LEARNING FRAMEWORKS, FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION 1300: A QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF EXPECTATIONS & PERCEPTIONS OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AND FACULTY

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
In Professional Leadership

by
David H. Pyle, Jr.

May 2017

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Dedication

"This the day the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24).

This doctoral journey has been an incredible pathway of learning I have ever experienced. A journey of in-depth questioning, critical thinking, endurance, reading, writing, persistence, and frankly, many prayers. If there is one thing that will make you rely on the Lord alone, it is a doctoral program. Support from Cohort Six, family, friends, and loved ones have made this degree possible and come to fruition. The level of gratitude and respect I have for the ones that made this possible is unmeasurable. My parents, Elinor & David Pyle, Sr., your love, support, words of encouragement, along the paths of my life will always be the source of strength that I draw from each day. Your unselfish love for not only one another but for others is an example of Christ's Redeeming Love and acceptance for everyone of His kids. To my little brother Dana, God has blessed you incredibly to be a joy to others. My personal prayer is that your marriage to Nicole will always be a witness of God's amazing grace in your marriage as you grow together. In honor and in loving memory of my grandparents, Dorothy and Hugh Pyle, Elsie and Ellis Ford. Being the oldest of all of the grandchildren gave me more time with you than the others. I treasured every minute with you. The Lord took you all home to be with Him way too soon. Uncle "Bub," your sense of life, vitality, and most importantly, that witty sense of humor, are missed. I know you are all together in heaven right now laughing in the fact that you would be calling me "Dr. Dude" (or make up some name for me) if you were here on earth. To say that I miss you all is an understatement. Time is not our friend.

In honor of my Godparents who have gone to be with the Lord and Mrs. Amelda Sump, who is 97 years young, you have set the "bar extremely high" for me now as a Godparent. Just like you and Elton, I have been blessed to have godchildren out of personal relationships with non-relative families from church. These are stories that only God can replicate. God has a sense of humor.

Finally, to my best friend and sweetheart Nilda. Your kindness, laughter, beautiful smile and love, will be cherished and adored all the remaining days of my life. Your infectious love for the Lord and others always brightens their day. Thank you for being you. God has made you special and I am so blessed to be with you. *This is the day that the Lord has made…I am going to rejoice and be glad in it.*

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Abstract

The course most offered by Community Colleges to enhance first-year student success focuses on facilitating students in academic transition from high school to higher education. The purpose of the first-year experience course is designed to increase tenacity, retention, completion, and personal advancement at the university level. Research is limited regarding the expectations and perceptions of college students as they matriculate into higher education. The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the Student Success Course (SSC) at the Community College level. The study most influenced experiences identified by first-year students such as their expectations; the perceptions for the first year SSC; the academic, social and career – related expectations students have during their first year of college that they believe will lead them to success in college; the preparation levels for the SSC and the extent student and faculty expectations are in alignment. The study used a qualitative approach that probed student and faculty perceptions as it related to the student success course. Five first-year students enrolled in Education 1300, and five Education 1300 faculty were identified and volunteered for the study at a large suburban community college. A semi-structured interview guide and cognitive interviews were employed to collect data, and these interviews were transcribed into themes. Five themes emerged, and two related to prior experiences that identified first generation familial disconnect to the college experience and taking the SSC. Three themes related to student perceptions of college success were hybrid course scheduling, faculty interactions, and academic advising. Implications for researchers and practitioners are discussed.

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Chapter I

Introduction

In a recent 2013 report, *Building a Grad Nation*: *Progress and Challenges and Ending the High School Dropout Epidemic*, the national high school graduation rate soared to a record high 81.4%. Concluded in this report was that the high school graduation rate was on track to meet the 90% goal by 2020 (Balfanz, Bridgeland, Depaoli, Ingram, Fox, & Mauschard, 2014). Although high schools continue to have high graduation rates, higher education enrollment statistics soar. Debard (2004) reported the current generation of entering college students is not only the largest generation, coincidentally, is the "most racially and ethnically diverse in this nation's history" (p. 33). Between the years of 1998 and 2008, the numbers of students who were enrolled in higher education increased from 14.5 million to 19.1 million students (National Center for Education Statistics). With this significant data, student populations that have been historically underrepresented propagate substantial growth.

Time to degree completion has increased. McCormick and Horn (1996) stated that the traditional pattern of graduating high school, entering college and earning a bachelor's degree four years later is no longer the experience of undergraduate students. It is evident why research related to degree completion is pertinent to improve postsecondary education completion rates because today students who begin college do not complete their studies. As students today explore and gauge their opportunities and options in selecting institutions, they inescapably create perceptions and expectations of what their first year in college will resemble.

In the United States, substantial growth has occurred in the large proportion of students enrolling in higher education. The Lumina Foundation (Sept 2015) stated that the demographics and balancing multiple responsibilities is alarming for today's college student and relevant to the foundation of this research:

- 75% of college students commute to class while juggling parenting working and both.
- 40% attend school part-time.
- On average, students work 19 hours per week.
- About 40% of community college students worked 20 or more hours per week.
- 38% of all today's undergraduates or older than 25.
- Enrollment among Hispanic students has tripled since the mid-1990s, and African-American enrollment has grown by 72%.
- These trends are expected to continue through 2021, with African-American enrollment projected to increase by 25%, Hispanic students supposed to increase by 42%, and only 4% increase in White students forecasted.
- To support themselves financially, 4.8 million postsecondary students are parents, and of those students, 61% have no money to contribute to the cost of college.
- Almost ½ of today students are on their own financially, half of those students (25%) have financial dependents of their own.
- 88% of single student – parents have incomes below 200% of the poverty line.

- Students with additional financial, work and family obligations are twice as likely to drop out of school in their first year as students out of high school, 38% compared to 16%.
- No more than a quarter of part-time students make it to graduation, even when given twice as long to complete.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) projected "that the number of students enrolled in higher education will continue to increase over the next decade, reaching an estimated 20.6 million students in 2018" (Aud, Hussar, Johnson, Kena, Roth, Manning, Wang, & Zhang, 2010). There were 16.3 million undergraduate students in the United States in 2008 (Aud et al., 2010). Overall, projections indicate that public institutions including community colleges will continue to educate most students. Barriers exist that community college students face from degree completion such as issues of persistence, retention, and decreasing levels of academic preparation. In the Student Success Course (SSC) also called (EDUC 1300), Stovall (2000) stated that this course is viewed to help "students identify campus resources, establish relationships with other students, faculty members, and assess their educational and life management skills" (p. 46). First-generation college students are at an enormous risk for the problematic transition and venture from high school to college (Pascarella & Terezeni, 1991). The lack of higher education experiences coupled with the lack thereof support from the family unit creates unforeseen barriers for students. However, First-Year Experience courses substantially influence college success, persistence, and degree completion (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Therefore, initiatives regarding inquiry and investigation

into student perceptions and expectations are inevitable in assessing success, completion rates, persistence, and retention efforts.

Many reform critics postulate how students are being educated in high schools and preparing them for higher education. Although graduation rates are increasing in public education, high schools are failing students by not preparing them for post-secondary education. In the United States in 2007, 70% of high school students graduated on time, with 34% ready for college (Education Week, 2007; Greene & Winters, 2005). Once in college, graduation rates among college students are alarming. In a report by the NPEC (Kuh et al., 2006), states that "20% of all four-year universities will graduate less than one-third of their first-time, full-time, degree-seeking first-year students within six years" (p. 17). Three-fifths of students (Adelman, 2004) in public 2-year colleges (Horn & Berger, 2004) while 4-year colleges require at least minimally one year of remedial coursework (Carey, 2004). The Institute for Higher Education agreed that remediation is a large business, resulting and costing at least $1 billion annually. Researchers have documented that the more remedial classes and entering college student must take, the less likely they will persist in graduate. As a direct result, improving college readiness must be an essential part of national and state efforts to increase college degree completion (SREB Report). Finally, problems created by low degree completions are important, and research is present regarding factors that may improve completion rates.

Statement of the Problem

As college enrollment continues to increase in the United States, graduation rates are not reflective of entering students. Students enter a 4-year university expecting they will graduate where they began their studies. In the community college system,

depending on several factors, most students transfer to a 4-year institution. Student expectations are enormous and lofty when it comes to attending higher education with the belief system instilled that college is going to be a simple process. Although students are held to meet the expectations of their professors, Kirst and Venezia (2001) determined that first-year college students not be aware of faculty expectations. In many ways, these expectations are not made clear to students. Also, students do not meet their expectations of graduating from a 4-year institution in six years. In 2014, 37% of students graduated from 4-year institutions within four years. The overall graduation rate reflects a 10% decline in a similar study from 1989 (HERI).

Tinto (1993), stated that faculty constructs their set of expectations for their students and represents the academic climate for the college. Faculty members are the foundation for academics in community colleges and universities. Although they are responsible for teaching, advising, syllabi, curricular development, and objectives of the university, faculty portray a significant role in the persistence and retention rates of entering freshman. Kuh and Hu (1999, 2001) stated that perpetual student–faculty interaction is assumed in undergraduate education. Faculty–student contact plays a specific role in degree completion rates, higher degrees of success in academic coursework, and overall improvement in undergraduate GPA (Astin, 1977, 1993, 1985; Bean, 1985; Bean & Kuh, 1984, 1991; Pascarella, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1976, 1979; 2005, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996; Tinto, 1993). The intellectual or substantive focus has a significant effect on college campuses than informal social exchanges (Kuh & Hu, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). With the successes of student – faculty interactions and outcomes, little research exists on student and faculty

expectations and perceptions on the First-Year Experience (FYE), Student Success Course.

Limited published research is present in which student expectations with learning together have been assessed (Kuh, 1999). As such, a gap exists in the knowledge base. College students transition from high school into the college experience with towering in some cases unreachable and unattainable expectations for college. Entering college students have high hopes when it comes to goals, perceptions, and future job targets (Olsen et al., 1999) stated that two ways are present in which student expectations influences what they do when they arrive on campus. First, student expectations serve as a filter, where students evaluate and make judgments about the information given and their personal experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Expectations do shape other behaviors and experiences (Feldman, 1981). Secondly, expectations affect experiences to be a psychological catalyst to other types of behavior (Olsen, 1999). Expectations do shape and guide further decisions in campus activities and future studies thus influencing persistence and retention. Expectations influence the types of opportunities students to pursue and thus determine and shape student success in the first year onward (Kuh, 2005). In this qualitative study, identified and analyzed will be the expectations and perceptions of first-year college students and the faculty who teach the First-Year Experience (FYE), Student Success Course.

Purpose of the Study

In the United States, many postsecondary institutions have made the first-year success course a priority to improve student success, persistence, retention, and increase graduation rates. In Texas, the Student Success Course is required of all incoming first-

year freshman under House Bill Five. Students must be successful in this course before they can take more than 12 college hours. Tinto (1975, 1993) postulated that both students social and academic involvement are significant contributors to degree completion. Student-faculty interaction is paramount in both cases.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 class. In this study, both first-year students and faculty were asked to reflect and to identify their perceptions and expectations of success in Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience-Education 1300. These expectations and perceptions were measured using the Cognitive Interview by Gordon Willis.

Significance of Study

In presenting and conducting present day, research allows higher education administrators, program directors, academic success advisors, chairs, insight in developing a concise understanding of the expectations and perceptions college students bring as they enter higher education in their first semester. This study is relevant to the knowledge base in six distinct areas. First, research about student expectations and perceptions is severely limited (Miller, 2005). Secondly, aligning expectations may assist in establishing the institutional fit between higher education pedagogy and entering first-year college students. Thirdly, identifying expectations may influence enrollment management strategies of the SSC and future programming. Fourth, outlining student and faculty expectations may affect curricular design for first-year students SSC. Fifth, the FYE Success course is highly adaptable and creative for all learners in institutional settings (Barefoot & Gardner, 1998). Finally, sixth, the significance of the study will

assist and shape future curricular design, scheduling of classes, programming, and course content.

Research Questions

Four research questions will be addressed in this study. The major foundation of the research study is to assess first-year college students' perceptions and expectations along with faculty views of the Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience, Education 1300 Student Success Course.

The research questions for this study were:

1. Before college, what experiences do first-year students recount having that most influenced their expectations and perceptions for the first-year SSC?
2. What academic, social and career – related expectations do students hold during their first year of college that they believe will lead them to be successful in college?
3. Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class?
4. In the Student Success Course, to what extent are student and faculty expectations are in alignment?

Theoretical Framework

For this qualitative study, the conceptual framework **was** the Cognitive Interview by Gordon Willis. Since the 1980s, cognitive interviewing has developed as one of the most unmistakable methods for distinguishing and correcting issues with survey questions (Beatty & Willis). Researchers can adapt cognitive interviewing to test written and orally delivered materials to identify difficulties that would normally go unnoticed (Willis, p. 3). Survey questions and their two meanings have often given researchers little

review. The cognitive interview intends to classify and analyze pieces of response error in survey questionnaires by focusing on cognitive mechanisms respondents use to answer an inquiry on a survey. The essence of the methodology is to review whether respondents comprehend the question across subject matter and in its original form by the researcher (Collins, 2003). In cognitive interviews, the focused in placed on the cognitive processes respondents use to answer questions on a survey (Willis, 1997, 2005). A research design is a procedural plan adjusted by the researcher to respond to the issues in a logical way.

Merriam (2002) insisted on understanding qualitative research lies within the idea that something is socially constructed by individuals to their reaction in their world (p. 3). Creswell (2013) stated that qualitative research could be employed when there is an issue or problem that needs to be investigated. McMillan (2012) remarked, "qualitative research stresses a phenomenological model in which multiple realities are rooted in the subjects' perceptions" (p. 12). Once the decision is made by the researcher to study a specific topic, the first step is to access the type of research design that fits the topic (Maxwell, 2005). Though many forms and traditions of qualitative research exist, this study will be completed using a phenomenological approach. In his work using qualitative research, Creswell (2013) argued that "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context of the study" (p. 23).

Marshall and Rossman (1999) suggested that in "qualitative inquiry, initial curiosities for research often come from real world observations, emerge in from the interplay of the researcher's direct experience, tactic theories, political commitments, interest and practice, and growing scholarly interests" (p. 25). Creswell (2013) advocated

that we use “qualitative research to follow-up quantitative research and help explain the various mechanisms or linkages in casual theories or models” (p. 48). As the literature review indicates some instructive insights into the correlation between college experiences and expectations, “there needs to be a more comprehensive understanding how expectations affect experiences and outcomes” (Miller, Bender, & Schuh, p. 39). It is through this framework that cognitive interviews and surveys were employed to assess the expectations and perceptions of first-year college students and the faculty who teach the student success course.

Assumptions

The first assumption in the study is that all 12 participants will respond openly and honestly in providing feedback during the interview. A second assumption is that member’s views and responses compared to one another regarding their perceptions and expectations of the student success course. Finally, it can be assumed that the student success course had somehow contributed in their pathways in becoming educationally successful.

Limitations of the Study

This educational research is limited to first-year college students enrolled in the Learning Frameworks, First-Year Experience, Education 1300 Student Success Course. In a research study, limitations are the factors that cannot be controlled by the researcher. Three limitations are present in this study. First, the study was conducted at a single institution, and the conclusions of the research study may be too generalized as compared to separate populations. Secondly, this study covered fall to spring student and faculty

expectations. Third, first-year experience programs are not easily duplicated just like the higher institutions themselves.

Delimitations of the Study

Four delimitations are present in this research investigation. First, this survey was limited to a South Texas institution of higher education. Secondly, the instrument utilized to measure expectations was the Cognitive Interview. Third, the research questions to students and faculty were presented, surveyed, and audiotaped by only this researcher. Fourth, this study was limited to first semester students who were enrolled in the SSC at a South Texas institution of higher learning.

Definition of Key Terms

The following terms will be defined for purposes of use throughout the study.

Academic Achievement- Academic Achievement as defined as successfully completing a mandatory course with a grade of C or better.

Associate degree- A degree awarded by a community college typically recognized as a two-year degree.

Attrition- When a student fails to re-enroll at a higher educational institution within consecutive semesters.

College readiness- ACT (2015), states "the acquisition of knowledge and skills a student needs to enroll and succeed in credit-bearing first-year courses at a postsecondary institution whether that be a 2- or 4-year college, trade school, or technical school without the need for remediation."

College Success Course- Provides entering college students with information about campus departments and services. Assistance with academic and career planning,

techniques for study skills and financial planning, with the "primary goal to familiarize students with the collegiate environment. Give students the tools they need to persist postsecondary education while earning a college degree" (Hughes, Karp, O'Gara, 2012, Community College Research Center).

Community College Survey of Student Engagement – An instrument used to assess student perception of engagement at the community college.

Community College- An institution of higher education, typically a commuter campus, accredited to offer certificate programs and Associate degrees.

Completion – The attainment of a college certificate or degree.

Developmental Education- Courses designed to assist and remediate underprepared student's skills to perform at college level standards. Typically, these are courses and reading writing and math. The enrollment into these courses is to be determined by entry placement testing.

Efficacy – For this study, increased student retention, persistence, and completion as it relates to the capacity for producing the desired result.

Expectations- An act or state of looking forward to some occurrence (Miriam and Webster).

First Generation Student – A student whose parents do not have a bachelor's degree or have attended college (Pell Institute, 2015).

First-Time-In-College (FTIC)-A student who has never taken a college course.

Full-time student – A student enrolled in 12 or more credit hours.

Low-income status- An annual family income that consists of earning less than $25,000 a year (Pell Institute, 2015).

Minority student- Regarding race and ethnicity, a student who reports his/her race and ethnicity as something other than non-Hispanic White (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011).

Open-door admissions- Two-year college admission and enrollment processes that are different from 4-year institutional requirements in which fewer entrance examination scores and other criteria is not required.

Part-time student- The student enrolled in less than 12 hours of course work.

Perceptions- The ability to understand inner qualities or relationships (Merriam & Webster).

Persistence- For the study, persistence is measured as fall to spring to fall enrollment. It is a student measure of the desire and action of a student to stay within the system of higher education from their beginning year through did agree on completion.

Postsecondary Education- Education in a college, university, or institution is providing education following completion of high school or secondary school also referred to as higher education.

Remedial Education- Courses designed to assist and remediate underprepared student's skills to perform at college level standards. Typically, these are courses and reading writing and math. The enrollment into these courses is determined by entry placement testing.

Retention- For this study, retention is measured asked first-term successful course completion. It is an institutional measure, "the ability of an institution to retain a student through a determined timeframe such as retention in a course or retention from the beginning term through degree completion" (Seidman, 2012, p. 12).

Student engagement – Student engagement is defined as the amount of time and energy students invest in meaningful educational practices these are highly correlated with student learning and retention (CCSSE, 2015).

Student Expectations- Defined as the pre-college beliefs of students relating to what they believe their experience will be in college (Miller et al., 2005).

Student Success Course- Provides entering college students with information about campus departments and services, assistance with academic and career planning, techniques for study skills and financial planning. As the Community College Resource Center explains, "the primary goal of the Student Success Course is to equip and familiarize students with the collegiate environment and hand them the tools they need to persist to be successful in postsecondary education" (Karp et al., 2012, CCRC).

Underprepared Student – A student whose academic skills in reading, writing, and math are not at the college level, usually assessed by a basic skills assessment.

Withdrawal – The departure of a student from a college or university campus (Seidman, 2012, p. 12).

Organization of the Study

This research study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One provides the introduction of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the research, the primary research questions, theoretical framework, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, the definition of terms, an organization of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of the existing literature, encompassing and examining expectations and perceptions of first-year students and faculty that teach the Student Success Course. Goals of the SSC are presented describing the outcomes of the

course, characteristics of community college students, transient populations, and demographics of community college students. Next, students transitioning in college is discussed, and curricular issues of alignment are exposed at the secondary level. Finally, student and faculty perceptions and expectations are shown. Chapter Three presents the methodology of the research study this chapter explains the research type, context of the study, participant selection and population, survey instrument, and data analysis processes. Chapter Four presents the findings of the investigation organized around the research questions. Chapter Five summarizes the study, provides findings and discussions, recognizes limitations of the study, offers implication of the survey, and in conclusion, presents findings and recommendations for further research.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter is a consideration of the relevant literature as it relates to persistence, retention, student perceptions, expectations, and success. An overview of community colleges in Texas, student demographics, transitions to college, and interventions are presented to provide full contextual evidence for the study. The literature on the first-year experience in college success is then reviewed, followed by more specific analysis of both student and faculty expectations and perceptions of the student success course. The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 class.

History of Community Colleges

Community colleges seek to make education affordable and "open accessible to the public." Community colleges desire to be accountable and judicious in providing a quality education for all students, regardless of economic position. Community colleges have grown substantially over the years, especially in student enrollment in both credit and non-credit course offerings. Barton (2005) alluded to the notion that community colleges educate 40% of students in the United States that have limited funding as compared to 4-year institutions. As cited in Deegan and Tillery, (1985, p. 141) Kerr called the community college one of America's "two great innovations in higher education" with the other being the emergence of the land-grant college system in the 19th century. The history of community colleges has been outlined by Jerry Young (1997) into five succinct generations: (1) extension of high school, 1900 – 1930.; (2)

junior college, 1930 – 1950; (3) community college, 1950 – 1970; (4) comprehensive community college, 1976 – 1985; (5) new college, 1985 – present. Community colleges have been responsive to societal change throughout its beginnings.

Almost 80% of high school graduates enroll in higher educational institutions every year. It is significant to impart that colleges in the United States must continue to create and invent new pathways to retain students for completion of the degree. While the open access idea of community colleges and 4-year institutions have had significant gains the last 30 years, the difficulty is present in translating access to college into college success (Tinto, 2010). Although no one solution is present to the persistence, retention, graduation and success rate issues in the United States, current researchers contend that student success is a function of both social and academic engagement (Carey, 2005).

In Brint and Karabel (1989) and Mellow and Heelan (2008), community colleges are categorically American and different than any public sector of higher education. They are affordable and present in most urban even rural communities in the United States. Cohen and Brawer (2003) related that before the 1970's, a clear majority enrolled in community colleges, because not only were their commuter campuses but students desired to transfer credits eventually to 4-year universities. Amidst the last century, community colleges roles have evolved from an extension of vocational high school training to the accredited institutions. In contrast to Bok, (2006) that noted the passing of the Morrill Act of 1862 made vocational institutions the extension of public education. The characteristic of community colleges does follow two fundamental tenets from the Truman Commission, which are: overall mission and open admission (AACC, 2006).

In 1963, with the emergence of the Federal Vocational Educational Act, this made vocational programs highly successful at the community college level which became increasingly popular in the 1970's. In both the 1960s and 1970s, community colleges became primarily public institutions with the opportunity for students to transfer to a 4-year university, earn an associate's degree in a subject related industries or fields. "Vocational programs were being reserved for the favored few while the transfer curricula were entered by those unqualified for the technologies or uncertain of their direction" (Cohen & Brawer, 2003, p. 67).

Early Higher Education in Texas

In Texas, the beginnings of higher education followed suit as the pattern of the rest of the United States from within the framework that the first colleges were founded by religious groups and communities (Steen, 1941). In 1840, Rutersville College first opened its door close to La Grange. Rutersville College was named after an emissary, Dr. Martin Ruter, was sent by the Methodist General Conference in Texas (Steen, 1941). Until 1856, "Rutersville merged into the Texas Monument and Military Institute near Bastrop" (Eby, 1918, p. 7). Local and denominational authority, changes in management, and an isolated location led to this merger.

In 1837, Republic of Texas first Congress authorized the charter to the University of San Augustine. Because of a substantial, significant handicap population of 150, the college closed in 1847 (Steen, 1941). The oldest existing institution in the State of Texas is Baylor University, chartered in 1845 under the Republic of Texas. Under the direction of the Texas Baptist Educational Society, and the Reverend's William B. Tryon, James Higgins, and Judge R.E.B. Baylor were activists in the movement. Just as in early

America, with the founding of colonies for religious toleration and freedom, the “major motive for establishing Baylor was the idea of preparing people for public ministry” (Eby, 1918). Attitudes in Texas at that time were that education was a private matter, and the government of Texas should not interfere. In 1845, to grow and foster education in Texas, the Texas Literary Institute was formed by some of the early school leaders in Texas (Hansen, 1969).

Before the start of the Civil War, old institutions were founded by 1865. “These were sacred institutions, with only five of these first colleges existed with an unchained history—Waco and Baylor University, which joined in 1882, Austin College, Baylor Female College, which became after Independence Academy in Galveston, and Ursuline Academy in San Antonio” (Eby, 1918, p. 8).

Government Intervention in Higher Education

In 1839, a legislative act by the Republic of Texas, the President was to “have surveyed from the vacant public lands and set apart for university education, fifty leagues” (Brown, 1970, p. 36). Once the Morrill Act of 1862 passed, the Texas legislature then accepted the provisions of the Act of 1866 (Brown, 1970). From 1868 onward, the constitutional convention acknowledged the need for public colleges and universities in Texas and some form of coordination of those institutions. Specifically, the convention committee desired a board of education to establish institutions “offering work beyond that of the public schools” (Stewart & Clark, 1936, p. 21). Out of this recommendation, the State Board of Education was adopted (Hansen, 1969).

Later known as Texas A & M University, in 1871, the Texas Legislature gained 180,000-acre land endowment by the passage of the Morrill Act and called it, “The

Agricultural & Mechanical College" (Steen, 1941, p. 37). Texas A&M was the first institution of higher education that was established in Texas, and thus, its door was open in 1876. Later, in 1879, Sam Houston Normal and Prairie View Normal were created. Thanks to the Texas Legislature, in 1881, they established the University of Texas which later opened in 1883. In 1899, Southwest Texas State Normal and North Texas State opened. Tarleton State opened as a junior college. It was during this "period that both the University of Texas and Texas A&M were the only public institutions offering degree programs" (Steen, 1941, p. 38). Many private institutions were founded at this time.

It was during the late nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, there was significant growth in public higher education. In the early 1920's, there were 14 senior public institutions and two public junior colleges in the state. There was a significant need for growth and a "central coordinating agency for higher education was recognized" (Cave, 1986, Presentation). Higher education flourished after World War II in Texas as in the remainder of the United States. Technical colleges and vocational schools began to emerge. With the demands of Texas society, politically, socially, and economically, the scope and role of higher education became an ever-changing entity.

Community College Students

The numbers of community college students have grown throughout the years. In *Why Access Matters*, Mullin (2012), cites the growth of student populations in community colleges:

> In 1953, 15% of Americans between the ages of 18 to 24 were enrolled in higher education, specifically, the fall semester (Grant & Lind, 1974). In 1969, figures increased to 30%, and in 2009, 41% (Simon & Grant, 1970; Snyder & Dillow,

> 2011). College enrollment for 25 to 29-year-olds and 30-40-year-olds doubled (Baime and Mullin, 2011). Snyder and Dillow (2011) cited that the overall undergraduate fall enrollment in 1967 was 6 million students in which by 2009, it had increased nearly threefold to 17.6 million. There are greater numbers of students who are enrolling in community colleges under the age of 18 years old. In 1993, just 1.6% of the student population was younger than the age of 18. In 2009, this same group increased to 7%. Texas Early College High Schools, which purposely target first-generation college attendees, low-income students, minorities, as well as bilingual learners join forces with community colleges to allow students who are high school age to earn an associate of arts degree (as cited Mullin, 2012, p. 6).

Not "Traditional" Students

The traditional college student for an elongated time has been ill-defined as the formidable school graduate and enrolled in college typically in the fall. Nationally, 67% of undergraduates are under the age of 24 (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). Among all community college students, nontraditional students aged 25 years and older represent nearly 40% of the student population (Gibson & Slate, 2010) and exhibit lower retention rates when compared to students aged 18 to 24 years old (Philibert, Allen, & Elleven, 2008; Sorey & Duggan, 2008). Although these age expectancies of a "traditional" student still exist, the framework or characteristics are not homogenous. A greater percent of 18-to 24-year-olds at the community college level characterized themselves as "nontraditional" students. Mullins (2011) stated "employees who had decided to enroll in college (20% to 9%). It is interesting to note that students are enrolled exclusively,

part-time In the same study, Mullins described that during the same academic year (44% compared to 11%), students who lived with parents (61% compared to 19%) (Mullin, 2011; NCES, 2011). In part, none of the characteristics was associated with the term, "traditional" student.

Issues of Transient Student Populations

Noted in the research literature was that community college students are transient, leaving their institutions within one year of entrance. Data from *Achieving the Dream* clearly show that 113 community colleges in 18 states participating indicate that "48% of credential-seeking students new to the institutions in the fall persisted to the next fall and only 34% enrolled in any term in the third year" (Lee, 2010, p. 3). Students did not leave their institutions because of completed programs. As Lee (2010) reported, many community college students have stop-in/stop-out enrollment patterns, making it methodically and conceptually difficult to track their progress. Community college students face a variety of barrier to degree completion, not including issues of persistence, retention, and low levels of academic preparation. While student success at the community college remains low, "only 44 percent of first-time college students at community colleges had transferred to a 4- year institution or earned a certificate or degree" (Bailey, Jenkins, & Leinbach, 2006). For community colleges, 84% of its students work and 60% work more than 30 hours a week (NCES, 2011). Community colleges have the lowest tuition and fees than any sector of higher education (Baum & Ma, 2011). Cook and King (2007) and Orozco and Cauthen (2009) determined working more than 20 hours a week is a risk factor for not completing coursework. The level of perceptions and expectations for community college students who work more than 20

hours per week is vastly different from full-time students in 4-year universities (Baum & Ma, 2011).

As compared to public and private universities, community colleges have much lower tuition rates and have open-access enrollment year around. Community colleges typically serve more nontraditional students (Aud et al.; Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Roueche & Roueche, 1993). Today, 1,195 community colleges offer open admissions and services normally within an hour's drive for most that live in the United States. More than half of the undergraduates in U.S. postsecondary education do enroll in community colleges, including more than half of graduate students of color and race (AACC, 2015; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015). In both studies (Grubb, 1999; Mellow & Hellan, 2008), a disproportionate majority were academically unprepared, economically disadvantaged, and have limited English language acquisition skills.

Developmental Coursework Created

In the 1960s, developmental education began to serve and instruct students who were underprepared for college. Descriptive names are categorized like basic, remedial, guided, core competencies, and developmental studies. College is designed and created programs with various multifaceted levels of developmental writing, math, and reading. According to a CCSSE (2016) report, a "common pattern included three concentrations in each area before students were deemed ready for college-level instruction" (p. 1). Some higher education institutions created as many as five levels in math. Students expectations of success are grand and lofty.

In Fall 2014**,** 42% of all undergraduate students attended community colleges. Of full-time students, 25% attended community colleges (College Board, Trends in

Community Colleges, 2016). Among all students who completed a degree at a 4-year college in 2013-2014, 46% had enrolled in a community college in the previous ten years. Of those, more than one-fifth were enrolled for one term, but 47% have enrolled for five or more terms (CCRC, 2015; National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2015). Scholars have suggested that as 4-year institutions continue to raise tuition rates, a larger percentage of postsecondary students will attend community colleges in the United States (Boswell, 2004). As community college enrollments continue to rise in 2016, nearly 80% of all postsecondary institutions offered at least one remedial writing reading and mathematics course (Corash, Baker, & Nawrocki, 2006; US Department of Education, 2015). Remedial education has transitioned quickly past the college transfer function as being one of the emphasis' of the community college. With the primary reason being increasing numbers of students entering higher education institutions without sufficient preparation (Crews & Aragon, 2004). With increased remedial coursework, large populations of underprepared students, low graduation rates spiral downward.

Developmental studies are very visible on college campuses as they make efforts to enhance the persistence and performance of entering underprepared students for the college experience (Pascarella & Terenzini, p. 398). Community college students face a variety of barrier to degree completion, not including issues of persistence, retention, and low levels of academic preparation. Entering freshmen account for a minimal of one developmental course than their peers at 4-year institutions. Finally, as a result, students are more likely to spend a longer period of taking time in these courses (Wirt et al., 2004). The evidence shows that academic intervention programs make modest active efforts in precollege and underprepared preparation. The price tag for remedial

coursework comes with a huge cost. Not all states permit students to apply for state aid for remedial classes. In Texas, for example, students who enroll in community college remediation classes are eligible for state and federal funding. However, courses carry no credit toward degree completion (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). In the short term, these programs promote students academic and persistence in most cases from semester to semester or into both to and 4-year institutions. Researchers have suggested that remediation and intervention program efforts produce the likelihood of persistence and degree completion (Braley & Ogden, 1997; Fullilove & Treisman, 1990; Pasacarella & Terenzini, 2005).

In early 2000, demands for an inquiry, evidence, and accountability has called for an investigation into remedial coursework in higher education. While the requirements call for a survey into remediation education, colleges are being asked to increase completion rates (CCSSE, 2016). Because the success rates are low for underprepared students, the American Association of community colleges 21st-century comments on the future of community college presently with a formidable challenge: Double the rate of students who completed developmental programs and programs to successful completion of college level gatekeeper courses by 2020 (CCSSE, 2016).

In light of demands and accountability for federal funding, colleges have devised best practice proactive approaches to providing remedial students with multifaceted services to help them be successful. Students who need developmental course work tend to have lower retention rates (Bailey, 2009; Calcagno & Long, 2008) however, academic success initiatives such as but not limited to combining developmental courses with support services has proven to be effective (Swartz & Jenkins, 2007). Higher educational

institutions have created tailor-made programs dependent upon student needs for success. These programs have been highly engaging and fruitful. Levin and Koski (1998) reported that when real world applicable situations or relatable topics to students is given, thus providing opportunities for the development of critical thinking skills, and technology can improve persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

High school graduation requirements and the demands for college readiness are significant, but it does not change the job of community colleges. For many prospective students, the technical community college is the only higher level institution they will be able to attend. 65 to 70% of remedial education students agree their placement and developmental education is appropriate (CCSSE, 2016). The success rates for the first developmental course has an extremely high failure rate in core classes. As the CCSSE reports, addressing the ongoing concern by testing new approaches to assessment, placement, and develop coursework" (p. 2). Some of these strategies include the following:

- Multiple measures for assessing readiness
- Co-requisite course
- Redesign math
- Accelerated developmental courses
- Computer-assisted developmental math
- Developmental education paired with workplace skills
- High school partnerships
- Improve preparation for placement

In the Community College Research Center Report was a discussion that high school GPA is more accustomed to predicting student success then placement test in the community college system. A trend is present in some states to use a variety of measures to assess students and placement into the most appropriate coursework and plan (CCSSE). Community colleges have such a different student body some students begin or return to institutions lacking critical pedagogical skills necessary to be successful in the advanced degree. Policies from within the community college system embrace these students rather than reject them. Students will be offered remedial or developmental courses to gain the critical skills needed to be successful in future on level course work. Present in the same study was that over 40% of community college first-year students took remedial courses in 2003 (Basmat, Lewis, & Green, 2003; U.S. Department of Education).

The debate continues college campuses regarding limiting the number of developmental courses a student can take, whether academic credit is given and whether the courses ever count toward graduation (Bettinger and Long, 2005). Hoyt (1999) showed that taking remedial courses is linked to student retention. Other researchers have revealed that students who take remedial coursework would persist in college even is compared to students who were required to take the courses and transfer to 4-year institutions (Bettinger & Long, 2005; The Pell Institute, 2015). Developmental courses had positive effects on Latino students while assisting them in overcoming the language barriers in learning English (Swail, Cabrea, Lee, & Williams, 2009). Custom tailoring developmental programs to the various needs of students, postsecondary institutions will benefit most students toward persistence and degree completion.

In 2016, community colleges face unprecedented challenges. “Community colleges may be the best institutions of higher education to develop viable responses to many of the country’s problems” (p. 1). In many decades, among immense technological advances, growing competition from various education sectors, underprepared and increasingly diverse student populations, all amid a steady decline in U.S. education rankings from within the international community (McGabe, 2000; NCES, 2015; Roueche & Roueche, 1993).

Millenials and Poverty

Howe and Strauss (2003) classified millennials as being born between 1982 and 2000. The millennial generation is categorized as one that is defined by their preoccupation with electronic information shared transfer. Although Millennials are confident in their abilities, their goal is one of surviving (Howe & Strauss, 2003). As traditional students, millennial’s value and affordable education and items they can afford. However, they do not value learning (Bye, Pushkav, & Conway, 2007). Millennials are extrinsically motivated outside the given task and not the classroom (Bye et al., 2007). In the existing literature, the motivation for extrinsic rewards is solely based on students’ life experiences and how they perceive life’s challenges in higher education. Present in the research literature is numerous works about persistence and college success. Main reasons why students attend institutions of higher education in America is to receive a quality education, develop a skillset, and to prepare for graduate school (Erickson et al., 2006). “Going to college does not merely continue a student’s classroom in another venue. It is an important rite of passage” (Erickson et al., 2006, p.14).

The issue of poverty often is addressed as well in the literature. In 2006, 5 million people aged 18 or over were living in poverty in the United States (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2007), with nearly 4 million enrolling as undergraduates during the 2007-2008 academic year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2011), "community colleges enrolled more than 1.7 million, or 41% of all undergraduates living in poverty in 2007-2008; approximately one in five community college students lived in poverty that year."

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in the fall of 2015, 20.2 million students attended American colleges and universities, contributing an increase of about 4.9 million since the fall semester of 2000. About 11.5 female students are expected to account for most college students, as compared to 8.7 males. An estimated 12.6 million will attend college full time, compared with about 7.6 million that will attend part-time. Gains in the traditional college-age population and rising enrollment rates have contributed to the increase in college enrollment. Between 2000 and 2013, the 18-to 24-year old population increased from approximately 27.3 million to approximately 31.5 million. The percentage of 18 to 24-year-olds enrolled in college was higher in 2013 (39.9%). In 2013, 12.2 million college students were under age 25 and 8.2 million students 25 years old and over. The resulting number of younger and older students increased between 2000 and 2013 (NCES, 2015).

The Transition Phase: High School to College

Higher education literature is saturated with research about the transitions to college (Goldrick-Rab, Carter, & Wagner, 2007). However, more research is needed regarding the transition process (Locks, Hurtado, Bowman, & Oseguera, 2008), primarily

because scholars have neglected the issue of how students perceived factors that influenced their transition experience (Clark, 2005). Pasacarella et al. (2004) and Pike and Kuh (2005) and Ishitani (2006) all concluded that first-generation students are at an enormous risk for the difficult transition from high school to college. Those students who are involved socially and academically experience and are more likely to return for their second year (Tinto, 1998).

Peer support was determined to be a major factor in the transition to college. However, some have acknowledged that some of this "peer support" may encourage the lack of academic study habits (Hurtado, Carter, & Spuler, 1996, p. 153). Academic advisors were deemed essential in assisting students' transition to college (Hurtado et al., (1996) while Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) and Hossler, Schmidt, and Vesper (1999) stated that parental involvement and encouragement as the strongest predictor.

Targeted Interventions

The ensuing subsections encompass and highlight many best practice interventions intended to help students transition to college. Gardner, Upcraft, and Barefoot (2005) designed interventions that integrate social and academic transitional issues, thus making these effective interventions based on off the research on transitional programs.

In the community college system, sophomores are sometimes paired with first-year students as mentors, group leaders, group tutors, and as resident advisors if applicable. Early detection of potential high-risk dropouts through advising and recommendations from professors create a network of support in the FYE course. In 4-year institutions, sophomores, juniors, and seniors work with FYE students in many ways

both on and off campus. Barefoot (2000) noted that “creating structures wherein upper-level student mentor and support new students is especially important for students who are in one or more at risk categories “(p. 15). Researchers have determined that nontraditional students, first-generation students, women, and students of color who are in more than one at-risk categories truly benefit to get to know others and develop interactions.

Undergraduate research programs at the University of Texas, El Paso and the University of Michigan gave students the opportunity to work with various experienced faculty on research projects. At the University of South Carolina and the University of Virginia, undergraduate students including first-year students were afforded the opportunity to live in residence halls with resident faculty members and their families. At both Harvard University and Pennsylvania State University, tenured faculty who are heavily included in a 4-year program with first-year students. In some cases, one meal is exchanged at the faculty professor’s home (Barefoot, p. 15).

Approximately 96% of higher education institutions that answered in a 2000 federal survey cited that there was some form of brand-new student orientation for entering freshman. In referencing the research, first-year experience programs including both precollege and existing orientation programs, student advising, first-year seminars, and learning communities is linked to a variety of positive results (Muraskin & Wilner, 2004; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005). Creating clear pathways to show students the way to success lends itself to successful educational experiences in persistence. The Pell Institute (2015) determined that institutions with high levels of persistence, retention, and the result graduation, had more programs that eased student entry and adjustment to

college. Most, if not all, higher education institutions had variations of the brand-new student orientation program. Among these new student orientation programs, academics seem to be highly stressed among the populace today. Barefoot (2005) noted that more emphasis was placed on scholarly programs than any distinct time before the 2000 survey. Orientation programs regardless of the size and time of year offered, have a common distinct goal: improve student's chances of academic success, persistence, retention, and the likelihood of earning a baccalaureate degree.

In a preliminary study by Pascarella, Terenzini, and Wolfe (1986) evidence showed that the NSO's achieved their goals. Pascarella later determined that participation in NSO's result in greater and academic success and integration. Barefoot (2005) concluded in her research that higher institutions of learning should decide based on their demographics, student population, the size of the establishment, local populace, and student characteristics, and what form of NSO that institution should use.

When academic support services are tailored specifically to student needs for core courses, majors and are linked to gateway courses, student persistence is alleviated (Tinto, 2004). Studies exist regarding how student success supports underrepresented students' adjustment to college. Among Latinos in college, Hurtado and Ponjuan (2000) determined that participating in academic support courses and programs gave students a strong sense of belonging. Because community college students commute, linking academic support and advising to community student college students is especially significant to students in matters of persistence and graduation rates.

With a strong emphasis on curriculum, academics, and social integration, summer bridge programs occurred during the summer months before when a student begins

college (Muraskin & Lee, 2004). In most cases, this intervention has lower income or underprepared students targeted for an opportunity to become familiar with the college before the start of the academic year. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) established in their research that students often will reside in on-campus housing for several weeks, take beginning college level and developmental courses and will engage with both professors and academic advisors. Muraskin and Lee (2004) further noted that summer bridge participants reported a stronger perception of adjustment to college and more active engagement in campus life.

Texas Legislature and House Bill Five

When former Texas Governor Rick Perry signed into law House Bill (HB) 5, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, it created a new high school graduation program-The Foundation High School Program. Another component of the same legislation is the creation of new college preparatory courses including a Student Success Course (SSC) to be offered to students while currently in high school. TASB (2013b), HB5 removes the responsibility from TEA (Texas Education Agency) and higher education commissions to "challenge districts to take center stage in students' college readiness efforts" (p. 23). The Texas Association of School Administrators cited that in HB5:

> Assigns responsibility for college preparatory courses to districts that *must partner* with at least one institution of higher education to develop and provide college preparatory courses in English language arts and math. Requires that the courses be designed for grade 12 students whose performance on an EOC (End of Course) exam does not meet college readiness standards or coursework, college entrance

> exam or higher education screener (e.g., Accuplacer) indicate the student is not ready for college-ready coursework. (p. 6)

Because HB5 calls for first-year students to take an entry-level college course, The Learning Frameworks, FYE course is designed as a first-year experience course. First time in college students (FTIC) learn various strategies and networking models to begin their college career. Because community college students are commuter students and working average of more than 30 hours a week, are offered in a variety of learning platforms: hybrid, online, and face-to-face.

Evolution of the Student Success Course

As (Fidler, 1991) reported, the SSC (Student Success Course) began in the early 1970's. The first-year course was implemented at the University of South Carolina in 1972 as it dealt with retention and student needs and issues all relating to support. Colleges and institutions of higher learning offer the SSC for teaching students how to be successful in college (Karp et al., 2012). First-year experiences commonly known as (FYE) programs was fashioned upon some of Tinto's (1993) intervention practices. Programs are made and designed for students in their first critical year of enrollment (Schrader & Brown, 2008). Tinto in his studies stated that the college skills or the SSC had provided a non-threatening environment from which nontraditional students may find answers to their challenges.

Within the last 20 years, much more attention is placed on first-year students by universities and colleges. There have been freshmen programs implemented from small group seminars to full year courses (Barefoot, 2000, p.12). The SSC's purpose was to focus on retention, persistence, and graduation rates for new students. The SSC is one

way in which a variable range of student support services is employed. Deil-Amen (2011) and Troxel and Cutright (2008) ascertained that most 4-year programs designed to meet the needs of traditional students are used in the community college system. With the emphasis being on entering students reflected in seminar design and content, the course assists pupils in the areas of financial planning, career preparation, personal skills, study habits, and techniques, learning styles inventories, and building persistence to be successful in post-secondary education (Gardner & Barefoot, 2011). Among these, the use of credit-bearing college skills has grown in popularity (Barefoot et al., 2011) and intended to improve graduation rates (Mayo, 2013). The AACC recommends incoming freshmen in two-year colleges take the SSC course in their first semester (AACC, 2012).

No standard definition exists for a FYE Program, research over the influence of FYE has reflected institutional findings and experiences. Rather than a large consortium of research contributing to far-reaching higher education, institutions have devoted their efforts to developing practices and conducting research to assess their personal specific programs and courses. Bers and Younger explained that FYE Centers all over the United States identified elements that support student success and retention.

Goals of the Student Success Course

Thematic scaffolding does emerge in the literature when aims and outcomes are addressed in the SSC. Stovall (2000) stated these courses would be viewed to help "students identify campus resources, establish relationships with other students, faculty members, and assess their educational and life management skills" (p.46). The dominant criticism of the literature is that without interventions, students would not likely follow up on these given skills on their own. While there are challenges in the literature for both

university and community college students, there are enormous difficulties in transitioning to higher education. The first year students sometimes require more individualized services than many institutions may be able to provide (Levitz, Noel, and Richter, 1999). The following are research-based objectives of the FYE curriculum:

- Increasing student to student interaction
- Increasing faculty to student interaction, especially out of class
- Increasing student involvement and time on campus
- Linking the curriculum and the co-curriculum
- "Increasing academic expectations and levels of academic engagement" (Amundsen, 2008)
- "Assisting students who have insufficient academic preparation for higher education" (Barefoot, 2000)

In measuring the effectiveness and major point of the SSC is to help students providing services and campus tools so that they may be successful. While there are major differences in 4-year institutions and 2-year institutions, both higher education entities share the common ground on students being successful at their campuses. Because some community colleges are commuter schools and the ease of entrance is feasible, dropout rates are difficult, as 4-year institutions focus on entry and graduation (Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014). Persistence, retention, and achievement all vary depending upon retention efforts and success in SSC (Upcraft, Gardner, Barefoot, & Associates, 2005). In their research, Porter and Swing (2006) identified first-year experience courses that SSC courses benefits institutions in four concrete ways: First, students pay their tuition and stay enrolled. Secondly, it keeps and solidifies the

institution's mission of graduating students. A third manner is by helping with recruitment and marketing. Finally, fourth improves rankings in annual college surveys and reports. These demonstrate factors that seek to enhance the institution.

First Year Experience

As noted earlier, first-year seminars are rampant in higher education, with 95% of all institutions in the United States having these interventions. While student transition to college is one of the goals of the FYE, various academic seminars with consistent and varying content, along with basic study skills. Student characteristics, demographics, the issue of poverty, first-generation students, transition students from high school to college, are many factors that determine the type and design of a specific program for this given population. Colleges and universities have become quite versed in offering many forms of the FYE (Pascarella & Terezini, 2005). Participation in FYE programs provide students with a higher sense of community, improve academic advising and their perceptions, and increase the greater likelihood that students will persist from their first year to their second year of college. In all the research gathered and assessed, an overwhelming abundance of evidence exists that show first-year experiences do affect the successful transition to college.

The Student Success Course

So that students may overcome the barriers to success and improve academic outcomes, community colleges have designed and implemented a plethora of student support services, with one of them being the college success course. The course is designed for students who have little to no college experience and provides them with useful information involving financial literacy, interpersonal skills, study habits, note-

taking, program planning, career, academic planning and graduation requirements. One of the main tools that students need to be fruitful and acclimate to the postsecondary environment (Derby & Smith, 2004; O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009).

In recent literature, an association exists between engagement and participation in the student success course along with a variation of academic outcomes. Schnell and Doetkott (2003) determined that freshmen that enrolled in the course at a public 4-year institution continued in greater numbers than those students who did not. In a similar manner, Boudreau and Kromrey (1994) established the presence of relationships between the completion of the student success course and college persistence, as well with academic performance. In a larger scale study in Florida, conducted by the Community College Research Center, they tracked a cohort of freshmen students over the period of 17 terms. In this study, students who did take the student success course were compared to students who did not take the student success course. Overwhelmingly, students who took the SSC were more likely to be successful than their peers in credit completion, persistence in college, and transfer to a 4-year university (Zeidenberg, Jenkins, & Calcagno, 2007).

Based on their institutional characteristics and needs, no first-year experience course is the same. As a matter of fact, the first-year seminar is one of the most analyzed courses in the undergraduate curriculum (Cuseo, 2009; Koch, Foote, Hinkle, Keup, & Pistilli, 2007). There are many versions of Student Success Course (SSC) that are laid out in various fashions depending on 2-year community colleges and 4-year institutions. SSC's are designed based on student population, demographics, degrees offered, commuter campus, and resident life each of these factors influences the content of the

program. Barefoot, Warnock, Dickenson, Richardson, and Roberts (1998) determined that in assessing persistence to graduation shows positive outcomes from within the results of the first-year seminar.

The goals of the student are taken into consideration. In most community colleges, students are looking to take as many classes as possible that will eventually end up transferring to a 4-year institution to complete their degree. In other cases, students may want to earn a certificate or gain the job skills in some form of a market trade. In a 4-year institutional setting, students have one goal, and that is to earn a bachelor's degree.

With the Texas Legislature passing HB 5 (House Bill Five, 2013) in the legislative session, it called for first-year students to take an entry college course. EDUC 1300 was designed as a first-year experience course in which FTIC students will learn various strategies and networking models to begin their college career. The course will be offered in hybrid, online, face-to-face formats. Stakeholders in various departments have created EDUC 1300 and their major and minor degree fields in which students will gain access and entry into their area of study. The Lone Star College System (2016), course overview states:

> This course serves as the Lone Star College first-year experience student success course it is designed to provide first-year students with an opportunity to attain maximum success in college and life it will assist students in realizing their full potential by facilitating activities that promote effective learning and personal and professional growth. This course aims to achieve this goal by helping new students connect with LSC resources and promote a positive and successful

> college experience that leads to completion at LSC, our data reveals that this course has managed to increase student success (Lone Star).

According to Lone Star College, the course description states:

> A study of the research and theory in the psychology of learning, cognition, and motivation; factors that impact learning, and application of learning strategies. Theoretical models of strategic learning, cognition, and motivation serve as a conceptual basis for the introduction of college-level student academic strategies. Students use assessment instruments (e.g., learning inventories) to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses as strategic learners. Students are ultimately expected to integrate and apply the learning skills discussed over their academic programs and become effective and efficient learners. Students developing the skills should be able to draw continually from the theoretical models they have learned.

The course is taught by 25 adjunct faculty who teach part-time and four full-time professors in the Education Department. Every fall and spring semester, whether they have taught the course or not, faculty must attend mandatory training sessions system-wide because the curricular models of instruction are ever changing. SSC is the only course in the college system that requires yearly staff development for any instructor (regardless of experience) that will teach the course. Training sessions include active vs. passive teaching, student engagement, financing college, learning styles, study skills, building relationships in the classroom, using social networking as an educational device and many others. The course outcomes are**:**

1) Identify, describe, and utilize campus support services, systems, and student-life opportunities.
2) Use financial literacy knowledge and skills to create a personal money management plan for college success.
3) Establish collegial relationships with LSCS faculty, staff, and peers.
4) Assess and report on their strengths, preferences, and college and career success attributes.
5) Formulate educational and career goals and apply strategies to advance their targets and college performance.
6) Create an academic plan and identify the requirements for successful completion of their academic plan (Lone Star College System).

Student Expectations of College Success

In their book, *The Undergraduate Experience*, Felten, et al. (2016) addressed the way and way institutions communicate what matters to prospective students is not always aligned with their expectations. While websites and pamphlets contain images of athletic facilities, recreation centers, state-of-the-art dormitories, such "materials rarely reference academic rigor or the need to work much harder in college than was necessary for high school (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Felten (2016) concluded that undergraduate students arrive on campus and have the expectation of social life on campus because the campus literature promotes the social aspects of the institution rather than the academic. These are some of the mixed messages that are conveyed to prospective first-year college students whose expectations have often viewed as confusing. Arum and Roksa (2014) reported that expectations that are contradictory are confusing and will alter campus

culture. For many students, “the importance of the social thus goes much beyond the party scene; it goes to the core of how students defined the college experience, understand their purpose in college, and different value dimensions of their college lives” (p. 26).

Student expectations are important for understanding why students persist to graduation. Peers, social media, family, and past experiences all from these expectations. When beginning college, traditional first-year students believe in the “freshmen myth” which according to Stern (1996) will be a more fulfilling, satisfying experience than what it turns out to be. First-year students trust they will be able to rise to the occasion and will be able to meet the challenges of college work by working harder than they ever have in their previous educational experiences. These expectations a person forms clearly determines how these situations are approached (Howard, 2005). “Expectations are used to utilize past experiences to formulate a view on what should happen in the future. However, these expectations constantly change as one experience new situations” (Howard, 2005). Expectations are an important area of educational research because through understanding the importance of expectations; institutions may be better equipped to meet student’s needs once they matriculate (Miller, 2005). As Braxton, Vesper, and Hossler (1995) determined that when student experiences and expectation is aligned with the college experience, they are more likely to persist and succeed in their goals. Although most freshmen do experience the “freshmen myth” the result of dissension experienced by students can produce the level and transition of student success (Jackson et al., 2000; Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006). In a study by Shilling and Shilling (1999), the researchers employed the College Student Expectations

Questionnaire model. They established that substantial numbers of traditional age students begin college “disengaged” from the entire learning process and academic skills (Levine & Cureton, 1998; Marchese, 1997; McCarthy & Kuh, 2006).

Student expectations about college are related to success in college. In their research study, DeAngleo et al. (2011) discovered that attending college for social reasons, personal or academic was directly related to obtaining a degree. They later determined that students who expected or perceived to be engaged academically in college be more likely to succeed (Cabrera, Nora, & Castaneda, 1992; Hu & St. John, 2001; Nora, Cabrera, Hagedorn, & Pascarella, 1996). Student’ first enrollment characteristics are previously related in the literature to persistence and graduation. There have been positive gains in both persistence and degree attainment (Arbona & Nora, 2007). Planning to enroll in a first-year experience course has also had solid ties to persistence (Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2004; Pike, Schroeder, & Berry, 1997).

One of the biggest struggles colleges and universities deal with are retaining students once they are enrolled. Low success rates in community colleges make them susceptible being lesser institutions. Horn and Berger (2005) discovered that almost “one-third of community colleges complete a degree or certificate within five years than half of 4-year students.” In another study involving retention, Jacobs and Archie (2008) wanted to determine why students leave college. At this undergraduate University, 4,000 students were included in this study. While membership in various organizations, societies, athletic-sport clubs was in subgroups while engagement into the scholarly community was the most positive indicator. Enlightening adaptation and cultural interaction are significant inroads to persistence at institutions of higher education (Kuh, 1995; Tinto

1993). Researchers have shown that activities outside of class develop academic skills but also knowledge in first-year college students (Kuh, 1995). The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2015), 94% of college freshmen reported that they had to change their ways of studying to align with college faculty's expectations.

Based on the premise that first-year students need support transitioning from high school to college, Mattanah (2010) cited that it can be personally and psychologically disruptive. Mattanah suggested that transition to college "disrupts whatever existing social support networks are essential to buffering stressful life events." Mattanah and colleagues (2011) in a meta-analysis identified over 150 articles detailing the issues of parental attachment and transition to college. Clearly demonstrated was the successful agreement of transition issues connected to almost every important outcome, including academic outcomes (persistence, academic self-efficacy, and career development, for example). Developmental outcomes (such as a sense of personal identity, social competence, and relationship satisfaction) are also highly relevant (Renn & Reason, pp. 66).

In a study using the College Student Experiences Questionnaire, Lundberg, Schreiner, Hovaguimian, and Miller (2007) analyzed data on first generational college students. One of the areas that were investigated was whether race and ethnicity had any relationship to on learning, student involvement, as first-year generation students. Using a random sample of 4,501 undergraduate students from 4-year institutions, who took the CSEQ during the years of 1998-2001. With a database of 20,000 students and seven racial/ethnic groups identified, the students were predominately White and from master/doctoral level institutions. One of the key results was that first generational

student status had a negative effect on four of the involvement areas. These included areas such as effort invested in course learning, attendance, and frequency of fine arts, student acquaintances experiences, and scientific experiences involvement. In relationship to academic gains, a direct positive influence was present. This finding was interpreted to mean that generalizations about first-year generation students are sometimes incorrect and misleading.

Much research has been conducted into understanding expectations among students before college matriculation (Cole, Kennedy, & Ben-Avie, 2009; Martin & Hanrahan, 2004). For example, Cole et al. (2009) stated that "pre-college data assists practitioners in understanding student success once students transition into the university." Cole concluded that "understanding student backgrounds, experiences, and expectations so that institutions can minimize unmet expectations and increase student persistence, learning, and satisfaction are the reasons why precollege data is necessary" (p.67). Studies show that first-year students are going to college with more "unrealistic and unrealized expectations" (Kreig, 2013) this includes perceptions and what it means to be a college student (Karp, 2008, Schilling & Schilling, 1999). To show that these perceptions have not changed over time, Stern (1966) reported that because these expectations and perceptions do not theoretically align, students are "emotionally stressed" (p. 60). First-year students' perceptions are influenced from outside the collegiate atmosphere including factors such as family, peers, educators (Clark 2005; Kreig 2013, Meyer, Spencer, & French, 2009; Smith & Zhang, 2009).

One of the many tools used for assessing student expectations is the College Student Expectations Questionnaire (CSTQ) developed by Dr. Robert Pace and George

Kuh in 1996 (Williams, 2007). Although this survey is administered to students before their first year of college in the fall, this-this questionnaire assesses two areas: college environment and college activities. For college environment, a standard question asks about how many interactions with faculty or connections outside the class. For college activities, students were concerned how their expectations would even matter yet how much emphasis their institution will place on educational activities. While the questions are very broad in scope, there are open-ended questions employed in the survey.

One of the surveys that use data to determine if student expectations are met is the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ). This questionnaire is passed out to the students at the end of their first year or subsequent years. One of its measurements determines if college students participated in college activities as often as they expected. In the 1980's, an assumption was present in the research literature that student demographics were the most important cause of college success. With the CSEQ results, along with the literature reviews (Kuh & Pace, 1998; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1993) challenged the results and placed student experiences and engagement into the conversation. The CSEQ is one of the few national assessments that inventories both learning processes and progress toward desired outcomes (Borden, 2001)

In the 2010-2011 academic year, at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, both the CSXQ (College Student Expectations Questionnaire) and CSEQ (College Success Student Experience Questionnaire) were used at UNCP. Because the CSEQ's instrumentation is based on the quality of effort, students "experience in using institutional resources and opportunities it is provided for learning and development" (King). The CSXQ evaluates new students' expectations for college, and there are no

open-ended questions on this survey. When the CSEQ and CSXP are, both paired together; it is possible to assess the degree to which the institution and student expectations are met (King, Beverly). The CSEQ were administered in the late spring of 2011 to 326 students in all English 1060 courses (King). Students who were involved in the study showed few differences were present in the 80% of the students who desired to continue their education after the baccalaureate year. At the beginning of their freshman year, students were content about their grades (with the majority they hypothesized their GPA would be between A-B+ (King, Beverly). By the end of the year, the student's GPA reflected the average GPA at UNCP of (C-). CSXQ scores were higher than CSEQ because beginning students have unrealistic expectations and goals of course work specifically, in the literature reviews clearly demonstrate that students do not work as hard as previously assumed. King states that approximately 43% of students reported on the CSXQ indicated they would perform less than 10 hours on educational activities (p. 12). In other cases, 60% of the freshmen reported that they would spend more time on academic coursework and activities to persist.

Self-reports have been used since the 1970's to measure the influence of college. In an eight-institution study involving self-reports (Gaft, Wilson, & Wood, 1973), seniors were asked to assess their campus involvement in nine different activities (athletics, vocational, intellectual, social, political to name a few. They were requested the extent of their progress during college on various dimensions of cognitive growth such as conceptual and applying principles (Pascarella & Terenzini, p.147)

Self-efficacy can be conceptualized not only as the relationship between some form of effort and result in certain tasks, but, as the individualistic belief in their ability to

be successful in their duties (Bandura, 1977). Individuals may understand which specific behaviors are vital to producing distinct outcomes, yet having different beliefs about the ways they can be successful with the completion of those behaviors while accounting for differences in performance of their tasks at hand (Wood & Bandura, 1989). In both research studies (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Devonport & Lane, 2006), self- efficacy does influence one's ability to be successful in science, writing, math, or any college coursework as well as the skills required to achieve personal development. In his writings, Bandura suggested that one's perception of self-efficacy is the main ingredient in assessing whether that person will engage in being successful. A strong sense of efficacy leads to greater effort to master challenges; serious doubt results in reduced effort and giving up.

Multiple studies have been conducted on relationships between student performance and self-efficacy. One review of the research on the topic was carried out by Schunk and Zimmerman (2007) who determined that not only the idea that skills associated with enhancing student self-efficacy are strengthened through modeling but that enhancements in self-efficacy are directly related to improved outcomes for student learning in writing and reading contexts. In Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2003), adult learner age groups are compared to the undergraduate college level, and writing skills were linked together. From within those outcomes, the results were significant, and much growth is seen across the spectrum in student collaboration, persistence, and retention.

Academic self-efficacy falls within the context of academia when it focuses on an individual's belief in themselves regarding college-related tasks (Chemers, Hu, & Garcia (2001, p. 56). Researchers have already documented that if students feel confident in

performing well in college, then they are more likely to be successful (Chemers et al., 2001). In their study, Chemers et al. (2001) used the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale to measure efficacy. One of the significant findings of their study was that students with high academic self-efficacy had a significantly higher grade point average. Those individuals who had higher GPA's displayed higher academic self-efficacy, academic expectations, and academic performance in college than those students with lower GPA's (Chemers et al., 2001).

In his research investigation, Howard (2005) explained why the research studies of Chemers, Hu, and Garcia, specifically concerning self-efficacy and expectations, were prevalent. Self-efficacy and expectations are constantly shaped experiences. At any given time, experiences may affect a person's self-efficacy or redirect negative experiences into positive ones. When students apply and understand these life events, learning is affected. Howard asserted that students would more than likely face experiences that contradict their levels of self-efficacy providing their expectations are realistic both in the classroom and in their social lives. Thus, providing the expectations are realistic, the chances are the student will be able to understand the environment in higher education. Galyon, Blondin, Yaw, Nalls, and Williams (2012) administered a study on 165 undergraduate students comparing the various relationships among academic self-efficacy and students' class participation, GPA, and overall exam performance. Galyon et al. (2012) established the presence of a much stronger bond between academic self-efficacy and exam performance over class participation. Academic self-efficacy levels were the same among students with high, medium, and low GPA's (Galyon et al., 2012).

In a study involving self-efficacy and expectations among first-year college students, Gore, Leuwerke, and Turley (2006) used the College Self-Efficacy Inventory; an instrument used to assess self-efficacy in college students. One of the results of that study was that students who had more faculty interaction thus demonstrated significantly higher levels of self-efficacy in relationship to academic performance. In this same survey student persistence and greater degrees of faculty, interaction leads to overall student success in college (Gore et al., 2006). Greater self-efficacy measures are not predictive of any college outcomes (Ferrari & Parker, 1992; Lindley & Borgen, 2002) whereas academic self-efficacy has been consistently shown to predict grades and persistence in college.

In a study of 192 freshman students in examining differences in academic self-efficacy levels among non-first generation students along with their graduate college parent and first generation students with their non-first generation parent. The entire purpose of the study was to discover if there was any possible effect on academic performance (Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007). They concluded that non-first generation college students had higher levels of academic self-efficacy and clearly outperformed first generation college students academically. In a similar study involving 408 Mexican American immigrants (born in Mexico) and non-immigrant (born in the United States), Aguayo, Herman, Ojeda, and Flores (2011) determined that among immigrant students, a statistically significant relationship was not present between self-efficacy and academic performance was seen.

In their seminal piece, *How College Affects Students*, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) stated that students' grades are a single revealing indicator of their successful

adjustment to the intellectual demands of a college's course of study (388). Grades are significantly influenced by study habits, motivation, organization, and level of effort as seen in (Astin, 1971, 1975; Capella, Wagner, & Kusmierz, 1982; Culler & Holahan, 1980). Grades tend to "reflect not only requisite intellectual skills but also popular personal work and attitudes" (Pascarella et al., p. 388). Evidence exists to support grades of undergraduates success will lead to the student earning a bachelor's degree and future graduate degrees.

In his research, Tinto (1975) categorized two forms of erudite needs. The student's academic performance is labeled as "structured" and students' perception of their intellectual development was called "normative." Because a vast majority of Tinto's model has focused on "structured" adjustment citing grade point average to draw conclusions, a relationship exists between mental growth and the intellectual domains of the institution. Astin (1988) used Tinto's appraisal in using grade point average to determine academic student acclimatization. As mentioned earlier, Pascarella and Terenzini, (1983) advocated academic integration to be computed by gauging erudite performance. Researchers have documented that first semester grades are robust indicators of student persistence (McGrath & Braunster, 1997). On the contrary, first-generation students have lower GPA's at the end of their freshman year that non-first generation students (Warburton, Bugarin, & Nunez, 2001).

Faculty Expectations of College Students

Contemporary researchers have demonstrated the presence of a larger disconnect between expectations of high school teachers and college professors. As this evolves, researchers contend that academic preparedness for entering college does not align with

the expectations and desire of college faculty. In this section, the research literature on college faculty expectations is reviewed.

Chickering and Gamson (1987) submitted that one of the factors that raise the bar for student motivation and engagement be student-faculty interactions. Astin (2003) later reported that student-faculty interactions were a top indicator of student success. As Yoon (2002) related, the teacher-student relationship is paramount and is an essential predictor of academic performance and success. Regarding higher education, most of the current research has been carried out using secondary level education samples (Wubbels, 2005). Little research has been undertaken or completed on the role of the university professor and their expectations of college students. Roche and Marsh (2000) contended that "one aspect that can help professors develop their role is the information and feedback they receive from their students." Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) noted that student-faculty interaction is significant because it empowers students to devote greater energy to academic activities and programs. When students feel part of the university community, they are much more inept to be involved in campus involvement and be successful academically.

Faculty expectations of students are often measured or compared to academic standards or college readiness. Students in higher education have become increasingly unmotivated and unengaged in their learning (Bok, 2006; Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006; Taylor, 2006). "College student motivation is a harsh and pervasive problem for faculty and staff at all levels of postsecondary education" (Pintrich & Zusho, 2007). What this trend seems is not a regionalized issue, rather a national epidemic. Students are academically and intelligently disengaged (Taylor, 2006, p. 52). College

faculty expects students to be able to maintain and possess relevant academic skills by the time they make it to the college classroom. It is the ability to read informational texts, articles, and journals and analyze those pieces of information in an analytical manner (ACT, 2015).

One of the significant findings of the ACT (2015) report was that math and reading remedial class instructors' course ratings and pedagogy are aligned significantly with higher academic institutions than with those of developed secondary schools (p. 42). There is a "continuing gap" between what high school campuses are teaching and what postsecondary education faculty expects of the entering students. In retrospect, this "gap" feeds the ever-increasing remediation rates as well" (ACT, 2015). Assessments for high schools administered for state accountability measures baseline knowledge and skills of ninth or tenth-grade students. In retrospect, these exams do not ask students to explain critical thinking skills, reasoning, or predict new situations. This research contributes significantly to the idea of college readiness and gives teachers and educators valuable feedback (Callan, 2006; Conley, 2003). Standards, course requirements and assessment are not aligned to college. Wagner (2006) remarked that high school courses are not aligned with college expectations and rigor. Essentially, it is common for students to graduate from high school without taking courses needed to be successful and get into college (p. 38).

The ACT (2015) relayed in their findings that state standards for public education show that there are "extensive demands of state standards which are forcing high school teachers to treat all content topics as important, sacrificing depth for breadth." College faculty expects students to think critically and be able to master grammar and language

skills (ACT, 2015). In public education, specifically in the state of Texas, the rise of standardized testing has not emphasized discriminating thinking and argumentation skills more than 55% of the time. In first-year students in both, 4-year and community colleges are required to enroll in remedial writing classes in their first semester of college (ACT, 2015). In their research studies, ACT polled and collected data from both postsecondary and high school teachers in how well they believed state standards were preparing students for college-level work. In polling high school teachers, 95% of high school faculty and 59% of postsecondary instructors indicated that they were moderately familiar with their state's standards (ACT, 2015). While high school teachers believe the state standards are preparing students for college, "65 percent of postsecondary instructors respond that their state's standards prepare students poorly or very poorly for college-level work in English, writing, reading, and science" (ACT, 2015). This study suggests that there is a significant gap between what colleges believe is essential to the issue of college readiness and what state standards are requiring teachers to teach. High school instructors across disciplines with 42% believe students today are not as well prepared as students in prior years. Postsecondary instructors (51%) believe that there has been no change than students in the past (ACT, 2015). Despite explicit attempts to increase rigor and college readiness in the United States, the results from ACT (2015) study clearly show that most "respondents do not believe today's students is better prepared than their predecessors."

Another ubiquitous concern to faculty expectations is the student investiture of studying and preparation for success in academic coursework. As Woolsey (2003) related, adjusting to college immediately following a "successful high school career is

hard because becoming a first-year college student means entering an unknown atmosphere that could ultimately impact student success" (p. 202). In Schilling and Schilling's (1999) research, students expect to spend an hour a day outside the confines of the classroom (p. 3). There exists "the three-fold" gap between expectations. While faculty state that "two to three hours of work outside of class for every hour in class is necessary to succeed entering students report expected to spend about a third of that amount of time" (Schilling & Schilling, 1999).

Present in the literature is that students who are not successful in the academic setting may not be familiar with expectations of college faculty nor be prepared to meet that given need (Tinto, 1993). Students, especially those individuals who have struggled through their high school years often find tremendous obstacles and issues when faced with entry-level coursework. Conley (2007) asserted that first-year students are not successful in college because of the difference from their courses in high school. College students must be able to think critically, analyze, problem solve, and additionally work with others both in and out of class. Faculty wants students to interact with them and their peers (Schuetz, 2008). In his research and findings, Kuh (2007) established that students who discussed discipline related contact with faculty resulted in higher satisfaction relating to the college experience. Community college students spend fewer hours with faculty outside of class (Schuetz, 2008). About three-fourths of community college faculty are part-time adjuncts who work at multiple institutions and rarely had office hours.

For successful outcomes of learning which are rewarded accordingly, learners may not see the significant value of structuring themselves. Learning is very complex,

and institutions must recognize the value of the positive change in learning. One of the biggest problems in learning and facilitating change is when "faculty set down periodically to review and revise the curriculum" (Bok, p. 40). In practice, as Bok concluded, many "faculties give this step only cursory attention before moving onto discussed the standard components of the undergraduate program – general education, the concentration, the advising system, and the like" (p. 40). Misalignments in the curriculum exist between the outcomes, goals of the course, and the ways learning is processed. When instructors are frustrated that their students are not structuring themselves as college students, Barefoot remarked that "the heart of the problem is the institution grading practices do not align with their goals (p. 31).

Haycock (2010) contended that high schools and higher collegiate institutions need to focus on teaching and assessing skills required for success that rely only on GPA and course credits for college readiness. It is often predicated on the notion that when students enter college life, they will have the skills to be successful in the classroom. Gaultney and Cann (2001) cited evidence that grade inflation begins in secondary education where grades are not bound to personal performance.

In 2002, in a report completed by the California Community Colleges, California State University, and the University of California, called Academic Literacy: *A Statement of Competencies Expected of Students Entering California Public Colleges & Universities*. "The faculty task force set out to examine what colleges and university faculty expect from their students upon entering higher education" (Guerrero, p. 101). Faculty noted the following: "Exhibit curiosity 80 percent, experiment with new ideas 79 percent, see other points of view 77 percent, challenge their beliefs 77 percent, and ask

provocative questions 73 percent" (Guerrero, p. 101). Additionally, students should be able to do the following: "ask questions for clarification 85 percent, be attentive in class 84 percent, come to class prepared 82 percent, complete assignments on time 79 percent, and contribute to class discussions 67 percent" (Guerrero, p. 101). When students turn in incomplete assignments and loose papers indicates poor writing, reading, and probing skills. Two central ideas become clear out of this specific report:

1. The students who enter the community college may not fully understand or be aware of the faculty's expectations upon entering college, and
2. The faculty may not be entirely aware of the circumstances which the students are entering college seem to be facing, and if they do, faculty may be dismissive of these conditions.

"Regardless of whether our students are fully prepared for college-level work, the faculty must be able to have high expectations of students, and students must become aware of their responsibility to be active participants in their education" (Guerrero, p. 102).

Gap in Literature

The research has reflected institutional findings and experiences that colleges have designed SSC to fit the needs of their stakeholders. A gap is present in the literature when it comes to student expectations and perceptions of the SSC due to the overabundance of research and assessing persistence rates. The literature over the last 20 years has demonstrated live small group seminars (Barefoot, 2000) and credit-bearing college skills (Gardner & Barefoot, 2011). The first-year seminar course is one of the most researched courses in the undergraduate curriculum (Cuseo, 2009; Koch, Foote, Hinkle, Keup, & Pistilli, 2007). Researchers have conducted studies on the course on

persistence to graduation and retention showing positive results of first-year seminars and student outcomes (Barefoot, Warnock, Dickenson, Richardson, & Roberts, 1998).

In the current study, students and professor's perceptions and expectations as it relates to the SSC are explored. This in-depth qualitative study is accomplished by conducting research on first-year college students and instructors, as they will be interviewed by the principal investigator to inquire about their experiences, perceptions, and expectations regarding the taking of the SSC.

Chapter III

Methods

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify and to analyze the congruence of expectations and perceptions of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 course. As indicated in the literature review, community college students face a variety of barriers from course to degree completion, issues of persistence, retention, and decreasing levels of academic preparation. In the Student Success course, Stovall (2000) stated that this course is viewed in a way to assist "students identify campus resources, establish relationships with other students, faculty members, and assess their educational and life management skills" (p. 46). Perceptions were defined as the "ability to understand inner qualities or relationships," whereas expectations will be defined as "an act or state of looking forward to some occurrence" (Merriam and Webster). Although college success courses are created to combat low persistence and retention efforts, rarely have researchers explored and analyzed the perceptions and expectations of both student and teaching faculty. Based on the depth and breadth of this inquiry this research will contribute to the body of knowledge in the following ways: (a) in providing an in-depth view regarding perceptions and expectations of students; (b) the results will be invaluable to the institution for assessing learning outcomes, future curriculum design and advising components; (c) the significance of the study will assist future programming and course content taught in various modalities; (d) college administration leadership and lead faculty will be able to use this assessment data on students in college entry; and, (e) promote gains in student development from college

entry to college completion which is assessed yearly at the state and federal levels for accountability and funding. Therefore, initiatives regarding inquiry and investigation into student perceptions and expectations are inevitable in evaluating success, completion rates, graduation, persistence, and retention efforts.

First-generation students are at an enormous risk for the difficult transition from high school to college (Ishitani, 2006; Pascarella et al., 2004; Pike & Kuh, 200). In their work of more than 2500 postsecondary studies relating to college success programs and experiences, Pascarella and Terenzini emphasized, “The weight of the evidence suggests that the first-year seminar was positively linked with both freshman year persistence and degree completion. This positive link persists even when academic aptitude in secondary school achievement are considered” (pp. 419-420).

In presenting and conducting present day, research allows higher education administrators, program directors, academic success advisors, chairs, insight in developing a concise understanding of the expectations and perceptions as college students enter higher education in their first semester. Barefoot, Co-Director for Research and Publications at the University of South Carolina’s National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience concluded that “We are building a body of research that seems to indicate that yes, first-year seminars is positively correlated with improved student retention” (p. 1). Barefoot and Gardner (1998) noted that FTIC Student FYE courses are “remarkable creative courses that are adaptable to a great variety of institutional settings, structure, and students” (p. xiv). The qualitative approach to the study is appropriate because the qualitative perspective adds to the knowledge of quantitative research already performed on college success. Moreover, few researchers have examined college success

courses as they relate to perceptions and expectations of both FTIC students and instructors. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the design of the research study. This chapter is organized in the following sections: (a) Descriptions of Research Design, (b) Setting, (c) Subjects, (d) Procedures, (e) Instrument, (f) Analysis, (g) Limitations, and (h) Summary.

Research Questions

Four research questions were addressed in this study. The major foundation of the research study was to assess first-year college students' perceptions and expectations along with faculty views of the Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience, Education 1300 Student Success Course.

The research questions for this study were:

1. Before college, what experiences do first-year students recount having that most influenced their expectations and perceptions for the first-year SSC?
2. What academic, social and career – related expectations do students hold during their first year of college that they believe will lead them to be successful in college?
3. Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class?
4. In the Student Success Course, to what extent are student and faculty expectations are in alignment?

Descriptions of Research Design

A research design is a procedural plan that is adapted by the researcher to answer questions in an accurate way. Used in this study was a qualitative methodology to gather, obtain, and answer the five stated above research questions. As Merriam (2002) insisted, the "key to understanding qualitative research lies within the idea that something is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world" (p. 3). Creswell (2013) stated that qualitative research could be employed when there is an issue or problem that will be investigated. McMillan (2012) remarked, "qualitative research stresses a phenomenological model in which multiple realities are rooted in the subjects' perceptions" (p. 12). Once the decision is made by the researcher to study a specific topic, the first step is to access the type of research design that fits the topic (Maxwell, 2005). Although many forms and traditions of qualitative research are present, this study was completed using a phenomenological approach. "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context" (Creswell, 2013, p. 251).

Marshall and Rossman (1999) suggested that in "qualitative inquiry, initial curiosities for research often come from real world observations, emerge in from the interplay of the researcher's direct experience, tactic theories, political commitments, interest and practice, and growing scholarly interests" (p. 25). As indicated in the literature review regarding the correlation between college experiences and expectations, there needs to be a more "comprehensive understanding how expectations affect experiences and outcomes" (Miller, Bender, & Schuh, p. 39).

Setting

This study was conducted at a large suburban community college in Texas. The college system is comprised of six large campuses and six regionalized centers with a student population combined of 85,661 as of the Fall Semester 2016 (Lone Star College System Data, 2016). 11,619 FTIC students with 45% of this population on financial aid. 12, 515 students are taking developmental studies system wide. During the Fall Semester 2016, the student population is 41% male and 59% female. Student ethnicity is 37% White, 15% Black, 38% Hispanic, 7% Asian, and 8% other. Persistence data show that 41,505 students persisted from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016, with 6,483 with students who had attended Lone Star College at some point in the past, not in consecutive semesters (Lone Star College System Data, 2016). In the Fall semester of 2015, combined student population is 83,932. System-wide 70,961 students paid in district tuition with 9,730 students paying out of district tuition, 1,956 students paying international fees (Lone Star College System Data, Fall 2015). In the Fall of 2015, 71% of students are part-time, and 29% are full-time students taking 12 hours or more per semester. In the Spring of 2016, FTIC student system-wide is 7,695. Students who persisted from Fall 2015 to Spring 2016 is 51,731. Students who persisted from Spring 2015 to Spring 2016 is 30,798 (retrieved from Office of Analytics and Institutional Reporting Lone Star College).

Table 1

Community College System Profile: Fall 2016 Community College Demographics: Student Population

Student Distribution	Enrollment	Percent
Total	86,551	100
African American	12,849	15
Hispanic	32,551	38
White	27,411	32
Asian	5,996	7

The data in Table 1 highlight the system's Fall 2016 student demographic breakdown as retrieved from Office of Analytics and Institutional Reporting.

Table 2

Community College System Profile: Fall 2016 Community College Demographics: Special Populations

Student Distribution	Enrollment
Total	86,551
First Time in College (FTIC)	11,619
Developmental Studies	12,545
Dual Credit	13,263
Veterans	2,249
Disabilities	2,238

The data in Table 2 display FTIC student data. The data also reveal and confirm the existence of a large section of students who take developmental classes as cited in Chapter Two Literature Review. This data is retrieved from the Office of Analytics and Institutional Reporting.

Table 3

Community College System Profile: Fall 2016 Data Persistence and Retention Rates

Student Distribution	Student Numbers
Fall 2015 to Spring 2016	51,731
Spring 2015 to Spring 2016	30,798
Fall 2015 to Fall 2016	41,505

The data in Table 3 showcase the student persistence and retention rates from semester to semester depending upon starting date as reported and retrieved in the Fall 2016 Office of Analytics and Institutional Reporting. With the Texas Legislature passing HB 5 (House Bill Five, 2013) in the legislative session, calls for first-year students to take an entry college course. EDUC 1300 was designed as a first-year experience course in which FTIC students will learn various strategies and networking models to begin their college career. The course is offered in hybrid, online, face-to-face formats. Stakeholders in various departments have created Education 1300 and their major and minor degree fields in which students will gain access and entry into their area of study. The Lone Star College System (2016), course overview states:

> This course serves as the Lone Star College first-year experience student success course it is designed to provide first-year students with an opportunity to attain maximum success in college and life it will assist students in realizing their full potential by facilitating activities that promote effective learning and personal and professional growth. This course aims to achieve this goal by helping new students connect with LSC resources and promote a positive and successful college experience that leads to completion at LSC, our data reveals that this course has managed to increase student success (Lone Star).

The Lone Star College (2016), course description states:

> A study of the research and theory in the psychology of learning, cognition, and motivation; factors that impact learning, and application of learning strategies. Theoretical models of strategic learning, cognition, and motivation serve as a

conceptual basis for the introduction of college-level student academic strategies. Students use assessment instruments (e.g., learning inventories) to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses as strategic learners. Students are ultimately expected to integrate and apply the learning skills discussed over their academic programs and become effective and efficient learners. Students developing the skills should be able to draw continually from the theoretical models they have learned.

The course is taught by 25 adjunct faculty who teach part-time and four full-time professors in the Education Department. Every fall and spring semester, whether they have taught the course or not, faculty must attend mandatory training sessions system-wide, because the curricular models of instruction and engagement strategies are always changing. The SSC is the only course in the college system that requires yearly staff development for any instructor (regardless of experience) that will teach the course. Training sessions include active vs. passive teaching, student engagement, financing college, learning styles, study skills, building relationships in the classroom, using social networking as an educational device and many others. The course outcomes are**:**

1) Identify, describe, and utilize campus support services, systems, and student-life opportunities.
2) Use financial literacy knowledge and skills to create a personal money management plan for college success.
3) Establish collegial relationships with LSCS faculty, staff, and peers.
4) Assess and report on their strengths, preferences, and college and career success attributes.

5) Formulate educational and career goals and apply strategies to advance their targets and college performance.
6) Create an academic plan and identify the requirements for successful completion of their academic plan (Lone Star College System, 2016).

Participants

The participants for this study were selected by using purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2013). Creswell (2005) acclaimed, "In qualitative research, the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon" (p. 203). Creswell (2013) stated, "The concept of purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. This means that the inquiry selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposely inform and understanding of the research problem and central phenomena in the study" (p. 156). This methodology was chosen because the focus of the study was to describe and to analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 course. Five current students enrolled in the Fall 2016 semester in Education 1300, Learning Frameworks participated in this research study, while five current Education 1300 professors with various years of teaching experience were also involved in the survey. All 10 participants volunteered to partake in the study.

Procedures

The University of Houston, Committee of the Protection of Human Subjects, granted permission to conduct the study as outlined (see Appendix A). Lone Star College – Montgomery Resource Development and Administration Office: Institutional Review Board granted permission to conduct the study at Lone Star College-Montgomery as

outlined (Appendix B). Participants in the study were limited to individuals who were of legal age, at least 19 years or older, currently enrolled or teaching. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, great lengths were applied. Data collected from the study will be stored in a locked file cabinet for one year.

Education 1300 professors and staff assistance enlisted five volunteer participants for this study by reading a script as outlined (Appendix C) to Education 1300 classes. Any questions regarding the study were directed to the primary investigator. Five professors volunteered for the study, for a total of 10 participants (Appendix D). Before the interviews, an informed consent form was obtained from all participants. The only person to have access to the audio recording interviews is the principal investigator. Once the first 10 participants agreed to participate in the study and were willing to share their insights, perceptions, expectations and taking The Learning Frameworks, FYE Education 1300 course is to interview with the chief investigator. An interview guide was developed by using the course outcomes and objectives, review of the current literature, feedback from faculty and college administration, to gain foresight into participant's views of Education 1300, Learning Frameworks. The interview guide allowed participants to discuss, characterize, expound, and detail their lived experiences in the course. This guide also permitted participants to share information about their academic and nonacademic conceptual skills and goals. Questions address some of the following literature related items such as: (a) academic goals, (b) programs of interest, (c) on-campus organizations and activities, (d) personal and family obligations, (e) working and barriers to success, (f) high school preparation for college, (g) perceptions and expectations of instructors in the education 1300 class, (h) perceptions and expectations of the student success course both

before and after enrollment. The interviews were transcribed by the chief investigator and emailed to the participants to confirm the accuracy of their statements.

All interviews were tape-recorded and involved open-ended semi-structured questions interviews in a private room in the library. Creswell (2007) stated that qualitative data should be well organized and then reduced into major themes. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant to ensure confidentiality. The interviewing was transcribed by the principal investigator. Once the transcriptions were completed, all participants were notified to verify authenticity and accuracy. Then the data were analyzed**.**

The data for this qualitative study were collected using semi-structured interviews. Nohl (2009) agreed that semi-structured qualitative research design gives participants enough scope to express their individual diverse views and allows the researcher to respond or follow up questions on emerging themes. In his interview methodology, Creswell (2013) proposed the following steps in performing interviews:

1. Decide on the research questions that will be answered by the interviews.
2. Identify who will be interviewed.
3. Determine the type of interview to be used.
4. Use adequate recording procedures
5. Use an interview protocol or interview guide
6. Complete pilot testing to refine interview questions and procedures.
7. Determine the setting in which the interviews will take place.
8. Obtain informed consent before commencing the interview.
9. Use good interview procedures.

A total of 10 individuals volunteered for the study: five currently enrolled Education 1300, Learning Frameworks students and five Education 1300 Learning Framework professors. Each topic had prewritten responses before the interview. The data collection method designed for this study was to gain insight from the participant's views and perspectives regarding their expectations and perceptions of the Education 1300, Learning Frameworks course. The data collection instrument that was employed for this research study explored the expectations and perceptions of first-year students in Education 1300. Designed pre-interview questionnaires were distributed to all 10 participants (See Appendix F).

- The pre-interview questions consist of 21 open-ended responses.
- Personal interviews will be conducted for all 10 participants using the same questionnaire.

Several pieces of instrumentation were used to collect data from the participants. All participants had wished to become involved in this research study had to sign and submit the "University of Houston Consent to Research" that reviews the main purpose of the study, confidentiality, risk, procedures, and statement of publication. Questionnaires designed for this study were given to all participants of the survey. These questions can be located as outlined (Appendix F). The interview questions were based on various factors supporting success and participants' perceptions and expectations along with the outcomes presented in Education 1300, Learning Frameworks. The open-ended question leaves opportunity for more extended probing questions in the cognitive interview. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) suggested that participants provide and add rich descriptions to qualitative research piece and add trustworthiness to the study.

Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2013) indicated that the primary data collection method to be employed in the phenological study is the interview. So that as much information as possible will be gathered from the participant, both authors including Willis recommended an in-depth interview with probing questions. McMillan (2012) remarked that the interview does allow for richness of information and greater depth. One on one semi-structured interview was used for the study. Moustakas (1994) stated that "the phenomenological interview involves an informal, interaction process and utilizes open-ended comments and questions" (p.114).

Interviews were performed in person by the principal investigator. First-year and college students and education 1300 faculty were given the interview questions approximately two weeks before their scheduled interview to can preview, question, and reflect as much as possible. The purpose of the tools used in this study is to report, investigate, and to synthesize major themes, perceptions, and expectations of both students and professors that teach the Education 1300 Learning Frameworks course.

Instruments

Beginning in the 1980's, cognitive interviewing emerged as "one of the most prominent methods for identifying and connecting problems with survey questions. Numerous academic survey centers, government agencies, and command research firms have incorporated cognitive interviews" (Beatty & Willis, p. 288). Cognitive interviewing is the administration of "draft survey questions while collecting additional verbal information about the survey responses, which is used to evaluate the quality of the response or to help determine whether the issue is generating the information that its author intends" (p. 287). Researchers can use cognitive interviews to assess any variances

of materials and identify problematic areas that may not go detected (Willis, p. 3). Although a variety of methods in compiling results is present, no one way is necessary best (Beatty & Willis, p. 287).

Analysis

The data collection instruments utilized in this research study will predict qualitative results which will be methodically be analyzed by the primary researcher. The survey and questionnaire findings included data that were the perceptions and expectations of the participants. In the frame of open-ended questions, answers will transfer and be directly expressed in the results section of the study. All the participant's responses to the interview questions were themed to show commonalities and differences among one another. Participants' responses also included with direct quotes as stated during the interview process to show and provide insight on their perceptions and expectations of the course.

One of the primary means of data analysis is transcription coding. Walcott (1994) asserted coding represents the key method of identifying repeated patterns. Coding also provides researchers with the means of protecting their research from personal biases. Codes were assigned to the highlighted text and bracketed and linked to large amounts of data and more information. Creswell (2013) explained that coding "involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeing evidence for the code from different databases being used in the study, and the assigning a label to the code" (p. 184). The experiences described are the participants, then developed into themes then followed by a written description of how the experiences occurred. Lastly, a written and

composite description emerged which allowed this researcher to make and draw conclusions from the interviews.

Limitations

This qualitative research study consisted of survey and interview data, which were collected from a group of participants who were FTIC students and instructors.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

Presented in Chapter Four are the results of the study. The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 course. Presented in the first part of this chapter are the congruence of responses from five first-time in college (FTIC) students and five professors who teach the first-year experience course. The research questions for this study were:

1. Before college, what experiences do first-year students recount having most influenced their expectations and perceptions for their FYE Student Success Course?
2. What academic, social and career – related expectations do students hold during their first year of college that they believe will lead them to be successful in college?
3. Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class?
4. In the Student Success Course, to what extent are student and faculty expectations in alignment?

The expectations and perceptions of five first semester FTIC community college students who had completed the FYE, Learning Frameworks EDUC 1300 course were enrolled in their second semester of college course work. Five professors who teach EDUC 1300 were interviewed in this research study. Participant's interview responses to 21 semi-structured interview questions assessing the five research questions that guided

the study. Emerging themes arose from the interview responses. Interviews were 30 minutes to 55 minutes in length and were conducted face-to-face in a private room at the research site. Follow-up interviews for purposes of clarification of responses, transcription confirmation, and member checking have been carried out in person and over the phone. These follow-up interviews lasted 20 minutes or less. All participants confirmed the accuracy of their statements from the transcriptions that were emailed to them.

Chapter IV provides results gathered and analyzed from the interviews. This Chapter provides a description of each participant cited from the questionnaire before each interview. Emerging themes are presented that developed from the interviews along with direct quotes from the participants.

Student Participants

For this study, five first-year in college (FTIC) students who completed the SSC at a large suburban community college in Texas were interviewed along with five EDUC 1300 faculty professors. Each student had taken the SSC in the fall of 2016 and was enrolled in their second semester of college in spring 2017. The participants included two males and three females, ranging in age from 18 to 65. The ethnicity of each of the participants was one Black male, one Black female, one White female, one Hispanic male, and one Hispanic female. The participants who volunteered compose of the sample. Current EDUC 1300 teaching faculty were eligible for this study. Faculty professors who volunteered for the study were three females and two males. Additionally, the ethnicity of the faculty participants was one Black male, one White male, and three White females.

John. John was a Black male who was between the ages of 21 and 24. John is a first generation (FTIC) student. He has completed 15 credit hours in the fall of 2016 and is taking 12 hours during the spring 2017 semester. Before the fall semester (2016), John has not been in school since he was 17 years old. He is married and has two small children who are infants. He is employed and works 30 hours or more a week along with extra jobs, so his wife can stay at home with their children. John has been in the workforce for several years and has decided to attend college. His parents dropped out of high school to work full-time and later returned to school to earn their GED's. John initial major was accounting, but because of EDUC 1300, he was exploring other career choices in the field of management.

Dana. Dana was a White female between the ages of 18 and 22. She has completed 16 hours in the fall of 2016 and was currently enrolled in 15 credit hours in spring 2017. Dana wants to become a teacher and is active in the AAT Program. Dana is a first time in college (FTIC) and first generation student. She notes that her family is very proud of her. Dana's parents did not attend college but have offered Dana to live at home while she attends college. Her parents do not have the finances to pay for her college expenses. Dana does not have any children, works 25 hours a week, and is paying for her college education without taking incurring financial aid.

Jean. Jean was a Hispanic female between the age of 21 and 25. She is a first generation and FTIC student. She completed nine hours in the fall 2016 and is enrolled taking six credit hours in spring 2017. Jean was a single mother of three children ranging from 6 to 10 years of age. Her children excel in school and encourage her to do the same. Jean works two part-time jobs and babysits for friends over the weekend. Jean's initial

major was nursing, but after taking EDUC 1300, she is considering entering the career workforce program.

Mario. Mario was a Hispanic male between the ages of 30 and 40. He is employed in a full-time job working a minimal of 40 hours a week. Mario completed nine hours in the fall 2016 and is enrolled in six credit hours in the spring of 2017. Mario has three children, and his wife works part-time. Mario is a first-generation college student and an (FTIC). His parents dropped out of high school and were day laborers. Even though Mario is undecided on his future course of study, however, his goal is to earn a baccalaureate degree.

Lisa. Lisa was a Black female between the ages of 18 and 25. Like the other student participants, Lisa is an (FTIC) and first generation college student. She completed nine hours in the fall of 2016 and is enrolled in 12 hours for the spring of 2017. Lisa was employed full-time working over 28 hours a week. Lisa does not have any children, however; she is the first one in her family to attend college. Her parents did not go to college and worked in manufacturing. After taking EDUC 1300, Lisa expressed interest in studying English and assisting others in learning how to read and write.

Faculty Participants

April. April was a White female between the ages of 45 and 55. She is an adjunct professor of education with a Master's degree in administration and supervision. April was a full-time public school administrator and has returned to the community college to teach part-time. April has been teaching EDUC 1300 for the last five years.

Chris. Chris was a Black male between the ages of 40 to 50. He is an adjunct professor and teaches at several universities in the area. Chris holds a Ph.D. in

Curriculum and Instruction. He has been teaching at the community college and university level for the last three years.

Darlene. Darlene was a White female between the ages of 25 and 35. She has a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and is pursuing her doctorate. Darlene attended the community college and later participated in the University to attain her graduate degrees. She has just completed her first year of teaching EDUC 1300.

Melissa. Melissa was a White female between the ages of 55 to 65. She was a retired full-time public school teacher and has been teaching EDUC 1300 for the last two years. Melissa has a master's degree in math and a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

Ronald. Ronald was a White male between the ages of 45 and 55. Ronald has a Master's degree in education and has taught both elementary and secondary education. His educational experience is vast. Ronald has been teaching EDUC 1300 for the last five years.

Student Interviews

Ten interviews were conducted at the participants' community college at their convenience in a face-to-face format. Participants were reminded and affirmed of their rights and recognized for their cooperation in the study. Several questions posed to the participant is in the initial interview addressed (a) high school experiences, (b) perceptions of the SSC, (c) expectations of the SSC, (d) expectations and perceptions of college before enrollment. Transcripts were emailed to each participant before the follow-up interviews for confirmation of transcription. The following sections detail the personal

accounts of the participants using thick, rich descriptions of participant responses and direct quotes.

Interview #1: John. The interview with John took place on February 1, 2017; the interview lasted for 50 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 7, 2017, over the phone and lasted 15 minutes. John appeared to be very relaxed when the interview began.

Experiences having most influenced your expectations and perceptions for the SSC. Due to financial constraints and low standardized achievement scores, attending the community college was John's best affordable option. He arranges his class schedule around his work schedule. John says that his employer is supportive of him attending college encourages him to complete his studies. Because John is such a hard worker, his employer had a tuition reimbursement program if John can maintain a B average in all his classes. John says that he was extremely nervous and hesitant in attending college because he knew that he was not academically prepared.

> I did not take care of my academic studies early on in high school, and I paid for it. All of my teachers in high school told me this year after year. When my academic advisor told me that I had to take the EDUC 1300 class at first, I was mad because I thought it was going to be a big waste of time. I needed to have a plan of action. My advisor told me, "you cannot get in the hallway without going through the doors." Because of finances, the last thing I want to do is waste money on such a class. In many ways, I needed to take this class so I could improve my interpersonal skills and competencies set. This class helped me. At first, I did not know what EDUC 1300 was about and what the expectations from

> the community college were. I expected my professor to be mean and not help me at all… however, that was so far from the truth. My professor moved through the course in such a way that I was successful. I did not realize the campus was so huge until I had to do the Scavenger Hunt activity. After I had completed the course, I am so glad I had to take EDUC 1300... It changed my life.

Multiple times in the interview, John indicated that he must be successful because he wants his family to be proud of him and his children to be successful in their future academic studies. One of the activities that were significant for John in EDUC 1300 was a Scavenger Hunt. It made John realize that many organizations, student services, and departments were present to achieve success. Some of the experiences John relates to his experiences are possessing having a strong work ethic and being responsible. While education was not stressed in his family growing up, John remarked that college was viewed in his family as something that other groups of people can afford. "It was as though all my parents could think of was just work, earn a paycheck and work some more. Education was never part of the equation or at least it was never brought up in my home as a child. It was as though the word Education was a terrible word to use in my house."

> The first time I walked on the community college campus, there were many students of various ethnicities, race, and culture, older and younger. I remember sitting in the academic advisor's area and listening to other students talk about their fears about going to college. It was then I realized that I was going to be okay. At first, I thought that the SSC was a big waste of time. When my instructor shared some of her personal accounts with struggles and challenges, I realized

> that everyone barriers to success. I grasped the idea that I could not only pass this class but also be successful in all my other courses.

John stated that his parents would often tell him to work hard and provide for this family. John indicated that college and academic expectations were never expressed clearly to him as a child, so he did not grasp the concept of "how" to become successful. His high school experiences were minimal when it came to excelling in the classroom because John was an athlete. He readily admits that he was more concerned about playing collegiate basketball than studying and making good grades. He has taken many developmental classes to prepare him academically for college-level coursework.

Academic, social, and career-related expectations that will lead to success. Because John was a first time in college (FTIC) student, who had few support systems at home to help guide him in the decision-making process of attending college. One of the benefits of his academic and career plans was to have an academic advisor working with him. He states that the academic advisor team cared about his progress in the program. Academic advising came to the rescue and assisted John in making academic and career life choices for his future. John states that academic advising is an excellent service to students because the student receives one-on-one assistance and one can map out their career path and future program of study.

> My career related experiences will not happen if I do not earn my college degree. I do not want to set my children up for failure. I realize now after making many mistakes in my life that this degree is the key to my path to success. The one thing I did not expect was for them to walk me through the process of selecting coursework and develop a plan for the upcoming semester. Because I was in the

> fall semester 16-week EDUC 1300, it was convenient that our class was a hybrid course. It gave me time to do the assignments online and allowed to take an additional class. Even though I work long hours and am rarely home, my academic advisor gave me hope in her words of encouragement. It is nice to sit down, speak to someone in person, and work through the scheduling process. This was something I had never experienced since high school.

Interview # 2: Dana. The interview with Dana took place on February 6, 2017; the interview lasted for 45 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 10, 2017, over the phone and lasted 10 minutes. Dana was upbeat and eager to participate in the interview.

Experiences having most influenced your expectations and perceptions for the SSC. Dana expressed the fact that she was passionate about the arts, theater, music, and social justice issues that she believed that human beings ought to be treated with respect. Just like community colleges, "I want to make communities strong and vibrant."

> I idolized college growing up. I wanted to leave my neighborhood and community and get out of the house. I wanted to go to a university out of the area, do whatever I want. My course related expectations were the fact that I was going to have to take Education 1300 SSC that I did not believe I needed. In all honesty, I was mad. I thought I was more than prepared for college. My parents did not have much money, and even though I made straight A's in high school, there still was a lack of support to attend the University. I wanted to go to the University but could not afford it. The best choice for me in my financial condition was to attend the

community college. This way, I can save money and be prepared to pay for the rest of my education at the 4-year university when I transfer.

Dana says that she was angry that she had to take Education 1300 once she learned how "user-friendly" the class is, she knew she just had to get through the course and be successful. She credits her professor for creating an environment for learning, engagement and making the course challenging.

> It was frustrating in high school because even though high school prepared me for college, it did not prepare me for the "sink or swim" mentality of the real experience of college. EDUC 1300 will probably be the only course you take where it is all about you. It is all about you as the student learning about resources and service organizations that are available for you as a student. Your teachers can tell you many times it is going to be different in college, but until you experience it yourself, you cannot grasp the intentionality of those warnings from your high school teachers. My high school years were good years, but I had no idea "how" this was all going to play out. I wanted to be in a class where freedom of thought and opinions were not scrutinized. My professor made sure that each of us was valued and our ideas were respected. He (Professor) made sure everyone had a voice, and personally, I think he was a "rebel" at one time in his life experiences because he would question the status quo. His level of active student engagement in my class was wonderful. I wish all the professors would teach and activate learning in their classrooms as my EDUC 1300 professor.

Academic, social, and career-related expectations that will lead to success.

Dana did not hesitate to point out that the assignments and activities gave her inspiration and fortitude to choose her field of study. She gives credit to the course organization and D2L structure of the hybrid class that allows her to work and attend college. When she entered college, Dana was not sure exactly what she wanted to study and choose for a future career. One of the best things about Education 1300 is the career exploration project when the student does research into various careers of interest. Thanks to the help of her professor, Dana relates that he pointed out some of my strengths in debate and drama, thus assisting her to choose to become a political science major. She is taking 12 hours this semester and working 25 hours a week. Because of Education 1300, this class showed Dana how to become involved in campus activities and organizations, even though she does not have much time to spare.

> Faculty sponsors understand the academic learning culture and understand volunteer limitations of "commuter" community college students. The only way I am going to be successful is to understand my personal strengths and time management restrictions. I am looking forward to transferring to a 4-year university to complete my degree. While I was mad at first that I had to take Education 1300, it has taken a semester to see the value of first semester students becoming involved in the academic and social aspects of the community college. My professor was phenomenal because he was consistently engaged with our class demonstrating learning styles and time management skills. I needed to understand a different perspective so that I could be successful.

Interview # 3: Jean. The interview with Jean took place on February 9, 2017; the interview lasted for 55 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 16, 2017, over the phone and lasted 15 minutes. Jean appeared nervous and was hesitant at first when the interview began. After a few minutes, Jean calmed down and was ready to proceed with the interview. Jean repeatedly stated in the interview that the academic advising teams and the creative talents of her professor made her EDUC 1300 a concise course to explore the various components of success and explore career opportunities.

Experiences having most influenced your expectations and perceptions for the SSC. Jean readily admits she feared attending college because of the fear unknown. When Jean first arrived on campus, she relates that her academic advisor not only gave her a tour of the campus but was very positive and encouraging in answering her questions. It was during the tour, she learned about the process of applying for classes, grants, financial aid, and other programs that were offered to assist students. Jean is a first-generational student to go to college in my family and had pressure by other family members to not attend college but rather work full time. She does not have the support of her family to go college. According to Jean, the community college experience has been wonderful because of the flexibility of course delivery and offerings designed for students. She did not expect campus academic advisors to be so sweet and concerned about her progress.

> Since it has been many years since I graduated from high school, I was scared to even walk on the college campus. I have had children along the way and have not had the opportunity to take classes. Even though I am working two jobs now, I am determined to complete my studies. I think one of the reasons I felt that way is

> because I have several children and I was afraid to begin something and not be able to finish. I knew there were many others like myself that had never been, so it was nice meeting new people that have the same struggles I have had in my life. I did not expect the class to meet one day a week and complete the assignments online.

Jean says it had been a long time since she was in a classroom as a student, that she had no idea what to expect in EDUC 1300 class. She knew it was a study skills course but did not know many activities and discussions, learning simulations, regarding careers, finances, study skills, and test-taking skills would occur. Her expectations were that the class would be boring and have much homework.

> My professor was awesome in making us think about our careers and our future goals. We performed interview exercises that helped me to communicate job expectations and resume writing. Since I have four children, I have been so worried about their future; I never realized I needed to concentrate on making their lives better by earning my degree. It was nice to be on campus for a class that met the other 50% online as a hybrid.

Academic, social, and career-related expectations that will lead to success. My only means of support right now are my classmates and children. It was in the EDUC 1300 class that I met many friends that have some of the same problems and life challenges as I do. I have felt that I was alone throughout this process, but that was not the case. So, that I can gain full-time employment faster, I am considering the 2-year degree or certificate. The benefit to that is I can move into my career and make more money for my family. It was not the plan I had when I entered community college, but

for me to be successful, I need to graduate in the least amount of time so that I can support my family. At first, I wanted to study nursing, but after I had found out the length of the program, I had to change my course of study. Because of EDUC 1300, it opened a world of possibilities that I did not believe existed.

Interview # 4: Mario. The interview with Mario took place on February 14, 2017; the interview lasted for 45 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 20, 2017, over the phone and lasted 10 minutes. At the onset, Mario appeared to be frustrated because he has limited English proficiency. However, he was eager to share his expectations and experiences in EDUC 1300.

Experiences having most influenced your expectations and perceptions for the SSC. Mario shares this incredible account of "how" he ended up attending this community college by attending his God-daughters choir concert while she was in high school.

> I found this college by accident. My neighbor participated in a choir concert here a few years ago, and one of my cousins asked me if I would ever go to college… moreover, through a series of events, I am here. When I found out that I had to take developmental English and math, I somewhat expected it. It has been years since I have read a book! All I do is work. When the advisor told, me I had to take EDUC 1300, I had no idea what the course was about. The academic advisor went through the details of the course and explained that the course was hybrid. I had no idea what that even meant! If anything, this course gave me the tools to not only be successful, but I enjoyed learning about finances and learning styles. Some of the perceptions and expectations of this course were that I thought the

course was going to be too difficult for me to understand. Because I am proficient in using the computer, I was happy that this class was offered online as a hybrid course. My professor would meet me online and work me through some of the assignments I thought were difficult to understand. My native language is Spanish and sometimes connecting the English words is difficult for me.

Instead of giving up and not returning to class, people who cared about Mario assisted him so that he would be successful. He credits his classmates and professor for collaborating and working with him and not making him feel like an outcast.

My professor, academic advisor, and classmates made sure that I would not be left behind. I thought my professor was going to be mean and not care about students, which was not true. I expected my classmates just to let me fail out of college, but that did not happen. The professor made this course enjoyable because he had all kinds of games and activities that went with the lesson of the day.

Academic, social, and career-related expectations that will lead to success. Mario states that he did not think that EDUC 1300 would be so applicable to his work, home, and in his personal life. At first, Mario did not know "why" this course was mandatory for incoming students, but after persisting through the class, he has a better understanding of success and being an active learner in a college classroom. The application pieces to each of the EDUC 1300 modules were designed for student engagement and learning.

My personal expectations about college and my paths to success were all wrong. To think that there are people at this community college that care about my well-

> being is overwhelming. This is a special place. After taking EDUC 1300, it gave me many things to think about as I consider the future for my family. I want to start a college fund for each of my children, so once they graduate from high school, they will not have to work at least their first few years of college. I want them to become more successful than I ever have. Without an education, your career will never take off. I have spent many years working any job I could just to pay bills. Attending college for the first time in my life was a wonderful experience. I am hoping in the next few semesters; I can take college-level math and English. My path to success will happen if I keep working hard.

Interview # 5: Lisa. The interview with Lisa occurred on February 20, 2017; the interview lasted for 50 minutes. The follow-up interview took place on February 28, 2017, over the phone and lasted 10 minutes. Lisa appeared to be euphoric and eager to participate in the interview.

Experiences having most influenced your expectations and perceptions for the SSC. Lisa readily admitted that she had no idea what the community college experience was all about. She had been on several field trips since she attended an area high school, but was not sure what expectations regarding college coursework she would have to face.

> My high school teacher used to tell us that college is a brand-new experience that you must be prepared for…I thought my teacher was joking about all of this until I found out. Course related the professor and the college set expectations. I wanted my coursework to be easy my senior year of high school because I knew I would be transitioning to college in the fall. Little did I know; my personal

> expectations were in direct conflict with what I have experienced. In college, students must grab every learning opportunity possible because professors will move right through the material. At first, I had enrolled in a face-to-face class and after visiting with my academic advisor, I changed my EDUC 1300 class to a hybrid format because it fit my schedule better.

Lisa thought that the SSC was going to be a boring class with hardly anything to do. She says after she was in the course, her professor was more than willing to go the extra mile to make them all successful. She later recounts how she felt before taking the course.

> When my academic advisor told, me I had to take the SSC because it was state-mandated, I was outraged because I did not want to waste any money. My professor said that she is there to make us all successful and that this course will demonstrate to us the importance of learning about resources in college. I would see my professor outside occasionally, and she would always speak to me and call me by name, I never expected that kind of treatment from an instructor.

Being raised in a poor family, Lisa stated that her family lived from paycheck to paycheck. Times occurred when the electricity would be turned off because her family could not afford the electric bill for the month. Her parents were never home because they were always working.

> After watching my family struggle for many years, I decided that I must go to college and needed to be productive in learning. My family never encouraged me to attend college because all they did was work. It seems all I do is work as well. However, I know what I need to do. When you see your family struggle and both

parents work all the time, you gain insight into your future in where you could be heading. My academic advisor was instrumental in helping me write down my goals and have a plan.

Academic, social, and career-related expectations that will lead to success. Lisa believes she is on the right track for her career in Education. She explains that she has family members that can barely read and write and she loves helping them understand various pieces of text.

I am in my second semester of college, and my family says that I am too smart for them. I love teaching and cannot wait to start taking some of the Teacher Education classes. I am going to work many hours this summer and try to save as much money as possible so that I can take 18 hours in the fall. Since my academic advisor has given me a "pathway" to eventually transfer and attend a local university, I must complete this degree and earn my teacher certifications. Because of EDUC 1300, it gave me clarity and the tools for success. Since my professor was highly engaged with our class and the class was a hybrid course, it worked with my current work schedule.

Faculty Interviews

Faculty Interview #1 Professor April. The interview with Professor April took place on February 6, 2017; the interview lasted for 35 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 9, 2017, over the phone and lasted 10 minutes. April was eager to share her insights into the preparation of students for her class.

Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class? Students who attend class and show interest in the course are usually successful and are more prepared.

> I learned that many of my students are transitioning out of high school, that they work well over 25 hours a week and are taking 12 hours of college credit classes. Several weeks into the semester, I noticed more than 50% of my students are not prepared for class. As far as student preparation for EDUC 1300, I think a big issue in addition to cognitive or non-cognitive preparation for my class is that the students do not know what to expect from this class before they enter the door on the first day of school. They know conceptually what English and math are having had those classes all through school. However, I think that it is not clear to the students as to what they will specifically learn in this class or what they will gain from this class (or even what this class is). I think that this disconnect results for many in the, "Why am I required to take this class?" attitude.

Professor April believes the newness of the course and the EDUC label may be part of the issue or lack of clarity on the purpose of the course.

> The lack of student clarity on what EDUC 1300 entails may be due to the newness of the course being required, the EDUC label given to the course, or perhaps a lack of communication regarding the content and purpose of this class at the time of enrollment. Every semester that I have taught this class I have had, students tell me that they had no idea what to expect from EDUC 1300 nor did they think that they would find the class useful. However, after students have experienced the content of the class, for the most part, they express that they found EDUC 1300 very helpful and that they enjoyed the class.

Professor April also stated that she constantly had to remind students of the class to turn in their work.

> While I was preparing for my class in the fall, I thought every student in my class would come to college prepared. My teaching strengths are characteristics such as being responsible and turning work promptly. The level of responsibility and student's level of expectations were surprising. I did not think I would ever reach out to encourage students to turn in work and be responsible. This is a trademark of this course. I ended up learning a brand-new set of interpersonal skills relating to students in an academic setting. There are always transitional shifts in dealing with FTIC students because they want to be successful and yet need to learn the ropes of the campus.

Faculty Interview #2: Professor Chris. The interview with Professor Chris took place on February 8, 2017; the interview lasted for 40 minutes. Professor Chris appeared confident and was concise in his thoughts about the research question. The follow-up interview occurred on February 12, 2017, in person and lasted 15 minutes.

Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class? Students are prepared for my class as a majority are coming out of high school and in their first semester of college. The one benefit from my class since it is a hybrid class and they turn in all their assignments in D2L (Desire Two Learn System). Once the students learn how to navigate around the course and turn in work, they do very well in the class. Their assignments are sometimes late, but they do know that I will work with them to make them successful...many times the student needs guidance and support. EDUC 1300 is all about making students successful so they may persist and move into their next semester. I believe that they are not receiving the encouraging support at home. By the time they leave my class, they can take online coursework and do well in future online environment

coursework. One of the key problems I see today are students that have not developed time management skills and being organized/equipped to meet the academic challenges of college.

Faculty Interview #3: Professor Darlene. The interview with Professor Darlene took place on February 13, 2017; the interview lasted for 35 minutes. Professor Darlene had written down some notes and referred to them during the interview. She was excited about having the opportunity to share her insights into the interview question and the SSC. The follow-up interview occurred on February 16, 2017, over the phone and lasted 15 minutes.

Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class?

My class is a hybrid course, which means that all the assignments are turned in online. All the assignments have due dates along with various required projects. Students understand technology because it interests them….it is a huge piece of the puzzle to the culture of academic success. Most of my students come prepared as it relates to the levels of technology and basic school supplies. I see them not being ready to launch into their semester by having their required supplies such as their textbooks or other laboratory materials/workbooks for their content. An underlying component from where students struggle is the lack of academic discussion at home from family members, especially if they are FTIC and first generational students. One of the biggest frustrations in my class is that student expectations do not align with what the students want in the class. In some cases, they want or expect me to assist them in most the assignments. They do not understand the reasons why they must take EDUC 1300. If they are taking

Developmental English/ Math or both, I find that they need support and guidance from their academic advisors. This is paramount to the success of each FTIC. I give them all the support and encouragement I can so they can be successful!

Faculty Interview #4: Professor Melissa. The interview with Melissa took place on February 15, 2017; the interview lasted for 30 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 20, 2017, in person and lasted 10 minutes.

Are students prepared for your class?

At first, I underestimated the level of knowledge and preparedness of the students when they entered the class. A clear majority (80%) were detailed oriented and were excellent students. I believe they were prepared for the routines of college possibly not the rigor. This one interesting statement is that students do not understand the expectations of college. Students had to deal with external barriers such as housing, finances, and issues regarding relationships. It appears each of them brought various problems and issues into the class. While behavioral wise these students were fantastic, they had tremendous difficulty adjusting their academic calendar and work schedules. Around 20% did not attend class faithfully because of work, family obligations, small children and life issue…with a variation of skill sets, academic writing and reading levels were not at the college level so I assist my students the best way I can.

Faculty Interview #5: Ronald. The interview with Professor Ronald took place on February 17, 2017; the interview lasted for 30 minutes. The follow-up interview occurred on February 21, 2017, over the phone and lasted 10 minutes. Ronald had a series of notes that he brought into the meeting room. He appeared to be excited to share

his insights. One of the first comments Professor Ronald made was that he enjoyed teaching the hybrid model of EDUC 1300, especially in a 16-week course. These scheduling practices allow students to take care of their outside responsibilities and still attend college.

Are students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class?

Since this is a foundational course in sharing tools and resources for FTIC, it is imperative that as professors, we give students every resource possible so that they may become successful in college. While I cannot say, all students are prepared for my class; I can confidently say that a clear majority of the students better are ready for coursework. One of the main difficulties students possess is difficult transitioning stages from high school to college. The lack of reading and academic writing skills for college-level coursework are evident as they struggle in composition. I want them to be successful, and sometimes I wonder if I wanted more than they do. This course does require a lot of creativity and engagement on behalf of the professor. However, the student must be prepared to take on the rigor of coursework. Many times, students do not challenge themselves during their high school years because they are concerned about graduation with their friends and school functions.

Analysis and Coding Procedures

One of the primary means of data analysis is transcription coding. Walcott (1994) asserted coding represents the key method of identifying repeated patterns. Coding also provides researchers with the means of protecting their research from personal biases. Codes were assigned to the highlighted text and bracketed and linked to large amounts of

data and more information. Creswell (2013) explained that coding "involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeing evidence for the code from different databases being used in the study, and the assigning a label to the code" (p. 184). The experiences described are the participants, then developed into themes then followed by a written description of how the experiences occurred. Lastly, a written and composite description emerged which allowed this researcher to make and draw conclusions from the interviews.

Each transcript was read at least five times each to gain an understanding of the participants' responses. Transcripts were highlighted detailing key phrases and color-coding those responses from each participant. Key phrases, words, concepts, and examples that were repeated from other participants were highlighted and bracketed. Common responses from participants that were related to the perceptions and expectations of first-year college students then emerged as consistent themes. These emerging themes were tabled and tracked by participants' interview responses.

Emerging Themes

Five different themes from common phrases, words, and concepts used by the participants were bracketed into categories. Each of these five themes was related to the expectations and perceptions of the FYE, Learning Frameworks EDUC 1300 course. In some cases, themes overlapped in some of the remaining research questions. Participants demonstrated a variance of expectations and perceptions in the SSC as first-year community college students. After studying and analyzing the data, each of the research study questions had distinct responses from the participants geared toward their expectations and perceptions of the SSC in both before enrollment and afterward. The

supporting details before student enrollment in college and experiences first-year students recount having most that influenced their expectations and perceptions were the lack of familial support in understanding college culture and expectations and taking the SSC. Themes emerged related to academic success in college were the hybrid mode of instruction, interactions with faculty, and academic advising. The themes associated with student preparedness was difficulty and lack of acquisition of college practices, academic advising, student success course, and hybrid mode of teaching. Continual themes emerged to the extent of expectations aligned with the hybrid mode of instruction, academic advising, and interactions with faculty.

Table 4 illustrates the themes, conceptual definition, and participants' example related to each of the themes. Following Table 4 are rich descriptions along with participants' quotes that give evidence to the theme as related to the research question.

Table 4

Emergent Themes, Conceptual Definitions, and Examples of Participant Responses

Emergent Themes	Definition	Participant Responses
Hybrid Model of Instruction	A mode of instruction that is a flexible combination of face-to-face and online instruction that affords students the opportunity to take more classes or work.	"I enjoy taking the hybrid course because it allows me to attend class, work, take other classes and studying."
Interactions with Faculty	Positive interactions which occur with faculty both inside and outside the classroom that leads to success, persistence, and retention in college.	"My professor was the bomb. He made sure we understood the materials and would offer to help us in his office."
Familial disconnect in understanding of college culture and expectations.	The absence and lack of understanding college policies, admissions, expectations, and college culture.	"I am the first one in my family and my generation to attend college, so there is no one at home that understands the process."

Emergent Themes	Definition	Participant Responses
Student Success Course	A first-year mandated course that provides entering college students with information about campus departments and services, assistance with academic and career planning, techniques for study skills and financial planning.	"At first, I thought this was going to be a big waste of time and money, but when my instructor had us do the Scavenger Hunt and the Career Project, I learned more about those two activities because it gave me hope for the future. The SSC is a wonderful course to get students connected."
Academic Advising	The belief that the academic advisor and student have roles and responsibilities with the end goal being student success.	"When I walked on campus and met my academic advisor, he was right there with me throughout the entire planning process. I have been successful because of academic advising."

Experiences influenced expectations and perceptions in SSC: Research Question 1

The first research question was designed to identify experiences and prior belief constructs that influenced student expectations and perceptions of the first-year experience, EDUC 1300 course. Based on student participants' interviews, two contributing beliefs emerged as themes. The themes, familial disconnect in support and understanding of college culture and expectations, and the Student Success Course are presented in the following section using thick, rich description along with direct quotes from the participants.

Familial Disconnect in Understanding College Culture and Expectations.

Question 10 in the interview stated: Are you a first-generation college student? If so, does it affect you in your academic performance? Each of the participants is first-

generation, first-time in college students (FTIC). Participants believed in many ways not having family in college was difficult because no one at home could relate to the rigor, expectations, and demands of the college classroom. John's response was, "Well, it feels as though I am all alone. No one understands this environment in my family." Dana and Jean both indicated that while they were never actually encouraged to attend college, they were scared due to the fear of the unknown. Dana credits EDUC 1300 for equipping and showing her how to be academically successful. "I have extended family that have not earned their GED's and I would love to help them achieve that goal if that is what they want." Because academics were never prevalent in her home, Dana is resolved to become successful and lead others into gaining a college education. In his family, Mario has seen the effects of not having a strong academic background and wanted to earn his bachelor's degree Mario stated that he worked so much, that he never thought of attending college. "You can make all the money in the world, and it will never equal the amount of education that you need… I am planning on instilling these values into my children."

Student Success Course

Four interview questions were related to the learning outcomes of the EDUC 1300. Participants were asked probing questions as they began to share their insights about the SSC. John admitted that he was not looking forward to taking the SSC based on what he had heard from his friends. "At first, I thought that the SSC was a big waste of time. When my instructor shared some of her personal accounts with struggles and victories, I then knew that I could not only pass this class but be successful in all of my other courses."

Each of the student participants reflected that their high school years and family were instrumental in developing their mindset about expectations and perceptions for their first-year (FYE) SSC. Question 3 and 4 in the interview guide stated, "Think back when you were in high school, what were your perceptions of college? While Question 4 asked the question, "What were your expectations of college? Participants realize that they needed to go to college even though they were unsure of what college expectations truly were. John related that he thought college was going to be easy with no rationale for this assertion. He later discovered upon arriving at college that he did not have the academic skill sets to perform some of the assignments in his coursework. Dana said that high school years did not fully prepare her for the reality she would face.

> It was frustrating in high school because even though high school prepared me for college, it did not prepare me for the "sink or swim" mentality of the real experience of college. Your teachers can tell you many times it is going to be different in college, but until you experience it yourself, you cannot grasp the intentionality of those warnings from your high school teachers.

Activities such as the Scavenger Hunt connected students to other service areas in the community college that they would not normally know about. John said, "I did not realize the campus was so huge until I had to do the Scavenger Hunt activity. After I had completed the course, I am so glad I had to take it... It changed my life." Mario thought that the SSC would use higher order academic language in a manner that he might not be able to understand the concepts of the course. Mario credits the SSC for showing him how to create a budget using the financial literacy activities so he could incorporate the tools to use at home. "I was never shown how to save money; all we ever did was pay

bills and never had any money left over for fun." Lisa agreed with the other participants that she thought the course was going to be a "major waste of time and resources."

> Now that I have taken the course, I believe that the entire theme of the SSC is to give (us) as student's tools and resources to become successful. Although the College is a commuter campus, the community college has your best interests at heart when it comes to students completing their studies or degree. All my professors especially my EDUC 1300 professor would tell us all the time, which we need to make decisions and move toward our goals. Don't sit down and allow the world to pass you. Professors gave me hope.

Academic, Social, Career expectations lead to success: Research Question 2

The second research question was designed to identify and analyze the congruence of responses related to academic, social, and career expectations during students first-year of college they perceive will lead them to success. Based on participants' feedback, three themes emerged from research question two. Hybrid mode of instruction, interactions with faculty, and academic advising are presented in the following sections using thick, rich descriptions and participants' quotes. Six questions from the interview guide were related to EDUC 1300 and student expectations of success.

Hybrid Mode of Instruction

All the participants' responses included references to course delivery and instruction. Participants were overwhelmed that EDUC 1300 was taught in a hybrid style format and that it was convenient and accessible for them. Participants remarked that they did not have to be on campus more than two days a week for a 16-week course. They could perform the assignments online and turn them into their instructor. John says,"

Because I was in the fall semester 16-week EDUC 1300, it was convenient that our class was offered as a hybrid- it gave me time to do the assignments online and allowed me to take an additional class." Dana gives credit to the community college and the structure of the hybrid class to be able to work and attend class in the same day. Jean relates, "Since I have four children, I have been so worried about their future; I never realized I needed to concentrate on making their lives better by earning my degree. It was nice to be on campus for a class that met the other 50% online as a hybrid. Our professor was around campus if we ever needed assistance." Mario confesses that he was worried about taking EDUC 1300 because of his limited language proficiency.

Interactions with Faculty

Three questions from the interview guide were related to faculty interactions and EDUC 1300. All five participants expected their professors to not care about their progress or success in the course. Although students accepted responsibility, students understood that they are responsible for their academic success. Students note that faculty expected them to take responsibility for their learning by demonstrating effort, attending class, and being prepared. Because higher education had not been experienced by each of the participants' academic experience and their immediate families, a foundation was lacking to validate these expectations. Participants expressed these perceptions were based on the "fear of the unknown" including information given to them as high school students. While professors were perceived or expected to be "cruel, heartless, and not understand student backgrounds, all of the participants verified this was not true. John says, "I expected my professor to be mean and not help me at all… That was far from the truth. My professor moved through the course in such a way I was successful. He always

had our class' best interest at heart." Dana responded by saying, "My professor made sure everyone had a voice… In his level of active student engagement in my class was wonderful. Sometimes I would see him outside, and he would take the time to visit with me. What made this professor special to me was that he knew my name." Jean agrees that her professor was awesome and always accessible to her needs. "It was nice to have a teacher that was engaging in the classroom and would make you think about life's issues even when the class was over. Every class was a different lesson, and no one knew what this professor was going to do that day… totally unpredictable." Mario said when asked about his EDUC 1300 class in his interview,

> Our professor cared about us. He made sure our entire class turned to work when it was due. He was always engaged with our class and would encourage my class to make your dreams happen. He would tell us that he does not want to be disappointed by our actions and our choices. He would ask all kinds of questions and then relate the material to life application. He was one of the best professors I have ever had. He made a lifelong impression on me to continue with my studies. I did not expect that from a college professor.

Academic Advising

The third theme that emerged in the study was academic advising. All five participants expressed that they had "incorrectly paired" academic advising with professional counseling at the college level. "When you walk into the advisor's office, your perception and framework of the entire process changes because they are so friendly and welcoming" replied John. Dana stated that she was comparing academic advising to a

high school guidance counselor, which was not accurate. “When I was in high school, my guidance counselor spent maybe five minutes with me my entire senior year.”

> I have already spent at least an hour meeting with my advisor going over goals, schedules, finances, work schedules, and plans for transfer to the University…she tells me she wants me to be successful. I did not know what the word “successful” meant until I walked onto the campus.

John and Jean agree that their perceptions of academic advisors have changed since they have been through the advising process. John states that “my academic advisor had many scheduling class alternatives since I work many hours. She made sure that I was well equipped to become successful and prepared for the semester.” While Jean agrees with John, she relayed that her academic advisor requested that she stop by every few weeks to check-in with her.

> Out of all the thousands of students at this specific community college, my advisor takes the time out of her busy schedule to see how I am doing. She asked me to bring in my assignments, so she knows I am making positive ground in my classes. I guess you could say she is like my “mom” here at the college. Sometimes I go to her office and have lunch with her…she has made a difference in my life, and I will never forget her encouraging words of support and care.

Lisa gives credit to her advisor for placing her in the correct path. “I am going to work many hours this summer and try to save as much money as possible so that I can take 18 hours in the fall. My academic advisor has given me a “pathway” to eventually transfer and attend a local university.

Student preparedness for class: Research Question 3- Professor’s responses

As previously indicated, all five faculty professors (participants) teach EDUC 1300 in either face-to-face or hybrid mode of instruction. Four of the five faculty participants stated that students were "mostly prepared for their classes." Four faculty participants agreed that the transition from high school to college is a major concern due to the vastness of student needs, demographics, learning styles, and foundational context of understanding higher education. One faculty participant, Prof. Melissa stated that she "underestimated the level of knowledge and preparedness of the students." Prof. Melissa responds by indicating that she believes students are prepared for college and had difficulty grasping the issues of rigor, expectations from higher education, and placing priority in attending class rather than working extra hours than normal. "Students have so many external and internal barriers to success that it impedes their progress more than what I ever had to deal with."

> I underestimated the level of knowledge and preparedness of the students when they entered the class. A clear majority (80%) were detailed oriented and were excellent students. I believe they were prepared for the routines of college possibly not the rigor. Students had to deal with external barriers such as housing, finances, and issues regarding relationships. It appears each of them brought various problems and issues into the class. While behavioral wise these students were fantastic, students had difficulty adjusting their academic calendar and work schedules. Around 20% did not attend class faithfully because of work, family obligations, small children and life issues.

Prof. Chris explains that because EDUC 1300 is primarily a connections course to college, he understands the barriers to success and transitions from the workforce to

college courses and high school. He noted that students work many hours to finance their college education, assist family members, and raising children. “This is an unmistakenly new adventure in education where students are at risk every day of not persisting. I am amazed how busy they are in their personal lives and yet they have the fortitude to graduate from college.”

> Their assignments are sometimes late, but they know that I will work with them to make them successful… Many times, the student needs guidance and support. ED UC 1300 is all about making students successful so that they persist and move toward the next semester. Sometimes I believe they are not receiving this support at home or from their families. By the time they leave my class, they can take online coursework and do quite well in the online environment for the future.

Prof. Darlene stated that she believes students do come to college with high expectations for success and lack sometimes having adequate supplies such as paper, pens, and textbooks.

> Most of my students come prepared as it relates to the levels of technology and basic school supplies. Quite frequently, I have supplied students with school supplies if they needed it. This is a difficult transition for first-year students. I see them not being ready to launch into their semester by having their required supplies such as their textbooks or other laboratory materials and workbooks for their content. One of the biggest frustrations is my class expectations sometimes do not align with what the students want in the class. In some cases, they want or expect me to assist them in most the assignments, and of course, that is not going to happen.

Prof. Ronald believes that students are prepared for college and asserts that professors need to give their students every tool possible in EDUC 1300 to be successful and eventually graduate. He also asserted that first-year students are in transition from high school to college. “This is a difficult transition because students do not understand the expectations from higher education. They believe that college is going to be like high school except a little harder.” Prof. Ronald credits the hybrid mode of instruction because it allows students to attend class and have extra time to take additional classes, study, or take care of other responsibilities. “The hybrid mode of instruction allows much more flexibility for student success than traditional face-to-face instruction.”

Student Success Expectations in Alignment: Research Question 4

The last research question assessed the alignment of the SSC as it relates to student and faculty expectations. Student and faculty answers to the question of alignment in the SSC had mixed responses. Before college, students admitted that they did not know what college expectations were neither did they comprehend the expectations of the SSC. Student participants in this study had a clear understanding of their professor’s expectations (in the SSC) after the professor explained the course expectations from the first day of class. The participants understand that they are responsible for their learning and active engagement in the course. From the student perspective, students expected their professor to be engaged with them and interactive. The faculty participants agreed that they interact with students. Professors April and Melissa believe entering first-year students expect a relaxed approach to learning, one where students and faculty interact often and informally. Prof. April explains that an alignment of expectations is present when students enter the SSC because both the

professor and student want to be successful in their learning outcomes. Prof. Darlene believes students attend college to “enhance their skills so they can be able to work, think, speak and write.” Prof. Ronald agrees with Prof. Darlene but adds that “academic writing must be taught daily and frequently exercise in high school coursework. At some point in their high school years, a misconception is present they will not have to write academically in college.”

In the SSC, student and faculty responses indicated some alignment was present in the various levels of expectations in the course. Whereas, students cite the lack of college knowledge and the fear of the unknown, while faculty who teach the SSC understand that the conceptual framework and outcomes of the course are fashioned toward student success. In addition to student expectations, faculty expectations play a vital role in creating and sustaining the community college culture for student success on campus. Faculty expectations of student success heavily influence and impact their interaction with first-year experience students and in retrospect, create and impact future enrollment in retention mechanisms.

Summary

Presented in Chapter 4 were the analyses of data collected in this qualitative study. The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 course. Interviews were conducted with five first-year students and five EDUC 1300 professors at a large suburban community college and offer insights into the expectations and perceptions for college success.

The data from the student interviews were interpreted to mean that students are optimistic and believe they will be successful in EDUC 1300 because the faculty are engaging and interact with them. Students expect academic success by being responsible for their learning, engaging with faculty, and managing their various schedules. Student expectations align with the faculty participants who expects students to attend class and interacting engage in the course with them. Analysis of data from discipline interviews conducted from this research study exposed five themes related to the research study questions. Sponsors from each of the participants were individually synthesized. Secondly, once all interviews were analyzed and synthesized, each compared to one another by bracketing and coding identifying key phrases and individual responses to themes. One theme emerged from pre-college experiences that influence the expectation of perceptions in their SSC which were a disconnect between familial college expectations. Three themes emerged from academic, social, career – related expectations which were the hybrid mode of instruction, interactions with faculty, and academic advising. Two themes emerged from faculty responses to student preparedness in the SSC.

In Chapter IV, information was presented to each participant with thick, rich descriptions. Bracketing and coding procedures were discussed, data analyzed, and the emergent themes about the research questions were presented. In Chapter V, a summary of the study and the relationship of the findings to the current literature directly related to the themes. A discussion of the legitimation of the findings, recommendations for future research, and recommendations for future practice will be discussed.

Chapter V

Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations and perceptions of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 course. Qualitative research methods were used in this study to measure and assess student expectations and perceptions of the SSC. In this chapter, discussion of the findings, implications, conclusions, and recommendations will be presented as they are aligned with the research questions. In presenting and conducting present day, research allows higher education administrators, program directors, academic success advisors, and chairs, insight in developing a concise understanding of the expectations and perceptions of college students as they enter higher education. The findings of this study will be of benefit to community college leaders and administration in the following ways: (a) in providing an in-depth view regarding perceptions and expectations of students; (b) the results will be invaluable to the institution for assessing learning outcomes, future curriculum design and advising components; (c) the significance of the study will assist future programming and course content taught in various modalities; (d) college administration leadership and lead faculty will be able to use this assessment data on students in college entry; and (e) promote gains in student development from college entry to college completion which is assessed yearly at the state and federal levels for accountability and funding. Therefore, initiatives regarding inquiry and the investigation into student perceptions and expectations are inevitable and necessary in evaluating success, completion rates, graduation, persistence, and retention efforts.

Summary of Study

Presented in Chapter One were the introduction of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the survey, which was to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 class. Also, noted and presented in Chapter One was the significance of the research, the primary research questions, theoretical framework, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, the definition of terms, and the organization of the study.

In Chapter Two was a review of the existing literature, encompassing and examining expectations and perceptions of first-year students and faculty who teach the Student Success Course. Goals of the SSC are outlined describing the outcomes of the course, characteristics of community college students, transient populations, and demographics of community college students. Next, students transitioning in college is discussed, and curricular issues of alignment are exposed at the secondary level. Finally, student and faculty perceptions and expectations are shown.

In Chapter Three are the methodology of the research study, the research type, context of the study, participant selection and population, survey instrument, and data analysis processes. Findings and themes that emerged from the research study including key conclusions and recommendations for future practice and research are described in Chapters IV and V.

The expectations and perceptions of five first semester FTIC community college students who had completed the FYE, Learning Frameworks EDUC 1300 course were enrolled in their second semester of college course work were interviewed. Five professors who teach EDUC 1300 were interviewed in this research study. Participant

interview responses to 21 semi-structured interview questions assessing the four research questions guided the study.

Discussion of the Findings

In Research Question 1, five first-generation FTIC students were interviewed and confirmed that not being exposed to college culture and expectations at home were unequivocally prior experiences that influenced their belief constructs of college. In Research Question 2, FTIC students interviewed perceived three components that were influential and thus allowed them to be successful in the SSC: (a) hybrid mode of instruction, (b) interactions with faculty, (c) academic advising. In regards to Research Question 3, five faculty were interviewed and stated that about 80% of their students attended class prepared. Two themes emerged from professor's responses as to student preparedness. Professors indicated that students who were not prepared for class were due to not grasping college expectations. Professors also stated that students had other forms of external barrier (s) such as work, family, children, living arrangements that were impeding them to not be successful. The second theme, hybrid mode of instruction, was cited as a reason in consideration of student success factors, and this mode of instruction meets the needs of the stakeholders. Finally, in Research Question 4, student and faculty responses indicated the presence of some alignment of the various levels of expectations in the course. Whereas students cited not knowing college expectations of higher education and with the lack of familial understanding of college experiences. The faculty, who teach the SSC understand the conceptual framework and course outcomes of EDUC 1300 that are required and intended for student success. In addition to student

expectations, faculty expectations play a vital active role in creating and sustaining the community college culture for student success on campus.

The research questions for this study were:

1. Before college, what experiences do first-year students recount having most influenced their expectations and perceptions for their FYE Student Success Course?
2. What academic, social and career – related expectations do students hold during their first year of college that they believe will lead them to be successful in college?
3. Are the students prepared for your EDUC 1300 class?
4. In the Student Success Course, to what extent are the student and faculty expectations in alignment?

Research Question 1

The first research question was to identify pre-college experiences that influenced FTIC expectations and perceptions of the SSC. All five participants were FTIC and first-generation college students. The disconnection of familial interactions over college practices heavily influenced the participants to be “unsure” and overwhelmed in plans for academic success. Before they reach college, many first-generation students face tremendous difficulties in their transition from high school along with their perceptions and expectations of the college experience (Thayer, 2000). First-generation college students are at an enormous risk for the problematic transition and venture from high school to college (Pascarella & Terezini, 1991). The lack of higher education experiences coupled with the lack thereof support or the understanding of creates unforeseen barriers

for students. Hsiao (1992) discovered that first-generation students face many challenges that other student groups that include false expectations, conflicting obligations, and the lack of support. In relating to first-generation student background characteristics, participants stated that their parents had encouraged them not to attend college rather work to support the family unit. The literature supports the student participant responses. Pasacarella et al. (2004), Pike and Kuh (2005) and Ishitani (2006) all concluded that first-generation students are at an enormous risk for the difficult transition from high school to college. Those students who are involved socially and academically experienced are more likely to return for their second year (Tinto, 1998).

Students admitted in their first semester that persisting was incredibly difficult. While not attending, college was never an option; participants found significance in developing collegial relationships with their classmates and professors in EDUC 1300. Although none of the participants had taken any Advanced Placement coursework or dual credit courses while in high school, participants admitted in the interviews that they "had no idea what college was going to be like." Several stated that they formed their pre-college expectations and perceptions about taking EDUC 1300 from friends that had already taken the course. Participants stressed in individual interviews that lack of finances, grades, academic skill sets, language barriers, and the need to work and support the family unit, shaped their academic perceptions and expectations. Having expectations to attend a four-year university in the fall semester were not realistic because each of the student participants were enrolled in two developmental classes in their first semester. Because of EDUC 1300, student participants repeatedly stated that they did not want to take a "study skills" course, however, after taking EDUC 1300, each stated that he or she

were glad they took the course because it created an awareness of college culture and learning. “It seems that the unmet expectations of students remain a challenge for colleges and universities across the country. In other words, did the schools prepare their incoming students adequately, through the dissemination of materials or orientation programs, to enable them to form realistic expectations?” (Miller, p. 132).

The second theme from Research Question 1 that emerged was enrollment in the Student Success Course, EDUC 1300, Learning Frameworks, First-Year Experience. As Fidler (1991) reported, the SSC (Student Success Course) began in the early 1970’s. Colleges and institutions of higher learning offer the SSC for teaching students how to be successful in college (Karp et al., 2012). First-year experiences commonly known as (FYE) programs was fashioned upon some of Tinto’s (1993) intervention practices. Programs are made and designed for students in their first critical year of enrollment (Schrader & Brown, 2008). Tinto stated that the college skills or the SSC had provided a non-threatening environment from which nontraditional students may find answers to their challenges.

Participants characterized the course upon enrollment that the “SSC as a waste of money and a way in which the community college can make more money off the students.” While interviewing, students learned that the SSC is a state law and is required of all incoming college freshmen. Students reported that they were intimidated in their SSC class, even though the professor greeted them at the door and had sent an email to them several nights before the first day of class to make a connection. The SSC’s purpose was to focus on retention, persistence, and graduation rates for new students. The SSC is one way in which a variable range of student support services is employed. Deil-

Amen (2011) and Troxel and Cutright (2008) ascertained that most 4-year programs designed to meet the needs of traditional students are used in the community college system. With the emphasis being on entering students reflected in seminar design and content, the course assists pupils in the areas of financial planning, career preparation, personal skills, study habits, and techniques, learning styles inventories, and building persistence to be successful in post-secondary education (Gardner & Barefoot, 2011). Among these, the use of credit-bearing college skills has grown in popularity (Barefoot et al., 2011) and intended to improve graduation rates (Mayo, 2013). The AACC recommends incoming freshmen in 2-year colleges take the SSC course in their first semester (AACC, 2012)

Students appreciated their professors going through the syllabi, course outcomes, and campus resources, assuring the class that they will be successful and learn some things about themselves along the way. Participants exclaimed that their SSC professor made the class engaging and challenged them to learn about themselves. Professors made the course relevant to their needs and participated with the class as activities were being performed such as The Scavenger Hunt, which is the first activity in the SSC. Colleges and universities have become quite versed in offering many forms of the FYE (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Participation in FYE programs has provided students a higher sense of community, improve academic advising and their perceptions, and increase the greater likelihood that students will persist from their first year to their second year of college. In all the research gathered and assessed, an overwhelming abundance of evidence demonstrates that first-year experiences do affect the successful transition to college. Based on their institutional characteristics and needs, no first-year experience course is

the same. As a matter of fact, the first-year seminar is one of the most analyzed courses in the undergraduate curriculum (Cuseo, 2009; Koch, Foote, Hinkle, Keup, & Pistilli, 2007). Many different versions of the SSC exist that are laid out in various fashions depending on 2-year community colleges and 4-year institutions. The SSCs are designed based on student population, demographics, degrees offered, commuter campus, and resident life each of these factors influences the content of the program. Barefoot, Warnock, Dickenson, Richardson, and Roberts (1998) determined that in assessing persistence to graduation shows positive outcomes from within the results of the first-year seminar. Participants shared that they SSC is a user-friendly course and that they understood the expectations on their professor because they were explained to them the very first day of class.

Research Question 2

The academic, social, and career-related expectations that students believe will lead toward success were described in the second research question. Three themes emerged: (a) hybrid course of instruction, (b) interaction with faculty and (c) academic advising.

In developing, creating, and offering online courses, community colleges have led the process nationally of implementation of online, hybrid classes (Garza Mitchell, 2009). In hybrid classes, students have demonstrated to be able to achieve success, learn in less time, and have a more positive attitude toward learning than in traditional 16-week semester courses (Tapscott, 2009). Surprisingly, participants stated that course delivery was a huge indicator of their success in college because as in the case for EDUC 1300, they believed that the 16-week traditional face-to-face course would have been excessive

in length for their needs. Because student participants were working more than 25 hours a week, they cited the hybrid course allowed them the time and resources to complete assignments and take additional courses during the specific course schedules. Per the participants in the study, students expect digital access to classes from cell phones and want discussions, lectures, and project submissions to be online while completing coursework at times convenient for them. Their professor(s) gave them contact information and participants stated that their professor contacted them frequently and often. Many acknowledged that because of EDUC 1300, their computer skills increased and could learn online platforms and participate in online discussions.

The number of students nationally enrolls in online and hybrid coursework as the number of institutions offering them. Kleinman and Entin (2002) suggested that community colleges may be interested in offering hybrid classes to meet the demands and accommodate the needs of their student populations since many hold part-time and full-time jobs. Because computers were in all assigned EDUC 1300 classrooms, student participants indicated this was a "surprise" because many did not have the funds to purchase their laptop or computer and expected to go to the library to use the college computers to complete assignments.

The results of the research study demonstrated that the second theme, interaction with faculty, was a major component and foundation for a successful SSC at the community college level. Tinto (1993), stated that faculty build their set of expectations for their students and represent the academic climate for the college. Faculty members are the foundation for academics in community colleges and universities. While they are responsible for teaching, advising, syllabi, curricular development, and objectives of the

university, faculty portray a significant role in the persistence and retention rates of entering freshman. Kuh and Hu (1999, 2001) stated that perpetual student–faculty interaction is assumed in undergraduate education. Faculty–student contact plays a specific role in degree completion rates, higher degrees of success in academic coursework, and overall improvement in undergraduate GPA (Astin, 1977, 1993, 1985; Bean, 1985; Bean & Kuh, 1984, 1991; Pascarella, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1976, 1979; 2005, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996; Tinto, 1993). The intellectual or substantive focus has a significant effect on college campuses than informal social exchanges (Kuh & Hu, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Students reported that both formal and informal engagement interactions around and in class made EDUC 1300 a favorable course among the participants. Students admitted that they were intimidated and frightened in attending college, but after having discussions with their professor at lunch one day, outside the classroom, each stated their perceptions were “wrong” about their teacher. Students said that many times their professors would invite them to eat lunch outside as a class. Any engagement with the class was viewed as productive and positive.

Chickering and Gamson (1987) submitted that one of the factors that raise the bar for student motivation and engagement be student-faculty interactions. Astin (2003) later reported that student-faculty interactions were a top indicator of student success. As Yoon (2002) related, the teacher-student relationship is paramount and is an essential predictor of academic performance and success. Regarding higher education, most of the current research has been carried out using secondary level education samples (Wubbels, 2005). Many stated that their perceptions changed over the course of the semester.

Because professors had a myriad of activities, games, scenarios, and brought in guest speakers from around the campus community, students believed they would be successful in EDUC 1300 and college coursework. Students cited and appreciated when faculty take an interest in them and are various activities in EDUC 1300 rather than lecturing every class period. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) noted that student-faculty interaction is significant because it empowers students to devote greater energy to academic activities and programs. When students feel part of the university community, they are much more inept to be involved in campus involvement and be successful academically.

The third theme that emerged in Research Question 2 was Academic Advising. The relationship between a student and their academic advisor is a highly significant association to have. Academic advising was highly favorable and meaningful as students were assisted in creating pathways for their success in college. In college, course instructors do not know students well enough especially in large settings, and students are exposed to many instructors for different courses. The meeting with the academic advisor is one of the keys to community college success (Choate and Granelle, 2006). The goal in advising is to create a relationship with the student, so the student will not only be successful but will get the most out of their education. Studies exist regarding how student success supports underrepresented students' adjustment to college. Among Latinos in college, Hurtado and Ponjuan (2000) determined that participating in academic support courses and programs gave students a strong sense of belonging.

Because a clear majority of community college students commute, linking academic support and advising to community student college students is especially significant to students in matters of persistence and graduation rates. Each of the

participants was appreciative of the work and mission of academic advising as it relates to success in the SSC. Student participants revealed that if it were not for advising, they would not have been successful in their first semester of college. Students remarked that due to the lack of support at home (as previously discussed), academic advisors gave them hope to become successful in college. By giving them short-term goals to be successful, academic advisors help set the tone for students to be successful in short-range goals. Students remarked that this was not something they had not thought about before attending college. The entire scheduling process and goal setting session with their advisor were student-centered. Students appreciated their advisor visiting their EDUC 1300 classes, making scheduling appointments and answering questions as needed. Many participants stated that they stop by and see their advisor to ensure they are on the right path toward success and graduation. The connection pieces to academic advisors were found to be a critical component to student success.

Research Question 3

In research question three, faculty participants were questioned about student preparedness in their class. Two themes emerged from the interview. The first theme was a familial disconnect and the second was the hybrid model of instruction.

EDUC 1300 faculty participants believed that students were prepared as they could be for college. EDUC 1300 faculty stated a disconnect was present between the transition from high school to college, and that is why professors assist FTIC students to ease into that difficult transition. The faculty believes that EDUC 1300 is a “campus resource connections course” exposing first-year students to multi-college services and programs to assist students to be successful in college. While faculty gave multiple

reasons for students being unprepared for college, the participating faculty in this study had a sense of compassion, value, and understanding for entering FTIC students. Faculty participants said that being an FTIC and first generation student makes college so intimidating, so they go out of their way as professors to make sure students are comfortable in the course as they progress.

Tinto (1993), explained that faculty constructs their set of expectations for their students and represent the academic climate for the college. Faculty members are the foundation for academics in community colleges and universities. Though they are responsible for teaching, advising, syllabi, curricular development, and objectives of the university, faculty portray a significant role in the persistence and retention rates of entering freshman. Kuh and Hu (1999, 2001) stated that perpetual student–faculty interaction is assumed in undergraduate education. Faculty–student contact plays a specific role in degree completion rates, higher degrees of success in academic coursework, and overall improvement in undergraduate GPA (Astin, 1977, 1993, 1985; Bean, 1985; Bean & Kuh, 1984, 1991; Pascarella, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1976, 1979; 2005, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996; Tinto, 1993). The intellectual or substantive focus has a significant effect on college campuses than informal social exchanges (Kuh & Hu, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). With all the successes of student – faculty interactions and outcomes, little research exists on student and faculty expectations and perceptions on the First-Year Experience (FYE), Student Success Course.

Faculty participants stated they believed students were more academically prepared for college after they left their EDUC 1300 class than before entry. In turn, due

to the various resources, tools, collegial relationships, and academic conversations that develop from the course. Faculty participants remarked that students learn "class preparedness lessons" in both EDUC 1300 and from their classmates. Students who are most successful in college find a place for themselves within the college campus and are likely to have found their experience in a college meet their expectations. These expectations held by faculty play a tremendous role in creating a culture of learning and success on the community college campus.

Research Question 4

In the final research question, student and faculty responses regarding the alignment of the SSC were compared with mixed results. The misalignment in the SSC portrayed in this study is the lack of professors understanding student expectations in the SSC. Once professors discussed the expectations of the SSC on the first day of class, students stated they understood their professors' expectations in the course, however; they did not understand the purpose of EDUC 1300 as enrolling freshmen. Students reported they did not understand college expectations from the beginning, however, their EDUC 1300 professors demonstrated to them throughout the semester the level of expectations needed for college success. This finding is consistent throughout the literature. In the community college system, depending on several factors, most students transfer to a 4-year institution. Student expectations are enormous and lofty when it comes to attending higher education with the belief system instilled that college is going to be a simple process. Although students are held to meet the expectations of their professors, Kirst and Venezia (2001) determined that first-year college students not be aware of faculty expectations. In many ways, these expectations are not made clear to

students. Also, students do not meet their expectations of graduating from a 4-year institution in six years. In 2014, 37% of students graduated from 4-year institutions within four years. The overall graduation rate reflects a 10% decline in a similar study from 1989 (HERI).

Student participants stated that the professor went over course materials the very first day of class including their expectations for the class. While in the course, faculty participants, however, seem to be less inclined to know what their students' expectations are in the SSC. Although students spoke of learning styles activities from the class, students reported that they were never asked how they learn and what are their personal expectations of college. Faculty mentioned multiple times that they believe students expect college to be a direct continuation of high school. However, students were not of that opinion that college would be like high school and related that they knew college was going to be much more challenging. The review of the literature clearly demonstrates that faculty set the course for success. If faculty set the direction and goals of the course, students understand their expectations. Student participants continually stated that no basis was present for their personal expectations because they are FTIC and have no college connections at home with their families. Students indicated that they wanted to be successful, but needed assistance because of language barriers, skills required for academic writing, and financial needs. Value existed in the SSC, and they expected their professors to be engaging.

Limited published research is present in which student expectations with learning together have been assessed (Kuh, 1999). As such, a gap exists in the knowledge base. College students transition from high school into the college experience with towering in

some cases unreachable and unattainable expectations for college. Entering college students have high hopes when it comes to goals, perceptions, and future job targets (Olsen et al., 1999) stated that two ways are present in which student expectations influences what they do when they arrive on campus. First, student expectations serve as a filter, where students evaluate and make judgments about the information given and their personal experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Expectations do shape other behaviors and experiences (Feldman, 1981). Secondly, expectations affect experiences to be a psychological catalyst to other types of behavior (Olsen, 1999). Expectations do shape and guide further decisions in campus activities and future studies thus influencing persistence and retention. Expectations influence the types of opportunities students to pursue and thus determine and shape student success in the first year onward (Kuh, 2005).

Implementation of Future Practice

Recommendations for further practice are intended for campus leadership, college faculty, curriculum teams, who desire to make gains in the transition and persistence among their first-year populations. When community colleges create systemic and student service first environments, they increase the patterns for student success, persistence, retention, and graduation rates. The following recommendations can be made from the results of this investigation: (a) community colleges should create and establish clear and concise expectations for EDUC 1300 students; (b) examine the flexibility and scheduling of hybrid courses in EDUC 1300; (c) create specialized EDUC 1300 classes for students who have identified their programs of interest or study; (d) community colleges should have a shared collaborative vision and mission with local school districts

in creating college partnerships and dual credit opportunities; and, (e) academic advising should be a mandatory component for all first-year students in which they are assigned an advisor during their entire first year of college to assist in persistence and retention matters.

Community colleges should create and establish clear and concise expectations for EDUC 1300 students.

When student expectations are, clear and are aligned with the mission and vision of the institution, students develop reasonable expectations in due time. Within that framework student who understands and applies these expectations will be able to make that transition to higher education. Creating clear expectations and extremely intentional in practice will assist students to gain an understanding of college success and persistence. In *The Undergraduate Experience*, Felten et al. (2016) addressed the way and way institutions communicate what matters to prospective students is not always aligned with their expectations. Although websites and pamphlets contain images of athletic facilities, recreation centers, state-of-the-art dormitories, such "materials rarely reference academic rigor or the need to work much harder in college than was necessary for high school (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Felten (2016) concluded that undergraduate students arrive on campus and have the expectation of social life on campus because the campus literature promotes the social aspects of the institution rather than the academic. These are some of the mixed messages that are conveyed to prospective first-year college students whose expectations have often viewed as confusing. Arum and Roksa (2014) reported that expectations that are contradictory are confusing will alter campus culture. For many students, "the importance

of the social thus goes much beyond the party scene; it goes to the core of how students defined the college experience, understand their purpose in college, and different value dimensions of their college lives" (p. 26).

Student expectations are important for understanding why students persist to graduation. Peers, social media, family, and past experiences all from these expectations. New Student Orientation programs and Summer Bridge Programs along with Student Services give the community college an opportunity to host future student visits with academic advisors, counselors, professors, campus administrators, and financial aid representatives that will assist students in their transition to college. In most cases, this intervention has lower income or underprepared students targeted for an opportunity to become familiar with the college before the start of the academic year. With academic advisors collaborating with counselors, faculty informed career decision-making sessions would assist students in forming their expectations and perceptions for higher education.

Community college leaders in EDUC 1300 campus administrators and curriculum teams should examine the scheduling and flexibility of hybrid courses mixed with face-to-face and online instruction for student success in EDUC 1300.

In discussing class schedules, one of the students' major concerns is whether courses offered when they can take it. With new paradigms in the global market and flexible learning opportunities, community college enrollment completion and success data show that successful teaching and learning occur in the online environment. With the growth of online instruction and as previously discussed in Chapter Two, the barrage of working college students, the traditional class schedule may no longer meet the needs of commuter students. As appropriate teaching methods are conducive to student needs and

online learning platforms are established, hybrid coursework builds capacity in students and success. The flexibility of hybrid classes allows for students to work, take an additional class or perform homework. Student participation responses were positive when it came to their EDUC 1300 classes including the hybrid component. Schedule hybrid classes mixed with online and face-to-face. The key to success for hybrid coursework is for the institution to create and establish high expectations and for students to understand those expectations from the onset. Because every college campus has a distinct culture, offer appropriate variations to determine stakeholder needs for learning and success.

Create specialized EDUC 1300 classes for students who have identified their programs of interest or study.

In efforts to increase persistence, retention, transfer, and ultimately graduation, create specialized EDUC 1300 classes for students who are interested in specific fields of study or inquiry. Allowing professors outside the Education Department to teach EDUC 1300 class, an example for History majors, then professor would design curriculum to fit the curricular needs for History majors, and fulfill the academic requirements for EDUC 1300. These efforts will build capacity in student persistence and develop collegial relationships between faculty and students. In designing specialized classes tailored to student needs, students will have the opportunity to study and explore their career fields with experts. Faculty, on the other hand, will have ample opportunities to help build their programs of study by attracting students to their designated EDUC 1300 class.

Have a shared and collaborative vision with local school districts in creating college partnerships and dual credit opportunities.

Community colleges should form collaborative partnerships between their internal and external ISD's that are indirect pathways to their students attending the given community college. By working with school superintendents and campus administrations, these partnerships should increase campus visibility, college expectations, and a culture of learning when local schools visit the community college campus. The sharing of best practices and college expectations will create a culture of learning among the ISD's and college campus. With programs, such as early college access and dual credit, faculty will be able to work with high school teachers and establish college readiness regarding its expectations and perceptions of the college environment.

Academic advising should be a mandatory component for all first-year students in which they are assigned an advisor during their entire first year of college to assist in persistence and retention matters.

Academic advising should be one of the first contacts made with students on the college campus or by any other means including social media. As previously discussed in Chapter Two, FTIC and first generational students need academic advising to assist them throughout the community college experience. In the research, first-year experience programs including both precollege and existing orientation programs, student advising, first-year seminars, and learning communities are linked to a variety of positive results (Muraskin & Wilner, 2004; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005). Creating clear pathways to show students the way to success lends itself to successful educational experiences in persistence.

The Pell Institute (2015) determined that institutions with high levels of persistence, retention, and the result graduation, had more programs that eased student entry and adjustment to college. Most, if not all, higher education institutions had variations of the brand-new student orientation program. Among these new student orientation programs, academics seem to be highly stressed among the populace today. Barefoot (2005) noted that more emphasis was given to scholarly programs than any distinct time before the 2000 survey. Orientation programs regardless of the size and time of year offered, have a common distinct goal: improve student's chances of academic success, persistence, retention, and the likelihood of earning a baccalaureate degree. Because community college students commute, linking academic support and advising to community student college students is especially significant to students in matters of persistence and graduation rates.

Student confidence is shaped largely by the expectation of college upon entering and past academic experiences. On college campuses, academic advising should be in a centralized location strategically positioned on the campus and in general location for student access. Each FTIC and first-generation students should have an academic advisor assigned to them for their first year of college. In turn, this investment in the students and their college education will pay huge dividends in the area persistence, retention, success and completion of the degree.

Implementation for Future Research

In reviewing the research data from this study and in consideration of the emerging themes that were determined, the following suggestions for further research can be made: (a) develop research studies on career and workforce education; (b) qualitative,

longitudinal research on student persistence and retention in community colleges; and, (c) research studies are severely limited by student expectations and perceptions in assessing the SSC. The recommendation is for a larger scale qualitative study assessing student expectations and perceptions.

Develop research studies on career and workforce education.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, college students work more than 25 hours a week and take 12 or more college credit hours per semester. Consider a study on first-year in college (FTIC) and first generation students involved in workforce education. How does EDUC 1300 curriculum assist students in assessing their career goals for a two-year certificate? What are the benefits of career and workforce education? What does the recent literature show in the relationship between success parameters in various career and workforce certificate programs?

Conduct qualitative, longitudinal research on student persistence and retention in community colleges.

While this research study was carried out over a short amount of time, consider developing a longitudinal study in which FTIC students are tracked for a span of two years assessing their coursework, transition, and transfer to the 4-year university. Although research studies discussed in Chapter Two were interpreted to mean that students have lofty expectations of themselves for success, track a given sample for a qualitative study of persistence and retention in the community college. Noted in the research literature was that community college students are transient, leaving their institutions within one year of entrance. Data from *Achieving the Dream* clearly show that 113 community colleges in 18 states participating indicate that “48% of credential-

seeking students new to the institutions in the fall persisted to the next fall and only 34% enrolled in any term in the third year" (Lee, 2010, p. 3). Students did not leave their institutions because of completed programs. As Lee (2010) reported, many community college students have stop-in/stop-out enrollment patterns, making it methodically and conceptually difficult to track their progress. Community college students face a variety of barrier to degree completion, not including issues of persistence, retention, and low levels of academic preparation. Although student success at the community college remains low, "only 44 percent of first-time college students at community colleges had transferred to a 4- year institution or earned a certificate or degree" (Bailey, Jenkins, & Leinbach, 2006). For community colleges, 84% of its students work and 60% work more than 30 hours a week (NCES, 2011). Community colleges have the lowest tuition and fees than any sector of higher education (Baum & Ma, 2011). Cook and King (2007) and Orozco and Cauthen (2009) determined that working more than 20 hours a week is a risk factor for not completing coursework. The level of perceptions and expectations for community college students who work more than 20 hours per week is vastly different from full-time students in 4-year universities (Baum & Ma, 2011). This form of a study would be invaluable to the institution.

Research studies are acutely limited by student expectations and perceptions in assessing the SSC. The recommendation is for a larger scale qualitative study assessing student expectations and perceptions as compared to community college expressed expectations.

By the evidence presented in Chapters One and Two, limited research studies are present regarding student expectations and perceptions in community colleges. Revealed

in this investigation was that students did not know or understand the expectations of the community college. The only form of expectations given to them was found in class syllabi and course outcomes. Limited published research is present in which student expectations with learning together have been assessed (Kuh, 1999). As such, a gap exists in the knowledge base. College students transition from high school into the college experience with towering in some cases unreachable and unattainable expectations for college. Entering college students have high expectations when it comes to goals, perceptions, and future job targets (Olsen et al., 1999) stated that two ways are present in which student expectations influences what they do when they arrive on campus. First, student expectations serve as a filter, where students evaluate and make judgments about the information given and their personal experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Expectations do shape other behaviors and experiences (Feldman, 1981). Secondly, expectations affect experiences to be a psychological catalyst to other types of behavior (Olsen, 1999). Expectations do shape and guide further decisions in campus activities and future studies thus influencing persistence and retention. Expectations influence the types of opportunities students to pursue and thus determine and shape student success in the first year onward (Kuh, 2005). A program evaluation of EDUC 1300 as it pertains to FTIC and first-generation college students and assessing course content and student engagement in the college classroom should be considered.

Conclusion

The preceding sections of this chapter outline implementation for further practice and research as it relates to EDUC 1300, Learning Frameworks. Although high schools continue to have high graduation rates, higher education enrollment statistics soar.

Debard (2004) reported the current generation of entering college students is not only the largest generation, coincidentally, is the "most racially and ethnically diverse in this nation's history" (p. 33). Between 1998 and 2008, the numbers of students who were enrolled in higher education increased from 14.5 million to 19.1 million students (National Center for Education Statistics). With all of these significant data, substantial growth is propagated by student populations that have been historically underrepresented.

Time to degree completion has increased. McCormick and Horn (1996) stated that the traditional pattern of graduating high school, entering college and earning a bachelor's degree four years later is no longer the experience of undergraduate students. It is evident why research related to degree completion is pertinent to improve postsecondary education completion rates because today students who begin college do not complete their studies. As students today explore and gauge their opportunities and options in selecting institutions, they inescapably create perceptions and expectations of what their first year in college will resemble.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify and analyze the congruence of expectations of students and faculty in the first-year Education 1300 class. In this study, both first-year students and faculty were asked to reflect and identify their perceptions and expectations of success in Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience-Education 1300.

Overall findings were that community colleges should develop hybrid courses for purposes of scheduling, success, promote faculty interactions with students, participating in EDUC 1300, and academic advising that was all related to components of perceptions and expectations of FTIC and first generation students. The familial disconnect and

understanding of college culture along with expectations were listed as inhibitors of the first generation, and FTIC students do not understand the expectations of the community college.

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Appendix A

Approval from the University of Houston

Human Subjects Research Committee

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
DIVISION OF RESEARCH

Institutional Review Boards

APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION

July 19, 2016

David Pyle
Dr. Angus MacNeil
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

Dear David Pyle,

The IRB has reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Expedited
Title of Study:	"Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience--Education 1300: A Qualitative Examination Of Expectations & Perceptions Of First Year Students And Faculty"
Investigator:	David Pyle
IRB ID:	8438 - 16529-01
IRB Coordinator	Samoya Copeland

The IRB approved the study from:

- Approval Date: 7/18/2016
- Expiration Date: 7/17/2017

As required by federal regulations governing research in human subjects, research procedures (including recruitment, informed consent, intervention, data collection or data analysis) may not be conducted after the expiration date.
Sincerely,

Office of Research Policies, Compliance and Committees (ORPCC)
University of Houston, Division of Research
713 743 9204
cphs@central.uh.edu
http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/irb-cphs/

cc: Faculty Sponsor

Appendix B

Approval From Institutional Review Board,

Lone Star College

LONE STAR COLLEGE

Institutional Review Board

June 28, 2016

Mr. David Pyle, Jr.
IRB Protocol 2016080

Dear Mr. Pyle:

The research project application for your protocol titled, *"Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience--Education 1300: A Qualitative Examination of Expectations & Perceptions of First Year Students and Faculty"*, has been reviewed by the Lone Star College ("LSC") Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). The outcome of the review is as indicated below.

Approved: Expedited 45 CFR 46.102 (2)(i)

This approval will be valid for 12 months after the date of this letter. If the study extends beyond this period it will be subject to continuing review and will require the submission of a supplemental application at that time.

Please note that any changes to the protocol or procedures for this project after the initial review must be promptly submitted to the LSC IRB for review. In addition, any adverse events should be reported to the LSC IRB Office as soon as possible.

The LSC IRB requests that you share the results of this research project with the IRB office when you have completed it. The data from your study could be very useful to grant writers and to others in the LSC System. You will be given complete credit for its authorship.

This letter constitutes the official written response of the LSC Institutional Review Board.
Thank you, and best of luck on your study!

April M. Odell

April M. Odell
Administrator, Institutional Review Board

5000 Research Forest Drive
The Woodlands, TX 77381-4356
832.813.6500 LoneStar.edu

Appendix C

Student Invitation To Participate

Invitation to participate in a research study entitled:

"Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience--Education 1300: A Qualitative Examination of Expectations & Perceptions of First Year Students and Faculty."

One of the Staff Assistants (Secretaries) is to read the following script to the students:

Staff Assistant Reads This To Class:

"We are conducting interviews as part of a research study to increase our understanding and application of first-year student perceptions and expectations as they relate to Education 1300. As a first-year community college student, you are in an ideal position to give us valuable firsthand information from your perspective. The interview takes around 55 minutes and is very informal. There are a series of open-ended questions that you will be asked to reflect upon. The interview will be audiotaped, and none of your personal information or identifiers will be revealed. We are simply trying to capture your thoughts, perspectives, and expectations on being a student taking the Education 1300 course. Your responses to the questions will be kept confidential and anonymous. There is no compensation for participating in the study. However, your participation will be a valuable addition to our research and findings, and it could lead to emerging themes in future educational research.

I will place the following contact information on the board if you are interested.

If you have any questions or you are willing to participate, please contact Professor Pyle at David.H.Pyle@Lonestar.edu, you may call him at (936) 271.6203 or stop by his office which is G221M"

Thank you.

"This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Houston

Committees for the Protection of Human Subjects (713)743-9240."

Appendix D

Faculty Invitation To Participate

Dear Professor(s):

You're being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The researcher will give you this form and will also describe the study to you. Please read the information below and feel free to ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether you will take participate in the study. Your participation is entirely voluntary and anonymous. Your identity will never be disclosed.

Title of Research Study: "Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience--Education 1300: A Qualitative Examination of Expectations & Perceptions of First Year Students and Faculty"

Principal Investigator: David Pyle

Purpose of the study: The overall objectives of this research study, is to gain insight into both first-year students and faculty perceptions and expectations of the student success course.

What will you be asked to do in the study?

- If you agree to participate in the study, the researcher will conduct one audiotaped interview. A set of questions pertaining to student success, perceptions, and expectations will be asked. These questions are designed to aid the researcher in understanding student perceptions and expectations about Education 1300. The questions are open-ended to your individual responses.

Time: The length of each interview will last 55 minutes.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You are free to refuse participation and your refusal will not impact your standing in the Lone Star College System. If you would like to participate in this research study, or have any questions about this study, please email or contact me at David.H.Pyle@LoneStar.edu or (936) 271-6203.

Thank you,

David H. Pyle, Jr.

Principal Investigator

"This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Houston Committees

for the Protection of Human Subjects (713)743-9240."

Appendix E

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions:

1. Tell me some things about yourself?
2. What is your major?
3. Do you know your course of study?
4. So far, how is a semester going for you?
5. How many hours are you taking this semester?
6. Are you currently working? And if so how many hours a week?

Study Questions:

1. Think back when you were in high school, what were your expectations of college?
2. Think back when you are in high school, what were your perceptions of college?
3. Have your expectations differed from the reality of college? If so, how?
4. Have your perceptions differed from the reality of college? If so, how?
5. Has there been any life or work experiences that have prepared you for college? If so, what & and how?
6. Describe your high school experiences, how did they prepare you for college?
7. Describe and/or explain how high school is different than college.
8. If applicable, what role did your family play in you attending college?
9. Are you a first-generation college student? If so, does it affect you in your academic performance?
10. Describe your EDUC 1300 classroom experiences that have contributed to your success?
11. What were your personal expectations prior to taking EDUC 1300?
12. What were your personal perceptions prior to taking EDUC 1300?
13. Since you are now taking EDUC 1300 or have already taken the course, has your expectations changed? And if so, how?

14. Since you're now taking EDUC 1300 or have already taken the course, has your perceptions changed? And if so, how?
15. Describe your interactions with your EDUC 1300 instructor.
16. What were your expectations that you had with your professor in EDUC 1300, prior to the first day of class?
17. Did your expectations differ from now versus the first day of class when you walked into EDUC 1300?
18. What are some of your reasons why you return each semester and stay in school?
19. What barriers exist for you within the college that may keep you from being successful?
20. What barriers exist for you outside the college that may keep you from being successful?
21. Are there any other comments that you would like to add?

Faculty Only:

1). Are students prepare for your EDUC 1300 class?

Appendix F

University of Houston To Participate In Research

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: "Learning Frameworks, First Year Experience--Education 1300: A Qualitative Examination of Expectations & Perceptions of First Year Students and Faculty"

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by Professor David H. Pyle, Jr., M.Ed. from the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Houston. Professor Pyle is a Doctoral student and this research is being conducted for his dissertation project. The project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Angus McNeil, Professor of Education, the University of Houston.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Taking part in the research project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any research-related questions that make you uncomfortable. *If you are a student, a decision to participate or not or to withdraw your participation will have no effect on your standing.*

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the perceptions & expectations of first-year college students that are enrolled in the Student Success Course as well the faculty that teach the course. The duration of the study will be 4.5 months with the interview taking approximately 55 minutes.

PROCEDURES

You will be one of approximately twelve subjects (six student participants and six professors) invited to take part in this project.

If you agree to participate in the study, the researcher will conduct one scheduled audiotaped interview. As the participant, you will set up and confirm an interview time with the researcher. Once these procedures are in place, each participant will be given a set of interview questions to be reviewed prior to the interview. Once again, there will be one interview for the purposes of this study. As each participant is being interviewed, there are also open ended questions that could follow the subsequent interview questions. Each of these interviews will be audiotaped and will be transcribed. After transcription, the audio files will be destroyed and the recorded transcripts will be in a locked office. Your identity will remain anonymous. Your privacy will be paramount and will never be shared. These questions are designed to aid the researcher in gaining insight into your perceptions and expectations of the Student Success Course. An example of one of the interview questions is: (1) Think back when you were in high school, what were your expectations of college?

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your identity will remain confidential and anonymous.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand student perceptions and expectations of the college success course and future planning and administration of the Student Success Course.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

COSTS

There are no costs to the study.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations; however, no individual subject will be identified.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO/VIDEO TAPES

If you consent to take part in this study, please indicate whether you agree to be audio/video taped during the study by checking the appropriate box below. If you agree, please also indicate whether the audio/video tapes can be used for publication/presentations.

- ☐ I agree to be audio taped during the interview.
  - ☐ I agree that the audio/ video tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
  - ☐ I do not agree that the audio tape can be used in publication/presentations.
- ☐ I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.

Chapter 2

- If you do not agree to be audiotaped, then you will not be eligible for the research study.

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR DISMISSAL FROM PROJECT

Your participation in this project may be terminated by the principal investigator:

- if you do not keep study appointments;
- if the study sponsor decides to stop or cancel the project

SUBJECT RIGHTS

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.

2. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.

3. Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me, as have any potential benefits.

4. I understand the protections in place to safeguard any personally identifiable information related to my participation.

5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Professor David H. Pyle, Jr., M.Ed., 936.271.6203. I may also contact Dr. Angus MacNeil, faculty sponsor, at 713-743-5038.

6. **Any questions regarding my rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204). All research projects that are carried out by Investigators at the University of Houston are governed be requirements of the University and the federal government**.

SIGNATURES

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions to my satisfaction. I give my consent to participate in this study, and have been provided with a copy of this form for my records and in case I have questions as the research progresses.

Study Subject (print name): _____

Signature of Study Subject: _____

Date: _____

I have read this form to the subject and/or the subject has read this form. An explanation of the research was provided and questions from the subject were solicited and answered to the subject's satisfaction. In my judgment, the subject has demonstrated comprehension of the information.

Principal Investigator (print name and title): Professor David H. Pyle, Jr., M.Ed.

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: