomes Questionnaires that accompany it. That is, white the ilandtook describes specifie procedures for using the Student-Outcomes Questionateres for conducting student-outcomes studies, users should modify them to mee partucuar tudy needs. Toward this end, the Stud.nt-Outcomes Questomair also hate been desighed to be flexible instruments. Bach insimainai has. bexa desgese allow for the addition of 15 Inally developed items. Simitarly, the SOIS Response-Anal: ass zervice tas been de :oped in such a way a 10 acommodate the analysis of beally actoped items. In short, the SOIS Handbook, Stident-() ..coms Questionaires, and ResponseAnatysis Service have been developed we me the criteria of relevancy, usability, timeliness, and feasibility.

## Acknowledgments

Extensive assistance in the development and review of the Handbook and the Student-Outcomes Questionnaires contained herein have been provided by a wide range of practitioners and researchers interested in student-outcemes assessment. A debe of gratitude is owed to each of those persons. In particular, members of the Two-Year College Student-Outcomes issessment Task Force and the Four-Year College and University Student-Outcome: Assessment Task Force were most helpful in providing comments and suggestions, and deserve special recognition.

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## Introduction

Postsecondary-education mstitutions are faced with incrasing demands for information abrou students. Legislators, budget and finance officers, institutional planners, departments heads, faculty, institutional researchers, trustees, and crudents are among those who seek such information. Fiscal managers and trustees are interested in the perientage of students who leave school and why. Depe tment heads and faculty membets need to know the planned major fields o' new students. Institutional planners want information e. a student behavior owr time, to accommodate changing trends in the use of student services. Ani: students themselves want to know about the employment and postgraduate eyperiences of recent graduates, before committing themselves to a major field of study.

In addition to these internal demands for information, institutions ate facing external reporting demands. Those participating in federal student-aid programs must provide information about retention and program completion io prospective students. Central governing boards ard state planaing commi sions frequently request information about program utilization, i.egrees granted, and success of students.

Much of this information $\cdots n$ be obtained by surveying or interviewing students. Institutions can develop specific local questionnaire materials or interview strategies as r. eded. But considerable time, money, and staffare needed to develop a framework for organizing, collerting, and integrating needed data into an understandable format. Even when those difficulties are overeome, there is a waste of resources implicit in the duplication of effort that cecurs as time and mone: are spent for
similar developmental processes across institutions. And most likely, the data from specific local sources will not be comparable with information from another institution.

The alternative to developing local survey instruments and interview guides is the administration of pretested standardized instruments that collect intormation known to be useful and for which an analysis framework is available. The NCHEMS-College Board Student-Ouicomes Information Services (SOIS) provides this support to institutions by offering:

- A plan for collecting student-outcomes information and integrating ii into a student-outcomes information system
- General guidelines for conducting studies to obtain cross-sectional or longitudinal student-outcomes information at the postsecondaryeducation level
- Specific questionnaires for conducting student surveys
- A questionnaire-response ambsis service that provides casteto-use computer printouts of analytical informatio:

Additionally, the SOIS includes a set of grestionnaires and services specificaliy. des ad for use by community colleges (sec appendix 1) and another especially developed for four-gar colleges and universities (sec appendix 2).

The Handbook is intended both as a general guide io using the SOIS StudentOutcomes Questionnaires in community colleges and in four-year colleges and universities, and to using the services provided through we NCHEM"S-College Board Student-Outcones ! atormation Sertices. The remainder of this section addresses these questions:

- What are "student outcomes."
- What kinds of students and cutcomes do the Sols questionnaires siudy?
- How were the SoIS questionmares developed and how win they fit together?
- How can studentoutcomes intormation be used?
- What is plane ed for the SOIS question aires?

The subsequent sections of the Hamithot deal with developins:

- A plan for collecting data ahout student outiones
- Guidelin :s for phanning and administering questonnare surves
- Guidelines for using the SOIS Questionnare-Analysis Scevice
- Guidelizes fo: coding, processing, and analyaing the sots s udentout comes data
- Uses for the results of the sols ureer


## What Are Student Outcómes?

There are numerous definitions and explanations of the term student outcomes as related to the postsecondary-education process. Perhaps the most straightforward approach is to define a student outcome as the consequence of a student's enrollment in an educational institution and involvement in its programs. Student outcomes can be cutputs (directly linked to the education proce:s) or they can be impacts (indirectly linkec to the education process). For example, an educational output is a student's acquisition of new facts and skills because of attendance in a particular course. Conver:ely, an educational impact is a student's increased inierest in civic affairs aftur college, stimulated in part by political science and sociology courses taken. Student outccmes of one educationa' system may become inputs to other educational systems. For instance, students receiving associatc degrees from community colleges (community-college outputs) often enter fourvear colleges or universities (the inputs to four-year colleges or aniversities). Similarly, siudent outcomes that occur while a student is enrelled in a program can arect and are inputs to other choices anci siher outcomes of the same educational program. A student's choice of major as a sophomore, for example, clearly affects subsequent educational outcomes.

Several other distinctions also can be made among student outcomes. Some outcomes are intended; others are accidentally produced. Some are easy to measure (the earning of a degree); others are more difficult to measure (the improvement in the ability to think critically). Some outcomes involve change in student knowledge, skills, attitudes, or activities; others preserve student knowledge, -kills, attitudes, or activities.

And so we find that student outcome is defined or explained in numerous ways. For further elaboration and discussion of these distinctions and their sources in the literature, the interested reader is refirred to $A$ Structure for the Outcomes of Postse. ondary Education (Lenning, Lee, Micek, and Service 1977); The Outcomes Structure: An Overviewa and Procedures for Applving It in Postsecondary Instiutions (Lenning 1977); and Previous Attempts to Structure Educational Outcomes and OutcomesRelated Concepts: A Compilation and Rericze of the Literature (Lenanng 1977).

## What Students and Outcomes Do the SOIS Questionnaires Study?

The primary emphasis of the Student-Outcomes Infu-mation Services is on providing information about student outcomes that result from the postsecondaryeducation process. Given this emphasis, the SOIS questionnaires provide an institution with inportant information about st:adents, including their characteristics, backgrounds, goals, attitudes, satisfutions, reasons for making certain decisions, activities, educational plans. occupational choices, and achievements. Both the Community College series and the Four-Year College/University series of th. SOIS questionnaires obtain the following information:

1. Entering-Student Questionnaire. Baseline data obtained by a survey of entering students using this questionnaire include demographirs, educational and occupational experience and plans, sources of anticipated funding for college costs, goals in attending school, and reasons for selecting the particular institution.
2. Continuing-Student Questionnaire. This questionnaire is administered to students who continue to reenroll at the institution or to students who reenroll after being away from the institution for aterm or more. The survey instrument has been designed to obtain data about student characteristics and background, cirrent and long-range goals, employment status, and need for, use of, and satisfaction with services provided by the college.
3. Former-Student Questionnaire. This questionnaire is administered to any student who leaves the institution without completing a formal program and receiving a degree or certificate. In addition to demographic and background data concer:ing students' experiences and progress at the institution, a surve? using this questionnaire provides detailed information about the goals achieved by former students, reasons they did not teturn to this school, and their impressions of various institutional se :ices.
4. Program-Compleier/Graduating-Student Questionnaire. This questionnaire is administered to any student who is about to carn a degree or certificate from a college or universi:y, A survey of stud nts using this questionnaire frovides dentographics, background data, and information on students' satisfaction with various institutional services, as well as students' ratings of how well the school helped them reach their goals. The survey also provides information about students luture educational plans.
5. Recent-ilumn. Questionnaire. A survey of former students enrolled in degree, cert:ficate, or vocational programs provides demographic and backgrenund data on students' experience at the college as well as considerable detail about the first degree program a student enrolled in since leaving the school and the first full-time job a student held since leaving the school. Thece questionnaires are to be administered between three months oo one year atier students have left the school.

## How Weke the Orjestionnaires Developed?

The measures included in the community sollege ques $\because$ naires series and the four-year college and university questionnares series were developed partly as a result of preliminary pilot-test work that began in 1973 and continues today with a number of colleges and universities. In addition to this ongoing field work, NCHEMS-College Board staff reviewed many questionnaires and sarvey reyorts written by institutional researchers studying various aspects of wo-year and four-year college and university educational outcomes. Two surveys (Micek and Arney 1974; Romney 1976) that assessed the relative importance of various outcomes measures to different types of ins'tutional decisionmakers also were used in identifying the items to be included in these questionnaires.

Most items in the two series of questionnaire., have been tested individually, either on previous versions of the SOIS questionnaires or on comparable questionnaires such as the Bureau of Census Educational Attainment Survey or the Cooperative Institutional Research Program Survey of Entering Freshmen that is sponsored jnintly by the American Council on Education ard the Higher Education Research Institute of the University of California at Los Angeles. Pilot testing of both currest series of quastionnaires took place during 1977. (The communitycolleges series was pilot tested at Colorado Mountain College, the Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Commurity College, the Penn Val ey campus of the Metropolitan Community Coliege District, and Yakima Valliy Community College; the Four-Year College/University seres was pilot rested at South Dakota State University, Florida Technological University, and Fort Hays State College.) The final versions of the currently avi...able questionnaires were developed in consultation wit'. actual users of the field-test versions at those institutions. In addition, the new questionnaires have been reviewed by students and former students to enhance the reliability and validity of the instruments.

All five questionnaires in each series can be used in sequence to collect longitudinal data or they can be used separately to collect data about a particular group of stude.? tration 0 these questionnaires, an institution can measure the progress of its st * 'rents and the impacts of the institution on its students. Data obtained from longitudinal outcomes studies can be compared with previous studies within the institution as well as with similar data obtained from otiner institutions that use the SOIS questionnaires. The SOIS comparative data reports, which will be part of the SOIS Response-Analysis Service, will be most valuable for helping an institution compare its study results with comparative data from institutions.

Each questionnaire has been designed to collect the most important information colleges and universities want at an appropriate time. For example, infnrmation about students' satisfaction with various college services is included on the Continuing-Student, Program-Completer/Graduating-Student, and Former-Stud-nt Questionnaires since students' feelings and attitudes about these services
are particularly timely. These questionnaires, contain few questions about students' occupational plans becauss many students have not finalized their plans yet. The Recent-Alumni Questionnaire, on the other hand, intended for students who have been away from the college for three months to a "ear, includes few questions regarding students' satisfaction with college services; instead it contains questions about alumni experiences concernirg their first formal ceucational activities and firs: jobs after graduation.

Generally, institutions should find these instruments most valuable if they are viewed as an integrated system of questionnaires and not as "one-sh.." datagathering instruments. This use will provide an institution w: h important analytic capabilitıes through reviewing longitudinal student-outcomes data over time.

## How Can Student-Outcomes Information Be Used?

The SOIS inistruments and services have b.en developed to help community colleges and four- $?$ ear colleges and universities improve institutional functioning and decisinnmaking. Improvements can occur in a variety of ways. Student sur eys can provide information that suggests the need for institutional change. A study of recent alumni or program completers, for example, may reveal that students from certain programs have difficuny getting accepted in idrther educational programs. An attrition study may revial that a disproportionately high number of hose who dropped out were conce: rated in certain acad mic prog.ams and tha: most left because of dissatisfaction with their major field. Each of these findine, s may suggest the need for program changes.

Ouicomes studies can provid. ''ocumentation of students' atutudes and activities related :o institutional programs and services. For example, community-college personnei involved in the pilot testing of the Former-Siudent Questionnaire were pleased to find that most students who left were satisfied vith their experiences at their schools. As adninistrators had suspected but had not teen able io document, their conmunity colleges were serving the important function of providing courses for the "occasional" student-the person who wants to take a cuurse as time and money permits, but who does not intend to enroll ir. or cemplete a formal degree or certificate program. This information was valuable to the community colleges in demonstrating to funding agencie that the college was performing a useful community service and thar any high student-turnover rate was an expected outcome.

Outcomes studies also can provide information to he!p students with various decisions, such as choosing their program of study. Students are interested in such information as type of job obtained, starting salary, satisfaction with first job, acceptance into further educational programs, and farticularly the current labormarket situation. Such information also is important to students deciding where to enroll. For example, "better information" s"udes conducted at NCHEMS and elsewhere indicate the importance of outcomes information for improving student decisions (Lenniag and Coopor 1979).

Student-outcomes information collected at routine intervals and plotted over time can provide valuable and timely insights into student trends. Studentoutcomes informati $n$ can help detect changes in attrition levels, choices of major field, studen: attitudes, satisfaction with institutional services, decisions about further schooiing, job availability, and so forth. Problems can be detected when they first occur sy that corrective action, when necessary, can be instituted. This approach seems better than waiti.g until a problem is so large that it either cannot be resolved or requires major reallocation of institutional resources. Collecting student-ot:icor:es information that is standardized allows similar institutions to compare the data and therefore is valuable.

While there is always some concern that comparable data exchange among institutions will be improperly used, particularly in a normative sense, enoigh valid reasons exist to justify and support the excharge of comparable studentoutcones information. Comparable data may illuminate problem areas within an institution while also showing that certain problems are common among institutions and perhaps not correctable by individual schools. A small midwestern colicge concerned about changing atrition trends, for example, is investigating the possibility that other similar colleges mighi be experiencing the same problem. Clearly, this will be easier to determine if comparable colleges collect attrition data in the same way. An institution using the Program-Completer/GraduatingStudent Questionnaire may find that graduates from certain program areas have difficulty obtaining jobs. Comparable data from graduating students at other institutions can show whether the problem is universal or is limited to a single institution. Either finding could certainly lead to a different institutional course ufaction.

## What Are the Fetcre Plans for the SOLS Qtemonsames?

Samples of the surrent SOBS Two-Year College Questionmaires ant he Four-Year Collese and Leiversity Questionmares are in appendixes 1 and 2, respectively. The questionnaires are ababable to two-year colleges, four-yeat colleges and universities, ar d can be purchased directly from NC.HEDS. In addition, NCIEMS and the College Board will be dereloping a soxth instrument, a follow-up questionmaire for alumn out of college three to five sears. This questionnaire will be pilot tested during 1979 and wint be aded whoth series of SOIS questionnaires when testing and revisions are finished.

# Developiing a Student-Outcomes Data-Collection Plan 

Many col’.ges need to know not only about student attitudes, activities, and plans at partic 1 lar points in time, but also about changes in those plans, activities, and attitudes over time. For example, some institutions that need information about why specific kinds of students are dropping out will conduct an atrition study. Ortai, may wish to routinely monitor students' progress through their institution and treat an attrition study as only one part of an overall plan for collecting longitudinal data. The questiommares dereloped in crabunction with the Handboot are intended for both situations. That is, cach questionnaire can ! e used by itself to survey a particular student group at a certain point in time-a cross-sectional survev plan. The questionmaires can alse e used together to study a student cohort group over time by continually monitoring mdividual student plans, attitudes, and decisions-a longitudinal sur: ey phan-to see how they change orer time.

## A Plan for Cola acting Stcdent-()e comes Data

Figure 1 illustrates the typal flow of sudents through colleges and unicersities and shows six suggested data-collection points:

- As a student enters (for a certif cate or degree program or sele ed courses)
- While a studem is cnrolled

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- After a student leaver wi:hout giadmating or completing a formal program
- As a student completes a program or gr iduates (with cither a degree or certificate)
- Three months to one year after a sudent hess completed a progran: (degree, certificate, or other)
- Three to five years after a student has graduated

The six data-collection point, suggested reflect the philosophy u: derlying the operations of most colleges and universities. Typically, college students enro.l for a variety of reasons, ranging from personal eurichment or preparing for professional examinations to secking a degree or certificate. Many stucients, especially those in the traditional 18 -to-22 age range, continue from term to term until they meet their formal educational objectives. Others "drop in" and "drop out" to tak: courses as money, time and interest aliow and, as a result, do not move regularly and contimuousty throush a prescribed program. Tr neak of dropouts makes little sense in such ases, since these students never enrohet in a degre: or certificate program from which they could drop out. This indicates the importance of distinguishing between former students and graduat sor program completers, and follo, ving up the students wh.. complete a degree or certificate program. Question iaires for surveying tudents at five of the six points are currently avalable, atd a adestionnaire for following up students thre to "we years after the have completed the.: degree or certit cate program will soon be added.

However, not all information collected at the six stages should be considered outcomes information in the sease of effects, . stud nts caused by the institution. Rather, a good comprehensive plan for collening studen-ourcomes data that pemits the assessment of student change orer time must include the gathering of data about students' abilities, be kground, and intentions before and during their enrollment. That is, s! eh ptan must proside for the collection of baseline data. Given these baseline data, the assessment of student outcomes (changes in aspirations, type of job obtaned, graduateschoo progam acepted into, sarisfaction with experiences and services offered by the college) an be nore efficacoun,., because of the ability to control for tarious types of student-input variables (age, sex, racialethnic status, handicapped status, high-school (iPA. SAT or ACT seores, work experience).

There data-collection plans are flexible. Some instations may ant aced or want to "urvey students between the time they enter and graduate. Chers may want to add an additional data-collection point.

## Schenelms and Admeistramonc yeabs

Once decisions have been made reg ding the sese trhe cealuation yuestions and the sursey instruments to be used to obtain intomation needed on answer these
questions, two important issues must be confronted: sehedulins-the optimal time of year to administer each survey instrument, and eycling-how frequenty. cach type of questionnaire should be administered.

In general, surveys should be conducted at about the tine that outiones or events of interest heppen to the student. Ihis ensures that students can more casily recall their feelings, atitudes. reasons for decisions, and so forth. Thus the Entering-Student Ouestionnaire should be given to students with confirmation/ aceeptance materials when they register or shorty after they enroli. The Pros, ram-Completer'Graduating-St deat Ouestionanire should be given aboat (w.) to four Wecks before graduation. The Continuing-Student Questionnaire can be adminis ered any time during the academic gear, depending on the information to be collected from the surver. The Fomer-Student Questionnaire should be administered as soon as stw? ith. in hate not returacd can be identified. (Many institutons may want i conduct on!? one former-student sursey-for example, an atrition surver-ach vear. In :hi" inst...ere a good administration time is shorly after the start of a new term. Spring semester or winter quarter is gocd it an institution wistes ta stager the time of amintman of the barious surseys in be pla...

Finally, hecause many of the questions deal ${ }^{\circ}$ :h students firs jobs or first College choices iollosing praduator. the Re en ani Questionnaire should be administered thre months to a wear ater repowents graduate or leave college. Surves that ask alumn sabies, highest chational degrees earned, and other similar information are best administered several years after gtaduation when graduates have begun wiollow relative stable carcer paths. Figure 2 summarizes these scheduling usportwor.

The se cond isuc whe comat ad an developing a pan for routhely collecting



 tution data of suftian importane an! racuance on bitity the cos: and effort repuired to adminater ad process the question mares.

There are no deminse answers: cath institution must determine its own answers based on : $\therefore$ resources and intirmation neds. If there were few or no t. straints on coss and staftine and litheoncern aout orerburdening students with questionnares. instimuth might want to administer each type of questionnaire one or mo $e$ unces a year. Since these factur are in fact constraints at most colleges, conde ing survers soferumbe is uncealistic. Surves can be staggered effectively across several yars if insittations ramber that for most purposes


 $\because$ ald he in ated : fownile

FIGURE 2
Schedule for Implamentinc; Data-(ohmemon Plan

| Type of Sursey | If Administered Once | If Administored at Each Opportunity | Additural Cos ments |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Entering Student | Beginaing of fall tern | Beginning of each term that new students are accepted | Might be included with registration materials |
| Continuing Student | Neat the point in time most appropriate for the information being collected |  |  |
| Program Completer/Graduating Student | Ne: the end of th.: spring term | Near the end of each term that students graduate | Might be included with materials for !raduation |
| Former Student | Two weeks to one month after beginning of fall term, spring semester, winter quarter, or spring quartir | As suon after beginning of new Term that nonreturning students from previous term can be identified | Might be included with materials required for withdrawal or !eare of absence |
| Recent Alumni | Three mon hs to one year after spring graduation | Three montins to a sear atier grasuation | It is especially important when asking graduates about first job and first educational program after graduation to administer the questionnaire no more than nine months after piaduation, to avoid confusic, about which job and which |
| Alumni Follow- $\mathrm{U}_{\mathrm{p}}$ | Thre to five years atier gaduation when alam : have begun to follow relatively stable career paths |  |  |

longitudinal data will be the most useful to an institution (particularly for the purposes of investigatiny changes in student plans, attitudes, and decisions over time). Therefore while most institutions will not want to administer every survey every year, the plan should encompass the need to at kast survey the same students over time. There are two solutions to this problem, cach based on the premise that data from all entering students are eritical to the development of a longitudinal data base:

- Survey every enterag studen: roup and then follow up eath group as needed $c$ : according to a . . clical plan such as is suggested by model 1 in fig :re 3.
- Sursey all or a sample of sicectad ertering student groups at set iatervals (every two or three years) and follow up each group of sureyed entering students as needed or according to a cyclical plan such as is suggested by model 2 in figure 3 .

By first collecting data from entering students and then basing the rest of the datacollection cycle on these students, an institution wil: be assured of haring the critical information available in a longitudinal plan dealing with sth ... aipiat - plans, intentions, student background, and so forth.

Institutions should consider many other tariations of the outcomes datacollection cycle. For example, another possible data-collection plan would be to administer the Entering-Student survey every two years and at times appropriate for each subsequent questionnaire, and then follow up the initial group of students as they progress through and out of the institution. Another plan would be to administer the Entering-Studerit and Former-Student surveys each year out conduct the Continuing-Student, Program-Completer/Graduating-Student, and RecentAlumni surveys only to everv third year's group of entering students. In this plan, every third year the institution would have new information concerning graduates, current students, and alumi/former students; each year they would have up-to-date information about entering students and former or no returning students.

FIG:RI: 3

## Example Struy Am: Nitrathon Cyctes



# Guidelines for Planning and Administering Questionnaire Surveys 

As defined by A.N. Oppennein (1973), a survey is a planned data-collection effort for the furpose of describing or predicting as a guide to action, or for the purpose of explaining the relationships between two or more variables. While most survey researchers attest that in practice there are as many purposes as there are surveys, they also agree that foremost in any survey effert is developing a clear definition and understanding of the objectives of the survey. To achieve this, the first step is delineating and clarifying specific problems to be studied, determining, the critical questions to be answered, and considering possible uses for the survey results. This step is central to every survey because once accomplished, all the remaining steps in the survey process are "means to an end" and will flow logically.

In establishing the purposes of the survey, it is important to obiain input from those who wiil use the fimdiags of the study. The larger the group to use the fendinge, the more ciiverse the objectives of the study will be. Generally the more objectives to a study, the greater its complexity and cost. Therefore it may be critical to set priorities among the objectives given time and moretary constraints.

In addation to identifying the specific purposes or objectives of the survey in this initial step, two other key questions should be considered:

- W'hat concepts must be defined before the survey process continues?

In the formulation of any su-vey effort, certain concepts are used to communicate and organize one's thinking relative to the problems or questions in fouas. For example, in a survey of former students, one
question of interest might address respondents' satisfaction with their vocational preparation. "Satisfaction" and "vocational preparation" in this context need to be translated into specific terms, so everyone clearly understands $\cdots$ it constitutes the acceptable indicators of these concepts.

- What assumption: will be made?

In many surveys, it is impossible to control all clements of the survey, such as the validity of certain parts of a questionnaire or the adequacy of the sample. Therefore stating the assumptions of a survey is important since they may affect the survey process as well as the interpretation of the survey results.

## Institution-wide Involvement

Many different institutional personnel and constituencies may have an interest in the development and results of a questionnaire directed at students and former students. One vehicle for involving institutional staff and other interested groups is to establish an advisory committee comprised of students, faculty, and alumni. Not only can a cominittee of this type make recommendations concerning the administration and use of the questionnaire, but the committee can also suggest modifications to the questionnaire. Representatives from Student Services, Al:mni Development, Admissions, Career Placement, Academic Administration, Vocational Administration, Data Proc.ssing, and Public Information offices may have an interest in the findings of the student-outromes surveys. It may not be possible to include all of these representatives on the committee, but their involvement in certain stages of survey planning and implementation will help ensure better response rates, as well as facilitate actual use of the questionnaire results.

The involvement of a number of institutional personnel will guard against overlapping activities conducted in a number of different areas within the institution. In many institutions-large ones in particular-redundant survey efforts :requently are conducted by several offices, wasting time and money.

## Supvey-Design Consideizations

Once the objectives of the survey have teen determined and the specific research/ evaluation questions identified, the appropriate survey design must be selected. Generally two basic designs-cross-sectional or lengitudinal-are considered. A cross-sectional design is appropriate if the purpose of the survey is to collect data from a population of students only at a single point in time. A survey of former students-those who left the college before completing their degree program-to determine their reasons for leaving, their impressions while at college, and their current activities and plans is an example of a cross-sectional design.

If the purpose of the survey is to describe and explain changes in sturent progress, attitudes, or plans, over a period of time, a longitudinal survey design is appropriate. in deciding to do a longitudinal study, i'aree primary designs are to be considered: trend, cohort, and panel. In a trend design, a general population (for exampie, students who enter the college) is sampled and surveyed at difierent times. For example, a trend-study design could be used to examine the changes in goals, attitudes, and aspirations of students who enter the c. Hege the fall terms of 1978, !980, and 1982.

A cohort design studies the same population of students at different points in time although the samples drawn from the population will be different. An example of a cohort-survey design is surveving the entire entering groun of students in the fall term of 1978 and then drawing random sumples from this same student grour one year later, at the time of program completion, and so on. In this design, it is possible to assess changes in a particular group of students based on different samples of that group over time.

While both trend and cohort study designs allow the assessing of changes it: a group over time, neither indicates which students change; this hinders attempts to explain why char.ges occur. Pancl design. avoid this problem, since they involve the collection of data from the same sample of students at different points in time. For this reason, the sample for such a study is referred to as the "panel." This type of longitudinal survev design has some problems, however. For example, attrition of students who compose the panel is a severe limitation. So is the potential Hawithorne Effect that can occur (panel members become less representative of the population from which they were originally selected, because they are continually singled nut to respond to various data sequests). For an in-depth discussion of the auvantages and disadvantages of panc! studies, cohort studies, and tre d studies, see Survey Rescarch ifethods (Babbic 1973).

## Sampling Considerations

$\therefore 7$ every survey, the question must be asked: Should the institution survey all students or will a sample of students suffice? And if an institution elects to use a sample of students, how stou!d the sumple be selected, and how many should be in the sample? Again, the answers to these questions will ultimately be decided by staffat individual institutions.

For a variety of reasons, the total porulation of students should be surveyed if at all possible. Surveying the entire population avoids the necessity for restrictive assumptions about how a sample of that population's responses corresponds with those of the entire student body and provides a hedge against inadequate sampling. Jurveying the total population also eliminates the need for random sampling or any similar procedure to identity which individuals in the population are to receive the questionnaire.

Because administering questionnaires to all students can be costly, particularly
for colleges with a iarge enrollment, some institutions are unable to survey all students. One cer.promise is to survey all enteriag students to obtain baseline data and ther to select random samples of students from this population for administering later survere.

If an institution decides against a survey of the total population the study will be restricted to a sample of the total population. However, careful procedures must be followed to ensure that the sample is large enough to permit valid inferences about the total population. The initial sample size for entering students also must take into aceount (1) the number of students a ailable for surveving in subsequent years, and (2) whether the dati-collection plan is longitudinal. Probably the easiest and most reliable method for choosing a sampie of students is to select a simple random sample of students.' Other sampling plans can also be considered (stratified random sampling, cluster sanıpling, and so forth). Those interested in a detailed discussion of sampling procedures may wish to consult Elementary Survey Sampling (Mendenhall, Ott, and Schaeffer 1971), a good introductory treatment, or Sampling Tcchniques (Cochran 1963), a more technically sophisticated discussion.

Whether the institution chooses to survey the entire population or a sample, it is important to obtain as high a response as possible. One aim of every survey is to generalize from returned responses the entire population of students of interest. As significant numbers of surveyed students fail to icspond, response bias may occur, and the ability o reliably gener lize to the entire population on the basis of returned questionnaires deteriorates. Cienerally response bias operates such that those who complete questionnaires are nore positive toward the school and have stronger opinions than those who fail to respond. Response bias and straiegies for increasins. esponse rate are discussed in more depth in subsequent se tions of ine Hundtwe.

## 

The student-omeomes questiomaires developed be NCHIBMS and the College Board cen be obtained by using the order form included with the Handbook or by writing to NCHEMS lubiataions, P.(). Mrawer P, Boulder, Colorado 80302 and requesting the ten and number of enth gustionnaire needed. Institutions that wish to use one or all of the questionatires mat obtain them in the following way:

Puritase in halk. The NCHEMS-College Board SOIS makes the individual questionnaires awal hle in bulk at a charge that covers the cost of

[^2]printing and mailing questionnaires. Questionnaires ordered in this manner will be shipped within firs of recent of the order, facilitang rapid implementation of a survey. (See the SOIS order form for specific cost details.)

A question frequently asked by those reviewing the SOIS questionnares tor the first tine is whether certain iems (such as sex, racelehne group, gade point average, are needed since the institation likely will have this information on it master-file records. Eliminating those kinds of items produces shorter yuestionnaires ard might encourage better response rates. Howerer, duplicatas these kinds of items in the standard SOIS questionmares is preferred because:

- The institutional master file may not include some of the items for all students or some items may be missing from the files of some students
- The data in the institutional master tiles may be outdated for some students
- Exen if the datare complete and up-todate, it may be administratively impossible for the survey rescarch to obtain access to the master file
- Some institutions may wish to adminisier the questionaires anonymously and consequently cannot acese the master file for mathing
- Mismatching questionnaires with mester files may eliminate valuable analysis capabilitics tor certain respondents

Colleges with information in and acces to institutional mater files for whom these issues are not relecant may request permission to nodify and chupicate the SOIS questionnaires locally, $\therefore \therefore$ us eliminating redundant itens.

Some institutions may wish to add "local items" to the standardized SOIS questionnaires, to collect information relevant wheir local situatoms and sudy needs. The SOIS questionnaires have been desigied for such uses. In each questionnaire, spaces have been set aside tha: allow respondents to register their answers for up to 15 locally developed items.

Generally, the process for adding local items to the SOIS questioname involves there basic steps:

1. The local itens are developed. (In doing so, the response set fire any single item can be no more than nine responses. This restriction is necessary for purposes of keypunching and analyzing the responses to each item.)
2. Specific instructions are written that tei respondents how to register their answers to each local item in the appropriate space in the SOIS standard questionnaire.
3. The attachment that includes the instructions and the local items is printed and attached to the SOIS questionnaire.

## FIGC'FE!

Example of Siace Providfd os ahe Questionnahfas
Fóiodditionai. l.eral Questimas

## ADE:TIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION




FIGURE 5

## As Example of a Set of Local Questions Addedto a Former-Stldent Questhocinaire

 SECTION of the quesiommatre.
19. How many montlo has tran s.... wous litt our
 () ()ne montoor lew

1 Iwoto sx months
2 Sexen montis to one vart
3 Morte thon ame vear





: ( )ne-fitht.
1 Jwotmer

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? (.anm tor is mite amion tambs

- Iratelnas:

(1) 1):1:0.9

Figure 4 shows the spaces provideu in each of the SOIS yuestinnmares for responding to locally developed items. Figure 5 presents a sample of a set of local items that have been developed as an attachment to an SOIS Former-Student Questionnaire. Further information about the developmeat of lucal items and sorre suggested local items are presented in appendix 3.

## Alternatives for Administering the SoIS Questocivales

Some of the questionnaires in the SOIS series (such as the Former-Student and Recent-Alumni) probably can be administered only by mail since the intended recipien, s may no longer be accessible in any other way. Others, particularly the Entering-Student and Continuing-Student Questionnaires, can be administered to students either by mail or some handout procudure.

In instances where specific students have been identified as respondents, arrangements w:ll need to be made to deliver the questionnaires to the students. Also this will gencrally limit administration to mailing rather than handing out. If the sample has been drawn from official institutional rolls, mailing labels should be prepared at the ime of sampling. Another aiternative, feasible only with small samples, is to seek out the students and deliver the questionnaires This has advantages, if there is time to wait for the siudent to complete the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher.

Where it is nor necessary to assure that specific students respond to the questionnaire oi where the total student body is to participate in the study, a number of different methods for adminisinting the survey is avalable. One alternative is to give the questionnaires to instructors who will distribute and then collect them during class meerings. If all students are required to take a certain class, a sample of class neetings can be identifed, perhaps all those meering at 10:00 A.m. on Monday and 4:06 r.m. on Tuesday. If this method is used, care should be taken to assure that patterns of student attendance do not bias the sample. For example, fewer older, married and employed students may te enrolled in classes meeting during the day. Provision also should be made for absentecism and failure of some inseructors to administer the questionnares.

Another method of using a captive andience is to distribute and then collect the questionnaires from sudents in the library. A sample collected in this manner, however, will be biased by the students who need library services on the day when the questionnaire is distributed. The accuracy of students' responses may also be diminished because they see the questionnaire as an instrusion on time otherwise planned for study.

Institutions with advance registrations can send the questionnaire out with registration mate, i. Is and request the material be returned as part of the rormal registration procedutc: This method is effective when either the entire population or a san le of stud $n t$ : is used. The adrance planning time required for a study will eextended to the extent that the registration packets are prepared in advance
of their distribution and the length of time that students are given to return the registration materials.

Some groups of students possibly may be excluded if this mechanism is med. The transfer student who does not apply for admission in advance enoush to be included in pre-registration, a student with arademic difficulties who is not permitted to pre-register, those who cannot see counschors in time 11 arrange shedules before pre-registration, and students who are ursure whether they will return
 not to register if the questionnaire is seen as an unne essaty addition to what and already be perceived as a registration procedare thet is foo complicated.

Institutions that requite students to report for ectistation can use that co. : to administer the questioname. Forms can be derrathed to students as they enter the registration ar a, space cum be pervided for the completion of the forms, and collection accomplished at the exit or at the pace where fees :re paid. The tume needed to complete the questionmare can slow down the registration process, but this may not be a scrious disadrantage. All students who presumably will attend during the academic period an be incluced in the ste ? 3 , or a sample can be prepared by distributing the forms at varions times during the registation period. If the later method is used, an institution should be certain that cycles of registration (for example, trensfers on one day and tirst-time stadents on another day) or tink of registration (for example, sturnts who are working presumably will register in the evenings or c. weck or at lunch hour) dees not bias the sample.

A separate mailing of a y.ene iomare directly to the atudents residence assures that the questionnaire will receive more atertion (at least initiatly) because it is not included with some other registration matrial that might be more interesting or more important. Further, it permits students to complete the yuestionatire at their leisure with perhaps more thought directed at the answers. On the other hand, it permits the student total tredom to toss the yucstionmare in a wastebasket. Also, if the questionnaire is amainistered anonymously, there is no way to tell how the group who returas the yuestmmare corresponds to the werall group.

## Cover Letters and Memos for hime Sols (Qummomambs

Whethe quest. nnaires are mated out or namied to students, cover letters or memos for the initial distribution and for ant subsequent follow-up distributions should be inchuded, explaining the purpose of the survey and how the results will be used. These lerters or memos should be printed on institutional stationery and, is possible, signed by the president. The letter should:

- Convey the importance of a response from the student
- State that responses will! e confidential
- Emphasize the value to the statemt in responding to the questionnaire
- Not patronize the student
- Provide clear and specific directiois about how to fill out the questionnaire. (In particular, the letter shouid tell respondent winether they should complete the Personal Identification Section of the questionnaire. Also, the letter should inform the respondent if local itens have been attached.
- State when and how the questiontaire should be returned.

If a follow-up letter is sent, it should emphasize again that responses are confidential and should remind respondents of the importance to the institution of receiviner as many completed questionnaires as possible.

## Cost Materials, and Personnel for Administering ihe Questionialres

Figure 6 show, a list of materials required tor the initial contact in mail and handout surveys aiong with their estimated costs. Costs are based on a survey of 1,000 students; surveys of larger or smaller numbers of students should be approxiniately proportional in cost to those shown. Most costs are selfexplanatory in figure 6, except perhaps the first-class mailing expense. Research indicates that personalizing the survey materials increases the response rate substantially. (See Linsky 1975 for a good overview of this body of literature.) In particular, studies snow that using first-class postage, particularly commemorative stamps, is especially effective in increasing (as much as 10 percent) the response rate (Hensley 1974; Champion and Sear 1969). Because a good response rate is important, the added expense of first-class postage on the outside mailing envelopes orer bulk rate is justifiable. First-class mail has the added actantage of being forwarded by the post office. Hensley's research also show's the importance of including a return envelope different from the outside entelope; he also concluded that the least expensive choice, a business-reply-printed-return envelope, achieses the highest response rate when combined with a commemorative stamp on the outside envelope.

One study (Rossman and Astin 197.) indicates that nonprofit permits on the outer envelope combined with a follow-up mailing using first-class postage yields response rates only 2 percent to 3 percent less than the first-class postage on the initial mailing. Thus an institution should con ider using nonprofit permit postage on the outer envelope and first-class postage only for those envelopes returned undeliverable by the post office. There will probably be increased personnei time (and a slower overall response time) required to monito the reti rned envelopes and address and send out new envelope , but for many community colleges, extra staff time is more readily a a ailable than extra sources of funds.

Other mailing costs not shown in figure 6 are those required for either typing names and addresses of students on the envelopes or generating and affixing computer-printed name and address labels. These costs vary depending on the ins:itution but should be included in cost estimates for the survey. At least one stud: rpenter 197:-75) showed that personalizing the cover letter by manually.

FIGLRE:


| matierials | SUAB1:R"• | I:xplanathe | Stimatel Co.its* |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  | first Class Mail | Nonprofit Permit Mail | Handout |
| Quentinnaires | 1,000 | 'stimatatatar | 5100.00 | \$100.00 | \$100.00 |
| Cover I enters | 1.000 | Premed on whical stationery | 16.00 | 16.60 | 16.60 |
| Reiurn Envelopes (Size No. 9) | 1.010 | Busa: :'ss reply return encelopes <br> (a) Prouing costs <br> (h) Powage . stsat $\$ 15$ each $\times 300$ revarned | 16.80 45.00 | 16.80 45.00 |  |
| Mailing Envelopes (Size No 10) | 1.900 | Standard humbes size | 19.80 | 19.80 |  |
| First Class Postage | 1.0101 |  | 150.00 |  |  |
| Tonprofie Permis Firsi Class Postage for Unculiverables | 1.000 | (a) Xinprolit permins a 5.027 each <br> (b) Estimated 10 percent undeliserables al 3.15 tach |  | 27.00 15.00 |  |
| TOTAL |  |  | 3.18 .20 | 24030 | 116.60 |
| Per Studemt Comat Costs |  |  | $\therefore .35$ | \$ . 2.4 | \$ .12 |
| Per Studen Respunse Costs (estimanme 301 cepomes) |  |  | ¢ 1.16 | \$ .80 | \$ . 39 |

- Asof 1974

typing names ard addresses increased the response rate, though not significantly, over computer or machine-produced names and addresses. Thus if ath other factors are equal, typing students' names and addresses is prefered. But if the institution can produce the computer-generated labels at a substantial savings and is looking for ways to cut the cost o the survey, computer-produced labels are a. reasenable alternative.

The other costs incurred in conducting a survey are primarily personnel costs. It is diffecult to put dollar amounts oa these costs because taey will vary from institerion to institution depending on salaries and time invested. The following potential personnel requirements, giren without extimated costs, should be considered:

- Surve administrator
- Secretarial time for teping questionnaire and corer letter drafts and final copies
- Computer personnel time for creating survey sanple lists and address labels (or clerical time if lists are created by hand, plus typist time for typing envelcpe names and addresses)
- Ar oroximately 20 hours of clerical time for stuffing as. : mailing 1,000 questionnaires
- Cesrical time for recording and trasking returned questionnaires
- Keypuncher time ior $n$ anching responses
- Computer-data analys time for analyeng returned questionnaires
- Report-writer'stime
- Secretarial time for typing report


## Tracking Malmediot Questionambes

If an SOIS questmonaire is 1 , be mailed to students or former students, the institution needs to follow additional procelures to keep track of the survey. The initiat mailing of questionnares can begin as soon as the questionnaire, cover letter. enielopes, aduress labels, and a list (in the same order as the address labels or typed addressed envelope:.) of each stulent's II) number and/or name, and address. This list can, and probably should, be the survey status list shown in figure 7 .

After the initial mailng is completed, a set of tracking sheets should be prepared for recerding the status of each questionnaire as it returns. Figure 8 shows a sample cracking sheet. If institutional records are computerized or it nomes and addresses of student: are keypu, hed to produce labels, these tracking sheets can he prodaced by the computer: otherwise they must be eyped. The tracking sheet should contain:

FIGlRE 7
Suggested Form for l.isting of Sample and Survey Statts

ID

NAME
$\therefore$ DIDRESS

## FIRST MAMIN(; <br> Undeliverable Unusable Uable Date Nent Undeliverable Unusable Uable

12

## FlGiCRI: 8



| 11) | NAME: | ADIDRI:SS | FRSST MAll.iN(; |  |  |  | SECOND MAILIN(; |  | Usable |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  | Undeliverable | Unusable | Usable | Date Sent | Undeliverabie | Unuasble |  |
| 0122356 | Mark indrews | 314 W. 8ih Are. <br> Norfolk, VA 10S23 | 29 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9262230 | Alice Byers | Apt. ${ }^{3}$ B 9815 Mardand Ave. I os Angeles, (A 9812.? |  |  | 2115 |  |  |  |  |
| 1135976 | Rotori Davis | 213 I : 11 hb Susect <br> New York, NY loz? |  |  |  | 2129 |  |  |  |
| 4390178 | Susan IFord | 91 Brand I)rise <br> Rockamay, Nilloul |  | 2/11 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21239.17 | David ${ }^{\text {a }}$ rris | 123 Table llew Drise Boulder, (.() 80303 |  |  | 2111 |  |  |  |  |

1. Student's ID number, nanue, and address
2. Blank columns for recording the date the following information is received:
a) Date returned 'y post office as undeliverable
b) Date unusable questionnaire returned or letter received; student ineligible or unable to respond (student improperly identified for sample, refuses to respond, deceased, and so forth)
c) Date usable questionnaire returned
3. Blank columns for recording second anailing isformation:
a) Date second set of mate ials sent
b) Date returned by post office as undeliverable
c) Date unusable questionnaire or letter receited; student ineligible or unable to respond
d) Date usable questionnaire returned

Figure 9 shows a tracking shee with examples of entries by :he school.
As questionnaires are returned, one person should be in charge of recording this information for each student. Some kind of identifying mark (such as a check $[\checkmark$ ]) should be placed on each questionnaire as the proper information is recorded on the tracking sheers. To save all reiurned materials (eem undeliverable questionnares) until the end of the survey is a good prestice.

## Follow-UpiMahing Strategies

There is uneouivocal evidence tha follow-up atitities do increase response rates in mail surveys (Etzel and Walker 197.4; Hinrichs 1975; Wiseman 1973). There is den evience that a cash reward increases the rate of return (Hackler and Bourgette 1973; Huck and Gleason 197.4 Wiseman, 1973). A selected tibliography by Marshall and Gee (1975) and an article ccacerned with stimulating responses to mailed questionnaires by Linsky (1965) both provide up-to-date, in-depth information about techniques for maximizing response rates in surveys. Rather than review here various methods and the merits, several strategies appropriate for outcomes studies and consistent with recent research will be given for increasing response rates through follow-u•• activities.

The first follow-up strategy is to send out a complete duplicate se: of materials rather than a simple follow-up letter or a postcard reminder. A study by Etzel and Walke: (1074) found that a letter with duplicate questionnaire and ree..rn envelope materials did not increase the response rate over the follow-up letter without duplicates. However, a study by Rnssman and Astin (1974) in which respondents were actually college students, indicates a significantly lower response rate when no duplicate materials were sent. It is recommended therefore that a duplicate set of materials be sent to those who do not return questionnares.

FIGURE 9
Estimated Costs of Materials for Four Types of Foliow-Ur Mallings to 700 Students

| MATERIALS | NUMBER** | EX'lanation | lstimated costs* |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  | First Class Mail |  | Nonprofit Permit Mall |  |
|  |  |  | No Dime | Dime | No Dime | Dime |
| Questionuaires | 700 | Estimated at \$.10 | \$ 70.00 | \$ 70.00 | \$ 70.00 | \$ 70.00 |
| Cover Letters | 700 | Printed on oflicial stationcry | 11.60 | 11.60 | 11.60 | 11.60 |
| Return Envelopes | 700 | Business reply return envelopes <br> (a) Printing costs <br> (b) Postage costs at $\$ 15$ cach $\times 200$ returned | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 |
|  |  |  | 30.00 | 30.00 | 30.00 | 30.00 |
| Mailing Envelopes (size No. 10) | $\therefore 0$ | Standard busimess size | 13.85 | 13.85 | 13.85 | 13.85 |
| First Class Postage | 700 | First class. commemorative stampsat \$.15 eosh | 105.00 | 105.00 | -18.90 |  |
| Nonprotit Permit | 700 | di $\$ 0.27$ cach |  | 70.00 |  | 18.90 |
| Dime | 700 |  |  |  |  | 70.00 |
| TOTAI. |  |  | \$2.42.20 | \$312.20 | \$156.16 | \$226.10 |
| Per Student Contact Conts |  |  | § . 35 | \$ . 45 | \$ . 22 | \$ . 32 |
| Per Student Response Costs (estmating 2001 responses) |  |  | \$ 1.21 | \$ 1.56 | $\$ .78$ | \$ 1.13 |
| - As of 1079. <br>  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The second is to send out a duplicate set of materials with a dime enclosed. Cash rewards (even as little as a dime) have been effective in increasing response rates beyond the increase due to a letter and questionnaire alone. (It has been suggested that a monetary reward tends to make respondents feel bad about accepting the money without giving anything in return.) If the extra expense of the dime can be borne by the institution, this method is preferable to the duplicate set of materials without the dime because it could bring a greater number of responses. It should be noted that the cash rexard is recommended only for the follow-up mailing (not the initial mailing) because of evidence (Hackler and Bourgette 1973; Hick and Gleason 1974) that monetary reward need only be given after the first mailout to those who are not responding to the questionnaire.

A telephone reminder is a third type of follow-up activity that is effective in increasing the rate of returned questionnaires. This is particularly appropriate for a community college, since it serves a finite gec,graphical area where most students can be reached by a local call, even after leaving the school. It this condition is met añd the institution has arailable staff to make the calls, the cost of this method is less than a second wave of questionnaires and almost certainly is more effective.

There are certainly many combinations of thllow-up techniques possible. The follow-up variations suggested here were selected as most appropriate given research findings and budgetary considerations at most collepes. Staff at individuial institutions will have to decide which of the three main follow-up strategies (or some combination) given in the discussion above is best for them. The important point is to plan for and carry out some kind of follow-up activity.

## Checklist of Survey-Planning and Administration Actiomes

The following activities are required to prepare for and conduct the studentoutcomes survers outined a the Hambonk:
!. Decide on the objectives of the survey and the specific study questions to be answered.
2. Write out a plan and schedule for the entire surver.
3. Study the appropriate questoonnaire to ensure that it will provide data appropriate for the survey objectives.
4. Meet with a committe of potential institutionat users, of the survey results to discuss the survey objec.ives, phat, schedule, and questionnaire.
5. Decide whether to survey all students in the population or a sample of a specified pereentage.
6. Set up a method for identifying sudents in the population. I. sampling is to be done, also set up a method fo: randomly selecting stadents from the population.
7. Decide what method will be used to distribute questionnaiies.
8. If sample is selected and/or mail distribution is to be used, produce a typed or computer-printed list of all students to be surveyed. If using the computer, also generate a computer file of all students in the survey.7. Prepare survey materials (questionnaires, cover letters, follow-up materials, maiiing envelopes, return envelopes, postage, address labels, tracking sheets).10. Prepare a set of follow-up procedures.
11. Hand out or mail the questionnaires.
12. As questionnaires are ierurned, record appropriate information on tracking shects.13. Implement the follow-up plan to maximize response rate.14. Once the questionnaires are returned, implement coding and data processing procedures.
15. Conduct the data analysis needed to answer the study questions.16. Develop the reports for disseminating the results of the study.

# Using the SOIS Questionraire-Analysis Service 

One problem in conducting a student-outcomes study's the need to develop an analytic framework and computer software to facilitate analysis of the data collected. Thus the NCHEMS-College Board Student Outcomes Information Services (SOIS) includes procedures that will permit computer analyses of the student-outcomes questionnaires. The procedures provide an irstitution wita a ready-made analysis package that contains frequenc; and percentage distributions for every item as well as appropriate means, medians, and standard deviations; cruss-tabulations of most items showing differential resporises for sungroups of respondents; comparative, summary data tron questionaases collected ty wher, similar institutions that have participated in SOIS; and, perhaps mcst importantly, quick turn-around for processing questionnaires. Specifically, SOIS can:

- Keypunch the destionnaires collected by the mintion
- Perform computer analyses using the standad Q! developed by the College Eoard
- Provide an easy-to-read, computer-generated report for each questionnaire, including statistical tables that can easi!y be inserted into locally produced interpretive reports

The SOIS procedures for analyzing the questionnaires give the institutional administrator a quick, inexpensive, and simple way of communicating student-outcomes information to the various campus and community audiences.

## How to Use the Questionni: ?e-Analysis Service

The SOIS questionnaire-analysis procedures are initiated after the local administrator has administered the questionnaires, collected the completed forms, and inspected them to ensure an acceptabie level of accuracy and completeness. The procedures end when a computer-produced analytical report is mailed back to the institution, usually within two weeks.

In general, the institutional administrator should inspect at least a handful of the returned questionnaires to ensure that students have followed directions and that no inconsistencies have occurred in the kinds of responses received. In some instances, the administrator n:ay discover problems that can be corrected through hand-coding a particular response before forwarding the questionnaire for analysis. In other instances, an inspection of the questionnaires before keypunching may reveal problems that can not be corrected but that can b, discussed in the interpretive report.

The SOIS questionnaire-analysis procedures assume that all student responses have been made in a format that can be keypunched without further editing or coding. The standard questionnaires request that all responses be made in such formats. If local quest ons have been added, however, the administrator should veriiy that they have beer correctly entered in the Additional Questions section of the questionnaire. Some local questions may require that students write in their responses. For these responses to be included in the computer analyses, the local administrator will need to code them in the appropriate box of the Additional Questions section of the form.

Any hasd coding should be performed by a persca who has been given explicit coding instructions. The coder should be told to set aside any questionnaire for which there is an ambiguous response, so that the survey administrator may decide how to code it.

After the completed questionnaires have been inspected and any coding performed, they shouid be securely bundled, together with a fully-completed Batch Transmittal Form, and i,-warded to the SOIS Directur, College Board, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New lork 10019.

A sample Batch Transmittal Form is shown in Figure 10. Each institution participating in SOIS will be provided with a cupy of this form when its questionnaire order is filled. A separate Batch Transmittai Fo:m must be submitted for every type of puestionnaire (En' aring-Student, Continuing-Student, and FormerStudent) and for eziry adm: "st ation of a questionnaire for which a separate analysis is desired.

For example, three separate Batch Transmittal Forms must be completed if an institution: has administered the Entering-Student Questionnaire to new students in the fall, winter, and spring quarters; is transmitting all three administration.'s questionnaires to the College Board at one time; and desires separate reports for each entering student group. Similarly, if the institution has administered the

Entering-Student, Former-Student, and Program-Completer/Graduating-Student questionnaires and is forwarding all three at one time; separate Batch Transmittal Forms must be completed. In addition, if more than one institution or more than one campus of a single institution is submitting qi. astionnaires at one time, and if s. ?arate analyses are desired, separate Batch Transmittal Forms must be completed.

The Batch Transmittal Form requests tie following information:

- Institutional Study Idem:fication Number. This number is used to :dentify different institutions or different campuses for which both individual and group reports are to be prepar :d. If the questionnaires have been administered as part of a larger, prearranged grcap study. a special identification number will 'tave been assigned to the institution by the study administrator. If th anstitution, on its own, is submitting questionnaires from more than one campus or administrative unit and wishes separate analyses, different numbers should be assigned to identify the different entities.
- Type of Questionnaire Administcred. The individual questionnaires in the different series have differeni questions and thus require different analyses. The questi nnaire identification number ensures that the correct analysis package is used for the type and series of questionnaires included in the batch. (Note again that separate Batch Transmittal Forms must be completed for each different kind of questionnaire submitted for processing and analysis.)
- Date Questionnaires W'ere Administered. This identifies the time of administration of the questionnaires. The date entered here will be printed on the computer analysis for identification purposes. Enter the date in the boxes for month, day, and year.
- Type and Controt of Institution. Enter the code number that besi describes the kind of institution at which the questionnaires have been collected. The code entered here will identify the group of previously participating institutions from which comparative data will he developed, together with the institutionally specific analyses. ${ }^{1}$
- Carnegie Designation of Institional Type. Enter the code number that best describes the kind of institution at which the questionnaires have been collected. The code entered here will be used for internal research purposes and for developing additional comparative data in subsequent years of the service.
- Location of Institution. Enter the Postal Service two-letter code identifying the state in which the institution is located. (For example, CA

[^3]for California, NY for New York.) If ihe institution has campuses in more than one state, enter the code for the state in which the primary campus or administrative center is located. The code entered here will also be used for internal research purposes and for developing additional comparative data in subsequent years of the service.

- Approximate Number of Questionnaires in Batch. The number entered fore will be compared with the number of questicnnaires keypunched to ensure that nonie is lost in transit.
- Return of Questionnaires. Upon request, the College Board will return the questionnaires to the institution after keypunching and analysis. An additional charge for return postage will be included with the analysis costs.
- Submitted By. Provide the name, address, and telephone nuinber of the person to whom questions about the desired analyses should be directed (if necessary) and to whom the computer-produced reports should be forwarded.


## Outputs of the Analysis Service

The "tandard output of the SOIS Questionnaire-Analysis Service is one copy of a computer-generated report for cacn group of questionnaires for which a Batch Transmittal Form is submitted. Each item in ine standard questionnaire will be identified with appropriate textual statements. The number and percentage of students indicating each response will be identified. Means, medians, and standard deviations will be provided for questions with appropriate numerical response values.

Loca' questions coded in the Additional Questions section will bi analyzed only as local question 1, local question 2, and so forth. Responses to the local questions will be identified only by the code number or letter entered in th: response box. Frequency and percentage distributions will be provided, but no means, medians, or standard deviar:as will be calculated.

Special analyes and outputs can be provided upon request, with prior arrangement, and fe additional cost. These include:

- Muntiple copies of the computer-generated report, which typically can be produced less expensively at the ume the 'atial repurt is prepared than through subsegucat local reproduction.
- Group ieports combining responses o the same questiontaire made by students at more than one institution or by more than one campus or administrative unit that administers the questionnaires at the same time. Multiple group reports can be prepared for different levels of inquiry (for a campus, a multicampus institution, a segment of similar institutions, a geographial region within a state, a state, or


## Questonnatrf Batch Trangmital Form

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SOIS Qucatumnaices suhmittedb：



a multistate region). Special institutional coding may be required to produce neaningful group reports; specific prior artangements with the Director of SOIS Processing at the College Board are advised.

- Computer-tape output can be provided in a "ariety of irack/density formats. Such output can help an institution perforn: subsequent detai:id or different analyses as local needs and interests detate.

In addition to the special outputs and analyses in ciae preceding list, NCHEMS ard the College Board can arrange other analytic services to meet specific institutional, segment, or state needs. Most needs, however, should be determined before the questionnaires are administered to students. Those interested in special services or analyses not included in this list should contact the SOIS director at either NCHEMS (I O. Drawer I', Boulder, Colorado 80302) or the College Board (888 Serenth Avenue. New York, New York 10019).

FICIRI: 11




The computer amatyes of the SOIS Questmanare Analesis Service bave been designed to provide the basic core of intomation neded for preparing local interpre". . eports. Gencrally self-e damatery ind asily understood, they do not requ. e that the user be sophisticated in research methods or data processing.

In the analyses, questions are dematied be the same number"ierter code that appears on the original yuestionnaire. A tahle of contents. organized in the same sequence as items in the original questionmare, precedes each analysis. An index, arranged in alphabetical sequence by questic: cortent, follows the analysis and
 Samples of the first pages of the table of content and index rom the EnteringStudent Questionnare are ihustabed in Figures 11 and 1 ?

In the computer analys, mos items appearing on ace questionnaires are cross-tabulated by responses on other items. This permins ifferential de eripten of subgroups of the total student popuatom. Fepiabls: wery em ts cross-tabulated by the gender, marital stata, handiapped status. racial'thnic :roup membership, course load, and age of the respondent. Oher special eross-tathata ions are provided as appopriate for ondividual items. Th. se are summarized in a Question Table and Cross-Tabulation Report that can be and in the comput ergenerated report inmediately ater the table of conters.


The Question Table ildastrates how data from the original questionnaire were converted to the QUEST analysis sysiem for processing. (For those who receive iape output, the Quest:on Table corresponds to he record lavout for the individuat student records on the computer tape.) A sample Question Table is ihlustrated in figure! 3.

1. QUESTION. This describes the location, identifieation, kength, and number of possible responses for each tem. Within that section,
a) NO. is the sequential number assinned to the question for processing. In the Cross-Tabulation Report, this number is aced to identify items.
b) PRT\# is a designation coresponding to the or:smal item on the questionnaire. This number identifes the sequ:nce in which items

$$
\tilde{j}_{0}
$$

are primed in the computer-generated eut, ut and the actual number that precedes that item in the ourput.
c) LOC. describe. the starting position of that item on the onnatiot tapepecord.
d) GTH. describes the number of positions acupiad be that : : en in the compuatrape recond.
c) $R \neq$ indicates the: number of posswhe $\cdots$ - ponses to that iter In (question 005 handicapped states. for exmple, up ofiee different reeponses can be recorded to induate stadeats whe hase matiphe handiceps.
 regaruing processing tiems.
3. PRINY. This desoribe the mamer in which the amalsis of the tem is primed number onl- percent onls, smmary (nils.)
4. COUNY:RS. This descrates the saze of the tem mi kems of core sorage
5. CROSS-TAB RIEQIESTS. Thi shows the numbers of the cross-

 with crosstabe lations 01. 122, 13, and 04. The method of constructins: these cross-tahubations is described in the sollowing section.

A sample Cross-Tabulation Repont fom the wo-year college, Entering-Student Questionnare is reproduced in tigure 1t. It show the way whe whe crosstabulation columes were prepared the heading that apear in the cros-tabutatio. and the i:cms on which the croserahulatom was usce. L'sers of the Anatys Procedures will find this re" of hepfil in understanding exaty which responses to specific questions were uscia in roducing ach cross-abulation.

- 1.-allGORIIHM. This indiates he way in which student responses wernselected for inclusion under a cross-abulation heading. Ia this examole the algorithm 10011 indeates that the responses grouped in coltenn $1^{\prime}$ (headed MAII:S) were those who arswered yuestion 001 (gender) with a response of 01. Similarly, those whose responses are grouped in column o (headed HANDICAPPED) are those who :esponded to question 005 (do sou hate a phestal hendicap? with responses 01, (02, 03, 0.4, or 05.

In sonke cases, student responsen 10 wo questions are us-a 10 sort the responses into crosstabulation groups. In those instances, wo algorithm strements will be comected in the Cross -1 abulation Report by the words AND or OR. A.ND is used when a student responded to both indicated questions with the desired response; OR, when a decired response to either question would $r$ sult in inchasion.

FIGURE 14

## Sample Cross-Tabulation Report for SOIS analysts



Nore: See texi for deacipuons cortespording to numbered item
2. HEADING. These are words the appear at the top of the individual columns in the cross-tabulations. In many cases, they abbreviate the original responses in the quertionnaires. The heading BROWN, for example, stands for the longer "Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanishspeaking American" response to the racial/ethnic-group membership, question.
3. USED ON. This indicates the individual questions cross-tabulated by the algorithm shown. In this cxample, cross-tabulation 0.4 has been used on questions (20, 060), 100, 140, and 180 .

A sample page of actual output from the Entering-Student Questionnaire is illustrated in figure 15. As indicated at the top of the pase, the QUEST analysis will interject text to explicate material included ia the tables when appropriate. The tables themselves include:
?. Idemification mubers corresponding io the cissignation of the item on the original questionnaire and a prose deseription of the content of the item. In many instances, since the prose description does not exactly duplicate the original guestion, the user should refer to the questionnaire for the exact wording.
2. Respense identification mumbers and wat fore every valid response to the original item. As with the text for the y...stion, that for the response may not exactly duplicate the original on the yuestionnaire.
3. TOT and PCT total and percent that provide the frequence of response to each item and the percentage of all responses which that number represents. In some instances, the total (121 in this example) will reflect the unduplicated number of respondents to the questionmaire. For those where multiple responses are allowed (see the explanation in the section on the question tahle), the number will reflect the number of individual responses to the gilestion, a number that will probably exceed the number of individual respondents. In either case, the pereentage reported will represent the relationship betwer the number of responses and the total reported at the end of the column.

The TOT and PCT columns appear only the first time that an item is analyzed. in subequent analyses of that item using different

4. Cross- Tabutation Rozes that report the number and percentage of respondents answering both questions (for the table and ior the crosstabulation) under consideration. For example, ein'a respondents who described themselves as Whirle also indicated that they had an academic goal involving an increas in knowledge and understanding. Those eight white students repereried 17.8 percent of all students who identified that as one of their goals:

FIGURE 15

## Sample Items in the SOIS En:ering-Student Uustionsatre



Note: Sec text for descriptions corresponding to numbered items.

In many cases, adjacent cross-tabulation columns are not mutually exclusive (as betwec: the OTHER ethnic background and the FULL TIME class loa(1). In thuse cases, the calculation of percentage begins again with the first column of the new grouping. These new beginnings are identified in the Cross-Tabulation Report by the word START in the column in which the count begins again.
5. Cross-Tabuiation Columns that are reflected by the percentages in parentheses (XX.X). These show the percentage that the proportion of students in that row represents of all students in the column. For example, the eight white students who said they had as a goal the increase of knowledge and understanding represented 32.0 percent of all white students iesponding to that question.

Appendix 4 of the Handbook contains samples of some of the kinds of interpretive reports that institutions can prepare from the computer-generated reports of the SOIS Questionnaire-Analysis Service. Institutions should feel free to adapt and use those sample reports in preparing do .ments fir iocal use. In addition, the staff of NCHEMS and the College Board (or consultants identified by !hem), can help prepare detailed interpretive reports to meet local needs.

## .7

## 5

## Coding, Processing, and Analyzing the Data

Many colleges and universitics have sufficient access to computer facilities and software so that tiney can themselves process and analyze the SOIS questionnaites. This chapter provides guidelines for each step in this process and suggests ways of computer editing responses, matching kevpunched questionnaires to computer master files, and using standardized statistical/data compuier software.

## Hand Coding and Inspecting Returned Questionnaires

To ensure that students have followed directions and that no inconsistencies mave occurred in the kinds of responses received for each questionnaire, a few returned questionnaires should be examined. This is especially important if local questions have been added to the questionnaires. If they have been adfed, they should be hand coded before keypunching so that responses to them can be tabulated aiong with responses to other questions.

All hand coding should be performed by a person who has received explicit coding instiactions. The coder should be cold to set aside all questionnaires for which there are ambiguous responses so that the survey director can interpret them.

## Keypunching

Keypunch-location numbers have been assigned to each item in the SOIS questionnaires. In assigning these location numbers, it has been assumed that the user can
keypunch the questionnaire item in a continuous moic (that is, keypunch the location numbers 1 through 169) either on a computer tape or disc.

If the system available to the user has no such capability, keypunch instructions can be developed for keypunching in the questionnaires using 80 -column computer cards. Because of the number of items in each of the SOIS questionnaires, three 80 -column cards will nave to be used for each returned questionnaire. To help users develop these instructions, lists of keypunch locations on 80 column cards have been developed for each SOIS questionnaire. These lists are presented in appendix 5 .

Kegardless of what keypunch procedure is selected, cards should be verified bv a keypuncher. Verification will nearly double keypunching costs, but will eliminate many errors. The keypuncher also should be instructed to consult the survey administrator about any ambiguous responses.

## Computer Editing

In any questiomaire survey, mistakes by hand coders, keypunchers, or students who misread directions are bouad to occur in recording responses. Editing using the computer can detect two basic kinds of errors:

1. Resịonses may be out ci acceptable ranges for an item. For example, one o- two students may ie shown to have sex codes of " 3 " when only " 0 " and " 1 " are valid responses. This type of errer can be detected by inspecting a preliminary frequency distributi, 1 of all responses to the questionnaire for all students, using a packaged program such as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Alternatively, a special computer program can be written that checks for out-of-range responses to each item for each questionnaire and prints a message when an error is found. To correct errors, both the original questionmaire and the matching keypunch card must be located, and the arpprogiate keypunch-card columns must be changed.
2. Centradictory responses may exist among pairs or sets of responses. An exampie of such a contradiction occurs when a sophomore student indicates that the current degree being pursued is a doctorate. These types of erro: can be detected only by a special program that compares paits or sets of responses for each student and writes an error message Whan inconsisicat or contradictory data appear. To correct them, the keypunched cards must be changed after checking the correct responses on the original questionnaire. In many cases, these errors originate on the cuestionnaire (that is, a student misunderstood an item). In sucl: zases, the survey administrator must decide which response is correct; those responses that contradict must be changed to "blanks" or "no response" on the appropriate card columns.

To facilitate these kinds of editing, it is important to reep the original questionnaires sorted in the same order as the keypunch cards. By keeping the questionnaires sorted, it will always be ensy to find quickly a particular questionnaire needed for editing verification or any other purpose.

## Matching Questionnaire Data tc Master-File Data

An institutior may wish to match its computerized master file of student information with ques:ionnaire information; a computer program can be written to accomplish this. Buth files must be sorted in the same order and all information common to each file should be matched. That is, if student ID, age code, and sex code are on the master file (as well as on the questionnaire), then all duplicate information should agree before a match of the two records is considered correct. By using additional pieces of information to match records, the possibility of matching errars caused by incorrectly punched ID numbers will be minimized. Where !D numbers do not match, the original questicnnaire can be reviewed and the keypunci: cards corrected. The resulting matched information can be stored on tape or disk is one record for each respondent.

For certain purposes, primarily related to shecking response bias, the institution may also want to create a new master file containing codes for identifying the status of all students in the survey sample. The kinds of information that might be desired are:
code number

## student shates in survey

Usable questionnaire returned
Student evcluded from sample becaus': of improper or foreign permanent address
Student deceased
Questionnaire returned by post office as undeliverable mail
No questionnaire returned Unusable questionnaire returned

These codes can be added to the master file by keypunching a card for each sturent that contains the student's ID number and the appropriate code (that is, rode $2,3,4$, or 6 ) and matching these cards against the master file. Code 1 (usable questionnaire returned) can be added to the master file by matching the questionnaire cards against the master file. Code 5 is then defined as all master-file records that do not have a code. Figure 16 illustrates this procedure.

The analyst can now use the new master file with codes to describe similarities and differences among various coded groups. In particular, it is often useful for assessing response bias to compare master-file information between respondents and those who have not returned the questionnaires.


## Packaged Computer Programs

Student-outcomes surveys need packaged computer programs for two :nain functions. One is for manipulating data and selecting subsamples; the other is for analyzing data. Two commercially available packaged computer-program systems perform both functions: OSIRIS III: An Integrated Collection of Computer Programs for the Management and Analysis of Social Services Data (1973) and SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (1975). A third packaged program, BMD, Biomedical Computer Programs (1973), has certain limitations in performing data manipulation and subsample selection but also can be used.

## Performing Data Analyses

The data-analysis phase of almost any survey consists of descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) that summarize the questionnaire responses and as much additional - atistical analysis as time, money, and



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        270 79.2 \& Whiteor Cotloman
        \(00.0 \quad 5\) ( Yther
        3.11 100.0* ToM.
```






interest permit. In addition to basic questonnaire atalyses, the data-analysis phase often includes an assessment of the degree of response hias that may exist in the group of students who chose to respond to the questionnare (if respondents can be compared to the rest of the sample who chose not to resporid). This section on data analysis thereiore presents guidelines for performing basic descriptive statistical analyses of the questionnaire and assessing response bias. Also i.. ©luded is a hrief discussion of potential analyses that go beyond the descriprive stage.
A. Basic Descriptive Analyses. Basic descriptive analyses of the returned SOIS Student-Qutcomes Questionnaires usually consist of frequencies (counts) and percentages of the number of students who responded to each option of each question. Percentages for each question taire item are calculated using the total number of per:..its who actually respond to the item as the denominator or base of the percentage equerion. (Those who left an item blank are excluded from the denomina:or.) Thus each item is tabulated similarly to the example given in Figure 17.

For questionnaire items that direct the respondent to circle all the item options that apply, frequencies and percentages can be tabulated for each option. In this case, however, frequencies and percentages for each item option should not be summed since eash option represents a dichotomous variable. Figure 18 illustrates the descriptive analysis for such a questionnaire item. For questionnaire items that have an underlying scale, it is appro, riate to calculate the n:ean, standard deviation, and median response. Example: of such items include number of months

## FIGICRI: 18

Sample Tab:hathen Fur Qtestmonare Iffalma


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since withdrawal, number of hours employed per week, and number of changes of major. In addition, for rating scales (such as extent of satisfaction witi how the college prepared students for additional college work or for their first job). means and standard deviations can be calculated.

All these bacic deseriptive analyses can be performed for the total sample of respondents as well as for various subgroups of the sample. Subgroups that are frequentiy of interest are:

- Niales and femaies
- Racial/ethnic groups
- Handicapped and nonhandicapped
- Age ranges
- Students' academic award goal-degrec, certificate, or neither
- Degree types for graduate students
- Full-time and part-time students
- Employed and unemployed students
- Major or area of study
B. Other Data Analyses. Numerous analytical directions for using the questionnaire data can be pursued beyond the basic descriptive analyses suggested here. These include cross-tabulating items, correlating items to investigate relationships among variables, building predictive models (perhaps using multiple-regression techniques), and testing hypotheses. These analyses will not be discussed here
because they generally require considerable training in statistics and data analysis that is beyond the scope of the Handbook.
C. Assessing Response Bias. Response bias exists when the students who choose to respond to a questionnaire survey differ systematically from the total sample of students who were sent questionnaires. Generally response bias operates so that actual respondents tend to be more concerned, more interested, or more enthusiastic than those who choose not to respond to a survey. Respondents also may have stronger views and may have more positice feelings in general than those who do not respond.

There are two general approaches in survey neaw th the problent of assessing response bias. One is to isolate a smail random sample of those who do not respond to the survey and try th get valid, returned questionnaires for comparison with those who originally returned questionnaires. Primarity for cost reasons, this approach usually is not feasible in any but the largesi surveys. Another appioach, which can easily be done in a small survey, is to examine the eharacteristics of respondents and nonrespondents using demographicibackground data available in the institutional master fie records. Though this approach is technically less valid, it can produce useful insughts into the responsebias question. Typically institutions have in the:r records suci information as:

- Gender
- Race/ethnic categorv
- IIome state
- Age
- Degree sought
- Major field
- Grade-point average
- Number of terms eniolled
- Date of withdrawal (if appropriate)
- Date of graduation or program completion, (if appropriate) which can be re'cuant in assessing possible response hias

Assessing differences between respondents and nonresoondents for these types of characteristics can be made by comparing per entages and means for the two groups. For exan.ple, 56 percent of the respondents are women, 49 percent of the nonrespondents are women, and the average age :s 19 for respondents and 22 fror nonrespondents. In many cases, the differences may ie negligible between the two groups, indicating iftic response bias at ieast in terms of the citatacierislios on which the students were compared. in some cases there will be moderate to :ubstantial differences between respondents and nonrespondents. The important point in investigating the response bias question is to document any comparisons between the two groups and in cautiously interpret questionnaire results to the extent that it is believed respondents may represent a biased group.

## 6

## Usirg the Survey Results

I'sing the information is perhaps the nowt importame dement in conductire any surve. Unfortunately it common tor institutions to collect surser data but never publish a report or otherwise atemp: to disocminate the surver results. Not only is this consequence a wase of vatuble ime and mone $\because$, hut it alsi) contributes to understandable reluctance on the parts af sudents and othere inwhed toward the whole activity of conduting s..rsers. The survey coordinator mut therefore disseminate the survey results to all lever of potemtal users (from sudents to college presidents), not only to ensure that the data at hast 'ate the potenial to be used, but also :o encourage ?ositice athate aboat the value of stademtomteones i. Sormation.

## Iden:Tifying the C’sers

 to identify the key users of the iata and the lewels on data use. When an institutional advisory commitue is established in the sure $\because-p$ paning sages, this activity will have been completed. The biads of westions and issues raised by the advisory
 the surver seport. Even when there is no institutional adtisory committee, there may be focunsat: or record oí conversations outhing the concerns of those who stegeserd hat the stidy oe pursued. In the absence of either kind of a priori records, ite survey research can list the titles of various potential users on one side of a page and on the other, ine possible uses of the surver information by each.

## What Kinds of Reports Should Be Provided?

Not only will different users want to answer different questions from the survey results, some may need different kinds of reports. The president or chairman of the board, for example, may want nothing more than a wo or thee-page executive summary that highlights the implications of the findings concerning majer policy issues and alternatives. The director of institutional research, on the other hand, may be concerned with detailed statistics on every questionnaire item. The director of admissions may be interested only in how students learn about the college, so that recruiting ativities can be tailored. The director of the graduate placentent center may be concerned only about the kind of work students plan to do.

The survey administrator may write a series of reports. Some mav be issued immediately after the survey is conducted; others may be distributed over a period of time. Many writers of research reports have found that seerral sma!l reports, each dealing in some depth with a particular issue or item, are more easily read and understood than is a large report covering all aspects of the study.

Deciding what specific peeces of information may be useful to a particular decisionmaker is not an easy task. A good pide to start is be determining the major responsibilities of all potential users and then gearitg the information to fit their particular responsibilitics wathin the organzation. It generaliy would not be appropriate initially to give a colleere president detailed information elated to each department within ihe insention. It would be apropriate to develop a report for the president that would sive general indicators relared to the success andor failure of the institution. The acedemic dean, on the of her iama, might be interested in deparmental breakous but would want the data summarized and arrayed so th: comparisons betwere deparment were read:! appatent. Finally, the departme nt heads may not 'ee concernec' with indicators that relate to the entir: institutio: but rather with indicators relating specifically to the departamen, induding some notion of how then deparments compare within the institution.

Providing a rruly useful report tokes time and experience. The person prenaring the report should solicit fron the users feedback about the information that was part:cularly "seful in the prepar $\cdot \mathrm{d}$ report. This feedhack can be used to modify and improve future reports. It also mar he helptul to ask users what they specifically want from the repet, before beginning to write. Freguemty, howewer, this process can be frustrating to both the user and the report writer because it is difficult to identify ahead of time specinte needs from the report when one is not tamilar with the dati.

Appendix t, Sample Reports trom Student ()utcomes Assessment Surseys, provides four examples of reports that can be wed as models for survey report. The first two reports are examples of ee ecutive summaries; the third, an example of a report prepared to deal with a specific problem. Th final report is an cxample of an actual research report summarizine the results of a former-student study.

## Making Decisions Based on Information

It is import ant bat users not only receive information that is dis- tyed in a me.uningful mauner, but that they also use the information to effect positive change.. within the institution. For example, suppose a Dean of Students believed that, i itwors of students' nec 'ls, counselors spent ton much time with student.;' personal roblems and too little time with career counseling. A survey of students might indicate that many stucients were not aware of the carcer-counseling services but would use taem if available, while relatively few stujents felt a need for and planned to use the personal-counseling services. Stafing information might collaborate this by indicating considerably more time spent in personal courseling thea career counseling (perhaps because personal counseling takes more time per student served). These two piece of drat combined mat then be enough motivation for the dean to take the intiative in effecting a change in the counseling progren at the instilution.

Sometimes financial distress cou, led with new inform $n$ eauses change within an institution. At one small private college, an entire sth .atemajor program was phased out recause it wa., discovered that only a handful of students wer: being graduated fre me the program. The faculty in that program, whea presented
 recommended that the program be phibud and the department onty be maintained as a service department.

Not every survey will cause w.espread change S:udents' questionna-e responses may only be the first piece of informa on in an are that nay, in the future, need to be changed; or students' responses atay, in many case , document a high satisfaction with the status quo.

## Feedback to Respondeats

One reinforcing teennique that can encourage improved tuture participation in questionnaire surveys is showing respondents how the results are used. (Providing student feedack is particularly casy with on-campus questionnair ss, such a: entering and continuing-student surveys.) Most students will be interested in general survey recults as well as any cianges in or'lege or university policies or practices resulting, from the survey. Feedback is especially important tor graduating seniors and alumni since one of the objectives of contacting them is to maintain their i: terest and encourage their support of the college. If alumni and those who complete programs feel that their responses are influencing changes, they are more likely to become more involved in the institution. The same result is likely with on-campu, *'. dents in terms of a more positive attitude toward the school. Thus when chanse does occur, it is especially important to report it to the group who helpea bring it about. And even when there are no changes resulting from a survey, it still is important to inform respondents of the general :urver eesults


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APPENDIX

## The Two-Year Colleges

Questionnair ss

## PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION SECTION


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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION




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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION







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## STANDARD QL'ESTIONS SECTION


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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION

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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION



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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION

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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTICN






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## APPEDA:

## The Folr-Year Colieges and Universities Questionaares



## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION

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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIORIS SECTION







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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION

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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION







## STANDARD QUESTION：S SECTION

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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION





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PERSONALIDENTIFICATICN SECTION



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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION


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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION







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PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION SECTION


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## STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION


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## ADTITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION







APPI:NDIX 3

Samples of Local Items

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# Sampies of Local Items 

## Introduction

The questionnaires developed for SOIS by NCHEMS and the Coilege Board use standardized questions to collect information from students and former students that is of interest to a wide variety of institutions and research problems. Using standi dized questionnaires has a number of adrantages. The institution conducting the study does not need to develor aid field test the basic questions. Forms already printed are available on short no tee to meet particularly pressitg research needs. The standardized analysis packages that have been prepared reduce significantly the time between data collection and availability of the analysis.

In many situations, however, the researcher must collect and analyze some additional information unique to the local situation. Many times, such information cannot be accommodated through the items on the standardized questionnaires. In recognition of this, the SCIS forms have been designed to permit the 'notitution conducting the study to add a number of local items to the standardized forstiats. A maximum of 15 items can be added to each questiennaire in the series that is to be processed through the questionnaire-analysis service. Institutions that mane local modifications to the standard questionnaires or that plan to process the completed questionnaites locally may add as many local questions as they wish.

## Communicating Local Questions to Students

If local items are to be added, most institutions will want to print their local questions on a stparate sheet and attach it to the questionnaire. There are also two oher possibilities for adding local options. First, the back of the cover letter could be used, if the number of local items is small. Of course, e mprehensitile instructions must be given in the cover letter. A second option is adding local q.estions, if space permits, by actually "overprinting" them at the end of the standard SOIS questionnaire.

To be processed by the SOIS questionnaire-analysis service, the locally added items must have response values ranging from 0 to 9 . Local questions must be consecutive, and there must be clear instructions for the respondent. (Some institutions ask the question and follow it with "Sclect the number of the response below which best describes your answer to this question and enter it in the appropriate box on the questionnaire.")

## Sample Local. Items

Narurally, if local questions are to be askeu, the i- design and format should reflect particular local needs. Tr: following suggestions are intended to demonstrate the kials of local questions that wher researchers have used and may help stim late id as about how this aspect of SOIS might be used.

Overiapping Questions
While the same question :s always phrased in the same way, not etery question is on every form. A local researcher mig'... wish on examine side-by-side each of the questionnaires in the SOIS series ( whether all will he used or not), to wee if there are items on one questionnare that might be usefully added to another for local purposes. The Entering-Student Questionnaire, for example, asks ir the student had enrolled pr-vionsly at any postsecondary institution. That question is not included on the Continuing-Student Questionnaire. An institution might wish to know which of its continuing stucients cance fiom some other postseondary institution. The iten from the Entering-Student Questionnaire mietult be modified for the Continuing-Sudent form either to eiicit a simple yes/no response to the question "Have you attended any other postsecondary educational institution"" or to collect information abot. the specific kind of priur institution (publiz ino-\%ar college, public four-year college, university).

Similarls, a local question misht be added w the Continuirg-, Former-, a. 1 Program-Completer/Graduating-Student questionnaires askirg if respondents had -pplied for financial aid, what then primary occupation/employment status is or hed been, or whether this was their tirst-choice institution. This kind of overlap maty be particularly important to in institution that is not conducting longitudinal studies or that lacks the eapat lity to match questionnaire responses with masterfile information.

## Locater Questions

An institution may be interested in specific information abour where its students previously have lived. For institutions with a local service area, the information may identify the specific geographic location or the specific "feeder school." For those with a hroader service area, it may be phrased as a question of distance or of location. Some possible kinds of questions are:

At which of the following schools or inlleges we re you last enrolled?
What is the zip code of your permanent residence?
What is the distance of your permanent residence from campus?
In which of the following state/regions is your permanent residence located?

A multi-catapus institution that has not ntherwise coded its questionnaires probably vould want to add a local question asking respondents to indicate campuses at which they either curreatly or eventually intended io enroll.

## Mobility Questions

Some institutions may be interested not only in the areas students have lived and their current local and permanent residences, but alio t. ..here students reside or plan to reside once they leave the college; institutions may also want to know how mobile students are after graduation. For institutions interested in .uth information, the following kinds of questions might be helpful:

While you were attending ou: college were you a legal resident of the
state of $\qquad$ ?
In what state are yo' currently residing?
What are your long-iere plans in :erms of residence?
in what state is your curront job?

## Tratel Questhons

Some institutions, particulaty :hose with parking problems, may want to get information about their stude'as' commute to campus. The follouing might be asked:

How do you travel fro: y yur residence while in school in the campus?
How long does it take you to get from your iesidence while in school to the campus?
How many days a week do you park a ar on campus?
What would you do if ine daty charge for parking on campus were raised to $\$$ ?

If the campus instituted a shuttle bus service from $\qquad$ to $\qquad$ ,
how many times a week would you use it?
If the metropolitan transit district čarries through with its plans to increase fares to $\$$ $\qquad$ , what will you do about travel to and from campus?

Financial Questions
Other than asking en' ering students if they plan to apply for financial $\because \mathrm{i}$, the SOIS questionnaires do not inquire about the financial plans, resources, costs, or other financial problems of students. Some institutions may wish to collect this information in the SOIS surveys, although there are other standardiced questionnaires designed specifically for these purposes. (Those interested in in-depth research into financial areas should review the 1976 College Board publication, $A$ Guide to Student Aid Resparch: Using the Student Resotrce Surrev and Student Expense Study Service.) The investigation may deal with family filu..ncial background, current expenses, or patterr of financing. Accurate estimates can be determined, depending on the level of complexity and number of local questions added.

A: approximate determination of a student's academic background could be obtained from a question like:

How would you describe your parents' innancial situation?
A more precise determination would require the student to respond to a range of specific options about parental income:

Which of the following intervals best describes your parents' income last year? Be sure to include their total anneral income from all sources (such as salary and wages, pensions, interest and dividends, public assistance).

Similarly, students' dependency status could be determined by a simple yes/no response to "Are you dependent on your parents for financial support?" For mo:e specific information, questionnaires should include questions that ask about students' places of residence for the last three years, whether they had been clamed as dependents for federai incom-tax purposes, and now mucia money they had received from parents or guardians.

Oiher areas of financin: can be examined simply o- in detail. Students may be asked "What would you estimate to be the total cost of a year's education for you at this institution?" or "How much do you spend each year on each of the following items?" Financing patterns may be determined from a simple "Check each of the following sources that ycu used to finance your education here" or "W'hich interval describes the amount you actually received from each of the following sources during the 19 $\qquad$ academic year?"

Snme institutions might be interested in investigating the behavior of students or their reactions to alternative methods of financing their educations. The following might be included:

What is the highest amount of tuition you think you would be willing :o pay for the program in which you are enrolled?
What would be your response if tuition were increased to $\$$
How much money would you be willing to borrow to finance your education at this institution?
How would you prefer to repay nioney borro. . d to finance your education?

There are a variety of si...ple and con:plex questions about financing an education that might be considered. Most campuses have a director of innancial aid who is experienced and knowledgeable of the kinds of issues and problems involved in studies of financing patterns. It might be well to involve that person in the survey planning process if this area is to be investigated.

## Information Avalabmity and Quality

Particularly with entering students, an institution may wint to evalr 'te the amount and/or quality of information that the student has. It may be inforawion about tine institution itself or about the student's future. Sonce of the kinds of questions that might be asked are:

How easy was it for you to get the information you needed to apply for admission?
How would you rate the quality and quantity of information you received about the costs and financial aid aveilable at this institution?
How would you rate the information that you have received from this institution about opportunities for employment in your major field following graduation?

The institution might also be interested in the kind of $p$ tor information, guidance, and counseling the student had receised:

How would you rate the quality and quantity of information you received in high schonl thont the various opportunities for postsecondary education?
How would you rate the vocational counseling you received in high school?

## Educational Satisfaction Questions

Many faculty, administrators, students, and constituents are interested in how students feel about the quality of their iducational experiences and whether they are satisfied with the contribution tie college has made to growth and developnent in certain areas. In trying to obtain such information, it is worthwhile initially to gain some understanding about how students value a college education in general, and then ask students questions about the extent of their satisfaction in n.ore specific areas of growth and development. For instance, the following series of questions might be initially asked of students:

In general, how well do you like attending college?
If you could start over again, would you still choose to attend our college?
Kegardless of any vocational benefit colle; may have for you at this point in time, do you think that being in colleg is an important and beneficial experience?

This initial series of questions could be followed by a second series of satisfaction questions concerning the extent to which students' experiences at this college contributed to their progress in areas such as vocational preparation, critical thinking, human relations and verbal and written communication skiils.

Other Local Questions
The list of kinds of questions that a particular institution might wish to add to the stanaard SOIS questionnaires potentially can be as long as the number of institutions using the questionnaires and the groups of students they will be surveying. As NCHEMS and the Co'!ege Boa:d gain experience in helpi'g institutions develop local items to be " Ided to the standard SOIS questionnaires, an inventory of local items will be cieated and made available so that future users of the SOIS questionnaires will noi have to start from scratch.

## Introduction

The NCHEMS-College Board SOIS questionnaires were developed over a threeyear period. Versions quite similar to those currentiy available were field tested by four two-year and four four-year institutions during 1977 and 1978. The reports included here are drawn from actual data collected hy those field-test institutions, although their identitics have been disguised. In some cases, the questions and responses do not correspond exactly with the versions of the SOIS questionnaires currently available because of modifications made after the field-test experience.

The first two samples are intended to show how results of the surveys could 'e summarized for senior administrators or governing boards. They present highlights only. The third shows how survey results could be used to address a particular problem area. The fourth shows how the complete survey results could be documented as a reference for a variety of campus offices and officers.

These sample reports are intended to illustrate and to suggest ways in which institutions could use the outputs of SOIS surveys. Reports that result from use in the SOIS series also will be made available.

## SAMPIEI

A Summary Report for Governing Boards or Senior Administrators

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# Brookdale College As Entering Students See It 

A Report to the Trustees<br>Prepard ${ }^{\text {by }}$<br>L. F. Walter

## Introduction

Throughout its history, Brookdale College has collected $\mathfrak{v}$, uminous iaformation from its students. Substantially all of the collection, however, was information needed by the College for its own administrative purposes. Seldom were students asked in any systematic : ay why they had come, what they expected to receive and how they believed the Col'ege experience had benefited them when they left. The students' point-of-view was considered infrequently and only when some real or potential crisis encouraged administrators to seek it out.

The appointment by the Board of Trustees of President Nelson in 1977 changed that. One of his first acts was to establish a new research office charged with the responsibility of developing a complete data base about the College's student body. This report is the first of a series growing out of the development of that data base.

An advisory committee was convened in the fall of 1977 to outline the kinds of information the College should have from and about its students. Included were representatives of the admissions offi e, the financial-aid office, the faculty, and students. In the initial meetings of the committee, it became evident that a number of questions would need to be addressed. Among thein were what studenis expected to get from the College, how they found out about it, what their actual experiences were, why they left, and what happened to them after they left.

The advisory committee's initial inclination was to develop questionnaires that could be administered to different groups of students to obtain the needed data.

An analysis of the time and expense required to develop and test multiple insiruments indicated that such a course of action would be unreasonable. Further, the committee was cencerned about its ability to compare findings at the College with those of other similar institu:iuns. Locally developed questionnaires; would have made this difficult. Further, it did not appear that the College had tiee computer capability to perform particularly sophisticated analyses of the desired data.

Fortunately, the committee became aware of the Student-Outcomes Information Services (SOIS) made available by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and the College Board. SOIS provided a series of questionnaires addressed to different groups of students, collected information relevant to the issues that the advisory group wanted to addiess, and had a predesigned computer-analysis system that provided the kinds of displays needed. Participating in SOIS also was considerably less costly than developing the instruments and analysis procedures locally. In addition, NCHEMS and the College Board would assist in the design and conduct of the study. President Nelson authorized the use of SOIS in our student-outcomes studies.

SOIS includes questionnaires for newly admitted entering students, students who have previously enrolled at the College and are continuing their educations, students who have left withont completing their formal programs, graduating students, and alumni. The first two questionnaires have been administered; the other three will be administered during the current year. This report describes some of the findings of the survey of entering students. At your next meeting, you will receive a report describing some of the findings from the survey of continuing students.

In addition to providing infirmation directly relevant to the investigntion into enrollment patterns at the College, the SOIS questionnaires produced a wealth of information that will help the College in other ways. Special reports have been prepared for the deans of each of the faculties, for the dean of Student Services, and for the director of Piscal Planning. We anticipate that during the year-and years-to conce, we will find ourselves returning to the SOIS analyses for the answers to additional questions.

## Study Methodology

Questionnaires were mailed during the spring and summer to every student offered admission. To aroid confusion with the materials to be completed and returned to the admissions office, the SOIS Entering-Student Questionnaire was mailed separately one week after the offer of admission. A cover letter signed by President Nelsor: informed the students of the reasons for the survey, assured thern of the confidentiality of their responses, and urged their cooperation. Responses were requested within 10 days. Of the 2,048 students offered admission, 52.9 percent $(1,083)$ responded to the initial maiiing. A follow-up letter with a second copy of the questionnaire was sent two wee ss after the initial response period expired.

This produced an additional 486 responses. The final study group included 1,569 entering studenis, or 76.6 percent of those offered admission for Fall 1978. We believe that this respondent group is sufficiently large to permit recommendations to be made with confidence that they represent what would have been found if all entering students had responded.

## General Characteristics of thi. Respondents

Nearly 6 in 10 of the respondents ( 58.5 percent) were women. Nearly 6 in 10 ( 58.3 percent) indicated that they would describe themselves as white or Cancasian. Students who would describe themselves as black or Afro-American cons ituted the largest racial/ethnic minority group, with 35.8 percent of the respondents saying one of those ternis would best describe themselves. All other racial/ethnic groups made up just under 6 percent of the respondents. The average age of the respondents was just under 26 years. The women were slightly older than the men (the respective average ages were 26.4 and 25.2 years); the white students were slightly older than the nonwhite ( 26.3 years and 25.4 years, respectively).

Slightly over 4 in 10 respondents ( 41.7 percent) planned to major in Arts and Sciences; 35.6 percent in Business Administration; 15.1 percent in Engineering; and the remaining 7.6 percent, Education. About . 1 third ( 33.6 percent) indicated that they had some prior work experience in their intended major feld.

The average family income of the respondent group was $\$ 13,872$. Nonwhite students came from families with significanily lower mean income $(\$ 9,430)$ than did white students (for whom the average was $\$ 17,050$ ). More than one-third ( 35.6 perceri) of the nonwhite students cane from families with incomes of less than $\$ 6,000$, as compared with only 9.1 percent of the white students. More than half of the respondents were ernployed, 40.9 percent more than half-time and 12.7 percent less than half-time. White students were more lilely to be working than were nonwhites ( 66.4 percent compared to 35.9 percent). In view of their low family income and greater level of anempl yment, it is not surprising that nearly 6 in 10 ( 59.1 percent) of the nonwhit, students indicated that they had some concern about finances. Only about 3 in 10 ( 31.9 percient) of the white students said they would have any concern about finances.

## What Are They Looking for?

A substantial portion of the information collected from the entering students related to what they wanted to get out of their experience at the College-what were their goals? For most, the goals were ser ous and related to their future activities. More than 6 in 10 ( 60.2 percent) said that they had come to prepare for a new career. Siightly fewer ( 56.2 percent) said their goal was to obtain a degree or certificate. Just under half of the respondents ( 49.2 percent) said that longrange career development : $\because$ as one of their goals.

The next most frequently reported goa! had to do wihh self-improvement of a more personal nature. Just unider half ( 47.6 percent) of the respondents said that one of their goals was to learn skills that will help them enrich their daily lives and become more comp'ete persons. Improvement in self-confiaence was the next most frequently cited goal, reported by 43.6 percent of all the respondents.

Other goals cited by st aller percentages of the entering stu lents included seeking a way to improve their lifestyle, 39.5 percent; meeting people, 37.7 percent; gerting courses needed to transfer to another institution, 35.7 percent; learning how to better get along with other , 31.9 percent; improving leadership skills, 25.7 percent; improving skills for ac . rent job, $2 j .2$ percent; discovery of vocational interest, 24.3 percent; getting a raise or promotion, 19.6 percent; increased parti:pation in cultural activities, 18.8 percent; and more opportunity for social activity, 14.3 percent.

Table 1 shows the percentage of entering students who said that they had partuculat zoals in mind when they came to the College.

1:AB1.1:1

Fati. 1978

| GOAI. | Ph:RCist Of Risp |
| :---: | :---: |
| Prepare for a new career | 60.2 |
| Obtain a degue or cerificate | 56.2 |
| Long-range career development | 49.2 |
| Skills to cmrich lite | 47.6 |
| Inprowed selfeonfidence | 43.6 |
| Inproved lifestyle | 39.5 |
| Meet people | 37.7 |
| Ubtain credits to transfer eisewhere | 35.7 |
| Learn to get along better with others | 31.9 |
| Improve leadership skills | 25.7 |
| Improve ski!ls used on curreni job | 25.2 |
| 1)scoser vocational interes: | 2:3, |
| Get a raise or promotion | 19.6 |
| Participate in cultural and social activites | 18.8 |

These data show that students at the College typically have as one of their goals for attending a desire to prepare for the post-collegiate world, rather than simple self-improvement or social/cultural participation. The most common soals relate to career advancement and career preparation. Participating in social or cultural activities appears to be less important to the College's entering students.

## Why Do They Come Here?

There are more than 2,000 accredited degree-granting collegec and universities in the United States. There are more than 60 in this state. There are 12 u ithin reasonable commuting distance of the College. Presumably among this sel.ction of institutions there are a number at which students could achieve the goal:; they set for themselves in enrolling in postsecondary education. Why, then, \%ouid the' ${ }^{\prime}$ choose this college?

Our entering s:udents wire asked to respond to a variety of different aspects of the College and to indicate how important an influence each was in the decision to enroll here. Their responses say much for the image that the College projects to potential students. The most frequently reported aspect of the College influencing the enrollment decision was the range of courses available. Nearly 8 out of 10 ( 78.6 percent) said that influenced their decision. The next most important reason was that students viewed the College as "convenient to attend." Over 7 in 10 ( 72.0 percent) of the entering studens said this was an influence on their decision to attend. The next most important reason was a perception that the College was low cost, with just under 7 in 10 ( 69.6 percent) citing that as an influcince.

TABI.I: 2
Factors lafachong Decistons matend

| FACTOR | Phercinit of risp |
| :---: | :---: |
| Coursc olferings | 78.6 |
| Contenient to atter d | 72.0 |
| L ow cost | 69.6 |
| Academic reputation | 66.6 |
| Can work while attending | 61.6 |
| Can lite at home while attending | 50.9 |
| Range of student services | 3i.t |
| Identify with fellow students | 18.4 |

Three other reasons were cited as influencing the decisions of more than haif of the entering students: the College's academic reputation ( 66.6 percent), the ability to work while attending classes ( 61.6 percent), and the ability to live at home ( 50.9 percent). About one-third ( 34.4 percent) said that the range of student services was i..1portant; less than 2 in 10 ( 18.4 percent) said that friends attending the College intluenced their decision to enroll.

In addition to describing why the entering students come nere, table 2 provides a capsule description of the image that the College projects to potential students. We are seen as a place that is accessible, affordable, with a good range of courses and a solid academic record. Some of the less frequently named reasons may be
duplications of some of the more frequent. For exarnple, it may be unvenient to attend because the student can work or live at home while enrolled. So too the ability to live at home may be one reason why low cost is an important influence to so many students. Clearly, however, student services and friends attending the College are not serious influences on student choice.

It should be remembered that the list of fartors to which the entering students were asked to respond was close-end rather than fill-in. This is unlikely to change the high influence reported for such factors as available courses and low cost. It does not guaranter, however, that there are other "image" factors important to students hut not found on the listing on the questionnaire.

## How Do They Find Out about L's?

In addition to describing what students are seeking in postsecondary education in general and what clements of the College's image they think will help them reach those goals, the survey shed light on how students find out about this institution. The source of information most frequently cited by entering students was a teacher or friend. Nearly 6 out of 10 ( 57.1 percent) said that information from this source was important in their decision to enroll. The next most frequently cited source of information was former students. Nearly 4 out of 10 ( 39.5 percent) got information about the College rrom our alumni. Other important sources of information were our catalog, 37.6 percent; mailings from the College, 28.2 percent; and material in the newspaper, 13.8 nercent. Radio and TV advertising and stories were a source for 12.2 percent, while displays that the College set up at supermarkets and fairs were a source for 7.0 pe:cent.

Three other "people" sources provided information to some students. Employer recommendations were cited by 13.6 percent of our entering students, information from a guidance counselor by 13.5 percent, and information obtained from a representati e of the College by 5.2 percent. It is interesting that the two sources traditionally seen as having the most direct input to : otential students-guidan e counselors and cullege-admissions of ricers-were the two least frequently cited individuals providing information to our entering students.

The information in tal le 3 indicates then, that teachers, individuals in the community, and former crudents are important sources of information about the College to our prospective students. This suggests that we should broaden our focus of information dissemination to assure that the general public knows our story, rather than focusing narrowly on high-school guidance counselors.

Tabie 3 atso provides insights into the ways in which we might market our intage. The in:pore it of our catalog (a frequently undervalued marketing device) and direct mailinge ir licates that our prospective students are influenced by what ihe: read in materials hat the College sends to ihem. The lower importance attacked $t$ ewspapei. ". !', and IV coverage suggests that what other media souices suy about the College has less influence on student decisions.

TABI.I: 3

Sources of Information ibol-t the Combege
Important to Entering Students

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Peor. in ih: high school 57.1
$\begin{array}{ll}\text { Friends or acquaintances } & 38.5\end{array}$
College cate!og $\quad 37.6$
Information received in the mail 18.2
Information from the newspaper 13.8
Colluge placement service 13.6
Peopl: at another college $\quad 13.5$
Radio or TV 12.2
Displays at shopping centers, fais: i.6
College representative 5.2

And finally, table 3 shows that the traditional method of disseminating inforation about coileges and universities-a coilege representative talking to or arough a high-schonl guidance counselor-might well be re-examined. Direct railing and distributions s. ie ratalog are less expensive ways of reaching rospective students than are the one-on-one meetings. The College might better pend its recruiting budget in the development of more and better direct-mail ampaigns than in sending recruiters out to find students.

## UMMARY

This report presents some of the findings of a survey conducted by the College sing the Entering-Student Questionnaire of the Studerit-Outcomes Information iervices (SOIS) made available by NCHE..IS and the College Board. It includes esponses received from 76.6 percent of the students entering in the fall of 1978. The da: from these students indicate that:

1. Students come to the College first, to prepare for their future career; second, for reasons relating to se!f-improvement; and third, for reasons relating to -urrent job or social factors.
2. Students see the College as providing them with a desirable range of courses in a low-cost, convenient setting.
3. Prospective students rely heavily on information from teachers, friends, and former students in the community in deciding whether to come to the College. Information from our admissions-office representatives appears to be considerably less important.

The survey results include considerably more information tha: is presented here. Separate and special reports have been prepared for different officers and offices at the College. In the future, additional reports will be prepared for the trustees.
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## SMMPLE:

## A Summary Report for

 Governing Boards or Senior Administrators
# Executiv:Summary Fairview Community College Attrition Survey 

During July of 1977, 2,560 students at Fairview Cimmunity Coll-ge (FCC) who had failed to return for at least one quarter during the 1976-77 academic year were sent a questionnaiie. The questionnai: , nquired about students' reasons for not returning, satisfaction with various experiences at FCC, present and future plans, and backgreund and demographic intormation. The study was conducted using the Former-Student Questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Educaiion Management Systems and the College Board as part of their StudentOutcomes Information Services. After a follow-up mailing in September, 825 usable questionnaires were received tor an adjusted response rate of 38 percent. The 825 respondents were divided into three categories: 8 percent were seeking a certificate from the college when they left, 20 percent were seeking an asseciate: degree, and 70 perceni were not secking a degree or certificate.

## Background Demngraphic Data

1. Almost all respondents ( 94 percert) were Colorado residents
2. Respondents ranged in age from under 18 to 65 with a median age range of 20 to 30 years
3. Sixty-one percent of the respondents : are female and 39 percent, male
4. Almost all responcients were whie ( 94 percent)
5. Almost two-thirds of respondents ( 66 percent) had a high-school diploma as their highest degree

Overall, about one-third of respondents were enrolled one academic term or less before leaving; almost half were enrolled one year, and the remainder were enrolled longer. Grade point averages were high $(-.01$ to 4.00$)$ with 8 percent in each category of respondents below a " C " (2.0). In all categories of respondents, the majoriny were part-time students during their attendance at FCC. Corresp metingly, the bulk of respondents were employed while at FCC. Large percent.ages in all groups were empioyed full-time ( 36 or more hours per week). Most respondents were not receiving financial aid.

Sligh $\quad l y$ more than 60 percent of those secking an associate degree were enrolled primarily to coaplete courses that would transfer to another college. Other important goals icentified by associate-degree seckers attending FCC were: increasing knowledge and 'inderstanding in an academic field, obtaining a degrec or cer•ficate, formulating long-term career plans, and learning skills to enrich their daily life. Certificate seekers, on the other hand, identified the improvement of knowledge, skills, and competencies for their jois and the increase in knowledge and understanding in an academic field as the two most important goals they wished to achieve at FCC. Other important reasons for attending included the completion of courses necessary to transfer to another school and the in provement of chances for a raise andior promotion. Those not secking eit :er a degrec or a certificate most frequenty. indicaied their important goals to be the upgrading of job-related knowledge and skills ( 32 pereent), personal enrichment ( 27 pereent), and an increase in knowledge and understanding in an academic field ( 25 percent).

## Reasons Given for Lemving

The three most important reasons to respondents for leaving Farven were: conflicr between job and studies, lack of money, and other responsibilities too great. For those not secking a degree or certificate, two other reasons frequently mentioned were fulfilling acadenic and personal goals and accepting a new job. Those seeking: zertificate or associate degree cited the need for a temporary break from studies as another important reason for leaving he college. Certificati seekers also frequently meationed personal problems as a $r$ ason for not returning, and associate-degree seekers ranked dissatisfaction with specific aspects of FCC as the fourth most important reason for leaving.

## Evalcation of leCC Services

Respondents were asked to exaluaxe the various services offeed by the College in :ums of their awareness of a particular service, their use of it, anc their satisfaction. In general, most of the respondents were aware of the specific sea cies oflered by the College. Almos: all of the respondents (over 90 yereen who ased a particular service were satisfied with it, with the exception of
egistration ( 67 percent satisficd), college cultural programs ( 71 percent satisfied), inancial-aid opportunities ( 74 percent satisfied), and employment opportunities 74 percent satisfied).

## Jurrent Plans of FCC Former Students

jlightly more ihan half of the respondents planned to either reenroll at FCC or enroll at another college. Of those not planning to return to school in the near uture, almost two-thirds were working, 9 percent were looking for a job, and II percent were caring ior home and family.'

SAMPIE 3

## A Report Addressed to a Particular Problem Area

# TO: Members of the Inter-Campus Committee on Articulation <br> FROM: R. Lovell, Director of Admissions <br> SUBJECT: Review of Current Information Services for Prospective Students 

DATE: November 9, 1978

When President Nelson created our con:mitre: last year, he charged us with a review of the current methods of communicating information about the College to prospective students with the view of determining whether different groups of students or different campuses would benefit from different kinds of informationdissemination techniques. He was particularly concerned about the ways in which we try to reach "under-represented" groups.

At the last Trustees' meeting, Senior Fellow Walter presented information from the Entering-Student Questioanaire we administered through the NCHEMSCollege Board Student-Outcome' Information Services (SOIS). His report provided some information about how the total group of espondents viewed the different information-disse nation activities of the College. He further indicated that my office had been provided with detailed ana'yses of the responses of our students to individual items. This memorandum provides a more detailed look at our information-dissemination activi'ies.

You will remember that we sent SOIS Entering-Student Questionnaires to all students offered admission for the fall 1978 s:mester. Of the 2,048 offers we extended, 1,569 students completed and returned the questionnaires. That represented 76.6 percent of the total group. We anticipate further surveys of enrolled students, students who leave without completing their programs, and graduating students will be conducted during this year-providing us with information that will help us better understand student decisionmaking. For now, we need to focus on the infernation from the entering students as we make plans for our "campaign" for new :tudents for the fall of 1979.

The "Walter Report" to the Trustees showed that students said that they had used the following sources (in rank order of reported frequency) in learning about the College: people in the high school ( 57.1 percent), friends or acquaintances ( 38.5 percent), the College catalog ( 37.6 percent), information received in the mail ( 18.2 percent), information in the newspaper ( 13.8 percent), a college-placement service or educational-information service ( 13.6 percent), people at another college ( 13.6 percent), radio or TV advertisements ( 12.2 percent), displays at shopping centers and fairs ( 7.6 percent), and a representative of the College ( 5.2 percent).

- Table 1 examines the use of those sources of information by different subgroup "target" populations of the College's articulation efforts. It reveals that our students are far from monoiithic, at least in their use of information sources.

Nonwhite students are considerably more likely to rely on advice from people in their high school than are white students. More than two-thirds ( 67.4 percent) of the former gronp reported using a high-school source compared with only half ( 50.6 percent) of the latter group. This perhaps is a reflection of our efforts at "generalized recruiting" in the inner-city high schools and the encouragement that nonwhite students, who are represented in those schools in high percentages, receive from the "you-can-make-it" campaign. The only slight differences in use of information received in the mail suggests that our attempts to target our directmail campaign to what we think are student characteristics and interests have not been a great success.

It is perhaps encouraging to note that nonwhite students were somewhat more likely to have received information from a representative of the College than were white students, but the generally low rate repor:ed for use of the college represent.atives suggests that we might re-direct our efforts in that regard. Radio or TV seems to be a more efficient way of reaching students, regardless of racial/ethnic group, than does the college recruiter.

When students of difierent ages are considered, no clear pattern of information usage emerges. As would be expected, older students make less use of information sources in the high schnol tian do younger students, but the differences are smaller than might have: been expected. Older students also make less use of information received from triends than do younger students. That perhaps is contrary to what might be expected. Even more contrary to what might be expluted is the relatively low use made of college-placement services by older students. The establishment of the lncal community-education iniormation centers last spring presumably would have made more information resources available ts out-of-school adults. If that has happened, it is not reflected in the responses of our entering students.

Homenakers seeking to return to school have been a particular target of the College over the past few years. Consequently, their information sources are of particular interest. In our current entering class, the people who charasterized thenselves as homemners gave responses that were not very differer. from the total group or from the students under 21 years of age. Homemakers placed slightly

## TABLEI I

Sources of Lsformailox Used be Externg Studenis:


| SOURCE OFPLFORMATIO, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { TOTAL } \\ & \text { GROUP } \end{aligned}$ | RACIALETHNC |  | AGE |  |  | HOMEMAXERS |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Whinc | Nonmitr | Under21 | 4.4 | ${ }^{254} 4 \mathrm{Verer}$ |  |
| People in the high school | 57.1\% | 50.6\% | 67.4\% | 61.6\% | 56.0\% | 53.6\% | 60.3\% |
| Friends or acyuainances | 38.5 | 41.2 | 35.5 | 44.2 | 37.5 | 34.3 | 35.3 |
| Collyegralog | 37.7 | 35.8 | 40.6 | 39.5 | 38.8 | 39.3 | 42.1 |
| Informaion in the mail | 18.2 | 17.4 | 18.9 | 21.5 | 16.7 | 16.5 | 18.6 |
| Information in the newspapur | 13.8 | 12.4 | 15.9 | 13.4 | 11.3 | 15.5 | 18.1 |
| Collegeplucemens swrice | 13.6 | 15.7 | 13.0 | 24.3 | 9.7 | 5.4 | 11.8 |
| People al anolher college | 13.5 | 11.1 | 17.2 | 12.6 | 15.4 | 13.5 | 6.4 |
| Radio or TV' | 12.2 | 9.9 | 15.7 | 13.6 | 11.0 | 11.5 | 12.3 |
| Displays | 7.6 | 6.5 | 9.0 | 9.3 | 6.11 | 7.1 | 9.8 |
| Colleger reprosmalires | 5.2 | 4.2 | 1.9 | 8.4 | 4.0 | 2.3 | 3.2 |

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higher reliance on people in the high schuol，the College catalog，and newspaper information than did the total population．They reported slightly less reliance on friends or acquaintances，the educational－information centcre．and people at other colleges．

Of particular interest is the only marginally higher percentage of homemakers， as compared with the total group，who reported receiving information from the displays we had set up at shopping centers，fairs，and community centers．We had assumed that these would be good＂initial contact＂places for homemakers．That assumption may need to be reevaluated．

Table 2 shows separately the responses of students entering each of the College＇s three campuses this fall．In many respects，these data reflect difierences shown on table 1．Students at the Center campus were considerably more likely to use infor－ mation from people in their high schools than were students at either of the other two campuses．Again，this may reflect our special campaigns in the inner－c：＇y high schools from which Center draws most heavily．Students at the South campus were interestingly less likely to rely on the commurity educational－information center than were those at Center．That perhaps indicates some problem with the center branch in that community．

T：MBI．1：2
 D．makraichartst．

|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { Nokth } \\ \text { cown } \end{gathered}$ | sol：T11 <br> campls | CENTER cimpes |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| People in the high shom | 45 ごッ | 53.00 | 65．1\％ |
| Priends or acyuan ames | 39.1 | 41.6 | 3．4．9 |
| college catalor | 34．1 | 39.8 | 39.3 |
| Information th the mat | 18．3 | 20.2 | 20.3 |
| Intormamen in the newharet | $\therefore \mathrm{S}$ | 10.2 | 17.1 |
| （ollege platment serme | 13.1 | 8.1 | 17.1 |
| People at ane her wollese | 13.11 | 13.11 | 11.7 |
| Radiour TV | 11.10 | 12： | 1－． 1 |
| Wepplav | $\therefore$. | 87 | 8.5 |
| Colle；e reprewatare | 5.4 | 4.2 | 6.8 |

Students at the South and Center campues were more likely to get iniormation from the media than were students at North．Nearly twice as large percentages of students ：：South and（icnter reported getting information from the newspaper
then was true at North; about 50 percent more Center students reported using information from radio or TV than at North.

As in other analyses, the good old college representative runs dead last at all campuses.
't hese analyses must be tentative until confirmed through additional years' survey data. They do provide, however, a basis upon which we can do some more in-depth study of our own activities. I draw the following tentatite conclusions from the data and urge you to consider them prior to our next meeting:

1. Regardless of the target population, the secondary school remains the information source used by the largest groups of potential entering students. We should consider expanding our high-school reations efforts, particularly through extending the "you-can-make-it" can:paign beyond the inner-city schיols
2. Friends and acquaintances (who may or may not he our former students) are a very important information source toward which we currently direct little attention. We shouhd seck out ways to utilize this information source more.
3. While we had downplayed our catalog as a recruiting device in fator of more direct mail/meata activities, potential students still find it a very important information resource. We need to reemphasize the catalog.
4. Media appear to b: a more effective way of reaching students than do individual college representative visits. We should reassess the proportion of resources directed to cach kind of activity to see if we can make more productive use of our limited resources.

The admissions office at eath olt the campuses has been provided with a copy of the analysis of the SOIS Er cring-Student Questiomaire. This will give you an opportunity to review in more detail the responses of the total group and students at your individual campus. I will appreciate any findings that you identify from those reviews that would shed additional light on our information services an.? needs.

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Complete Dc aumentation of Survey Firdings

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# The Fairview Community Ccilege Attrition Study, 1977: 

## I. Introduction

For some time, the faculty, administritors, and trustees at Fairview Community' College (FCC) have uxpressed concern aboui (1) the number of students (both full-time and part-time) who leave the College witiout comple:ing their degree and certificate requirements and (2) the paucity of information regarding their reasons for leaving and their feelings aboc the College and the programs and services it provides. As a result of thi concern, President Nelson decided to undertake an attrition study at FCC. The purpose of this docum 12 : is to report the findings of ti. • udy.

The Fairview Community Collere Attrition Study was conducred on the total population of 2,560 students who failed to return to the College in at least one of the three quarters during the academic year 1976i1977. An initial mailing was sent to the 2,560 students on July 25,1977 , and a follow-up mailing was sent to all those who had not yet responded on September 10, 1977 The ivtal number of returned, usable questic nnaires was 825 for an adjust d response rate of 38.3 percent.

[^7]This report of the survey resul's is divided into three major :ections. Section I describes the survey-administration procedures and moludes discussions of response bias and response rate. Secion Il presents the resuits of the stedy in narrati: and tabular form. Section III is a summary of he major resuits of te servey.

## II. Survey-Administration Procedires

 appendix) was develop:d jointly burthe National Center for Higher Educerion Management Sysums (NCHEMS) and ihe College Beard, and it is one of a series of student-outcones questionnaires in the XCHFMS-College Board Student(• comes Intortartion Services (SOIS). An imitialmailing ever stter was develoned and printed. I he follow-up mailing cover letter used in the survey consisted of a copy of the original cover letter with a brief handwritten note urging studerts to return completed questionnaires.

Other neessaty materials for the survey included mailing enveloper and retu n (atelopes (printed with bulk-rate mailing permits).

The Sample: The sample of 2,560 nonreturning students was identifie: by Farview saff oy a computerized search of institutional records for any student who had failed to reenroll for owe of the three quarters during the academic year 1976/77 (excluding the se who had completed a program).

On July 25, 1977, 2,560 questionnaires, coter letters, and reiurn envelopes were mailed to the tota. sample of nonreturning students. On September 10, 1977, a follow-up mailing (which included a duplicate of all materials) was sent to all students who had not get responded.

Table 1 shows the final distribution of questionnates for the mailing samp: of 2.560 stadents:

TABIE: 1

Thus the unadjusted response rate was 32.2 percent. An adiusted response rate is calculated as 38.3 percent when the undeliverable and unusable quesionnaires are considered. ${ }^{2}$

Response Bias. Response bias is the tendency for those who choose to respond to a survey to differ systematically from those who choose not to respond; this can bias inferences made from the questionnaires. Frequently in attrition studies those who complete and return a questionnaire differ from those who do not in that they are more positive toward the school they leit and toward school in general, particularly in studies of four-year colleges, or universities. In a community college suct. as Fairview, however, where many nonreturning students ne:er planned to complete a degree or certificate, it is not as likely (as in four-year colleges) that not retuining for a particular school quart r is a sign of a negative attitude toward the school irself or the educational process. It is also not as likely, therefore, that in a community college those who choose to respond will be more positive in attitude than those who don't. This does not suggest there are no differences between the 825 who did respond and the 1,418 who did not; it does suggest that any existing bias between the two groups is not particularly clear simply from trying to guess why students complete and return a questionnaire. The reader should bear in mind when reading this report that conclusions and inferences are besed on the three-eighths of the sample who chose to respond, and to the extent that this group differs from the five-cighths who did not complete a questionnaire, these conclusions and inferences do not apply to the seneral or typical nonreturning student at Fairvicw College.

## III. Analysis and Resclets

Questionnaires were analyzed by computing frequencies and percentages of responses for each item and by computing a cross-tahulation between certain items, where appropriate (for example, reasons for leaving by sex). The quectionnare results can be conveniently divided into four categories:

- Background/status information
- Educational goals achieved
- Reasons for leaving
- Evaluation of institutional services
- Current cducational plans

[^8]These decisions of questionnaire information will be discussed, both in terms of the total responding sample of 825 students and separately for three subgroups: students enrolled in a certificate program ( $\mathrm{N}=65$ ), those enrolled in an associatedegree program ( $\mathrm{N}=165$ ), and thos" in neither ( $\mathrm{N}=574$ j. Since respondents were primarily students who were not seeking a degree or certificate ( 71 percent), percentages and frequencies for the total sample will be heavily weighted by the responses of the nondegree/noncertificate group.

Background/Status Information. The background and student status information available from the questi nnaire included:

- Gender
- Racial/ethnic
- Age
- Marital status
- Handicap status
- Length of time at college
- Highest degree held'
- Degree goal
- Enrollment status while attending
- Employment status while attending
- Number or changes of major'
- Major or area of study.
- Grade point average
- Applied for financial assistance
- State residence'

With exception of major or area of study, table 2 shows the frequencies and percentages of responses to each of the background/demographic items listed above for all respondents and separately for those who were seeking a certificate, an associate degree, or who were not seeking a certificate or degree. Major highlights from these tables are:

- Alore women than inen responded to the survey. For those not seeking a degree, the ratio was two to one; for the degrec/cerificate seekers, it was 1.5 to 1.
- Respondents sunged in age from under 18 to 61 years or more with a me dian age range of 26 to 30 . In all three subgroups, the 18 to 22 year olds represented the largest category of respondents. The associatedegree seekers had the lowest median age range ( 23,025 ).
- Almost all respondents were white ( 94 percent). $\because$ ith little variation across degree categories.


- Slightly over half of the respondents were not married ( 52.8 percert). Only in the "Neither" category were there more respondents who were married ( 56.3 percent) when they attended Fairview Comm'mity Colleze than those who were not married ( 43.7 percent).
- Slightly over 10 percent of the respendents indicated that they had some type of permanent handicap. Restricted mobility and restricted hearing ranked as the top two permanent iandicaps.
- Overall, about one-third ( 34.6 percent) of the respondents were enrolled for just one term or less before leaving, almost half ( 47.9 percent) were enrolled one year, and the remainder were enrolled longer. The associate-degree seekers were somewhat different in that only 20 percent were enrolled fer one term or less, while 39 percent left after one year, 25 percent in two years, and 15 percent had been enrolled more than two years.
- Almost two-thirds of respondents (66 percent) had a high-school diploma as their highest degree. For those seeking an associate degree, however, this proportion rose to more than four-fifths ( 82 percent).
- The majority of respondents ( 71.3 percent) were neither seeking a certificate or an associate degree when they attended FCC. Eight percent of the respondents were seeking a certificate and slightly over 20 percent were seeking an associate ciegree.
- Of both the degree and certificate seekers, 70 percent had never changed major fields of study and very few (3 to 4 percent) had changed majors more than once.
- Over 65 percent of the respondents in each of the three groups had grade point averages above a " C " ( 2.01 or better). (It should be noted that almost one-third of the respondents did not respond to this iten. on the questionnaire.)
- There was a fairly equal split in the part-time/full-time status in certificate-seekers ( 42.6 percent full-time and 57.4 percent part-time) and associate-degree seekers ( 47.9 percent full-time and 52.1 percent part-time groups). In the group of respondents who we.e not seeking either a certificate or an associate degree, only 12.1 percent were fulltime enrollees, while 48.6 percent were part-time students enrolled for credit, and 39.3 percent were not enrolled for credit.
- Large percentages in all groups were employed fu. $\therefore$-time $\xi$ nore hours per week). Certificate seekers were the grour with the largest percentage employed full-time ( 60.7 percent), followed by nondegree/ noncertificate seekers ( 56 percent), and associate-degree seekers it7. 7 percent).
- Correspondingly, the bulk of respondents were employed while at FCC. Certificate seekers were the least likely to be employed (13.1 percent), followed by associate-degree seekers (20.1 percent), and
those not seeking a degree or certificate ( 22.7 percent). This finding is somewhat coun:rr-intuitive in that one would expect that nondegree/ noncertificate seeker: would be more likely to hold jobs than degreeseeking students. It seems probable that the larger proportion of women respondents in the nondegree category accounts for these results.
- Most respondents did not apply for financial assistance. Slightly over 16 percent of respondents in the certificate group reported they received some form of financial aid, 14 percent of the associate-ciegree group and 6.2 percent of the nondegree/certificate group also received financial aid.
- Almost all respondents ( 94 percent) were Colorado residents. As expected, more of the nondegree seekers were residents of Colorado ( 96 percent) than were either the certificate group ( 86 percent) or the associate-degree group ( 92 perc: nt ).

Table 3 summarizes the majors or areas of study of the respondents. Majors or areas of study for the certificate-seekine group were diverse but tended toward the applied or vocational fields. Two majors accounted for over 44 percent of the respondents in this category: Business and. Commerce Technologies ( 20.5 percent) and Secretarial Technologies ( 23.8 percent). In the associate-degree rroup, majors and areas of study were even more diverse, with five majors or areas of study accounting for over half of the respondentr. Business and Commerce Technologies (22.4 percent), Public Service Technuogies ( 10.6 percent), Health Services and Paramedical Technologies ( 8.1 percent), Data Processing Technologies ( 7.5 percent), and Mechanical and Engineering Technologies ( 6.2 percent). Of the noncertificate/ nondegree group, responses were even more scattered than for the other t'vo groups. Business and Commerce Technologies ( 16.2 percent) and Health Professions (13.1 peicent) were the two majors or areas of study above the 10 percent level.

Rejpondents' Goals and Achievements. Tables 4,5,6, and 7 are most significant for answering the questions: What were the respondents' goals when they came to FCC? How are they doing with respect :o achieving these goals? As Table 4 shows, the goal pursued by the largest majority of all respondents was "to increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field" ( 83.2 percent). The second most pursued goal ( 547 percent) was "to improve my knowledge, technical skills, and/or competencies for my job or career." Correspondingly, these two goals ranked the highest as goals achieved or being achieved by the total respondents group.

With the exception of the respondents group seeking an associate degree, the two goals of the certificaie-seeking group and the group seeking neither a certificate or a deg, ee were the same as for the total respondents group (see tables 5 and 7). The group seeking an associate degree varied much more as far as goals that were i :nportant. Based on their responses, this group was especially interested in (1) increasing their know!edge and understanding in an academic field,

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) obtaining a certificate or degree, (3) preparing for a new carcer, (4) discovering rreer interests, (5) completing courses needed to transfer, and (6) formulating ng-term career plans and goals. Over 75 percent indicated that they had achieved - were achieving the goal of increasing their knowledge and skills in an academic eld.

Reasons for Leaving. Item 16 of the Former-Student Questionnaire provided ata from which students' reasons for leaving were tabulated. Table 8 summarizes re responses of each of the groups with respect to this item. Table 9 shows the ve most important reasons for students' leaving (the five re:sons with the highest equencies and percentages) for the total sample and for each subgroup.

While no single pattern emeiges from Table 0 across all three subgroups or zross the five top-ranked reasons within each group, several points are noteworthy:

- Conflict between work, home, and study responsibilities is the major reason for leaving.
- Lack of money and in.bility to carn enough money deter program completion.
- A good share of the persons who did not return had met their academic and personal goals.
- Dissatisfaction with the learning enviromment was a reason for leaving for only one of the groups-the noncerrificate/nondegree seekers. This result does present sente cause for concern since it is linked with the group that draws most frequently on FCC programs.

Fwaluation of College Services. Item 18 of :he Former-Student Questionnaire sked respondents to evaluate a number of the services FCC provides students. The parpose of the item was to assess students' awareness, use, and satisfaction with a particular service. To accomplish this end, each person was instructed to :valuale each service in one of four ways: (1) I did not know abrat this service, 2) I knew about this service but did not use it. (3) I used this service and was atisfied with it, and (4) I used this service but was not satisfied with it.

Table 10 presents the services each respondent was asked to evaluate and dentifies the number and percentage of respondents selecting each of the four esponse options. It should be noted that while Housing Services was listed as; one of the FCC services to be evaluated, the college does not have any formally ecognized service in this area.

Table 1! shows which five services were mose reognized (that is. services he mos. persons were awar" of and the five that were least recognizeci. Actually he five services most recognized could possibly have been predicted since they are all services that respondents must use in the process of attending FCC. However, $t$ is important to be aware of this fact sunce it is through these set vices and the College's academic programs that the College has its most constant contact with itudents. As a result, the greater extent 10 which these services are accessible and
relevant to students' needs, the greater the impact of $\mathrm{t}^{\text {h }}$. College in terms of helping students become more efficient and effective and make better use of the services.

In terms of the least recognized services, the two that need further study are child care and career planning. Given the growing number of persons with children who are attending FCC it is significant that the College be aware or needs concerning child care and publicize the availability of this service. As far as career planning is concerned, additional analysis needs to be concucted to determine the extent to which students who desire such a ervice are getting it. As the data en student goals indicate, career planning is especially important to students seeking as associate degree.

Table 12 presents the five services that respendents indicated are most satisfactory and least satisfactory. The ranking of services was determined by calculating the proportion of students using the service who were satisfied with it (number of students who used the service anc were satisfied with it divided by the total number of students who used the service). As the data show in Table 12, the FCC library ranked as the most satisfactory cervice in terms of the proportion of students who used it. This finding is most sratifing in light of the work that has been done over the last wo years to improse this service for all of our students.

The high rankings of tutoring and studentemployment services are also significant since they ate both services that potentially entance sudents' ability To complete the: programs. Administators might consider extending these services.

In interpreting the services that ranked least satisfactory: a low proportion of the persons who used the career planning service evaluated it as satisfactory. This is cause for some concern. With the exception of housing services, concern also must be expressed with the other "least satisfactory" services. Academic advising, and guidance and counseling are critical to ensure effective student planning and performance. If ICC is to remam a viable institution in a time of shrinking enrellmenis and national challenges to the quality of postsecondary institutions, the Coll.ge must determine the reasons for the low evaluation.

Curreni Edk: :ional Plans. Table 13 summarizes the 1 espendents' plans for additnonal educatien. This is an importani table of information with respect to our acew institutionai narfeting goals. Over half of all respondents ( 54.2 percent) indicated that they do not hate any additional prans for formal education pursuits at this tine, and e. 3 pe: ent identified that they are currently undecided. It may be important to contect ibese persons in the near future to inform them about our continuing and new offerngs as well as remind them of our continuing interest in helping them mee: their educational needs. The 104 respondents who indicated they plan to recemill at ICC ( 13.3 pereent) is a group we should contact immediately to determine ther have any needs we can help them meet.

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TABLE 2 (Coninuad)

|  |  | C:RTIFC. TE |  | ASsochisismemele |  | Six fix |  | TOTAL |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
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|  | Mariul Sadus <br> () Maried <br> I Mor:Marrie' <br> Towal <br> Su Remuase | $\begin{aligned} & 5 \\ & 4 \\ & 4 \\ & 4 \\ & 1 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{array}{r} i .9 \\ 0.9! \\ 10.10 \\ 101.0 \\ 0.0 \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{r} 39 \\ 126 \\ 161 \\ 161 \\ 10 \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{r} 33.0 \\ i n! \\ -10.0 \\ 10.0 \\ 0.0 \end{array}$ | 3.1 <br> 249 <br> $3: 0$ <br> 4 | $\begin{array}{r} 56.3 \\ 4, .7 \\ \hline 100.0 \\ 0.7 \end{array}$ | 385 <br> $4 i 6$ <br> 801 <br> 9 | $\begin{gathered} 48.1 \\ \frac{52.0}{180.0} \\ \hline 1.1 \end{gathered}$ |
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| Cumberol'humper Map <br> 0 Semefoctudhair <br> 1 Berer changei <br> ! (hase <br> 3 Wrine <br> + The werndors <br> inlual <br> Kinkupus | 11 $i 1$ $\vdots$ 1 1 $i 1$ | 111 <br> (1) 9 <br> 1. <br> 1. <br> 1.1 <br> \||10.||| <br> 10.11 | $\begin{gathered} 11 \\ 11! \\ 11 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ \mid 6! \\ 3 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 10.0 \\ 50.8 \\ 11.1 \\ 2.5 \\ 10.6 \\ 110.10 \\ 1.0 \\ 1.0 \end{gathered}$ | 341 <br> 154 <br> 17 <br> 4 <br> 4 <br> 15 <br> 4 <br> 49 | $\begin{gathered} 65.0 \\ 29.3 \\ 3.2 \\ . .7 \\ 1.8 \\ \hline 10.8 \\ 100.0 \\ 8.5 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 198 \\ 311 \\ 38 \\ 15 \\ 6 \\ \hline 757 \\ 68 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 51.1 \\ 41.1 \\ 5.0 \\ 2.0 \\ 0.8 \\ \hline 100.10 \\ 8.2 \end{gathered}$ |



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TABLEB



| MAJOR OR AREA OFSTUDY | CERTIFICATE |  | associatedegree |  | NETHER |  | TOTAL |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\checkmark$ | 5 | N | * | N | 9 | $\bigcirc$ | 8 |
| Levers inchudec Cravive Whiting, Lieraume, Philosophy, Speeth) | 1 | 1.6 | 1 | 0.6 | 10 | 3.1 | 12 | 2.0 |
| Library Scienc: | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | $n$ | 0 | 0.10 |
| Mathemaics | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 1.2 | 3 | 0.1 | 5 | 0.9 |
| Miliary Simacts | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 |
| Physical Scierces (indudect Chenisisy, Plyysis, Earth Scrences) | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 | ; | 1.5 | 6 | i.l |
| Peychology | 1 | 1.6 | 4 | 2.3 | 13 | 9 | is | 3.3 |
| Pubic Afjurand Scial Levices | 1 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | ? | 0.6 | : | 0.4 |
| Social Se" aes inctudes iathropoplogy, Econmmiss, Hisimy, Powitical Science, Scridog.in | 6 | 0.5 | 8 | 53 | 13 | : | 27 | 4.9 |
| Tlealogand R lugion | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | ; | 0.9 | 3 | 0.5 |
| Inceruciciolinery Sudies | 0 | (i) | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Olluer | $J$ | (i.) 0 | 4 | 2.3 | 4 | i.: | 8 | 1.5 |
| Livecicided bu protath:" prygram of fuy or monerars | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | $\therefore 2$ | 1 | 0.7 |

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T:MBL: 3/(Coninued)

| MAJOROR RREAOFSTUM | C:z71\|c:cit |  | associatiobegref |  | Neither |  | Toral |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\checkmark$ | : | * | 4 | N | 8 | N | 4 |
| Business nad Commrect Tecthondigis (indudes Acounning, Bar'ing, Commecrial An, Hoviland Ressauran Nangememen | 13 | 20.6 | 36 | 22.4 | 53 | 16.2 | 102 | 18.5 |
| Secrearaid Technologisf indudus Oincespurising ind Mamprumen, Serororaphicand Tping Tchanduys) | i) | 23.8 | ; | 3.1 | 4 | 1.2 | 2 | 4.4 |
|  | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 4.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Dital"ocessing Tectnowgisis fincuducs Computer Proyranning, Kepyunching) | 1 | 6.3 | 12 | 7.5 | ; | i.5 | 3 | 3.8 |
| Healh Services and Pramedical <br> Technologies (natwers D) pura and <br>  Lccupaiond and Physial Therapy" Technology | $\vdots$ | 7.9 | 13 | 8.1 | 12 | 3.7 | 30 | 5.4 |
|  <br> (initudes deronauicical and <br> Alumomorre'Tcethologe, Wheding, <br> Elatranics, Architurumal IDratitury | 3 | 1.8 | 11 | 6.2 |  | 2.8 | 22 | 4.2 |

TABL: 3 (Continutid)

| major or ArEA OSSTUDY | ( F RTIFICATE |  | Assochtelicigee |  | SEituer |  | rotal |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\cdots$ | " | s | 4 | $\checkmark$ | \% | $\cdots$ | 4 |
| Constracion and Builling <br> Technolopits (induluse Curpultry, Plunbing, Shet Me:cu, Heaing! | 1 | $0.1)$ | (1) | 0.0 | 2 | 0.6 | ? | 0.4 |
| Natural Science Technougpies (includss <br>  <br>  Wi, dific Trchandow | 1 | 0.0 | 1 | 11.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.2 |
|  <br>  Food Preparation) | 1 | 0.10 | 0 | $0.1)$ | ? | 0.6 | $?$ | 0.4 |
| Pubic Serricie Technougyess (niduder <br>  <br>  <br>  | 3 | 4.8 | ii | 10.6 | 1. | 3.7 | 3 | 5.8 |
|  Perataluy | 1 | 10.) | 1 | 0.6 | 3 | 0.9 | 4 | 0.7 |
| intlut | 1 | 10.1 | 1 | $\because 1$ | i | 1.5 | 9 | 1.6 |
| I'nucridutlen prowidyl less han <br>  |  |  |  | 11.8 | i 2 | 15. | 81 | 14.7 |

1;

## Goals Aspired To and Goals Achieved or Bring Achieved <br> By All Resiondent.

## Acacicmic Goals

A To increase my knowledee and understanding in an academic field

B To obtain a certificate or degrec
C To complete courses necessary :"ranster to another cducarional institution

1) To complete high-school retuirements

I: Other
Cancer-Preparation Goals
I- To discover carecr interests
G To formulate long-term career phans andor poals
H To prepare for a new career
1 Other

## Carec-Improvement Goals

J To improve ny knowledts. . techmical skills. andor competencies tor me job or career
$K$ To increase my chances tor a mase and $/$ or promothon

1. Other

Social-and Coltaral-larticipation Goals
N! To become actively involved in studen lite and ampus activities
$N$ To inerease my participation in cultural and socian events
0) To meer people

I' Other
i'ersonal-Development and Enricnment (ioals
Q $\quad \mathrm{O}$ incredie my self-confidence
R Toimprove ny keadership shills
A To improve ny : bitity to get acong with others
T T ( $\cdot$ ra skills that will emrich my daty litic or make me a more complate porm
 and adaprable
$\checkmark$ Other

| Goals that were important |  | Goals Achieved or lieing achieved |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| N | \% | N | 4 , |
| 687 | 83.3 | 452 | 5.4.8 |
| 220 | 27.4 | 76 | 9.2 |
| 14.4 | 23.5 | 148 | 18.0 |
| 3 | 1.1 | 2 | 0.2 |
| 107 | 13.0 | 86 | 10.4 |
| 291 | 35.3 | 218 | 26.4 |
| $31!$ | 37.7 | 2.49 | 30.2 |
| 107 | 23.9 | 10.4 | 12.6 |
| 65 | 7.9 | 3.4 | 4.1 |
| 451 | 54.7 | 329 | 39.9 |
| 219 | 20.6 | 12.4 | 15.0 |
| 7.1 | 10.0 | 36 | 4.4 |
| 102 | 10.6 | $1 i 8$ | 1.4.; |
| i21 | 1.4 .7 | 72 | 8.7 |
| 112 | 13.6 | 95 | 11.5 |
| 12 | 1.5 | 4 | 1.1 |
| 83 | 10.1 | 4.4 | 5.3 |
| 87 | 10.0 | ; ${ }^{\text {c }}$ | 4.7 |
| 18 | 5.8 | 3! | 3.8 |
| 25.2 | 30.6 | 190 | 23.0 |
| 121 | 14.7 | 53 | 6.1 |
| 73 | 8.s | 48 | 5.3 |

$N=825$

TABLE

## Goals Aspired To and Goals Achieved or Being Achieved <br> By Respondents W'ho W'ere Seekinc a Certificate



T:ABl.E:


Auder ic Goals
A T. ...atase nyki, …ads - . erstamim: man acamme lick!

B To obtain a writiate or degres
(: Tocomplete courses nec sary bramsto: tomatiot cducational mstatution

1) To complete high-shool requatmens.

1: Other
Carcer-l'rephation (ioahs

1. 「odseover career interest

G To formulate long-erm careo phan andor wat
H Io prepare tor a gew carer
1 Other
Sarecr-Inprovement (ivals


$K$ To incerase me chance hora rase and or promotion

1. O:her

Sociat and Cultame Partempan Coak
II Tobecome activer iavolved in stadent hate and campus athithes
 crents

1) Comeer : eople

I' Oth:

Q Toincrease biy solfondidence
R Temprove my leadersinp shill-
S To imnowe my ability a det alone with othet
I. Tolear:a skills that will enrich mer daily itic or make nie a more co peplete person
(" Todeveiop riy ability tobe indereden: self-reliant. and adantable
$\checkmark$ Othes

| goals that we: : importan |  | Guals achieved ur being achicv:d |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\therefore$ | $\because$ | . | $\because$ |
| 102 | 6s.2 | 125 | 75.5 |
| 130 | 30.4 | 45 | 27.3 |
| 7 | 4.0 | 48 | 29.1 |
| $1)$ | 11.0 | $1)$ | 0.0 |
| 1.4 | 8.5 | $s$ | 4.9 |
| 75 | 4 | 43 | 26.1 |
| 08 | +1.2 | +1 | 2.49 |
| ! 11 | 01.2 | 75 | 15.5 |
| ミ | 19.4 | 13 | 7.9 |
| 6) | 37.6 | 38 | 23.0 |
| 37 | 23.4 | 18 | 11.12 |
| 1.4 | 8.5 | 3 |  |
| 39 | 23.6 | 20 | 12.1 |
| is | 11.1 | 11 | 6.7 |
| 18 | 11.0 | 17 | 10.3 |
| i | 0.6 | 11 | 0.1 |
| 12 | 25.5 | 18 | 11.0 |
| 33 | 20.0 | 9 | 5.5 |
| 18 | 11.0 | 11 | 6.7 |
| 22 | 13.3 | 8 | 4.9 |
| 21 | 12.7 | i) | 5.1 |
| 15 | 9.1 | 1.) | 6.1 |
|  |  |  | $\mathcal{N}=1$ |
| $173$ |  |  |  |

TABIE:



## Academic Gonls

A To increase my in bobedec and understandin! in an acadmetictid
B a whain cotitureo degre
 educatonal insti ution
D) To complete nusiaschol requiremeats

1: Other
Garecr Prearation Goals. .
F. Todiscover carecr interesis
(; Tu formuate longerm carecr plans andor boals
H Ioprepa. for anew areer
1 Other
Carcer-In:zownem (goals
J joimprose my knowledfe, techntal killa and or competencies for my joh or carcer
$K$ To incease my chancestor a rase andor momotha
l. Other

Sucial- and Culural- Parncipation (ionk
M Io beanie surely molved natent hie and ampus activites
 events
(1) Ionnee people

I' Ither
Persomaidevesoment md Enrohmen! ( wal
() Io increase my self-contijence

R Coimprove mu leadership skils
$S$ Io improve ny abiity to get alone weth othe.
T. To iearn skills that will enrich my daty lite a matric me a more complete persors
(• Io develop my abilir! to be independent, selt-remait. and aduptable
$v$ Other


## T:MBE:8

Rempondert Lersos forlewna
For Tora Sampia wo Suscrours


## TABEEP(Connunud)



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## $1: 1 \mathrm{M}:=$





FABIIE 10

Legend
Kid not know aboat service
Kid about service but did not ase 1,
Used service and was satislied
Used service but was not satistied


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## IABLE IO (Continued)



TAELE 10 (Continacd)

| Legend |  |
| :---: | :---: |
|  | Lid not know about service |
|  | Kr.ew about service but did not ree it |
| I | Used seroite and was satisfied |
| $\because$ | Used servic but was not satistied |



TABLEII
The Five Monta. mast Recognimed Services

| serviciss | RANK | $\checkmark$ |  | $\cdots$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Mos' Kecognized |  |  |  |  |
| P:arki:g | 1 | 835 |  | :00.0 |
| Registation | 2 | $\because 17$ |  | 99.0 |
| Admissions | ; | 208 |  | 97.9 |
| Bookstore | 1 | 78.4 |  | 95.0 |
| Business Omile | ; | 713 |  | 90.1 |
|  |  |  |  | $\therefore=825$ |
| I cus: Recognized |  |  |  |  |
| Housmy Service | 1 | 751 |  | 91.1 |
| Corild Care | 2 | $3 \cdot 7$ |  | 42.1 |
| Campus Securits | 3 | 389 |  | 35.0 |
| Heath Sorvice | 4 | 281 |  | 3.4 .1 |
| Careor Plamans |  |  |  | 33.0 |
|  |  |  |  | $N=825$ |
|  | T: 13 |  |  |  |
| Thefive Mond alems Satisfatory Sprices <br>  |  |  |  |  |
| stervices | RANK | antisifiti) | C:ING | \% |
| Clus Suramory |  |  |  |  |
| Library |  | 553 | 58.4 | 94.7 |
| Pusoring | 2 | $1!4$ | 122 | 93.1 |
| Stumat limplosmom | 3 | 230 | 76 | 91.9 |
| Rusiness Othice |  | 627 | 702 | 89.3 |
| Healh Servaces |  | 115 | ! 31 | 87.8 |
| Rectanan \& whem Pras. .av | 5 | 05 | . $\%$ | 87.8 |
| 1.cast ratautory |  |  |  |  |
| Cater l'amang | 1 | 11 | 157 | 20.1 |
| A.akionic Adusime | 2 | 1.14 | 256 | 18.4 |
| Houswn Siromes | ; | $\stackrel{3}{ }$ | if | 50.0 |
| ( Dniclare | , | 91 | $17 \%$ | 32.6 |
| ( mismur and Coumelina | $:$ | - - 4 | 217 | 59.9 |




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## IV. Summary

During July of 1977, 2,560 Farview College students who had Eailed to remen for at least one quarter during the 1976-77 academic year were sent a questionnaire. They were asked their reasons for not returning, satisfaction with varivus aspects of FCC, present and future plans, and background and demographic information. After a follow-up mailing in September, 825 usable questionnaires were received for an adjusted response rate of ${ }^{2} 8$ percent. Of the 825 respondents, 66 (8 percent) were seeking a :urificate from the College when they left, 165 (20 percent) were secking an associate degree, and 594 (70 percent) were not seeking a degree or certificate. Data from the surver were analyzed separately for each of these three groups.

The questionnaire background data for responacnts rewaled fairly predictable patterns among the thece groups of students (certificte, associate, and neither). Those not seeking a degree oie .ertificate were almost en. :ly residents of Culnrado; they tended to be somewhat older, with an average age range of 26 to 30 and a range from under 18 to 65; they were nore likely to be female by a ratio of two to one, and most were white. Two-thirds of this group .eld a high-school diplom:a or GED, almost one-third held a higher degree, and less than 4 percent held no degree. Nearly three-fourths enrolled at FCC to learn new skills, upgrade skills, or for personal enrichment and 40 peecent had been enrolled one term or less. One of eight was enrolled full-time, three-fourths were employed, and few received any financial aid. Grades were high for this : oup, averaging 3.4. The majority (nearly wo-thirds) had never declared a major.

The respondents secking a certificate or an associate degree generally shared similar backgrounds. These students were primarily from Colorado. They tended to be older than traditional students (eertitate seekers averaged 26 to 30 years of age, while associate seckers were 23 to 25); they were more likely to be female by a ratio of three to two; and most were white. Most associate-degree students had a high-school diplom: or (illi) ( 88 percent): the same was true of 70 percent of the certificate seekers (with an i.deditional 17 percent in this group holding bachelor's or higher degrees).

The wo groups shared a desire to increase their knowledge and skills in an academic field and obtain a certificate or degree. However, over 40 percent of the associate-degree respondents enrolled to complete courses necessary to transfer to another coilege, while oniy 20 percem of the eertifiate seekers aspired to that goal. On the other hand, only 37 percent of the associate-degree secke- aspired to improve their job-related skills, while 97 percent of the certificate seekers sought this goal.

Almost 30 percent of the certificate group attended the College for only one term betore leaving, while 20 percent of the associatedegree group ere enrolled for one term before leaving. Slighty ower to percent of both groups were full-time students. Only 13 percent of the certitic. e respondents were not employed at all
white a FCC and over 60 pereent were employed full-time. In the associatedegree group, 20 percent were not employed, and almost half were employed full-time. A substantial minority of both groups received financial add (herween 26 and 34 percent) while at Earriew. Grades for both groups were good with 68 pereent of the certificate group and 84 percent of the associate-degree group aveaging 2.01 or better. Over wo-therds of hoth groups had dectared a major and never changed.

Over to pereent of the certifiate seckers were from one of wo major fieds: Business and Commere Techoblosies and Sectamal Technologies. Nearly 50 percent of the asociatedegree seckers were from one of four wehnology majors: Business and Commerce, D: : Processing, I Eath Services, and Public Services. These results may have programmatic implications for the $\begin{aligned} & \text { ollege it }\end{aligned}$ the proportions of at studems enrolled at $B C O$ in these mator tield are substantatly less than the proporions in these mators who lefi lece (For example, if the peremtage of all asociatedegre seckers enathed in the Public Service Technologies program is, say, 2 percent, but 10 percent of those who keave are ir: the same program, this may indicate a potental problem in the program.)

Among all three degree groups, three reasons for leating lairview sartaced as in. nortant: contlict beween foh and studies. tack of moner, and wher responsibilities outside of college hecomins too grean. lor these not secking a destee or certificate, wo other reasons were requenty mentioned: atherement of personal
 mentioned personal problems, and associatedegree seckers ranked disatisfacion with the learning environment of F C C as another mator reason for leaving.

Respondents were asked to rate their satsfation with barious services and functions of the College. From these ratings, the five most .ad least satistatory aspects of l${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{CC}$ were interred for eath of the three groups of respondents hy calculating the proporion using a particular service that was satistice with it. The service that were mone satistory were libare, tutoring sudent employment. the business office, and health services/recteationatheric programs. The fiee keast satisfactory servies were: ateer planning, academic adsising, housing services, child care, and guidance and counseling.

Most of the students in the certificateseckers and noncertiticatemondegreeseckers groups ( 60 pereent and 58 percent, respectively) did not have any addional ducational plans at the time the were survered. (if ine certifeate seckers who did, 23 pereent pianned to reearoia an $\mathrm{i} \because \mathrm{C}$

In contrast to the other wo subgoups, only 38 percent of the associate-degree -. Ser: had no current plans tor adiatonal cducation. Of this group, 19 percent
 aid is percen had aready reerabled an another collese.

## 191

## AMrNin!

Sample of Questionnair: i $\because$ in in Stud.



## STANDARD QUFSTIONS SECTION




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## ADDITIONAL QUESIIONS SECTION






LIST A: MAJORS IND AK...S OF SIUDY


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| $\therefore$ (1) |  |
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| 91401 | 11: $10 \cdot$ |
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| 9644 |  <br>  . $\cdot \mathrm{H}$ |
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## Additional Questions





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## AMMNDIX

Questionnaire Keypunching Formats
Using 80-Column Cards

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$$

## Card 1 - Entering-Student Questionnaire for <br> Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universities

| Columins | fient Number | Desrriplion | Columios | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Henn } \\ & \text { Number } \end{aligned}$ | Deacrintion |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
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| 11. | $\because:$ |  | '. | . |  |
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| $\therefore$ | $\cdots$ |  |  |  |  |
| $\therefore$ | $\cdots$ |  | , | 1.1 $\cdots!$ |  |
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| $\therefore$ | - |  <br>  | $\therefore$ | $\therefore$ : |  |
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| $\therefore$ '' | $\cdots$ |  |  |  |  |
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| 17 | $\cdots$ |  | $\cdots$ | $\therefore$ : ${ }^{\text {- }}$ |  |
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| : 1 | $\cdots$ : |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | $\bullet$ ! |  |  |  |  |

## Card 2-Entering-Student Questionnairs ior Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universities



# Card 1 - Continuing-Student Questionnaire for Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universities 




## Card 2-Continuing-Student Questionnaire for Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universities

| Columns | llem Number | Description |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
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| in |  | ( ardmumimi - |
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| d 10 | $\therefore$ |  |
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| $\therefore$; | $\therefore$ |  |
| (a) | $\therefore$ | D6htwnisharetion is |
| 17 | ! | What mal wranton it |
| H 4 | ii |  |

## Card 1 - Program-Completer Questionnaire for Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colieges and 'Jniversities




## Card 2 - Program-Completer Questionnaire for Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Univers:ties



## Card 1-Former-Student Questionnaire for

 Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universities


## Card 2-Former-Student Questionnaire for Two-Year Colleges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universitics



## Card 1-Recent-Alumni Question. aire for <br> Two-Year Colleges and for For-Year Colleges an d Universities



## Card 2-Recent-Alumni Questionnaire for Two-Year Colieges and for Four-Year Colleges and Universities

| Columns | Item Number | Description |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
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