

The Learning Assistance Review

The Journal of the National College Learning Center Association

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About *The Learning Assistance Review*

The Learning Assistance Review, an official publication of the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA), is published by the General College, University of Minnesota. NCLCA serves faculty, staff, and graduate students in the field of learning assistance at two- and four-year colleges, vocational and technical schools, and universities. All material published by *The Learning Assistance Review* is copyrighted by NCLCA and can be used only upon expressed written permission.

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Call for Manuscripts

Journal of College Reading and Learning

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The *Journal of College Reading and Learning (JCRL)*—a national, peer-reviewed forum for theory, research, and policy related to college literacy and learning—invites interested authors to submit manuscripts for publication.

The *JCRL* seeks manuscripts with a focus on the following topics at the college level: effective teaching for struggling learners, learning through new technologies and texts, learning support for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations, and program evaluations of developmental and learning assistance instructional models.

In addition to feature articles, the *JCRL* publishes shorter pieces (fewer than 2,500 words) in a “Theory to Practice” section. We welcome specific examples of theoretically based, research-supported practice, action research, critical reviews of recent scholarly publications in the field, and policy analyses.

For further information, contact Dr. Cynthia Peterson, Editor, Texas State University-San Marcos, at cpeterson@txstate.edu or by phone at 512.245.3839. We encourage you to visit the Journal website at <http://www.crla.net/journal.htm>.

Letter from the Editors

Before we introduce the articles in this issue, we want to recognize and express our gratitude to graphic designer Karen Bencke, who has accepted a new position as a Web designer for the University of Minnesota's College of Liberal Arts, and will no longer be doing the layout and formatting for *The Learning Assistance Review* (TLAR). Karen introduced TLAR's "new look" in spring 2004 and has consistently offered suggestions that are both helpful and creative. We would also like to thank Dean David Taylor of the General College at the University of Minnesota for his continued financial support for the work done by Karen and to be performed by her successor (though who can *replace* Karen?) in the future.

We also want to report that thanks to the creative energy of NCLCA Communications Chair Jennifer Haley, the "Join the Conversation" piece from TLAR is once again available on the newly improved NCLCA Web site, www.nclca.org—Thank you, Jenny!

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our apologies to TLAR editorial board member Carol Severino. Carol's last name was misspelled on the cover and first page of her chapter in our last issue. Please make this correction when citing Carol's work.

This is our third issue as editors of TLAR. We are currently recruiting additional editorial board members in order to keep up with submissions. We also hope to identify potential new editors by winter 2006. Our last issue in our 3-year term will be published in fall 2006. Please contact Emily if you are interested in serving on the editorial board or Irene or Jeanne if you might be interested in succeeding them as co-editors.

This issue of the journal begins with a phenomenological study by Thomas C. Stewart that provides compelling evidence for the affective as well as cognitive benefits that result from students in developmental programs tutoring one another. The next article, by Arlene J. Krellwitz, Jane A. Pole, and William Potter, describes a collaboration between instructors and paraprofessional staff members in the Academic Support Center that resulted in higher grades and enhanced student retention. The third article, written by Randy Moore and Murray Jensen, explores the relative merits of (a) a commonly used equation that is supposed to predict student achievement, and (b) voluntary attendance at summer orientation as a predictor of student retention and academic success.

"Join the Conversation" for this issue, provided by Patricia A. Eliason, follows up on previous articles published in TLAR about higher education policies and practices in South Africa. We hope that after you read Pat's article you will go to the NCLCA Web site to join us in discussing what we in

the U.S. can learn, 50 years after *Brown v. the Board of Education*, from more recent desegregation efforts in South Africa.

Finally, this issue's book review, by TLAR Associate Editor Emily Goff, is of *Qualitative Research in Practice* by Sharan Merriam, a leader in qualitative research in postsecondary education. Qualitative research can contribute many insights into effective practice in learning assistance. However, just as in using quantitative methods, it is imperative that our methodology is sound.

We plan to present a session at the fall 2005 NCLCA conference in Milwaukee on converting conference presentations to publications. We hope that we will see you there!

Jeanne, Irene, and Emily

From the Inside: The Developmental Student and the Tutoring Experience

Thomas C. Stewart
Kutztown University

Abstract

This research involves an examination of the experience a developmental student had as an informal tutor and how that role became a form of cultural capital and identity for her. When the experience ended, the student lost one of the few forms of capital she had in an academic setting. Through phenomenological interviewing, this study examines this student's experience. This study also theorizes on the role tutoring plays as a form of cultural capital and identity and how developmental programs can foster this kind of tutoring, ensuring that developmental students have an opportunity to gain confidence in the college setting by serving—even in limited ways—as tutors.

It all started with Shannon and Tammy (pseudonyms). As I made my way through the cafeteria at the end of the day, I saw the two sitting at a table off to the side, talking quietly. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary, but I happened to notice that the two were intensely examining their notes next to a stack of books. As the director of the 140-student summer program the two were attending, I knew that by this time of the day, after 6 hours of classes, most students were delighted to talk about anything but class. The 5-week program was designed to give a chance to students who ordinarily would not be admitted to the university. If they passed the English, math, and study skills classes, and attended all of their classes, they would be admitted for the fall. The best of the students in this developmental program would crack open the books later that night. Some of the students—either through lack of ability or unwillingness to work—would try to slide by and would be dismissed at the conclusion of the program.

“What are you working on tonight?” I asked as I passed the two.

“Tomorrow’s homework,” Shannon replied.

Tammy followed, “We’re tutoring each other.”

That caught my ear. In the classroom, instructors in the program frequently set up situations where students would teach one another, following pedagogy indicating how helpful that was for student learning. I was pleased to hear that Shannon and Tammy had replicated this practice on their own.

“She’s good in math,” Tammy continued, “and I’m good in English, so we kind of balance each other out.”

“Yeah,” Shannon smiled. “And so far, it’s working. We both have As in all three of our classes.”

Not many students could say that. I sat down and talked with them for a little while longer, aware that both were students with SATs in the 700-800 range from urban school districts. I also knew that both were in the top five of their large graduating classes. Motivated, talented, and hard-working but underprepared. The program offered tutoring each night, and I asked them if they had been attending.

“Sure,” Shannon said, “when we have specific questions that we can’t figure out.”

As I stood up to leave, Tammy added one more thing. “You know, us being tutors—it’s catching on. Some other students want us to work with them. It’s really making me feel good about myself.” That statement and the self-confident smile that went with it stuck with me. In many ways, Shannon, Tammy, and the other students like them might not seem to have much to offer academically at the college level. They were only conditionally admitted, and, by our university’s Predicted Quality Point Average (PQPA) formula (i.e., a combination of SAT scores and class rank), many of them were predicted to fail.

The brief discussion led me first to wonder exactly how developmental students’ perceptions of their own role as tutors had an impact on their experiences. I was interested in issues of cultural capital and identity (Apple, 1982; Boylan, Sutton, & Anderson, 2003; Giroux, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1989). In addition, I was intrigued by the fact that the story of the experience was moving me to action. I became interested in the narrative, the stories students created about themselves as students who could be tutors that led them to greater feelings of confidence and ability. Essentially, I wanted to get on the inside, to see how a developmental student perceived the experience of becoming a tutor.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand the perceptions of the experience of a developmental student who had, on her own, become a tutor. In the process of searching for an appropriate participant, I came across one who met these criteria and who had already graduated from college. This meant that she had some perspective on the experience as a tutor and on the

college experience as a whole. In a series of structured interviews, I aimed to find out: a) what her perceptions of being a developmental student and a tutor were, b) what meaning she made of those experiences, and c) how an understanding of those experiences is valuable to developmental educators and tutoring administrators. In other words, how can a student's perceptions affect practice?

Theoretical Framework

There is an important difference between a phenomenological study like this and a traditional ethnographic observation and anthropological methodology. While in ethnography one examines a phenomenon in progress, in a phenomenological study the researcher asks the participant to recreate a past event and to make sense of it now that he or she has some perspective on it. As Bruner (1983) noted, this goes against anthropographical rhetorical tradition, which advocates maintaining a scientific distance between the "subject" and the ethnographer. As an interviewer formulating questions, the researcher's role is to guide the participant through a recreation of their experience and to help them make sense of it. This is, of course, much different from an observation of that experience. The aim of the observation is to be as objective as possible, to be a neutral observer of a situation. The phenomenologist, on the other hand, is not even present during the situation; instead, he or she is closely involved in getting the participant to put a past phenomenon into perspective. For an educator, a phenomenological approach gives one an opportunity to hear the perspective of one's students very clearly.

Although the majority of studies in developmental education are quantitative (MacDonald & O'Hear, 1996; O'Hear & MacDonald, 1995), one of the best-known works in the field is a personal narrative grounded in the politics of developmental education (Rose, 1989). Narrative, as Fisher (1987) noted, can be effective because it is "more universal and probably more efficacious than argument for nontechnical forms of communication" (p. 75). Although stories and narrative may be seen as merely one person's recounting of events rather than a realistic, objective picture of those events, Bruner (1983) noted that "narratives, once acted out, 'make' events and 'make' history. They contribute to the reality of the participants" (p. 42). As Seidman (1991) noted, the "process of selecting constitutive details of experience, reflecting on them, giving them order, and thereby making sense of them. . . makes telling stories a meaningful experience" (p. 1). A phenomenological study examines the essence of individual experience (Patton, 2002; Schutz, 1967).

The phenomena under investigation in this study were the experiences of a developmental student who became an informal tutor. Mimi, the participant in this study, entered a university (not the same university that Shannon and Tammy attended) through a summer developmental program. Her entrance into the college as a regular student depended on her success in the summer.

Nevertheless, being admitted in the fall was no guarantee that she would graduate, as the program's 5-year graduation rate was 35%, as opposed to 55% for regular admits. The phenomenological approach in this study would aim to show how Mimi made sense of her college experience, particularly of her role as a tutor.

Methodology

There are four elements of the methodology that have been used in this research project: sampling, phenomenological interviewing, data analysis, and the role of the researcher.

Sampling

For this study, purposeful sampling has been used to find cases that will bring some clarity to the phenomenon in question, in this case the experience of developmental students as tutors. In this study, typical case sampling has been used. As Patton (2002) noted, the purpose of this type of sampling is to illustrate a typical case rather than to be a definitive portrait of an entire phenomenon. After preliminary interviews with 12 students, none of whom had been in the program this author directed, Mimi was chosen for the study both because she had compelling stories to tell and because her case is illustrative of developmental students who have been informal tutors. She had characteristics that were typical of the students at the institution she attended who were in developmental programs: first-generation college student, person of color, language other than English was the primary language in the home, combined SAT score between 700 and 800, ranked in the top 25% of her high school class, from an urban school district.

Phenomenological Interviewing

For this particular project, the method used was in-depth interviewing. As Patton (2002) noted, phenomenology attempts to discover what thoughts are inside a person's mind. I used the interview process for this study because:

1. The phenomenon I want to study is one the participant has already been completed (Maxwell, 1996).
2. In this study, observations might have led me to impose my meaning onto the participant's experiences (Seidman, 1991).

Seidman went on to note that if "the researcher is interested. . . in what [something] is like for students. . . , what their experience is, and what meaning they make out of that experience. . . then it seems to me that interviewing, in most cases, may be the best avenue of inquiry" (p. 5). In this study, I have used the modified version of the three interview structure for phenomenological interviewing, which calls for open-ended questions. With this approach, three tape-recorded interviews of approximately 90 minutes each are scheduled from three days to a week apart. As Seidman (1991) noted, "This allows time for the participant to mull over the preceding

interview but not enough time to lose the connection between the two” (p. 14). The time between the interviews was used to transcribe the earlier interview, a process that allowed me to develop questions for the forthcoming interview. I also asked follow-up questions in later conversations with the participant.

Data Analysis and the Role of the Researcher

Upon completion of the interviews and transcription of the content, I have used elements of phenomenological analysis. First, I aimed to become clear about my own preconceptions. The second stage involved isolating the data in as pure a format as possible before spreading it out and reorganizing it into new clusters. This was followed by the identification of themes in the participant’s interview. In order to enhance the validity and reliability of my conclusions, I used member checks, and I had a co-analyst examine the data and my conclusions.

The Interviews

The participant, Mimi, was an ethnic Chinese immigrant who had spent the early years of her life in Vietnam. Her family fled the country when she was a teenager, and she suddenly found herself, with only a basic knowledge of English, in an American high school trying to figure out the system. She graduated and went on to college, where again she struggled with the system and took a few detours in and out of academic probation and a number of different majors before finally graduating.

In the first interview, Mimi told me about her background. Even with the political disruptions of her own country, she had received some schooling.

I went to a Chinese elementary school which the Vietnamese—the communists—closed when they took over. Instead of sending me to a Vietnamese school, my parents [she described them elsewhere as “middle-class for Vietnam”] hired me a tutor. I don’t think it was as good as going to a regular school, but it was better than nothing, I guess.

When she first arrived in the United States as a teenager, she spent a few weeks in a suburban high school before her parents moved to an apartment in a city. “A lot of people say that it is a bad school, but it was good for me.” At the first school, Mimi noted that she felt isolated, one of only a few students of color and even fewer English as a Second Language students. At the urban high school, she noted, there were lots of other Asian students, and the school ran English as a Second Language program.

That was the first time I became a tutor. I learned English pretty fast. Some of the other Asian students had never been to school at all, so I had an advantage. The teachers really

liked me, and I felt good about my job. It made the other students look up to me.

Mimi herself has indirectly recognized here the tutor role as a form of identity and of cultural capital. “I liked being a tutor,” she reflected, “because it was one of the few things I felt like I had to offer.”

In spite of her success, Mimi was still relatively new to English. While her counselor encouraged her to apply to college, Mimi was unsure. “My parents were in business in Vietnam, but nobody really went to college. And I didn’t know if I was good enough.” She took the SATs; her inexperience showed in her scores. She did not remember her exact scores: “Maybe 400-something on the math, high 400s, and 300-something on the other part.” Mimi took the SATs in the early 1990s, before the scores were recentered; therefore, such scores would have been higher than now. “I didn’t do so good on the verbal. Those. . . analogies? Very hard.” She applied to only one school, the state university nearest to her home, because “I had to help my parents.” She was accepted on the condition that she successfully complete a summer program for developmental students. “I applied with a few other students from my English as a Second Language class. We decided we would all go together. My high school had some kind of connection with [the university], so that helped us pick, too.”

Upon arriving at the university’s summer program, Mimi initially felt right at home. “The students were a lot like the students at my high school. A lot of Black, Spanish [Mimi’s words], maybe more White students. We didn’t have very many White students at my high school.” There was also a fairly sizable contingent of Asian students. “Lots of Vietnamese [she made a distinction between ethnic Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese from Vietnam], students from Laos and Cambodia, too. That was most of the Asians—they had come here just like me.” Mimi quickly asserted herself as a leader in the group. “I was used to being behind in English, but I was surprised I knew a lot more than most of them. I think I was better at school.” Although Mimi had not made the connection herself, she realized during this interview that the other students’ prior education had a major effect on their ability to succeed at that point. “Some of them told me they had never been to school at all before they came to America. Those students mostly seemed to not do so good. Some of them even dropped out at the end of the summer.” She reflected more: “I don’t think any of them graduated.”

Mimi felt proud that she could help other students with their English. “I didn’t feel so strong at it myself, but the other Asian students would ask me for help at the end of each day.” She would sit with the students for hours, often translating the material back into Vietnamese or Cantonese for them. “Sometimes, they would know more Vietnamese than English, even if they weren’t from Vietnam.” The process helped her, too. “I definitely studied while I was doing this. It helped me learn the stuff, too, so that was pretty good.” Her tutoring role came to an abrupt end. One of the professional

tutors hired by the program had observed Mimi tutoring others and responded with what Mimi took as an admonishment. “She told me I had too much work to do myself to worry about all these other students. I felt so embarrassed, but I thought she would know more than me.” Still, she had her reservations:

Even though I wasn’t really good as a student yet, I thought I could be a better tutor for a lot of the Asian students than, you know, an American tutor. If they couldn’t understand something, I could talk to them in their own language. But that tutor [from the program] told me they had to talk in English all the time.

Mimi gave an incredulous look. “But they didn’t know much English. So, you know what? They just didn’t say anything at all. I remember still. They sat there and acted like they knew what was going on—but I knew they didn’t.”

When the program ended, Mimi was invited back for the fall semester. The atmosphere was very different in the fall.

There were a lot more people, and they looked very different. Now, almost all of the students were White, and I felt really like I stood out. It made me very scared to say anything in class because I knew I still had an accent, and sometimes I picked the wrong words.

Her role as a tutor also ended. “When I came back in the fall semester, there was no one to tutor. My friends from high school had dropped out, and everyone who was there knew more than me.”

The transition to college had begun in earnest for Mimi, and it became more difficult. The support that she had in the summer program had disappeared. The identity she had gained—the cultural capital—through her role in helping other students—that, too, had disappeared. One of the key features of the program was the regular meetings with a counselor/advisor. In the fall, that person left and was replaced by one advisor after another, none of whom really made a connection with Mimi. She signed up for tutoring but found the tutors to be unhelpful. She noted,

In the summer, all of the tutors knew us and knew the professors. The tutor I had in the fall just gave me exercises and photocopied handouts. She wouldn’t even look at my actual assignments—the ones I really needed so much help with.

Mimi struggled in her classes and struggled to find an appropriate major. At one point, she was double-majoring in two of the university’s most difficult areas. She ended up on probation and even had to petition to avoid

being dismissed. Finally, under the wing of an attentive advisor, Mimi found an appropriate major and was able to work her way to graduation. It took 5 1/2 years. “I remember,” she said, “that during that whole middle time I was in college—it seems now like I was underwater. I couldn’t get up. I felt like a nothing.” She added:

Luckily, I didn’t start to feel that way until later, until I got so far I felt like I *had* to finish. Some of the other students probably felt like they were underwater right away—like they were never going to make it. So they quit.

She concluded: “I always like to be able to help people”—part of her identity—“and I wasn’t even good enough to do that. Once I got in the right program, I was okay again. But it took a long time.”

Conclusion

Mimi arrived at the university with a number of challenges before her: first-generation college student, person of color, speaker of English as a Second Language, disrupted educational patterns. One of the few things she had to offer the university was her identity as one who helps others. When that was taken away from her, at least in her perception, she struggled, and only persisted through a combination of her own will to succeed, her determination to make her family proud (“I didn’t want to face my parents—I couldn’t let them down”), and her luck in finding a good advisor. She felt like she could have made it through more quickly. “That extra year-and-a-half—I’m still paying for that. But the whole thing has been worth it. I have a good job, and I can really help my family.”

There are several implications in this for developmental educators and tutoring administrators. First, giving students tutoring opportunities can help them learn the material more thoroughly and boost their confidence. The latter is particularly important for many developmental students, who are often all too aware of where they fit in academically. Structured programs can only go so far, of course. Not every student will follow it outside of class. But this form of modeling will work for some students who otherwise would not try it, and it can help give them an identity as someone strong enough, at least in one way, to help other students experience success. Beyond that, it gives a sense of control to students who often feel, to borrow Mimi’s words, that they are “underwater.” Even a small form of cultural capital can go a long way for a student who feels that he or she has little to offer on a college campus.

Second, although developmental programs clearly help get students started, they must have sufficient follow-through. Mimi thrived at first, but, when left to her own devices, she faltered, at least initially. Some suggestions for doing this include continued counseling—preferably with the same person—throughout the student’s college experience. Although it is tempting to mainstream students as soon as possible, the mainstreaming can come in

other areas. A consistent counselor can give students a connection that can help them through the unique difficulties that developmental students often face.

Third, in a related area, comprehensive advising is critical to developmental students' academic success. Many come from families with little knowledge of the bureaucratic maze that is the typical university. Their parents may be unable to offer much help; Mimi's parents, for example, spoke very little English. A comprehensive advising plan that covers academics, housing, financial aid, and related areas will help students avoid pitfalls to success. A counselor can serve as the primary contact person for these areas.

Finally, it is important to listen to students—to really listen to how they perceive what is happening. Often, what they are saying is already familiar to educators, but the additional perspective enriches the understanding of the particularity of each individual student's experiences. Some areas for additional research include: a) a further examination of the developmental student experience as it pertains to tutoring, and b) a broader study of student transitions from developmental programs such as the summer programs mentioned here to becoming members of the student body at large. Ultimately, listening to and examining student perceptions of their experiences can lead to improvements in practice that can benefit not just that student but all students in similar situations.

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Collaborating for Student Success: Teaming Support Center Staff with Study Skills Courses

Arlene J. Krellwitz, Jane A. Pole, and William Potter
Ferris State University

Abstract

The study skills course at Ferris State University seemed to have limited impact on student achievement based on outcomes analyses. At the same time, supervisors of the Academic Support Center (ASC) observed that paraprofessional staff hired to coach individuals or small groups of students about study skills were being underutilized. ASC supervisors proposed a collaboration that would allow the instructor to take advantage of paraprofessional staff to provide more individualized support for at-risk students. This article describes the collaboration between instruction and academic support, analyzes the outcomes, and identifies future directions.

For many years, the faculty and staff of University College at Ferris State University had offered instruction and coaching about college study skills originally to meet the needs of students who were in a probationary program. However, since 2000 the study skills course was open on a voluntary basis to any student campus wide. The study skills course, UNIV 101, taught by a senior member of the University College faculty, seemed to have a limited effect on student achievement as measured by outcomes analyses of course performance that were done by the instructor. The study skills course was scheduled to meet 2 days per week for 15 weeks. Before the collaboration, important topics such as graphics, grade point average (GPA) computing, and math study skills were not covered because of the lack of time. Topics covered in class included becoming a master student, math skills, vocabulary building, and stress management. This situation is not uncommon as noted by Kuo, Hagie, and Miller (2004) who observed that “the difficulty many professionals. . . find is that those who come to college without the raw skills necessary for academic success never have the opportunity to broadly develop and refine those skills” (p. 61).

The instructor expressed his frustrations to the supervisors of the Academic Support Center (ASC), who also had their own set of concerns. The supervisors of the Academic Support Center observed that the paraprofessional staff members hired to coach individuals or small groups of

students about study skills were being underutilized. These paraprofessionals were hired to provide one-on-one study skills instruction, yet the students were not taking advantage of this service and the paraprofessionals ended up with many unproductive hours in the day. The ASC supervisors proposed a collaboration that would allow instructors to take advantage of support from their paraprofessional staff beginning in winter semester 2001. By including paraprofessional services as part of the study skills course, paraprofessionals would be productive and the instructor would be able to cover more topics in the class. This proposal met Orozco's (1999) description of the foundation for collaboration as being "the need to solve a problem, create, or discover something. The common thread of all collaborative projects is the realization that the job/task can't be done alone" (par. 12).

The Solution

To that end, UNIV 101 was redesigned as a collaborative effort in accord with Mattessich (2003), who defined collaboration as "a long-term, well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals" (par. 4) to meet the needs of the students. The new syllabus required students to attend four two-part sessions with a paraprofessional in the Academic Support Center in addition to regular class meetings. There was no required textbook, but the ASC staff developed a resource notebook to assure consistency from paraprofessional to paraprofessional and from student to student. The ASC supervisors trained the paraprofessionals using the resource notebook for the five skills selected: memory, note taking, test taking, reading, and time management. The instructor and supervisors agreed that these topics were ones that students needed to master early in order to develop effective study habits and become independent learners. Each topic was divided into two 1-hour mini-sessions.

Time management session one included: (a) a PowerPoint presentation on time management, (b) a discussion of time management tips on a handout, (c) a discussion of the importance of reading the syllabus and use of a calendar and planner, and (d) the identification of time management strategies to stay motivated. Time management session two covered: (a) a review of points covered in session one, (b) a study area analysis assessment and discussion of results, (c) a discussion of tips for setting up a good study environment, (d) an Internet activity on time management hints, and (e) a self-evaluation.

Note-taking session one consisted of: (a) a note-taking evaluation, (b) a discussion of the Cornell system (Reynolds, 2002), and (c) a comparison of the Cornell system and the current note-taking system of the student. Note-taking session two included: (a) a review of points discussed in session one, (b) a discussion of note-taking tips during a lecture, (c) a discussion of note-taking strategies, (d) a discussion of how to create a test and study guide, (e) a demonstration of how to make a set of study notes, and (f) an Internet activity on note taking.

Memory session one entailed: (a) taking the Barsch learning style inventory (CITATION), (b) assessing the inventory, and (c) completing an Internet activity for memory. Memory session two involved: (a) reviewing points discussed in session one, (b) going over a handout on memory techniques, (c) discussing general and specific memory strategies, and (d) engaging in an Internet activity on memory techniques.

Reading session one included: (a) taking a reading assessment to establish dialogue with the student and paraprofessional; and (b) discussing and application of the Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review (SQ3R) reading and study system (Reynolds, 2002). Reading session two consisted of: (a) a review of points discussed in session one, (b) a discussion and application of textbook marking, and (c) an Internet activity on reading techniques.

Test-taking session one involved: (a) the administration of a test anxiety evaluation, (b) a discussion of the anxiety reduction handout, and (c) an Internet activity on combating test anxiety. Test-taking session two entailed: (a) a review of session one, (b) a discussion of the test-taking strategies handout, and (c) an Internet activity for test taking.

All students were required to attend the time management segment and were then allowed to choose three other mini-sessions according to their preferences. The professor's lectures during the semester covered many study skills topics. If a topic in which the student needed help was going to be taught later in the semester, the student could get one-on-one assistance from the paraprofessional upon request. For example, if students believed that they needed help in test taking early in the semester, then they would choose that session. The students were required to take responsibility and make their own appointments at the Academic Support Center. A database was made for the instructor by the Academic Support Center and he received a weekly attendance update. At the end of the semester, all students were required to turn in an organized notebook that contained class notes, Academic Support Center notes, Academic Support Center reports, and quizzes. The grade for the class was determined as follows: (a) Academic Support Center sessions (160 points), (b) Academic Support Center reports (180 points), (c) quizzes (140 points), (d) notebook (100 points), and (e) final exam (100 points).

As indicated above, 50% of the students' grades depended on their participation in the Academic Support Center sessions, which included meetings with a paraprofessional followed up by reflective essays of the sessions submitted to the course instructor. This arrangement corresponded to the elements in Smittle's (2003) Second Principle for effective developmental teaching that includes (a) highly structured activities with clearly stated requirements and standards; (b) presenting information in small chunks to help students link new material to existing knowledge; (c) offering frequent, meaningful, and clear feedback; and (d) using a variety of instructional methods. The collaboration strategy used here also anticipated Cuseo (2003), whose literature survey suggested that institutions should

deliver academic support intrusively by initiating contact with students and aggressively bringing support services to them, rather than offering services passively and hoping that students will come and take advantage of them on their own accord.

Initial Outcomes Analysis

In order to assess the effectiveness of this collaboration, data were compiled to compare the students enrolled in study skills during winter semester 2000 before the collaboration and a different cohort from winter semester 2001, which had paraprofessional assistance. In winter 2000 there were three study skills classes with a total enrollment of 44. In winter 2001 there were two sections of UNIV 101 with an enrollment of 34 students. Demographically, the two groups were quite similar. Both groups consisted primarily of second semester, first-year students (79%). Approximately half were females and half were males each year. The ethnic distributions were also comparable with about half White and half students of color. In terms of academic credentials, moreover, there was almost no difference between the two groups of students. The mean American College Testing Composite score (ACT-C) and the mean High School Grade Point Average (HSGPA) were similar for both groups and just over 40% of each cohort began the semester in which they enrolled in UNIV 101 on probation.

Table 1 shows demographics and ethnic distributions of each group of students.

Table 1
Demographics and Ethnic Distribution of Students

Data	Winter 2000	Winter 2001
ACT average	15.9	16.2
HSGPA	2.41	2.55
Males	52%	56%
Minority	50%	44%
First-year student	81%	82%
Number of students	44	34

Note: None of the values within rows for winter 2000 and winter 2001 are significantly different from one another at $p < .05$ level.

Analysis of these outcomes data showed grade improvements in several categories. First, there was an improvement of one full grade point in the mean UNIV 101 grades from winter 2000 to winter 2001. Second, the mean semester GPA for all classes in winter 2001 was .75 on a 4.0 scale, higher than the mean semester GPA for winter 2000. Careful analysis of student class schedules showed that both groups took essentially the same courses with similar withdrawal rates. In greater detail: (a) 26% of the winter 2001 students earned semester GPAs above 3.0, compared to 7% in winter 2000; (b) only 21% of the winter 2001 students earned semester GPAs below 2.0, compared to 69% in winter 2000; and (c) 69% of the winter 2001 cohort earned higher grades for winter than they did for fall, compared to 48% in winter 2000. Third, with regard to overall GPAs, the mean GPA for winter 2001 was more than half a grade (i.e., 0.50 on a 4.0 scale) higher than for winter 2000. A more careful analysis revealed improvements at both ends of the GPA continuum that included: (a) 18% of the winter 2001 students ended the year above 3.0, compared to 5% in winter 2000; and (b) 32% of the winter 2001 students ended the year below 2.0, compared to 72% in winter 2000. Table 2 shows the outcomes for each group of students.

Finally, we studied the longer-term effects of this collaboration by comparing the retention and the grade performance of these students through the subsequent semester after intervention for each cohort. The data for the winter 2000 precollaboration group show that 20 (46%) students were dismissed and that 4 (9%) others did not return to Ferris State University for fall 2000. Of the 20 remaining students—a retention rate of 45%—students who finished the fall semester earned a semester GPA of 1.53 and an overall GPA of 1.90. Similar data were collected and analyzed for the winter

Table 2
Longitudinal Comparison of Winter Semester Outcomes

Mean Data	Winter 2000	Winter 2001	Winter 2002	Winter 2003
Mean UNIV 101 grade	2.27(1.37)	3.27(1.34)	2.63*(1.26)	3.08(1.37)
Mean semester GPA	1.66(.995)	2.43(.884)	2.19(.860)	2.28(1.11)
Mean cumulative GPA	1.72(.758)	2.28(.744)	2.01(.611)	2.16(.780)
Number of students	44	34	44	26

Note. Independent sample t-test analysis comparing winter 2000 means with those for winter 2001, 2002 and 2003 were performed. All values are significantly different from the winter 2000 mean at $p < .05$ except when marked with an *.

2001 post-collaboration cohort. In this group, only 6 of the 34 (18%) were dismissed after winter semester, dramatically fewer than for the prior year. Twenty-one students (62%) were scheduled for fall 2001, significantly more than the 45% for the prior year. The students in the pilot cohort finished with a fall semester GPA of 2.43 and an overall GPA of 2.28, much higher than the preintervention cohort.

This analysis of the pilot program showed that one-on-one sessions with a paraprofessional, in conjunction with a study skills class, seemed to contribute to increased student success as measured by course grade, semester GPA, overall GPA, and retention. Given that the demographics and academic profiles for the two groups were nearly identical, these improvements seemed to be meaningful and support Cuseo's (2003) findings and Roueche, Baker, and Roueche's (1984) assertion that when "first-year students improve their academic performance, their retention rate tends to improve as well" (p. 274).

Feedback About the Pilot Program From Participants

The collaborative effort with the Academic Support Center improved the delivery of study skills instruction and revitalized the instructor's teaching of the course as stated by Cuseo (2003), who asserted that "when instructional faculty interact and collaborate with academic support-service professionals, combinatorial or synergistic effects are likely to be exerted on student learning and development" (p. 276). The instructor was more excited about teaching the course than he had ever been before. In fact, the instructor had fun presenting new and useful information to his students. Note taking was emphasized in class in a unique way. At the beginning of the semester, students were told that they could use their class notes on some of the quizzes, although they never knew in advance which quizzes those would be. In addition, the instructor was far more selective about the material presented in class. It was the instructor's goal to give the students the information they most needed to know in order to become successful, including nontraditional content such as math study skills. It is likely that some of the instructor's enthusiasm was passed on to the students. He found that students were more receptive to the information he presented than in prior years and more responsive to instruction. More students seemed "tuned in" to the instructor and willing to participate and ask questions in class.

In agreement with the instructor's evaluation, the vast majority of the student evaluations were positive. Students commented that the one-on-one study skills assistance was beneficial to them in all of their classes. On the follow-up survey, students reported that the collaborative efforts of the instructor and the paraprofessionals explained better ways for them to learn, provided helpful Web sites, enabled them to prioritize their work better, and assisted in improving study habits and memory skills.

The paraprofessional staff believed that the collaboration was a very effective way to communicate with the students. Having the resource notebook as a universal guide was beneficial. The paraprofessionals commented on the positive attitudes of the students throughout the semester. Staff members were elated with the outcomes data and excited about their new roles in the Academic Support Center. The ASC co-supervisors were pleased to find a meaningful way to involve the paraprofessional staff with faculty and students. All of these outcomes conformed to Cuseo's (2003) conclusion "that one of the most important benefits of collaborative programs is that they serve to foster the development of a 'culture' of collaboration on campus" (p. 300).

Next Steps

The semester and cumulative GPAs for participating students remained above 2.0 in each successive year of the collaboration. Based upon these outcomes, the dean encouraged continuation of the project in succeeding semesters with several changes. The instructor would not cover the same topics that the paraprofessional staff covered to eliminate repetition. The paraprofessional notebook would be updated for subsequent semesters to assure that Web resources were current and included new, relevant materials. Finally, it was determined that the collaboration would occur in both the fall and winter semesters.

Subsequent winter offerings of the study skills course produced similar outcomes as shown in Table 1. The UNIV 101 grades continued to be higher after the collaboration was initiated. Beginning in fall 2001, the UNIV 101 study skills collaboration was introduced in sections taught

Table 3
Comparison of Grade Performance Outcomes, Fall 00-03

Mean Data	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003
Mean UNIV 101 grade	1.82(1.27)	2.57(1.41)	2.64(1.45)	2.81(1.42)
Mean semester GPA	2.02(1.00)	2.27*(1.04)	2.41(.954)	2.55(1.07)
Mean cumulative GPA	2.03(.965)	2.20*(.993)	2.44(.898)	2.50(.948)
Number of students	64	53	54	23

Note. Independent sample t-test analysis comparing fall 2000 means with those for fall 2001, 2002 and 2003 were performed. All values are significantly different from the fall 2000 mean at $p < .05$ except when marked with an *.

by a different instructor. This adjunct instructor also had the students attend the paraprofessional sessions and followed a similar format to the winter semester instructor. Table 2 shows that course, semester, and cumulative GPAs consistently surpassed the fall 2000 precollaboration cohort performance each year of the collaboration as was the case for the winter semester offering. These gains were achieved independent of instructor. The improvements could be attributed to the following factors as suggested by both Smittle (2003) and Cuseo (2003). First, assigning students to meet individually with paraprofessionals to provide essential academic survival skills was key. Second, requiring a follow-up meeting with the paraprofessionals for each module allowed for meaningful and timely feedback to students. Third, requiring students to write reflective essays about the modules encouraged students to internalize the lessons. Fourth, counting these sessions for a significant portion (50%) of the course grade was critical. Table 3 shows the longitudinal comparison of fall semester outcomes.

Conclusion

This study indicates that collaborative efforts between Academic Support Center paraprofessionals and the winter study skills instructor and the fall adjunct study skills instructor accomplished the intended results and more. The two instructors who participated in the program were able to increase content coverage. The paraprofessional staff was meaningfully engaged with students. Students earned higher grades in the course, higher semester GPAs, and improved cumulative GPAs. In addition to these outcomes, this program also contributed to improved short-term retention and academic performance in the subsequent semester. Further, these gains were achieved with no additional staff and no additional expense. Because of the success of the collaboration, the program will continue in future semesters with new cohorts. Moreover, the study skills modules have been offered to other campus populations including students participating in first-year seminars, seminars for probationary students, and individual students as referred by educational counselors.

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What Factors Predict the Academic Success of Developmental Education Students?

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Abstract

We studied the association of first-year students' grade point averages (GPAs) with two pre-enrollment descriptors: Academic Aptitude Ratings (AAR) and voluntary or forced attendance at a summer orientation program. Students' average AAR scores were not significantly different by voluntary or forced attendance. However, students in the involuntary attendance group (a) earned GPAs that were significantly lower than students in the voluntary attendance group, (b) attended class less often than students in the voluntary attendance group, and (c) were more likely than students in the voluntary attendance group to end their first year of college with cumulative GPAs below 2.0.

Colleges and universities spend large amounts of time and money trying to ensure that they admit students who are prepared for the rigors of a college education. To do this, colleges examine students' high school transcripts, scores on standardized tests (e.g., SAT, ACT), and letters of recommendation in hopes of finding predictors of students' future academic success.

There have been many studies of factors associated with students' success. For example, some studies have examined institutional commitment (Tinto, 1975), whereas others have studied personality and scores on intelligence tests (Baird, 1994), students' academic integration and social class (Barney, Fredericks, & Fredericks, 1984; Bean, 1985; Bradburn & Carroll, 2002; Cabrara, Nora, & Castaneda, 1993), and motivation (Thomas & Higbee, 2000).

Although motivation can be expressed in a variety of ways, one explicit expression of a student's motivation is their rate of class attendance. Coming to class regularly requires a consistent and focused effort that relates directly to the student's educational goals. Interestingly, there have been relatively few controlled studies of how class attendance is associated with course performance (Launius, 1997; St. Clair, 1999). Moreover, these studies have

often produced conflicting results. For example, some studies have linked high rates of class attendance with high grades (Brocato, 1989; Gris e & Kenney, 2003; Jones, 1984; Launius; McGuire, 2003; Thomas & Higbee, 2000; Vidler, 1980), while others have reported that class attendance is unrelated to academic success (Berenson, Carter, & Norwood, 1992; Borland & Howsen, 1998). These studies prompted St. Clair to conclude, “research has not consistently revealed a positive relationship between attendance and achievement” (p. 172). Petress (1996) and St. Clair both argued against compulsory class attendance policies in higher education.

The purpose of this research was to assess the predictive power of students’ voluntary as compared with their involuntary attendance at a mandatory summer orientation program. For example, does a student’s attitude toward a pre-enrollment requirement (e.g., attendance at a summer orientation program) accurately predict the student’s subsequent academic success? What post-enrollment behaviors and outcomes are associated with pre-enrollment attitudes? For example, do students who refuse to attend the orientation program also refuse to attend class regularly? Do students who refuse to attend the orientation program make lower grades than students who voluntarily attend the program? Are students who must be forced to attend the summer orientation program disproportionately at risk to encounter academic problems? And finally, what can developmental educators and learning assistance professionals do to help students succeed?

Method

This study was conducted in 2002-2003 in the General College (GC) of the University of Minnesota. GC prepares developmental education students to transfer to one of the university’s degree-granting colleges. Many students in GC are considered to be “at risk” because they had lower high school grades and graduation percentiles than most other students admitted to the university. Courses in GC are content-rich, transferable, credit-bearing courses that count fully toward graduation from the university.

Population

In the fall 2002 semester GC enrolled 896 new developmental education students. These students had an average ACT composite score of 20, an average age of 20, and were 47% female and 53% male. These students’ ethnic diversity was as follows: 17% African American, 2% American Indian, 16% Asian American, 4% Chicano or Latina, 58% Caucasian, and 3% other (*Facts and figures*, 2003).

GC’s Summer Orientation Program

As a condition of admission, each student was required to register for and attend a 2-day summer orientation program at which they were introduced to the university (e.g., given a campus tour, shown the residence halls), told about university life, informed of college policies (e.g., registration, academic standards), introduced to their academic advisors, and registered for classes.

Students were informed in writing that (a) their attendance at the orientation was mandatory; (b) they had to register for one of the many orientations scheduled throughout the summer; and (c) after registering for an orientation program, they could change to a different orientation session (e.g., if their plans changed or if there were extenuating circumstances) by calling GC. Not surprisingly, many students called to enroll in an orientation session different than the one in which they had originally enrolled. All of these students' requests were accommodated, sometimes by scheduling orientations that were tailored to students' individual schedules. However, a record high 12% ($N = 108$) of the students neither attended their originally scheduled orientation (i.e., the session that they had agreed to attend) nor called to enroll in a different session. After several days, each of these students was contacted, at which time they (a) were enrolled in and agreed to attend another orientation program, and (b) were again told of the importance and mandatory nature of the orientation program. More than half (53%) of these students again failed to attend the subsequent orientation session, did not notify GC of their upcoming absence, or call GC after missing their orientation to enroll in a later session. Each of these students was again contacted for rescheduling and again told of the importance and mandatory nature of the orientation sessions. Some students "no showed" as many as four times.

Research Design

We divided the 896 first-year students into two groups. The "voluntary attendance" group included students who (a) attended their originally scheduled session; (b) called GC before their originally scheduled session to enroll in a different session, which they attended; or (c) missed their originally scheduled session but called GC within a few days to enroll in a subsequent session, which they attended. The "involuntary attendance" group consisted of students who neither attended their originally scheduled session (i.e., the session that they had agreed to attend) nor contacted GC to enroll in a subsequent session. Were it not for an ultimatum to these students, these students would have missed the summer orientation program altogether.

The University of Minnesota bases its admissions decisions partly on Academic Aptitude Ratings (AAR), which equal a student's high school graduation percentile plus two times his or her ACT composite score. For example, the College of Liberal Arts requires AAR scores of at least 110 for regular admission (*Advising manual*, 2004). Although GC bases its admissions decisions on a variety of criteria, we used institutional data to determine each student's AAR and subsequent GPAs (i.e., their first semester university GPA, second semester GPA, and first year cumulative GPA). We excluded students (a) who attended the orientation but did not subsequently attend classes at the university, (b) who withdrew from the university, and (c) whose records did not include ACT composite scores or high school graduation percentiles (i.e., students for whom we could not calculate an AAR).

To determine if students' attitudes about pre-enrollment requirements (in this case defined as their attendance at the summer orientation program) might correlate with post-enrollment classroom behaviors, we tracked the attendance rates of a subset of 263 of the first year students who were enrolled in an introductory biology class. In this four-credit course, students were told of the importance of class attendance for academic success in this course; they were also given empirical data showing that high rates of class attendance have been associated with high grades, and low rates of class attendance have been associated with low grades (Moore, 2003). Attendance was recorded in every class, but no points were awarded for attending class. Grades were determined by students' mastery of the course material, as demonstrated by their grades on exams. Students could have earned an A on each exam if they had read and understood the assigned readings from the course textbook. All students in the course were subject to the same in-class experiences, expectations, grading criteria, and pedagogical techniques. Additional information about the course, its grading policies, students' attitudes, and students' attendance is presented elsewhere (Moore).

Results

The average AAR score of students in the voluntary attendance group was 92 ($SD = 16$), and that of students in the involuntary attendance group was 94 ($SD = 21$). These means were not statistically significantly different ($p > 0.05$).

Grade Point Averages

Table 1 presents the first semester, second semester, and first year (i.e., cumulative) GPAs of students in the voluntary and involuntary attendance groups. Students in the voluntary attendance group had an average first-semester GPA of 2.9 ($SD = 0.6$), an average second-semester GPA of 2.6 ($SD = 0.5$), and an average first-year cumulative GPA of 2.7 ($SD = 0.7$). These GPAs were each significantly greater ($p < 0.01$) than the corresponding GPAs of students in the involuntary attendance group ($M_s = 2.1, 1.7,$ and 2.0 , respectively, for their first semester, second semester, and first year). The strong and similar correlation of second-semester GPA with first-year GPA (i.e., $r = 0.90$ and 0.91 , respectively) and first-semester GPA with first-year GPA (i.e., $r = 0.85$ and 0.88 , respectively) in the involuntary attendance and voluntary attendance groups was not surprising, because each accounts for approximately half of the first-year GPA. However, there was also a strong and similar correlation of first-semester GPA and second-semester GPA in the involuntary attendance and voluntary attendance groups (i.e., $r = 0.58$ and 0.59 , respectively).

Table 2 shows (a) the percentages of students having various first-semester GPAs, (b) how these students performed in their second semester, and (c) the GPAs at which these students ended their first year of college. Smaller percentages of voluntary attendance students than involuntary attendance

Table 1

Average GPAs of developmental education students who attended a summer orientation program either voluntarily or involuntarily

	Voluntary (n = 649)	Involuntary (n = 72)
Grade point average		
First semester	2.9	2.1
Second semester	2.6	1.7
First year	2.7	2.0
Correlation coefficients		
First semester with second semester	0.577	0.592
Second semester with first year	0.914	0.904
First semester with first year	0.846	0.877

students had first-year GPAs between 0.0 and 0.99, as well as between 1.00 and 1.99. Only 11% of voluntary attendance students had first-semester GPAs less than 2.0; for comparison, 32% of involuntary attendance students had first-semester GPAs less than 2.0. More than half of the voluntary attendance students, as opposed to only 28% of the involuntary attendance students, had first-semester GPAs equal to or above 3.0.

In their second semester, the only groups of students that improved their GPAs were those that had first-semester GPAs less than 2.0; the average GPAs of students in all other groups (i.e., in both the involuntary attendance and voluntary attendance sections) declined (see Table 2). However, the average increases of low-GPA voluntary attendance students exceeded those of involuntary attendance students, and the average decreases of higher-GPA voluntary attendance students were less than (or, in one group, equal to) those of involuntary attendance students. As indicated in Table 1, first-semester GPAs strongly correlated with first-year (i.e., cumulative) GPAs among voluntary attendance and involuntary attendance students; this is why students having higher first-semester GPAs had progressively greater chances of ending their first year of college with cumulative GPAs equal to or above 2.0, regardless of whether they were in the involuntary attendance or voluntary attendance group.

Table 2

Distributions of GPAs of students who attended a summer orientation program either voluntarily or involuntarily

Voluntary attendance (n = 229)				
1st Sem. GPA	% ^a	2nd Sem. GPA	1st Year GPA	% < 2.0 ^b
0 – 0.99	3	1.22	1.04	87
1.00 – 1.99	8	1.70	1.65	65
2.00 – 2.49	13	2.07	2.15	42
2.50 – 2.99	23	2.39	2.56	11
3.00 – 3.49	28	2.93	3.08	0
3.50 – 4.00	25	3.24	3.48	0
Involuntary attendance (n = 34)				
0 – 0.99	14	1.13	0.99	86
1.00 – 1.99	18	1.51	1.8	71
2.00 – 2.49	12	1.31	1.72	70
2.50 – 2.99	27	1.47	2.18	27
3.00 – 3.49	16	2.35	2.80	16
3.50 – 4.00	12	3.28	3.52	0

^aPercentage of students who earned first semester GPAs listed in the table; for example, 3% of the students in the voluntary attendance group earned first semester GPAs between 0.00 and 0.99. ^bPercentage of students in each group who ended their first year of college with GPAs less than 2.0.

To remove any disproportionate influence of students who earned first-semester GPAs less than 2.0 on the overall distributions of GPAs, we determined the distributions of GPAs of students in each group who earned GPAs equal to or above 2.0. The average first-semester GPAs and first-year GPAs of students in the voluntary attendance group having GPAs above or equal to 2.0 were 3.1 and 2.9, respectively, whereas those for students in the involuntary attendance group were 2.9 and 2.6, respectively.

Table 3

Distribution of first-year GPAs of developmental education students who attended a summer orientation program either voluntarily or involuntarily

First-year GPA	% of Voluntary Attendees	% of Involuntary Attendees
0.00 – 0.99	4	19
1.00 – 1.99	12	25
2.00 – 2.49	16	16
2.50 – 2.99	25	19
3.00 – 3.49	27	9
3.50 – 4.00	16	12

Table 3 shows the distribution of first-year GPAs among voluntary attendance and involuntary attendance students. Students in the involuntary attendance group were almost three times more likely (i.e., 44% vs. 16%) to have first-year GPAs less than 2.0, and more than two times less likely to earn first-year GPAs equal to or above 3.0 (i.e., 43% vs. 21%).

Table 4 shows the average GPA, attendance rate, average grade, and grade distribution of the subset of 263 involuntary attendance and voluntary attendance students who took an introductory biology class. These students' GPAs were not significantly different from those of students in the entire population (i.e., 2.7 vs. 2.6 for the voluntary attendance group, and 1.7 vs. 1.7 for the involuntary attendance group in the second semester; $p < 0.05$). However, the average attendance rates and final grades of students in the voluntary attendance group (i.e., 71% and 75%, respectively) were significantly greater ($p < 0.01$) than those of students in the involuntary attendance group (i.e., 47% and 50%, respectively). As shown in Table 4, the attendance-to-grade ratio was similar in both groups (i.e., 0.95 for the voluntary attendance group and 0.94 for the involuntary attendance group). Students in the voluntary attendance group had a 76% chance of making at least a C in the course, whereas those in the involuntary attendance group had only a 29% chance of making at least a C in the course.

Discussion

All of the students in this study, regardless of whether they were in the involuntary or voluntary attendance group, attended the summer orientation session. Thus, the subsequent differences in students' academic behaviors (i.e., class attendance) and performances (i.e., grades and GPAs) were not

Table 4

The first-year GPA, attendance rate, course grade, and grade distribution of developmental education students who attended a summer orientation program either voluntarily or involuntarily

	Voluntary (n =)	Involuntary (n =)
First-year GPA	2.7 + 0.8	1.7 + 0.4
Attendance rate	71 + 13	47 + 6
Course grade	75 + 11	50 + 8
Attendance : grade ratio	0.95	0.94
Grade distribution (%)		
A	10	1
B	30	7
C	36	21
D	17	29
F	7	42

due to differential rates of participation in the summer orientation program. Moreover, because all of the orientation programs were identical, the different behaviors and performances of students in the voluntary attendance and involuntary attendance groups were not due to students having different experiences at the sessions.

Academic Aptitude Rating

As Brothen and Wambach (2003) have noted, “the important question about standardized academic aptitude and achievement tests is whether or not they accurately predict college performance for all students who take them” (p. 45). Our results indicate that AAR scores below 110 (i.e., those typical of developmental education students at the University of Minnesota) do not accurately predict students’ academic success. Indeed, the dramatic differences in academic performance of students in the voluntary as compared to involuntary attendance groups were not associated with significant differences in AAR scores. These results are consistent with the findings of others (Cloud, 2001; Moore, Jensen, Hsu, & Hatch, 2002; Snyder, Hackett, Stewart, & Smith, 2003; Thomas & Higbee, 2000) and suggest that AAR scores are poor predictors of the academic success of developmental

education students. However, our results are not consistent with the claim that standardized academic aptitude and achievement tests are effective for identifying the college potential of developmental education students (Brothen & Wambach).

Grade Point Average

As shown in Table 1, students who voluntarily attended the summer orientation program earned significantly higher first-year GPAs than did students who attended the summer orientation involuntarily. These results indicate that students' voluntary attendance at a summer orientation program can effectively predict the academic success of first-year developmental education students. For example,

1. Students who voluntarily attended the orientation had first-semester GPAs that were 38% higher, and second-semester GPAs that were 53% higher, than did students who attended the orientation involuntarily. The differences in academic performances of students in the voluntary attendance and involuntary attendance groups remained even after the data were corrected for any disproportionate influences of students having GPAs less than 2.0.

2. Students who attended the orientation involuntarily ended their first year of college with an average GPA of 2.0, which is the minimum GPA required for a student to remain enrolled in the university; in contrast, students who attended the orientation voluntarily ended their first year of college with an average GPA of 2.7. These GPAs were significantly different ($p < 0.01$).

3. The percentage of voluntary attendance students ended their first semester with GPAs less than 2.0 (i.e., 11%) was almost three times less than that of involuntary attendance students who attended their first semester with GPAs in the same range (i.e., 32%). Similarly, 53% of voluntary attendance students had first-semester GPAs above 3.0; for comparison, only 28% of the involuntary attendance students earned such GPAs.

4. After their first year of college, the percentage of students in the voluntary attendance and involuntary attendance groups with cumulative GPAs less than 2.0 were 16% and 44%, respectively. For comparison, those with GPAs greater than 3.0 were 43% and 21%, respectively.

These results have an important and practical message for development education students, developmental educators, and learning assistance professionals—namely, that students who involuntarily attended the summer orientation program were disproportionately at risk for academic failure. This increased risk results from the fact that involuntary attendance students make significantly lower grades and, as a result, have a much greater chance of being placed on academic probation and being denied continued enrollment in the university than do voluntary attendance students. Academic advisors, admissions officers, learning center personnel, and developmental education

instructors should be made aware of these students' increased likelihood of academic failure so they can consider implementing intervention programs to help these students. Here, though, is the great irony, for the success of any such program would depend on these students' participation in the program, and it is those students' lack of participation in their education that correlates so strongly with their greatly diminished probability of academic success. Indeed, students who attended the orientation involuntarily also attended many fewer of their biology classes than did students who attended the orientation voluntarily. As Thomas and Higbee (2000) have noted, "The best . . . teacher, no matter how intellectually stimulating, no matter how clear in providing explanations and examples, may not be able to reach the high risk freshman who has no real interest in learning . . . and will certainly not be successful with the student who fails to show up for class" (p. 231).

On average, developmental education students who made low grades during their first semester also made low grades during their second semester. This trend occurred regardless of whether the students had attended the summer orientation voluntarily or involuntarily. For example, 86% to 87% of students who posted first-semester GPAs less than 1.0 also posted a first-year GPA less than 2.0, and 65% to 71% of students who posed a first-semester GPA between 1.0 and 2.0 ended their first year of college with a cumulative GPA less than 2.0. Similarly, students who posted first-semester GPAs above 3.0 had a 0% to 16% chance of ending their first year with a cumulative GPA less than 2.0. These results indicate that, on average, students' first-semester GPAs are effective indicators of their subsequent academic performance.

In this study, the average GPAs of all students—regardless of whether they had attended the summer orientation voluntarily or involuntarily, dropped during their second semester. However, this drop in academic performance was most dramatic for involuntary attendance students. These results are consistent with students' voluntary or involuntary attendance at a summer orientation being an effective predictor of students' subsequent academic performance.

Voluntary attendance at a summer orientation program is an effective predictor of the academic success of first-year developmental education students, but it does not guarantee academic success. For example, 16% of students who voluntarily attended the orientation had first-year GPAs less than 2.0, and 56% of students who involuntarily attended the orientation had first-year GPAs above 2.0. Nevertheless, there is a strong correlation of developmental education students' voluntary or involuntary attendance at the orientation with their subsequent academic success. This correlation may result from the fact that students who make higher grades like orientations more or are more committed to involving themselves in their education. This too, however, is only a correlation, and correlation does not imply causation. Indeed, causality could go either way; strong involvement might help produce higher grades, or the desire for better grades might motivate more involvement, or both.

Class Attendance

Students in the voluntary attendance group attended biology class more often and earned significantly higher grades in an introductory biology course than did students who attended the orientation involuntarily. Indeed, voluntary attendance students attended class 50% more often, earned grades that were 50% higher, had a much higher probability of earning an A or B, and had a much lower probability of earning a D or F in their biology class than did students in the involuntary attendance group. These results indicate that a pre-enrollment criterion (i.e., in this study students' voluntary or involuntary attendance at a summer orientation program) can be an effective predictor of developmental education students' subsequent rates of class attendance and, as a result, their grades.

Motivation

We believe that students' differing attitudes about attending the orientation are expressions of their differing levels of academic achievement motivation, which is their motivation toward learning or performance goals such as high grades, praise, or learning for learning's sake (Cavallo, Rozman, Blickenstaff, & Walker, 2004). We also believe that the data presented here and elsewhere indicate that developmental education students' differing degrees of academic motivation, and not their academic strengths and weaknesses, are the critical explanatory factors in this study. If students are to succeed, they must be motivated to learn and engage themselves in their education (Allen, 1999; Prus, Hatcher, Hope, & Grabiell, 1995). This is especially true for developmental education students, for these students often lack some of the academic experiences and skills possessed by other college students. Academic advisors can provide helpful advice, and instructors can offer inclusive, engaging, and up-to-date courses, but students must want to succeed. If students refuse to engage themselves in their own education (e.g., if they refuse to voluntarily attend a summer orientation program), there is little that instructors, advisors, or others can do to help.

Much other evidence indicates that motivation is a critical element for the academic success of developmental education students. For example, the most highly motivated students attend class, come to office hours, and attend voluntary help sessions more often than do poorly motivated students (Moore, 2003), and it is these students who usually earn the highest grades. Similarly, students who do not come to class regularly and do not take advantage of opportunities to learn course-related information usually earn the lowest grades. This emphasizes the importance of motivation and attitude as admissions criteria in developmental education programs. Although scores on standardized tests are not associated with the academic success of developmental education students, motivation and attitude are. In programs that must limit their enrollments of developmental education students (such as at the University of Minnesota, in which only about 20% of GC's applicants are admitted to the university), admissions officers should search for indicators of motivation (e.g., seeking help, attending help sessions), for

it is students with these traits—and not necessarily those with high scores on standardized tests—who are most likely to succeed.

Motivation, Success, and Learning Assistance

Several studies have reported that incoming freshmen are increasingly unmotivated, unprepared for, and apathetic toward their educational experiences. For example,

1. Students who entered college in fall 2003 spent less time studying in high school than any previous class, yet their grades were higher than those of any previous class. Almost half of college freshmen in 2002 had an A average in high school, but only one-third of these students studied more than 6 hours per week. In the past 15 years, the percentage of freshmen who studied less than 1 hour per week nearly doubled from 8.5% to 15.9% (Marklein, 2003; Sax, Lindholm, Astin, Korn, & Mahoney, 2002). Most students in elementary through high school study less than an hour on most nights (Toppo, 2003).

2. Class absenteeism is a problem at many, if not most, colleges and universities. For example, Romer (1993) reported that “about one-third of students are not in class” (p. 167), Friedman, Rodriguez, and McComb (2001) reported that “25 percent or more [of] students are absent from classes on any given day” (p. 124), Moore (2003) documented absenteeism rates of almost one-third, and McGuire (2003) reported that absenteeism in introductory science classes often approaches 50%. Such findings support Romer’s observation that “a generation ago, both in principle and almost always in practice, attendance at class was not optional. Today, often in principle and almost always in practice, it is” (p. 174). It is difficult to help students who do not come to class.

3. Grade inflation has produced misleading high school transcripts and unrealistic expectations for many incoming college freshmen. Indeed, 30% to 40% of students in many states who have earned academic scholarships for their high school grades have to take remedial courses when they start college (Schouten, 2003). In many states the tests used to measure high school students’ academic skills are poor indicators of college readiness (Cavanagh, 2003; Hebel, 2003).

4. Although only one in three 18-year-olds is even minimally prepared for college (Schouten, 2003), college freshmen often feel entitled to high grades when they do the same amount of work that they did in high school (Young, 2002). These students are often mistaken, and are shocked by low grades in their first semester of college. However, these students are then either unable or unwilling to make the changes necessary to improve their grades (Table 3). For many students, this means that they never understand the importance of coming to class, for it is class attendance that correlates strongly with academic success (Moore, 2003). Learning assistance professionals could

provide invaluable service to students by repeatedly stressing the importance of attendance for the students' short-term and long-term academic success.

Students express their detachment, apathy, and lack of motivation in a variety of ways, including increased absenteeism from class and help sessions, fewer visits with faculty during office hours, missed deadlines, less time spent studying (Moore, 2003), and, as noted in this study, reluctance to attend a summer orientation program. These students are often not motivated enough to succeed; they do not come to class or exploit any other opportunities to learn the course material. These students are not motivated by low grades in their first semester, for they continue to make low grades—and miss lots of classes—during their second semester. In contrast, highly motivated students attend class regularly, study more, and take advantage of other opportunities to learn the course material (Moore). Not surprisingly, then, they also make higher grades and out-compete their less-motivated classmates.

Education cannot just be delivered by instructors and learning center personnel—it must also be sought and received by students (Raspberry, 2003). Although many “gifted” students have academic talents and educational experiences that enable them to succeed despite poor motivation, most developmental education students do not; they fail if they are poorly motivated and unwilling to exploit opportunities that enhance their chances of success. Learning assistance personnel and others can help students succeed by repeatedly showing them that academic success depends largely on students' willingness to work hard to accomplish their goals. Students willing to work hard will have a much greater probability of succeeding than will students who do not engage themselves in their education.

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Join the Conversation Beyond the Learning Center: What the U. S. Can Learn From South Africa

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Abstract

*South Africa and the United States share a history of educational apartheid. Whereas the United States has been struggling to overcome the effects of this apartheid since the ruling of *Brown v. the Board of Education* in 1956, apartheid was not officially ended in South Africa until the elections of 1994. In the past decade South Africa has been challenged to deconstruct and rebuild its system of higher education to attempt to make a previously segregated system inclusive and supportive. The U.S. should pay close attention as South Africa critically examines the meaning of inclusion and access across the academy.*

South Africa (SA) and the United States share a history of educational apartheid. Whereas the United States has been struggling to overcome the effects of this apartheid since the ruling of *Brown v. the Board of Education* in 1956, apartheid was not officially ended in South Africa until the elections of 1994. In the past decade South Africa has been challenged to deconstruct and rebuild its system of higher education in a relatively short period of time, to attempt to make a previously segregated system inclusive and supportive. In addition to examining South Africa's implementation and improvement of academic support and development programs, educators and policy makers in the U.S. should pay close attention as educators and policy makers in South Africa critically examine the meaning of inclusion and access across the academy.

South Africa's Efforts to Redress Inequities

Under apartheid all institutions of higher education in South Africa were in effect racially segregated. Some programs to address Black access and support began in 1983 with the passage of the Universities Amendment Act and the relaxation of government restrictions against Black enrollment in historically

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White institutions; however, these programs were mainly initiatives between tertiary institutions and private foundations such as Ford and Kellogg (Richardson, Orkin, & Pavlich, 1996). Mabokela (1997), for example, detailed admission and retention policies at the University of Capetown (UCT) from 1980 to 1995. UCT first implemented the Academic Support Programme, which consisted mainly of subject-specific tutoring, in 1980. This program was soon deemed inadequate because “assumptions implicit in the structure and approach of regular first-year courses are often seriously inappropriate for the majority of . . . [African] matriculants” (Scott, 1990, p. 8). The program was renamed the Academic Development Programme (ADP), with a focus on paired adjunct courses and study skills training. There was a move in the 1990s to further decentralize and integrate activities with regular academic departments and faculty; as the program director stated, the program wanted to shift from “minority program” type interventions that “did not in effect challenge the mainstream educational processes in the institution . . . tinkering on the edges like this we would never really address any of the major problems . . . I would categorize the shift in development as moving from a minority program to one concerned with the majority and therefore with the mainstream” (Mabokela, p. 428). In 1995 ADP had 32 full-time academic appointments, 4 full-time administrators, a writing center, and a computer literacy project. In 1997, however, the program was still described as “remedial” in nature, with separate classes that were seen by some as “promoting a stigma that further identifies Black students as victims” (Mabokela, p. 428).

Another component of the Academic Development Programme at UCT is The Alternative Admissions Research Project (AARP), which was established in 1986 with three objectives (Mabokela, p. 430), to (a) develop selection criteria to identify and select “educationally disadvantaged” African individuals with the potential to succeed in college, (b) research how to develop the curriculum to increase success for a wider range of students, and (c) develop expertise on student recruitment to distribute nationally. As of 1995, AARP had 15 centers across South Africa for testing, and UCT had reserved 400 out of 1739 first-year admissions for “educationally disadvantaged” African students (Mabokela, p. 430). Commented Stanley G. M. Ridge, Dean of Arts at the University of the Western Cape (UWC; personal communication, November 10, 2004),

What this meant, of course, was a serious creaming exercise. It improved the “profile” of UCT, but did little to set a model for the system as a whole. I am far from dismissing the UCT initiatives. However, the example they represent is not useful as a model for the system. Their “educationally disadvantaged students” are so carefully selected that they do not represent very serious risk to the institution and most would probably have managed in another institution. It is almost as if Harvard took the top 400 African American school leavers in Massachusetts.

In 1999 UCT established the Centre for Higher Education Development with a mandate to focus “across faculty boundaries on all matters concerning academic development” (Centre, 2004). Their Web site states that “CHED units, especially the Academic Development Programme, have historically had a central role in facilitating the access and success of educationally disadvantaged black students, and CHED continues to have a particular commitment to equity and development in higher education” (Centre, 2004).

In 1992-1993 Richardson, Orkin, and Pavlich (1996), funded by the Ford Foundation, examined programs for academic advancement in six South African universities and one technikon. Many of these programs were initially funded by U.S. foundations. Richardson, Orkin, and Pavlich described these programs as either (a) interventions that were intended to increase access, including alternative admissions programs, financial aid, and outreach programs; or (b) interventions intended to enhance effectiveness, including academic support (e.g., teaching and learning strategies in academic contexts), and academic development (e.g., staff and curriculum development). They found that the two universities that focused the most on access had the least success in improving course completion rates for African students, whereas those institutions with more focus on academic support and development had more success in retaining and graduating these students. They concluded, “improving access and achievement for African students requires major changes in the faculty values and practices that undergird the teaching and learning process” (p. 264).

The first democratic elections were held in South Africa in 1994. Since then the desegregation of education at all levels has been an official mandate, although funding for initiatives has lagged behind ideology. In fact, unequal funding of higher education has been a critical component in perpetuating disadvantage in the past, as government funding formulas were tied to research output, graduate programs, and programs in science and technology, all areas which favored the historically White universities (HWUs) over historically Black universities (HBUs). In addition, HBUs have been inordinately burdened with large student debt and low funding reserves (Subotzky, 1997). New funding proposals focus on institutional plans that are intended to build a core mission for each institution, “to achieve differentiation by establishing the program profile of each institution” (Ridge, Makoni, & Ridge, 2001). In the National Plan for Higher Education of 2001 the Department of Education also agreed to fund year-long academic development programs (Luckett, 2001). “The first pilot programmes will be funded in 2005 and 2006 as pre-university foundation programmes (i.e., non-credit-bearing). There is no certainty of funding after that.” (S. G. M. Ridge, personal communication, November 10, 2004).

Casazza (2000) and Clark (2000) have described how the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE) has attempted to address institutional inequalities. Similar to the University of Cape Town, UPE has undergone philosophical changes in what constitutes redress. Whereas historically “academic

support” consisted of individual tutoring and study skills courses, this approach came to be perceived as marginalizing students, too focused on a deficit model. “What was called for was mainstream change encompassing curriculum development and a new culture of teaching and learning . . . called Academic Development” (Clark, 2000, p. 8). Clark described the Centre for Organisational and Academic Development at the University of Port Elizabeth, which facilitates student and staff development, although academic departments and faculties share responsibility and efforts are integrated into mainstream academic units. Programs include (a) a credit-bearing university preparation course that introduces students to the university and study skills; (b) a one-year foundation or bridge program that offers credit-bearing classes with support for students who want to attend the university in science, pharmacy, or commerce but who do not meet the admission requirements (Casazza, 2000); (c) language classes that emphasize academic literacy; and (d) Supplemental Instruction (SI), where the “focus is on the high risk course rather than on the high risk student” and the program is described as a “nonremedial, institution-wide approach to retention targeting traditionally difficult subjects” (Clark, p. 8) through the use of peer-facilitated study sessions. In a personal communication, Ridge (November 10, 2004) noted the contributions of the University of Missouri-Kansas City to UPE’s SI program.

Van Wyk (2003) described another initiative at the University of the Free State, the Career Preparation Programme (CPP), a 1-year bridge program for learners who do not initially meet entrance requirements for the university. The CPP offers classes in academic literacy and in 10 subject areas that represent different university degree programs. These classes are run by “subject coordinators” who design the classes and train and supervise tutors who then teach in regional areas. This is one way that the University of the Free State, which is situated in a large city, and which has traditionally served the White, Afrikaans-speaking community, has tried to overcome location barriers to access by sending tutors into regional areas outside the city.

These are just a few examples of the numerous programs and initiatives that have been designed to address and redress inequalities in higher education in South Africa. However, there is discussion beyond these programs—beyond the learning center—that is perhaps even more relevant to American educators, for the issues that South Africa is addressing now with dizzying speed are issues that the U.S. has been struggling with for decades. These discussions go to the heart of what higher education purports to be and to what ends it purports to serve. These discussions also grapple with and examine the meaning of equity and opportunity in a qualitative as well as quantitative sense. Just as South African educators have looked to the U.S. for historical examples of educational successes and failures (Lindsay, 1997; Makoni, 2001; Murray, 1997; Ridge, 2001; Subotzky, 1997) we in the U.S. can look to South Africa for new insights into the realization of diversity and access in higher education.

Learning From South Africa's Transformative Approach

South Africa has the opportunity to address equity and access by undergoing a transformation in higher education that challenges the status quo rather than reinforcing it. Instead of simply equating access with equity, a transformative approach looks at equality as a complex notion that requires “the recognition and accommodation of significant difference and the creation of enabling institutional conditions, opportunities, and practices that address the barriers experienced by subordinated groups” (Subotzky, 2001, p. 63). Subotzky went on to explain that institutions themselves are responsible for this transformation: “The onus lies on the institution to transform its exclusionary policies, practices, and epistemological foundations to accommodate difference and to recognize that particular forms of knowledge and agency lay equal claim to validity” (p. 64).

Indeed, the position of the community-based South African National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) in 1993 stated, “Equality cannot be achieved through a distributive paradigm; nor can it be reduced to gender and racial paradigm.” Otherwise, “progress . . . comes to be defined as the equalization of entry into, and participation in, the already-established institutional order” (Subotzky, p. 64).

NEPI was an initiative of the liberation movements working inclusively to draw on the expertise of all South Africans willing to participate in an attempt to address the educational crisis. It was initiated by the National Education Crisis Committee, later the National Educational Coordination Committee. It should not be confused with official state investigations. . . . However, NEPI laid a foundation for the first reports and investigations commissioned by the new government. (S. G. M. Ridge, personal communication, November 10, 2004)

Similarly, a National Council on Higher Education (NCHE) report in 1996 was titled “A Framework for Transformation” and stated, “The system of higher education must be reshaped to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to a context of new realities and opportunities” (Lindsay, 1997).

Future Challenges

Nevertheless, initial implementation of the new government mandates has not always lived up to the call for transformation. There is urgent need for those who have been excluded in the past to “insert their own epistemologies and ontologies into the process by which they determine who and what it is they and their nation choose to become” (Soudien & Baxen, 1997, p. 458). As Soudien and Baxen argued, the curriculum needs to recognize and

directly address “the suppressed identities and the stereotypes to which South Africa’s people were forced to conform in the past (p. 457).

This discussion questions the very form that knowledge itself takes at a university. What Kraak (2001, p. 19) referred to as “Mode 1” knowledge is disciplinary, more traditional knowledge that has traditionally been associated with university learning. “Mode 2” knowledge, on the other hand, is transdisciplinary, contextual, transinstitutional, and socially accountable. Mode 2 knowledge is more in line with the recommendations of the NCHE (1996) report, which calls for “increased participation in the system by a diverse range of constituencies; increased cooperation and partnerships between higher education and other social actors and institutions; and greater responsiveness to a wide range of social and economic needs” (Kraak, 2001, p. 20).

Four important changes that can shift higher education (HE) towards a more open, responsive system have been identified by Scott: (a) a move from courses to credits, which includes “new forms of curricular organization such as modular degree schemes, credit accumulation and transfer schemes, and outcomes-based assessment” where “connections between academic topics and levels are pragmatically derived rather than cognitively prescribed” (Kraak, 2001, p. 18); (b) a move from departments to programs, towards “transdepartmental, transinstitutional, and transdisciplinary collaborative efforts among multiple knowledge producers and users” (p. 18); (c) from subject-based teaching to student-based learning; and (d) from traditional notions of knowledge to competence. “The one aspect which has been transformative is the focus on student learning, not in opposition to subject-based teaching, but in relation to it” (Stanley G. M. Ridge, personal communication, November 10, 2004).

This idea of a shift from knowledge to competence may be the most troubling to academicians, who may see in it a potential devaluing of a general knowledge base (Ridge, 2001). However,

the main difficulties relate to cultural capital (Bourdieu [e.g., 1999]). The work of people like James Gee (1996) in the U.S. shows how vital that is for any genuine transformation. . . . A cultural capital approach certainly does not depend on a deficit model, although the metaphor would seem to fit. Cultural capital is gained by active engagement—a forward process. (S. G. M. Ridge, personal communication, November 10, 2004)

Luckett (2001), however, argued for the inclusion of both Mode 1 and Mode 2 forms of learning in a knowledge quadrant that includes propositional knowledge as foundational competence, or traditional cognitive learning (Mode 1), which can remain as a “pillar of the HE curriculum” but which

“needs to be challenged and complemented by other ways of knowing” (p. 32). Indeed, adopting a broader definition of knowledge acknowledges false assumptions of the past: “. . . lecturers who themselves operate only within this paradigm tend to adopt a deficit model of their students and see teaching as the transmission of information which students lack” (Lockett, p. 32). The second quadrant of knowledge in Lockett’s model is practical competence; learning in this quadrant “could include integration of global, work-based generic skills such as technical ability . . . and the ability to retrieve, process, and reconfigure large amounts of information relevant to the students’ future career or area of specialization,” to give students the opportunity “to go beyond routine tasks and to apply their knowledge and skills in unfamiliar, ill-structured contexts” (p. 32). Quadrant three is experiential knowledge:

students will need to be weaned away from dualistic, single-loop thinking in which they accept given knowledge as authoritative. Instead, they will need to understand knowledge as socially constructed, historically and culturally specific . . . the experience of some form of learnership, service-learning, or community-based learning . . . could provide an ideal context for developing and integrating some of the desirable personal and social generic skills. (p. 32)

Quadrant four is labeled epistemic knowledge, or metacognition, “an awareness of how and why one thinks and learns as one does,” and epistemic cognition, “the capacity to think epistemically, to recognize and evaluate the assumptions and limits of theories of knowledge, and to be able to suggest alternatives” (p. 33). Lockett argued that this type of knowledge is the most “intellectually demanding.” However, students need exposure to the learning in quadrants 1 through 3 to be able to effectively develop metacognitive skills (p. 33).

Lockett (2001) believed that we should specify learning outcomes only in broad, open-ended terms and then prepare students by creating powerful learning environments in which they can experience a wide range of variation and application in simulated or real-world context of the knowledge and skills that they learn. As she stated, “if the HE curriculum is to be higher in any sense at all, and if it is to contribute to the development of the nation in the long term, then it is the development of high levels of reflexivity (both individual and social) that may make it distinctive” (p. 30).

One important way in which the HBUs have been disadvantaged is government funding, which has been tied in part to traditional forms of research (Subotzky, 1997). One way to correct this imbalance is to make distinctions between different types of research and reward more than conventional research. Ridge argued (personal communication, February 25, 2005),

Yet it would be grossly misleading to suggest that the SA government has done this. It has narrowed the research category that it will fund. And, whereas there used to be some general support for research in university subsidy, all research funding is now to be generated from publication in accredited journals and from M and D theses and dissertations passed. Little (one might say grudging) credit is given for chapters in books, peer-reviewed conference proceedings or monographs. Community-based research of the kind described in Subotzky [1997] has always been subsidized – either through the general subsidy of research or through publication in accredited journals, books etc.

The NCHE report of 1996 identified four interdependent categories of research: traditional, applications-driven, strategic, and participation-based (Kraak, 2001, p. 23). Subotzky (1997) cited an Educational Policy Unit (EPU)-University of the Western Cape study that identified four types of research: (a) pedagogical research on teaching; (b) conventional basic and applied research; (c) community-oriented or developmental research; and (d) discipline-related scholarship, which includes keeping current with literature and developments in one's field, upgrading coursework, and networking with peers. Discipline-based research was regarded as important research in and of itself, to keep current with the demands of teaching and to effectively promote student learning. Meanwhile, community-oriented or developmental research may be a key area of strength that the HBUs are in a unique position to deliver, research that is socially responsible and “rooted in community priorities” (Subotzky, p. 508).

The EPU-UWC study found that HBU faculty believed they were uniquely positioned, because of their location in regional areas, to offer “more and greater opportunities to establish sustainable, development-oriented initiatives” and that HBUs could enter into collaborations with urban-based HWUs, with the HBUs providing their “accumulated expertise and intimate knowledge of the social and natural environments of their locales” (Subotzky, 1997, p. 512) and at the same time building capacity and transfer of technology and resources from the historically well-endowed HWUs. As interviewees from two HBUs stated, “I think we have an ideal opportunity to use our rural environment to do relevant research” and “it's like sitting in the middle of a laboratory. . . . We have got a community. We should be involved in development” (Subotzky, p. 513).

Subotzky (1997) argued that differentiation does not equal disadvantage, and that rather than define equality as sameness, universities need to preserve their diversity of function and programs and develop individual strengths. There are strengths inherent in the Historically Black Universities, specifically their potential as sites for teaching and research focused on community development. Unless these strengths are realized, he claimed, “not only will the policy goal of reconstruction and development not be met,

but noncapacitated and therefore noncompetitive institutions will be subject to greater marginalization or extinction” (p. 498). Subotzky went on to argue that

the notion of equity with regard to South African higher education cannot be interpreted strictly in terms of pursuing institutional and program equality and parity in all aspects of institutional life. Uniformity in higher education is neither desirable nor practical. Institutional transformation and capacity building is a complex process, involving deep qualitative and structural changes, toward which the equal allocation of resources is a necessary but not sufficient condition. This is not to condone perpetuating a dual system; however, all South African universities do not fit, nor can they be made to fit, the same mold. Rather, interpreting equity and redress in terms of quality and relevance offers a more authentic and realistic route. (p. 513).

Subotzky (1997) proposed a model for HBUs in SA which he called the “reconstructive development university,” which would emphasize “the role of the state over the role of the market” and “involve a high degree of coordination between public sector departments and other participants” (p. 514), including forming partnerships between “universities and both local and national government, NGOs, community-based organizations, foreign donors and development agencies and . . . local small- and medium-sized enterprises” (p. 515) with an emphasis on “social application-driven, program-based knowledge” (p. 516). He argued that “institutions should identify niche teaching and research programs within specialized centers of quality that are geared to the needs of regional and national development as well as to the variety of student needs” with the goal of “establishing a diversified range of higher education institutions that can offer an increasingly diversified, traditional and nontraditional South African student body a wide variety of programs to fuel both globally oriented and internally reconstructive economic and social development” (p. 518).

Conclusion

Educators must re-envision difference: “equity cannot be achieved by suppressing difference; rather, difference must be recognized and accommodated in the emancipatory interests of marginalized groups (Subotzky, 1997, p. 519). As Subotzky wrote,

Teaching underprepared undergraduates no longer needs to be equated with historical disadvantage . . . traditional notions of differentiation and disadvantage can and must be detached. When this is done, South Africa’s HBUs will be able to make their rightful contribution toward both

the reduction of inequalities and national development by offering quality programs where they are most sorely needed. Indeed . . . they may be able to play a unique role in the production and dissemination of knowledge for redistributive development.” (p. 519).

The end of apartheid in South Africa has presented new opportunity and exciting challenges. As Ndebele (1998) exclaimed, institutions of higher education in South Africa “must now no longer be defined by the limitations of their political history” (p. 443). The challenge to educators and the state in South Africa is to remain open to all that equity in a new system can offer. Ndebele wrote of the need to “factor instability into our planning timeframes . . . institutions of higher education can live with destabilizing aspects of change by managing rather than evading them” (p. 448). We as educators and policy makers in the United States also need to be challenged by what is happening in South Africa, to redefine and refine our own notions of access and equality, to go beyond the limitations of our own political history, beyond the learning center, to address the very core and definition of education.

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Book Review

Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis

Merriam, S. B. (Ed.). (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Reviewed by Emily Goff, General College.

Sharan B. Merriam is an author who is known for both her writing and research in adult learning and qualitative research. In her book, *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis*, she has assembled 16 previously published qualitative research articles in eight distinct categories of scholarship and invited the author of each article to share “their reflections upon some aspect of doing this type of research.” (p. 420). These reflections are the most interesting feature of this book, offering the reader a chance to gain helpful insight into the complex process of qualitative research.

The book is divided into two distinct parts. Part 1, written by Merriam, addresses the philosophical and technical aspects of qualitative research, touching on the shared characteristics of all qualitative research paradigms and on the epistemological underpinnings of the eight categories of qualitative research that are covered in this book: basic interpretive, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, ethnographic study, narrative analysis, critical qualitative research, and postmodern research. Also in Part 1, Merriam focuses on the assessment and evaluation of qualitative research. She discusses validity and reliability in general terms and includes a brief checklist (p. 23) that could be used for reflection or analysis of qualitative research, including those articles that follow in the second part of the book.

The first part of this book provides a condensed overview of qualitative research. Merriam acknowledged that the intent of this book is not to serve as a textbook on qualitative research; it is instead “designed to be used with standard texts in the field” (p. xvi). If used in a teaching setting, this book could be supplemented with a more traditional qualitative research methodology text such as Patton’s (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, or Merriam’s (1998) *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*.

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While the first part of this book provides a brief but necessary introduction to the qualitative research articles that follow, the real substance of the book is contained in Part 2. The second part is divided into eight sections with an introduction to each category of research written by Merriam. These introductions provide more in-depth descriptions of each type of qualitative research and also provide an extensive list of references that allow the novice researcher to pursue any of these research traditions in more depth. Each of these introductions is followed by two previously published research articles; all of the articles are followed by a reflection piece written by the researcher who wrote the article. This collection of well-written and accessible articles followed by the authors' reflections is an excellent format for introducing the novice researcher to a wide spectrum of the approaches that fall under the "qualitative" heading. It is also an enjoyable read for those researchers who might find their own experiences mirrored in the research and personal reflections of the authors. These reflections give both the writers and the readers an opportunity to continue the conversation of the research project—a conversation that, ironically, often ends after publication.

The authors were given a very open-ended request by Merriam to, "comment on any aspect of conducting the research" (p. 420). It is interesting to see how very different these reflection pieces are. It is particularly interesting to see, for example, how the passing of time seemed to affect the tone and focus of the authors' reflections. The most recently published authors seem to have focused on the specific details of researching and writing their articles. However, those authors who had published their articles some time ago tended to share more general reflections. An example of this can be seen in chapter 15, "Tootle: A Parable of Schooling and Destiny." This critical research article, written by Nicholas C. Burbules, was published over 15 years ago. In his reflection on this article, Burbules focuses on the excitement that surrounded the writing of his first "Big Publication" (p. 348). Rather than focusing on the specific details of the research—which might very well be long-forgotten—he shares the more general concerns that he had when writing the article and the emotions that he felt and pleasure that he had in revisiting this research after 15 years.

In addition to providing the authors a chance to reflect on their personal research experiences, these reflection pieces offer the authors a space to speak directly to novice researchers. Many of them use this opportunity to share resources that have been particularly helpful in informing their philosophical or methodological work. An example of this can be seen in Chapter 8 in Susan Jones's reflection on her article, "A Conceptual Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity." This is also the case in Chapter 18 for Elizabeth A. St. Pierre's reflection on her article, "Methodology in the Fold and the Irruption of Transgressive Data." Other authors use their reflections to share very specific tips such as those in Pamela Brott's reflection on her grounded theory article, "Development of Professional School Counselor Identity." Among her specific suggestions are, "consider hiring a

transcriptionist to word process all the taped interviews” (p. 161) and the more general, “Trust your instincts” (p. 162).

Although both the reflections and the articles themselves are instructive and enjoyable, this book would benefit from a brief description of why Merriam chose the articles that she did. It seems a strange coincidence that the two articles in the ethnography section deal with gender politics: Chapter 11, “The Ethnography of an Electronic Bar: The Lesbian Café,” and Chapter 12, “Hard and Heavy: Gender and Power in a Heavy Metal Music Subculture.” Additionally, those chosen from the critical research paradigm both deal with critical textual analysis: Chapter 15, “Tootle: A Parable of Schooling and Destiny,” and Chapter 16, “The Politics of Consumer Education Materials Used in Adult Literacy Classrooms.” In both cases, it may have been happenstance; but this could be confusing coincidence to a reader who is unfamiliar with these research traditions. Had Merriam shared her reasons for including the pieces of research that make up this book, it would lessen or eliminate this chance for confusion.

Although this book is no substitute for a more traditional text that delves deeply into the epistemology and techniques of qualitative research, it is fresh way of introducing readers to the rich variety of approaches and techniques that are commonly used in qualitative research. The book is very helpful in illustrating both the process and product of qualitative research and would be a welcome addition to the library of students and practitioners alike.

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