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THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES OF

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS ATTENDING A

PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION

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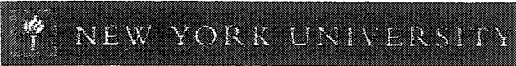
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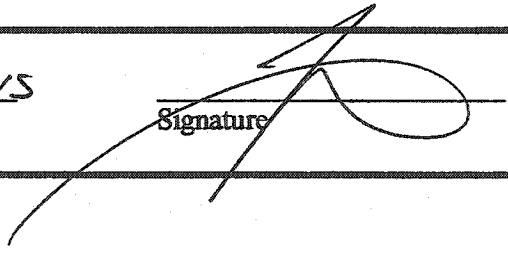
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study examined the influences that demographic and racial background factors have on African American students' perceptions of the college racial climate at a predominantly White institution, and subsequently, how these perceptions of the racial climate are related to their social integration experiences and subsequent college academic performance. A single-stage survey, entitled the "Student Experiences Questionnaire," was used to gather data from 327 African American undergraduate students attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), a comprehensive, major public research university located in Champaign, Illinois. Although the study focused on African Americans, data was also gathered on 345 Whites, 260 Hispanics, and 284 Asian Americans for comparative observations, following the analysis of the three research questions on African Americans. Each respondent answered questions relating to his or her demographic profile, high school and pre-college neighborhood racial make-up, perceptions of the college racial climate, social integration practices, and college academic performance.

Background

Prior to the 1954 <u>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka</u> decision, the majority of African American college students enrolled in historically Black colleges and universities (Fleming, 1984). More recently, African American enrollment in predominantly White institutions (PWIs) has increased. However, their academic performance remains lower and their attrition rate remains higher than White and Asian American college students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1995).

In addition to lower academic performance and higher attrition, feelings of isolation and alienation often hinder African American students' desire to interact with peers from other ethnicities (Allen, 1992; Feagin, Herman & Nikitah, 1996). Instead, African Americans are inclined to interact with peers of the same race or ethnicity to search for common bonds. Often, given the environment, African Americans would rather stay within these homogeneous groups than be immersed in the mainstream social culture of the college campus environment (Fries-Britt, 1994). Stikes (1984) found that because of their perceptions of the college climate, African Americans were less likely to interact with peers outside of their ethnicity through participation in clubs, organizations, and activities with students that represent a diverse assortment of ethnicities. This lack of social integration at a PWI often causes African Americans to become displeased with their college experience (Fries-Britt, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

As African Americans continue to enroll at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) across the country, their ability to integrate into out-of-class campus social life and their academic performance remains a concern. Research on African American students enrolled at PWIs indicates that African Americans often encounter difficulty in adapting to college life in general. A continued pattern of weak academic performance among African Americans and a continued lack of understanding of how African Americans perceive and adapt to their college climate could promote further attrition on majority White campuses. To further examine the social and academic experiences of African Americans attending a PWI, this study posed three research questions:

Research Question 1: To what degree are demographic and racial background variables related to perceptions of the racial climate for African American students?

Research Question 2: To what degree are perceptions of the college racial climate related to social integration experiences for African American students?

Research Question 3: To what degree is the extent of social integration related to college academic performance for African Americans?

Results obtained from these questions assisted in determining if relationships existed among pre-college experiences, perceptions of the racial climate, social integration experiences, and academic performance among African Americans.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine African American students' perceptions of a PWI college racial environment and subsequently, how these perceptions influence the students' social integration and subsequent academic performance. Specifically, how individuals' socioeconomic background and pre-college neighborhood and high school racial composition were related to their perceptions of the school racial environment was examined. Next, there was an examination of the relationship between students' perceptions of the college racial climate and their level of social integration. Finally, the relationship between students' social integration and academic performance was evaluated. For the purpose of this study, social integration is defined as the student's relationship with peers and the students' involvement in clubs, organizations, and campus activities, i.e. visiting the library, visiting minority student services, etc. (Nettles, Thoeny, and Gosman, 1986; Nora, 1987).

Research findings note that African Americans demonstrate low college grade point averages and weak relationships with faculty (Nettles et al., 1986; Sedlacek, 1999). But these findings do not effectively address the perceptions that these students have about their faculty and administration and how these perceptions are related to their social integration choices. According to Thompson and Fretz (1991), African Americans experience greater difficulty in achieving levels of social integration and report more feelings of alienation than their White counterparts (Allen, 1981; Suen, 1983). For some students, the types of decisions made regarding getting involved in the life of the college may determine one's

ability to connect with the university.

Significance of the Study

When comparing African Americans and Whites, previous research has found that African Americans have higher attrition rates, have lower academic performance, are less likely to enroll in advanced degree programs, make poorer psychosocial adjustment, and achieve lower post-graduation occupation attainment and earnings (Allen, 1985). This study examined experiences within the African American student population. Within the African American student population, little is known about the characteristics and processes related to their perceptions of the college environment, social integration practices, and academic performance. Allen (1985) asserted the need for more within-group comparisons for African American students. Understanding the different experiences of successful and unsuccessful African American students may lead to a greater understanding of diversity on PWI campuses and its consequences. Applying a within-group focus when examining African American students may inform researchers about the characteristics associated with academic success and persistence for different African American students. Recognizing and acknowledging differences within the African American student population may allow institutional programs and policies to be developed to accommodate such differences, thus improving student outcomes.

The Conceptual Framework

Key elements of the conceptual model (refer to Figure 1) of this study include:

- Students' demographic and high school characteristics;

- Students' social integration factors;

- Students' perception factors; and

- Students' academic performance.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model

Demographic & Pre-College Characteristics	Perception Factors	Social Integration Factors	Academic Performance
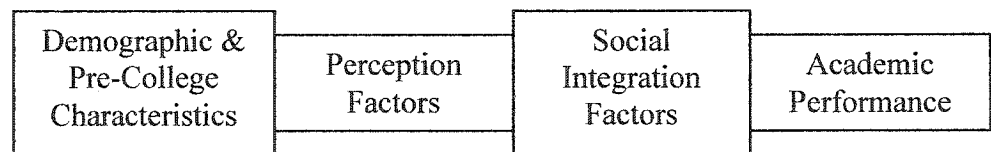
The Findings

Upon examination and analysis of the data obtained from the three research questions, the findings from this study suggest some important implications for the study and practice of higher education. The results support the inclusion of perceptions and social integration experiences to help increase our understanding of college student experiences and achievement among African Americans. The findings demonstrate that relationships exist among a number of the variables included in the conceptual model.

Relationships among pre-college variables and perceptions include the following findings: Among African Americans, as the average household income

increased, the perceptions of having positive interactions with other African Americans and with Hispanics decreased. Also among African Americans, as the level of household income increased, so did their perceptions of positive interactions with Whites. And African Americans who come from majority White neighborhoods are less inclined to have positive perceptions of the college racial climate.

Relationships between perceptions and social integration experiences included the following findings: African Americans who have positive perceptions of the racial climate are less likely to socialize with other African Americans, and less likely to visit the library, use minority student services, meet with faculty after class, or meet with their academic advisor. And African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with Whites are less inclined to socialize with African Americans, socialize with Hispanics, visit the library, or use minority student services.

Relationships between social integration experiences and academic performance include the following findings: African Americans who met with their faculty after class or with their academic advisors reported having lower grade point averages. Overall, the findings suggest that further investigation on the relationship between pre-college social interactions, current college perceptions, social integration experiences and academic performance could help explain a wide variety of student outcomes for African Americans. Chapter 5 provides more detail on the findings and their implications.

An Overview of the Dissertation

This study presents a comprehensive analysis of the social and academic experiences among African American students attending predominantly White institutions. The results obtained upon examination of the three research questions found relationships among pre-college experiences, perceptions of the racial climate, social integration experiences and academic performance. Such results could benefit higher education practitioners who are interested in the achievement of African Americans on majority White campuses.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature surrounding the key components of the conceptual model used in this study. Chapter 3 presents an overview of the methods used to gather the data from the research questions. Chapter 4 presents the results obtained from each of the three research questions. And Chapter 5 presents a summary and discussion of the findings, concluding with recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature surrounding the study. This chapter centers on the conceptual model (Figure 1) used in the study that examines the demographic and pre-college characteristics, perceptions, social experiences, and academic performance of African American college students attending a predominantly White institution.

First, there is an overview of the relevant theories of college student departure established in the literature. Second, there is a critique on how these traditional theories apply to the current study of African American college student development. Third, there is a summary of similar studies that have been conducted on the social integration experiences of African American students. Fourth, there is a review of research issues surrounding the key components of the conceptual model used in the study—demographic and pre-college characteristics, perceptions of the college environment, social integration experiences, and academic performance.

Traditional Theories of College Student Departure

For the purpose of this study, a conceptual framework was fashioned by drawing on two theories, Tint's (1987, 1993) and Satin's (1984, 1996, 1998). Each is discussed in detail below.

A portion of Tint's (1987) conceptual model provided the foundation for this study. Tint's model suggests that students enter college with varying patterns of personal, family, and academic characteristics and skills, including initial dispositions and intentions with respect to college attendance and personal goals. These intentions and dispositions are modified over a period of time, as the student begins to interact with his or her new environment, a process Tint describes as the "institutional experience." The institutional experience occurs in two domains—the academic system and the social system. The amount and quality of interaction within the two domains of the institutional experience lead directly to the academic and social integration of the student into the institutional environment.

The most critical elements in the academic system are performance in the classroom and interaction with faculty and administration. The elements in the social system include extracurricular activities, interaction with faculty and administration, and peer-group interactions. Tinto asserted that participation in formal and informal extracurricular social events as well as in positive social relationships on campus helps students to adjust to college, enables them to feel connected to the college, and increases their chances to complete their goals while in college.

Tinto (1987) suggested that most students who leave college do so voluntarily, and their departure reflects, in part, low levels of academic and social integration. Tinto's model therefore assumes that the probability of a student persisting at an institution depends upon his or her level of integration. The model also suggests that academic and social integration is primarily a function of the extent and quality of peer-group interactions, as well as the quality of student interactions with faculty (Pascarella, Duby, & Iverson, 1983).

A number of investigators have tested the validity of Tinto's theory in an assortment of settings and have obtained results consistent with Tinto's findings. Chickering (1993) held that the retention process should be started as early as possible. He was in agreement with Tinto that admissions counseling should set in motion the sequential steps for increasing students' self-reliance by involving them. Pascarella and Chapman (1983) tested the validity of Tinto's predictive theory of the persistence/departure process on a sample of 2,326 freshmen enrolled in four types of institutions: residential universities, liberal arts colleges, two-year commuter institutions, and four-year commuter institutions. Their findings confirmed Tinto's results, with a pattern of freshman students being more involved in the social aspects of the institution at residential and liberal arts colleges. The rate of retention was higher than two-year commuter institutions and four-year commuter institutions. Cabrera, Nora, and Castaneda (1992) conducted a different kind of validity testing of Tinto's theory by comparing it with Bean's Student Attrition Model. Tinto's theory was found to be more statistically applicable in terms of the number of hypotheses validated. Almost

70% of the student integration hypotheses were confirmed compared to 40% of the hypotheses of the Student Attrition Model. Both theorists were correct in assuming that college persistence was the product of a complex set of interactions between personal and institutional factors, and that the intent to persist was the outcome of a successful match between the student and the institution.

According to Astin (1984, 1996, 1998), a freshman arrives on campus with numerous and broad opportunities awaiting him or her. These opportunities include encounters with other students, faculty, staff, administrators, and a number of other university constituents. The change that takes place within this freshman is partly dependent on how much he or she will take advantage of these opportunities and become involved in the life of the college. Astin (1984) emphasizes the role of involvement in student persistence and development. He describes involvement as the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience.

Astin's Theory of Student Involvement has been the subject of several empirical studies. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) provided a considerable body of evidence that supports Astin's position that a critical factor in student retention and success is the quality of effort that students themselves invest in the university's resources. Based on their own empirical studies as well as other researchers' findings of how various college experiences influence students' development, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) offered the following assessment: "One of the most inescapable conclusions we can make is that the impact of college is largely determined by the individual's quality of effort and level of

involvement in both academic and nonacademic activities" (p. 610). Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, Andreas, Lyons, and Strange (1991) supported Astin's Theory of Involvement from a different vantage point by engaging in a year-long study of 14 four-year colleges and universities. The study determined that the critical issue regarding campus environment and student involvement is creating a sense of belonging for students whereby the institution acknowledges that students are valued members of the campus community.

Based on these two theories of student departure, students enter college with an assortment of personal, family, and academic characteristics and skills, including initial intentions with respect to college attendance and personal goals. These intentions are modified as the student begins to interact within the academic system and the social system. An important factor in student retention and success is the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the college experience. For minority students, their college involvement is associated with their beliefs and attitudes towards the college experience.

Critique of how Traditional Theories Apply to the Current Study of African American College Student Development

The two aforementioned traditional theories focus on general student success, with slight consideration for factors that may be exclusive to particular ethnic groups. For most studies that focus on college student success, race or ethnicity is considered simply as a student background factor. Moreover, in empirical applications of these models, analyses generally have consisted of

comparisons of outcomes across race groups (Tinto, 1987). In most studies, differences within the African American population are not generally discussed. And differences between African American and other racial groups are often explained in terms of other demographic background characteristics such as gender, mother's education, father's education, and parental income (Tinto, 1987).

Although the current models of college student departure have been established to predict social and academic outcomes for students in general, they still fail to tap into the processes that may lead to these outcomes. This presents a limitation in the current models. They assume a homogeneity in African American students' reactions to common experiences (Sherman, Giles, & Williams-Green, 1994). Specifically, researchers examining African American students at PWIs have begun their research with the premise that all African American students on majority White campuses are less likely to fit in and more likely to feel alienated than their White counterparts. African American students from similar socioeconomic backgrounds are expected to interrelate in certain school types in comparable manners. The expectation of the general effect of same experience is one that is prominent in the college student literature (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Given the limitation of the current models, the inclusion of components related the unique sociocultural experiences of African Americans would be a valuable contribution to the current research paradigms of college student departure. In this study, I present a model that includes both social and academic

outcomes for African American students. This model includes elements from the two traditional models previously summarized. Additionally, the model for this study incorporates factors specifically related to the students' racial group, such as African American students' prior interaction with other racial groups and their perceptions of their college racial environment.

This model proposes that students' pre-college interaction with other peer groups influences their perceptions of their college racial environment. Subsequently, how African American students perceive their college racial environment influences their degree of social integration. And how African Americans integrate into the college campus life affects their academic performance. A summary of related studies follows.

Summary of Related Studies Conducted on the Social Integration Experiences of African American Students

Chavous (1998) conducted a study on the influence of race-related experiences and perceptions on college students' social integration and academic adjustment at a predominantly White university. In her study, Chavous proposed that students' pre-college interaction with other groups would influence individuals' perceptions of the racial climate on campus. The study found that racial background and perceptions of the college climate predicted students' sense of community and their participation in university organizations.

Jarmon (2000) conducted a study on the factors associated between African American students' perceptions of the college environment and academic success, at both a predominantly African American university and a

predominately White university. Jarmon found that there were no significant differences in the perceptions of African American students attending either university. In fact, both groups reported that their respective universities were meeting their academic and social needs.

Antonio (2001) conducted a study on the role of interracial interaction in the development of leadership skills and cultural knowledge and understanding. Antonio found that casual interaction among races is beneficial for students with more racially homogenous friendship circles. Findings also indicated that frequent interracial interaction among students may be more important in developing cultural knowledge than involvement in formal activities, such as cultural awareness workshops.

Hurtado, Engberg, Ponjuan, and Landreman (2002) conducted a study on students' pre-college preparation for participation in a diverse democracy. This particular study focused on how students' pre-college experiences predict their ability to believe that conflict enhances democracy and their views about the importance of engaging in social action activities. The study also found that students who enter college with diverse peers are more likely to see the world from someone else's perspective and value the importance of engaging in social action to create change in society.

Berger and Milem (1999) studied the role of student involvement and perceptions of integration in a causal model of student persistence and found that, in general, students who are most likely to persist, are those who have values, norms, and established patterns of behavior that are congruent with the dominant

values, norms, and established patterns of behavior already existing on campus. Students with better high school grades were more inclined to integrate on campus; and finally, students who successfully integrate into the academic and social subsystems of a college do so not at the expense of their home background, but because of it.

Taylor and Howard-Hamilton (1995) conducted a study on student involvement and racial identity attitudes among African American males and found that African American students at PWIs who were more involved with clubs and organizations, academic experiences, sports, faculty, and staff interactions were more likely to develop a positive racial identity. Given the positive relationship between racial/ethnic identity development and student persistence, Taylor and Howard-Hamilton demonstrated the importance of involvement and the role it plays in the retention of African American students on campuses where they have been traditionally underrepresented.

Orfield, Bachmeier, James, and Eitle (1997) studied segregation in American public schools. The study found that students who reported interactions with diverse peers showed a greater openness to diverse perspectives and a willingness to challenge their own beliefs after the first year of college. The study also found that students who interacted with diverse peers reported more frequent discussion of complex social issues, including the economy, peace and equal human rights.

Based on these studies, students who interact with diverse peers prior to college may be more likely to view the world from a variety of perspectives and

may appreciate the importance of engaging in college groups in which the membership represents different ethnic and racial groups. Students' perceptions of the college climate are to some extent related to their sense of community and their participation in university organizations. The importance of student involvement in university organizations and its relationship to student satisfaction and sense of community is clear. However, upon reviewing each of these studies, it is still important to learn more about whether differences exist within the African American college student population itself when it comes to perceptions of the college climate, level of involvement, and academic performance; and whether differences exist between African Americans and other ethnic groups.

Research Issues Surrounding the Key Components of the Conceptual Model Used in This Study

The model identifies four classes of variables: demographic and pre-college factors, perception factors, social integration factors, and academic performance. In addition to social and academic outcomes, the model examines an area scarcely mentioned in research on African American college student success—factors related to prior interaction with other racial groups and perceptions of the college racial climate. While the model is not intended to provide a full explanation of outcomes for all African American students or to propose a comprehensive model of college development, it is intended to further examine the relationship between pre-college racial group make-up and perceptions; perceptions and social integration; and social integration and academic performance. Research indicates that African American students'

experiences, attitudes, and perceptions regarding race may be important influences on their social adjustment and academic performance (Nettles, 1990).

The model proposes that students' pre-college interaction with other groups influences their perceptions of the way that race works in their college environment (perceived racial climate). Students' perceptions of the racial climate influence their degree of social integration. Finally, social integration affects students' academic performance. A discussion of the key components of the model follows. The key components of the conceptual model (refer to Figure 1) used for the purpose of this study are a) students' demographic and pre-college factors; b) students' perception factors; c) students' social integration factors; and d) students' academic performance.

Demographic and Pre-College Factors

Demographic and pre-college factors are characterized as those variables that precede enrollment into college. Nettles et al.'s (1986) conceptual model of factors related to undergraduate minority students' college access, experience, and performance involves a number of different demographic and pre-college variables. Traditionally, studies of African American college students and school outcomes have relied on demographic background characteristics as independent variables (Chavous, 1998). African American college students have been shown to differ from other racial groups in terms of high school type, parental education levels, etc. Demographic and pre-college factors have also been used to help explain the discrepancy between African Americans and other groups on attrition

and persistence rates, academic achievement, and a host of other studies (Allen, 1992; Fleming, 1984; Nettles, 1990).

Variables surrounding college preparation are also common predictors of performance on the college level. One of the main variables used to anticipate college level performance has been the high school grade point average (GPA). Allen (1991a) studied African American students in predominantly White and in historically African American public universities and found the high school grade point average to be the strongest predictor of college grades for African American students at both PWIs and HBCUs. This finding is supported by other research that has found high school GPA to be a significant predictor of college persistence for African American students (Nettles, 1990; Sedlacek, 1999). Standardized entrance exams are also used as indicators of college-level ability.

Unfortunately, the models of college student success and researchers' application of them to African American students have reflected an inclination to consider only the demographic and school preparation factors when describing African American students' backgrounds. The most well known and widely used models involve both precollege characteristics and institutional factors (Sedlacek, 1999; Tinto, 1975). These factors are said to interact in such a way as to influence students' academic and social integration. Although the models have been operationalized differently in various studies, in general, they suffer from a major limitation. Specifically, studies have tended to evaluate individual characteristics almost exclusively in terms of pre-college characteristics.

The pre-college characteristics used to categorize students are based exclusively on traditional demographic factors, such as parental income, high school GPA, and standardized test scores, etc. Although examining students' pre-college background and pre-college aptitude is essential in obtaining an accurate estimate of the influence of the college environment on student outcomes (Adan & Felner, 1995), other factors that students bring to the college environment—such as prior experience with different groups as well as subsequent beliefs regarding race—may directly or indirectly influence social and academic development (Adan & Felner, 1995). These potentially important influences have been largely ignored in the research. Consequently, the contribution of African American students' unique psychosocial characteristics to their adjustment process has been overlooked as well.

Hurtado et al. (2002) studied students' pre-college preparation for participation in a diverse democracy and found that students who enter college with substantial interactions with diverse peers (such as peers from racial/ethnic groups different than their own) are more likely to see the world from someone else's perspective and value the importance of engaging in social action to create change in society. This study also included those who enter college with hardly any interactions with diverse peers, given an interest in how such students perceive their racial college environment. My study seeks to contribute to our understanding about how students' pre-college experiences (individual, family, neighborhood, and high school characteristics and experiences) influence them to certain educational outcomes, which are enhanced through formal and informal

interactions with diverse peers during college.

It has been suggested that the similarity between the culture of the school and the student's cultural background may influence educational outcomes for African American students (Allen et al. 1991b). Individuals entering new settings may confront a number of demands that have implications for adaptation to those settings. A critical factor that may influence the degree to which individuals cope successfully in college is the experiences preceding college. Specifically, the level of congruence between students' previous experiences and the circumstances defining the new setting may be central to the degree of successful adaptation to the new environment (Adan & Felner, 1995). For individuals adjusting to a setting in which they are the minority, the importance of congruence may be magnified (Graham & Donaldson, 1996).

One type of background factor that may be important in the college adjustment process for African Americans is the similarity between the high school and neighborhood racial environment and the college racial environment (David, 1995; Graham & Donaldson, 1996; Sherman et al., 1994). Clearly, there are differences between going to high school and attending college. For some students, however, the difference between high school and college may be more pronounced than for others. For example, at PWIs, African American students from neighborhoods with larger percentages of African Americans may view college as involving greater adjustment than students from high schools and neighborhoods with fewer percentages of African Americans (Sherman et al. 1994). The level of congruence between pre-college and college racial make-up

may influence students' perceptions of their new environment and subsequently the extent and nature of their adjustment to the new environment and their perceptions of the new environment.

The racial make-up of the neighborhood and home has also predicted the number of HBCUs to which students applied. David (1995) studied the campus environment and academic achievement of African American males from a HBCU and PWI and found a positive relationship between high school and college racial congruence and college performance and adjustment. The results of David's study suggest that beyond socioeconomic factors, students' prior interracial experiences may influence their choice of college environments.

With regard to school outcomes, Nettles (1991) found that African American students attending a PWI reported having more non-African American friends and high school classmates than students who had recently dropped out. Conversely, having attended a predominantly African American high school has been related to lower academic performance for African Americans at PWIs (Nettles, 1991). With regard to college adjustment, it has been found that African American college students whose pre-college neighborhood and high school were more racially integrated felt more ease in adjusting to the academic and social environment during their freshmen year. D'Augelli and Hershberger (1993) studied the academic factors and social networks of African American undergraduates on a predominantly White campus and found that African American students were more likely to come from heterogeneous environments and high schools that had substantial percentage of African American students.

According to Hurtado et al. (2002), students are likely to enter college from highly segregated high school environments across the nation and, therefore, are likely to encounter social differences for the first time in college. Pascerella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, and Terenzini (1996) found that students who reported interactions with diverse peers showed a greater openness to diverse perspectives and a willingness to challenge their own beliefs after the first year of college. Researchers have also discovered that students who interacted with diverse peers reported more frequent discussion of complex social issues, including the economy, peace, human rights equality, and justice (Springer, 1995). Several studies utilizing national longitudinal data indicate that student interaction with diverse peers is associated with increases in cultural knowledge and commitment to promoting racial understanding (Antonio, 1998; Hurtado, 2001; Milem 1994).

In summary, students' pre-college variables, such as high school performance and standardized test performance are important factors associated with college performance and the formation of beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. However, other factors may directly or indirectly influence social and academic development. In particular, prior experiences with different groups and the racial make-up of the pre-college neighborhood and high school may be associated with student adjustment to the academic and social environment.

Perception Factors

The concept of perception has been investigated frequently in education. According to Cuyjet (1997), perception includes such characteristics as awareness and input/output environment. In other words, one senses and interprets the environment, surroundings, and situations he or she experiences within a certain atmosphere (Cuyjet, 1997). Dember and Warm (1991) define perception as

> having something to do with our awareness of the objects or conditions about us. It is dependent to a large extent upon the impressions those objects make upon our senses. It is the way things look to us or the way they sound, feel, taste, or smell. (p.14)

Briley (1995) summarizes the concept of perception as

> a process within the person whereby the nervous system and body motor element, plus factors such as needs, motivation, feelings, and overall behavioral process, integrate with environmental influences to form a mental concept of perception. (p.13)

According to Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), while each student's perceptions are subjective and particular to that individual, each individual constructs his or her own meaning of his or her environment. Perceptions help define the culture or environment in which the individual resides.

The research literature on college students has indicated a relationship between the racial make-up of African American students' pre-college environments and their adjustment at PWIs. There is evidence that African American students may encounter difficulty integrating into the university

community. Little is known, however, about the variables that are related to this lack of integration. There is a shortage of research that examines the affective processes through which academic success and social integration are achieved or not achieved in these types of environment. Individuals' responses to an environment are based on their judgments about the environment, satisfaction with the environment, and problems in the environment. The extent to which the environment is viewed as positive by the individual can also be related to stress in the individual (Baum, Singer, & Baum, 1981).

African American students who perceive discrimination from White faculty and peers avoid interaction with them outside the classroom (David, 1995). Therefore, they may be less likely to ask for help from their professors or participate in out-of-class activities with their White peers (Allen, 1987). Overall, the college literature suggests that for African American students, the way race function in their school environment is especially important for their social and academic adjustment. Perceptions of the racial environment, therefore, may provide valuable information about African American students' adjustment or lack of adjustment in the college environment.

The literature supports that minority students must make significant personal, family, and social adjustments to attend predominantly White institutions. And the decision to become involved in activities is related to their perceptions of how well they, as members of a minority group, fit into the environment. Chavous (2000) conducted a study of the relationships among racial identity, perceived ethnic fit, and organizational involvement for minority

students at a predominantly White university. The findings indicated that the social integration process for minority students at predominantly White institutions differed according to the way in which the individuals think about race. College student research has consistently shown social integration to be a more important predictor of performance and retention for minority students than for White students.

However, it is important to note, as Chavous (2000) did, that minority groups are not homogeneous populations. Wide variations exist in their family backgrounds, socioeconomic status, experiences, and perceptions. Thus, the assumption that all minority students will react, perceive, and perform similarly in the same environment is erroneous (Sherman, Giles, & Willams-Green, 1994). Sherman et al. recommended that scholars and educators gain a better understanding of the unique characteristics of different ethnic groups on campus and of how these characteristics influence their perceptions.

Berger and Milem (1999) studied the role of student involvement and perceptions of integration in a causal model of student persistence and found that while African American students enter the institution with strong levels of institutional commitment, they are less likely to perceive the institution as being supportive and thus are less likely to persist. They also found that students who were not involved early in their college career tend to stay uninvolved throughout their tenure in college, and as a result, are less likely to perceive the institution or their peers as supportive.

In summary, I know that students' perceptions of their institution and their

peers are associated with their level of involvement. I know that positive perceptions of peer support have positive effects on subsequent institutional commitment and on desire to participate in the social and academic systems. All African Americans are not the same. As such, variations exist in their perceptions of the college environment.

Social Integration

Although this study focuses on the social integration experiences of African American students, I am also interested in whether differences exist among African American students, Asian American students, Hispanic students, and White students when it comes to social integration experiences, perceptions and academic performance. Following a discussion on social integration in general, there will be a discussion on the social integration experiences of African American students. Next, there will be a brief summary of the social integration experiences of Hispanics and Asian Americans.

Social Integration in General

Social integration has been examined in numerous studies of college students at four-year institutions (Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977, 1998) and for non-traditional students at two-year institutions (Nora, 1987; Nora, Attinasi, & Matonak, 1990; Nora & Rendon, 1990). Social integration has been defined as the student's relationship with peers and his or her involvement in clubs, organizations, and campus activities (Nettles et al.,1986).

Nettles et al. (1986) define social integration as the "student's relationship with peers and his or her involvement in clubs, organizations, and campus activities" (p. 259). Nora (1993) also presents a commonly accepted definition of social integration in a review of the literature on the educational aspirations of minority students at two-year colleges. Nora defines social integration as the development of a strong affiliation with the college social environment, both in the classroom and outside the class. This includes interactions with faculty, academic staff, and peers—but of a social nature—such as peer group interactions, informal contact with faculty, and involvement in organizations.

In a study of college completion by students who began at community colleges, Pascarella, Duby, and Iverson (1993) demonstrated that academic and social integration had the most consistently positive effects on academic performance of all the variables in the study. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found that the extent of influence of various measures of social and academic integration was not independent of the particular background characteristics that students bring to college.

According to Pike and Askew (1990), the social involvement that students have with their peers and in college organizations and extracurricular activities helps to promote the development of their interpersonal skills and their interaction skills. Astin (1996, 1998) postulated that often, as a matter of practical measurement, the concept of student involvement is associated with the number of hours students engage in campus activities. Although involvement clearly entails dimensions other than time, it is sometimes difficult to assess the exact

nature of the intensity and quality of each student's involvement.

Allen (1992) studied minority students, particularly African American, and the campus' structural, interpersonal and psychological correlates of success. In Allen's study, social integration was highest for students who claimed better relations with faculty and higher participation in similar ethnic-based student organization activities, and held highly positive views toward minority student services and race relations. Allen also ascertained that minority students' mere participation in campus social activities does not represent a form of social integration that has a direct relationship to their academic success. Allen believes that social integration may not be indicated by the quantity of interaction, but may be related to the quality of interaction.

Kimbrough's (1995) research discovered that participation in ethnic-based organizations leads students to develop stronger bonds with their peers. Such organizations often play a crucial role in facilitating and improving minority students' perceptions of the college environment. Kimbrough's study concluded that such participation serves as a viable means for increasing students' academic performance.

Byer (1998) conducted a study on fraternity members' perceptions of how involvement in a fraternity and involvement in student government influenced their college experiences. According to Byer, interviewees perceived that fraternity and student government involvement did promote their leadership and social skills. Incidentally, interviewees perceived some aspects of fraternity involvement as being socially exclusive, whereas other aspects of fraternity

involvement were seen to encourage social acceptance of diversity. Interviewees emphasized the importance of appreciating social interactions with different kinds of people, both within the fraternity and the college at-large.

Strage (1999) examined social integration and college success, and similarities and differences as a function of ethnicity and family educational background. One predictor of retention and success was the degree to which students became academically and socially integrated into their environment. The most critical elements in the academic system are performance in the classroom and interaction with faculty and staff. The elements in the social system include extracurricular activities and peer group interactions. Tinto also asserted (1987) that participation in formal and informal extracurricular social events and in positive social relationships on campus helps students to adjust to college, enables them to feel connected to the college, and increases their chances to complete their goals while in college.

Janes (1997) studied the experiences of baccalaureate nursing students, examined through the lenses of Tinto's student retention theory and Astin's student involvement theory. The study determined that an increased quality of communication and interaction between faculty members and students had a positive effect on students' thought processes, motivation, and problem-solving skills, which are needed for academic success. Milem and Berger (1997) compared Astin's theory with Tinto's (1994) theory of student departure. The study concluded that student involvement with faculty, the campus administration, and other students increased students' perceptions of institutional

and peer support, and subsequently, increased their academic and social integration.

In summary, social integration is defined as the student's relationship with peers and students' involvement in clubs, organizations, and campus activities. The involvement that students have with their peers through college organizations and extracurricular activities helps to promote their interpersonal skills. Participation in formal and informal extracurricular activities helps students adjust to college, enables them to feel connected to the college, and increases their chances to complete their goals while in college.

Social Integration of African Americans

One of the challenges that African American students encounter at PWIs is a hostile campus climate and cultural alienation and isolation (Chavous, 2000; Easley, 1993; Fleming, 1984). According to Chavous (2000), African American students continue to perceive PWIs as unsupportive and unwelcoming. Often times, African Americans who attend PWIs are accused of self-segregating (Stewart, Russell, & Wright, 1997; Sue & Sue, 1995). Fleming (1984) noted that this particular population of students often exists in social isolation at PWIs. Given this, Fleming contended that African American students often lack the kinds of meaningful social relationships with their fellow classmates, faculty, and administrators that foster academic success. Fleming concluded that in order to succeed academically, African American students must avoid isolating themselves from campus life.

Tinto (1993) has argued that a weak identification with an institution is likely to have serious and negative implications regarding students' successful social integration. There is some evidence to suggest that African Americans who attend PWIs have low levels of identification with their institutions (Allen, Bobo, & Lomotey, 1991).

To be an African American on a PWI is commonly challenging (Fries-Britt, 1994). Feelings of isolation and alienation often hinder the student's desire to interact with peers from other ethnicities (Allen, 1992; Feagin, Herman & Nikitah, 1996). Instead, students are inclined to interact with peers of the same race or ethnicity to search for common bonds. They make conscious choices to join similar ethnic groups—formal and informal—based in part on identification, interests, and needs (Steward, Marshall & Jackson, 1990; Pascerella & Terenzini, 1991). Often, given the environment, African Americans would rather stay within these comparable groups than be immersed into the mainstream social culture of the college campus environment (Fries-Britt, 1994).

Stikes (1984) found that because of their perceptions of the college climate, African Americans and Hispanics were less likely to interact with their peers outside of their similar groups through participation in institutional student activities. They were not interested in joining any club, participating in any group or event that did not relate to their perceived life experiences. This lack of social integration often causes African Americans to become dissatisfied with the college experience (Fries-Britt, 1994).

Kraemer (1997) argued that traditional studies on social integration are based on the assumption that the construct of social integration is valid, and raises the question of whether operational definitions of social integration that have been used in the past are appropriate for African Americans. Kraemer (1997) supports that the strong identification of African Americans and Hispanics with an institution is facilitated by interactions with persons from the same background in a compatible cultural environment. Kraemer redefined social integration as the extent to which the interaction between African American students with other African Americans grants them a sense of being an integral part of the institution, thus experiencing satisfaction with the college experience.

Antonio (2001) studied the role of interracial interaction in the development of leadership skills and cultural knowledge and understanding, and found that socializing across race not only contributes to development in an area where it is expected (e.g., cultural awareness) but also in the domain of leadership. Compared with White students, students of color are much more likely to engage in many forms of interracial interaction on PWI campuses (Antonio, 1998; Hurtado et al., 1994).

A considerable amount of the research that concentrates on African American students at predominantly White colleges reveals that they often encounter difficulty when integrating into the campus social life (Allen, Epps, & Haniff, 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; David, 1995). Researchers have commonly assumed that African American students experience social alienation as a result of conflicting cultural beliefs and values due to an internal conflict

between the beliefs and values of the students and the underlying philosophies that they assume are associated with the college environment (Allen, 1987).

Researchers who study African American students, such as Chavous (2000), often hold the premise that most African Americans on majority campuses are less likely to fit in and more likely to feel alienated. Loo and Rolison (1986) argue that even African American students who demonstrate high levels of academic achievement often feel socially alienated at a PWI.

D'Augelli and Hershberger (1993) corroborated that African American students must make significant personal, family, and social adjustments to attend predominantly White institutions, especially if the campus is geographically distant from their homes. "Many come from communities and high schools in which they were in the majority; on the college campus, however, they are now a distinct minority" (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993, p. 68). Ehrlich's (1990) report on campus ethnic violence found pervasive reports of discrimination, most being verbal. Ehrlich found that even if most African American students had escaped harassment themselves, most of them knew of other examples of harassment on campus. D'Augelli and Hershberger contended that most African American students in general are confronted with and must deal with racism on campus.

Despite the increased enrollment of African Americans at PWIs, historically Black colleges and universities still graduate a disproportionate number of African American students in comparison to their historically White counterparts (Allen, 1992; Easley, 1993). According to Hunt, Schmidt, Hunt, Boyd, and Magoon (1994), African American students seem academically,

culturally, and economically incompatible with the PWI model of education. African Americans continue to encounter hostile campuses, limited economic assistance, and cultural alienation and isolation (Easley, 1993; Nagasawa and Wong, 1999).

Saddlemire (1996) conducted a study of White students' attitudes toward African Americans. His findings indicated that White students had little or no contact with African Americans, yet they harbored negative assumptions about African Americans. White students perceived that African American students intentionally secluded themselves from Whites. Several White students indicated that they rarely interacted with African Americans on their own campus. However, when these students did have positive interactions with African American students, it was always stated as an exception. The exceptions that were mentioned were African Americans who culturally identified as White (Saddlemire, 1996).

Often, African Americans who attend PWIs are accused of self-segregating (Stewart, Russell, & Wright, 1997). However, what is seen as separation can be interpreted as a coping mechanism. African Americans tend to construct their social values from a family or group orientation more than other ethnic groups (Thompson & Fretz, 1991; Kimbrough, Molock, & Walton,, 1996). Hence, when entering a PWI that possesses an invalidating and hostile environment, some African Americans revert to this social value system, and seek out other African American students to create allies amidst opposition (Fleming, 1984). These social outlets include black student unions, historically black

fraternities and sororities, and other such organizations (Culbert, 1988; Kimbrough et al., 1996).

Davis (1991) found that increased interaction with peers and faculty, along with increased involvement in organizational activities, leads to a lower dropout rate for African American students. In a related study, Taylor and Hamilton (1995) found that African-American students on PWIs who were more involved with clubs and organizations, academic experiences, sports, faculty and staff interactions, campus employment, and community service were more likely to develop a positive racial identity.

In summary, one of the challenges that African American students encounter at PWIs is a hostile campus climate and cultural alienation and isolation. As such, they make conscious choices to join formal and informal similar ethnic groups, based on identification, interests, and needs. A weak identification with an institution is likely to have serious and negative implications regarding students' successful social integration.

Social Integration of Hispanics

Scholars assert that the problem of retaining Hispanic students on college campuses is due in part to the lack of knowledge among student affairs practitioners regarding this minority group. According to Hurtado (1997), Hispanic students are not as academically and socially integrated in college as White students are. If practitioners are to be successful in structuring environments that will help Hispanic college students to succeed, they must first

understand and appreciate the various cultural, economic, social, and political backgrounds that Hispanic students bring with them to campus. Without this understanding, practitioners will fail to retain Hispanics on college campuses (Hurtado, 1997; Quevedo-Garcia, 1987).

Hispanics are more prone than Whites to have parents with no collegiate experience, and they are more likely to have been raised by single-parent families (Baker & Velez, 1996; Wilds, 2000). Several hypotheses have been advanced to account for the low enrollment of Hispanics in college during the last 25 years. These include changes in college aspirations, changes in high school completion rates, academic readiness for college, socioeconomic status, changes in college admissions criteria, changes in the composition of financial aid packages from grants to loans, increasing costs of higher education, and reluctance to use loans as the main mechanism to finance college (Baker & Velez, 1996; Hurtado, 1997; Nora, 1987; Wilds, 2000).

Reasons for poor academic performance and minimal social integration from Hispanics include insufficient academic preparation for college, exposure to a campus climate of prejudice and discrimination, financial problems, and various family and work responsibilities (Baker & Velez, 1996; Hurtado, 1997; Nora, 1987; Wilds, 2000). Some intervention strategies recognize the importance of support services and advising programs, and emphasize ethnic enclaves on campuses to facilitate transition into the academic and social life of the institution. (Nora, 1987; Baker & Velez, 1996; Hurtado, 1997; Wilds, 2000).

Social Integration of Asian Americans

While researchers do not agree on the specific causes for the differential academic performance of Asian Americans, Mordkowitz and Ginsburg (1987) support that socialization practices among this group contribute to their educational achievement. Stereotyped as the "model minority," Asian Americans have outperformed their non-Asian minority counterparts on many commonly accepted indices of educational achievement (Park, 1990). The fear of academic failure is prevalent among the Asian American community. This stems from family and parental stress on academic success (Siu, 1992). According to Alwin (1989), low academic performance among Asian Americans elicits family criticism and shame. As a result, parental pressure serves as one of the primary catalysts behind Asian American students' motivational behavior to succeed.

Asian American students are socialized to feel responsible to their family and community, whose needs and expectations prevail over individual desires. Asian American students have been classified as the model minority of society today (Sue & Sue, 1995). This is attributable, in part, to myths about the intelligence level of Asian Americans and about how well some perform in the classroom. Another reason for this label is the reserved and quiet nature of those in the Asian culture, and how they are not as outspoken as many other cultural groups when faced with discrimination and a hostile environment (Parker, Archer, & Scott, 1992). As professionals, understanding the cultural differences of various student populations and the best manner in which to counsel them is crucial. There are three values shared by nearly all Asian American cultures: the central

role of the family, a belief in hard work and education as the way to success, and a respect for their community (Sue & Sue, 1995).

Asian Americans firmly believe that one's actions reflect upon the entire family. For this reason, there is very little personal independence and freedom of choice over the types of activities in which they become involved. Asian Americans want to make their family proud, so many in the Asian culture strive to be as successful as possible, not so much for personal satisfaction, but for a sense of family pride (Sue & Sue, 1995). In terms of the label, "model minority," most of this myth comes from the quiet and shy nature of Asian Americans. Most Asian cultures emphasize a restraint of emotions because emotionality is seen as a sign of immaturity. Expression of emotions reflects badly on one's family, in many Asian cultures. As a result, Asian Americans tend to be very formal in the interpersonal relationships they form with others. Students are likely to maintain formality with professors and with peers, due to their reserved nature and out of respect.

In classroom situations, some Asian American students may experience feelings of helplessness due to language barriers. They may suffer from interpersonal difficulties or possibly experience isolation by classmates due to their inability to effectively communicate. Asian students may exhibit social avoidance in regards to not fitting in and making friends easily. According to Sue and Sue (1990), Asian students may experience maladjustment to the host culture and in the ways they are perceived and accepted by others. Due to the fact the Asian family is such a central part of students' lives, it is likely that these students

will develop fears of not succeeding in school and of disappointing their families.

From early on, many Asian American children are taught that outstanding achievement in school is a direct reflection on the family name, and they are expected to succeed to bring honor to the entire family unit. Because this high value is placed upon education, students in the Asian culture are more likely to attend prestigious institutions, and outperform their classmates in many subjects. These students tend to take their education very seriously, and it is likely that Asian students will attend renowned colleges and universities and may even choose to study difficult subjects because it reflects so well upon their families (Sue & Sue, 1995).

Based on research surrounding the social integration experiences of students of color, for African Americans, perceptions of the college climate will help to determine the manner in which they will interact with their peers and participate in student activities. For Hispanics, insufficient academic preparation for college, financial problems, and family and work responsibilities may impact the manner in which they will interact with their peers and participate in student activities. And for Asian Americans, a belief in hard work and education as the way to success, a strong commitment to family, and a respect for their community will help to determine the manner in which they will interact with their peers and participate in student activities.

Academic Performance and Social Integration

For the purpose of this study, academic performance is defined as a student's self-reported cumulative college grade point average. Pace (1990)

studied college student experiences and found that the more conversations students have, both with other students and with faculty regarding their course work, the more they gained academically. Nettles et al. (1984) studied differences in college performance among students of different racial groups and found that White students earn their degrees at faster rates and have higher grade point averages than African American students. Results from their study also revealed that a high rate of faculty contact increases students' college grade point averages. Milem and Berger (1997) argue that social integration has a more influential role in predicting academic performance than academic integration. Social integration appears to be a major determinant of both students' satisfaction with college and their academic performance. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) identified the lack of social integration into the college environment, due to insufficient contact with members of the institution, as perhaps the most important predictor of low academic performance. In general, there is a limited amount of research that looks at the relationship of social integration and academic performance. As such, my study seeks to contribute to our understanding on whether a relationship exists between social integration and academic performance.

Purpose of this Study

Research suggests that students' integration into the college environment is manifested by both a sense of belonging or fit to the environment as well as actual curricular and extra-curricular involvement. Research also suggests that students' social integration experiences may be influenced by (a) demographic factors; (b) prior racial experience/contact; and (c) perceptions of a school's racial climate. Finally, there is minimal research on the relationships between social integration and academic performance.

This study examined differences among African American college students attending a PWI. The primary focus of the research is on the influence of previous race-related experiences and perceptions on the college adjustment of African American students. In order to establish this unique influence, additional analysis was incorporated to examine the influence of these factors in African American, White, Hispanic, and Asian American samples.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what degree are demographic and racial background variables related to perceptions of the racial climate for African American students?

According to Hurtado et al. (2002), students are likely to enter college from highly segregated high school environments across the nation, and therefore are likely to encounter social differences for the first time in college. Pascerella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, and Terenzini (1996) found that students who reported

interactions with diverse peers showed a greater openness to diverse perspectives and a willingness to challenge their own beliefs after the first year of college. Researchers have also discovered that students who interacted with diverse peers reported more frequent discussion of social issues, including the economy, human rights equality, and justice (Springer, 1995).

Research Question 2: To what degree are perceptions of the racial climate related to social integration for African American students?

Chavous (2000) supports that minority groups are not homogeneous populations. Wide variations exist in their family backgrounds, socioeconomic status, experiences, and perceptions. Thus, the assumption that all minority students will react, perceive, and perform similarly in the same environment is erroneous (Sherman, et al., 1994). Sherman et al. recommended that scholars and educators gain a better understanding of the unique characteristics of different ethnic groups on campus and how these characteristics influence their perceptions.

Research Question 3: To what degree is the extent of social integration related to academic outcomes for African Americans?

Allen (1992) studied African American students and the campus academic, structural, interpersonal, and psychological correlates of success. In Allen's study, social integration was highest for students who claimed better relations with faculty, higher participation in similar ethnic-based student organization activities, and held highly positive views toward minority student services and race relations.

In summary, students enter college with an assortment of characteristics and skills, including initial perceptions with respect to college attendance and personal goals. These intentions are modified as the student begins to interact within the academic system and the social system. For minority students, college involvement is associated with beliefs and attitudes towards the college experience.

Students' pre-college variables, such as high school performance and standardized test performance are important factors associated with the formation of beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. However, other factors may directly or indirectly influence social development. For example, prior experiences with different groups may be associated with students' adjustment to academic and social environments.

Students' perceptions of their institution and their peers are also associated with their level of involvement. Positive perceptions of peer support have positive effects on subsequent institutional commitment and desire to participate in the social and academic systems. All African Americans are not the same. As such, variations exist in their perceptions of the college environment.

Students may have negative feelings about some aspects of their college environment and positive views of other aspects of their college environment. For some minority students attending predominantly White institutions, the decision to participate in the college environment is related to their perceptions of how well they will fit into the environment. A positive college organizational environment and its relationship to student satisfaction and retention in general

are also important.

In general, there is a limited amount of research that looks at the relationship of social integration, and academic performance. As such, this study seeks to contribute to our understanding of whether a relationship exists between social integration and academic performance. The next chapter presents an overview of the methods used to gather the data needed to research and examine the three research questions posed in this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 presents an overview of the methods used to gather the data required to examine the research questions. Following a general overview of the methods, there is a description of the site where the study took place. Next, there is a review of the sampling procedure and a description of the sample used in the study. Subsequently, there is a review of the survey instrument used in the study, the measurements created for each variable and the analysis procedure applied for collecting the data. Finally, there is an assessment of the study's limitations.

Overview

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of the study is to examine African American students' perceptions of the racial environment of a PWI and subsequently, how these perceptions are related to students' social integration and subsequent academic performance. Specifically, there is an examination of how individuals' socioeconomic background and pre-college neighborhood and high school racial composition are related to students' perceptions of their school's racial environment. Next, there is an examination of the relationship between students' perceptions and their levels of social integration. Finally, the

relationships between students' social integration and academic performance are evaluated.

A quantitative research method was used to examine whether relationships existed among the pre-college and demographic variables, perception variables, social integration variables, and the academic performance variable. A quantitative research method was selected since the aim of this study, as with any quantitative study, was to determine the relationship between an independent variable such as social integration and a dependent or outcome variable, such as perception (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). Quantitative research also helps to quantify relationships between variables (Hair et al., 1995). In this study, relationships between the variables were examined mainly through correlations. This relational paradigm allowed the opportunity to examine two or more variables in order to assess relationships.

A survey instrument was selected to gather the data. Surveys are designed to obtain information from a sample in order to describe the characteristics of hundreds, thousands, or even millions (Salant & Dillman, 1994). In order to make accurate estimates based on a human sample, such as the sample of undergraduate students taken at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, four requirements had to have been met (Salant & Dillman, 1994):

1.   The sample is large enough to yield the desired level of precision.

2.   Everyone in the population has an equal (or known) chance of being selected for the sample.

3.   Questions are asked in ways that enable the people in the sample to

respond willingly and accurately.

4.   The characteristics of people selected in the sampling process but who do not participate in the survey are similar to the characteristics of those who do.

Site Description

As indicated, the study took place at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). As the study centers on the experiences of African Americans attending a predominantly White institution, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was selected because there are a significant number of African Americans and Hispanics enrolled and because it is a predominantly White institution. Moreover, the University has a tradition of remaining committed to student affairs and of offering top-notch services and out-of-class programming for its students, from residence life to fraternity and sorority life.

Since the mid-sixties, the University of Illinois has been committed to offering academic resources and services for its students that develop an appreciation of diverse cultures and ethnicities. In 1965, The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies was designated as a national resource center for Latin American studies. The Latin American Library maintains the fourth largest collection of Latin American and Caribbean materials in the country.

The University developed an appreciation of diversity in enrollment early on by designing and implementing summer research opportunities for underrepresented high school students. The purpose of such programs was to have

these students immerse themselves into the college culture, while educating them on the admissions process and the importance of high school preparation. Scholars programs were also created to provide African American and Hispanic students with tuition assistance, research experiences, study stipends, travel experiences, and living expenses in an effort to improve recruitment and retention at the University. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is currently ranked third in the Big 10 Conference in the percentage of African American and Hispanic enrollment.

The Office of Minority Student Affairs at UIUC was originally designed for underrepresented students to improve their academic performance by fostering a learning center, which now prides itself as the most diverse work environment on campus. More than 1,200 students and tutors work together in regular weekly tutoring appointments, drop-in assistance, exam review sessions for midterms and finals, study skills workshops, and regular study groups.

While the recruitment of African American and Hispanic faculty continues to be an ongoing goal, UIUC has seen extraordinary gains in the representation of women at the associate professor (up 68%) and full professor ranks (up 138%) since 1981, despite the overall decline in the size of the faculty. There is a total of 2,537 faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the University of Illinois. Out of the 2,537 faculty, the breakdown for African American (n=78), Asian (n=292), and Hispanic faculty (n=89) is listed in Table 1. Understanding the ethnic distribution of faculty helps to illuminate on patterns among the interaction between students and faculty.

Table 1:

Faculty Composition by Race and Gender at UIUC*

Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total
African American	45 (58%)	33 (42%)	78 (03%)
Hispanic	52 (58%)	37 (42%)	89 (04%)
Asian	216 (74%)	76 (26%)	292 (12%)
White	1222 (69%)	550 (31%)	1772 (70%)
International	187 (61%)	119 (39%)	306 (11%)
		Total	2537 (100%)

Data Source: University of Illinois Office of Information Management, 2005.

The University houses one of the largest fraternity and sorority systems in the country. One of its unswerving goals has been to increase the recruitment and retention of African American and Hispanic students on all levels. As such, representatives from the Provost's Office are interested in this study, its findings and recommendations. Finally, UIUC students are known to respond favorably to participating in research studies, as indicated by representatives from the Office of the Provost.

UIUC is consistently ranked among the top universities in the nation for its commitment to research and development in an assortment of fields, particularly in science and engineering. UIUC is one of the original 37 public land-grant institutions created within ten years of the signing of the Morrill Act by Abraham Lincoln in 1862. UIUC was chartered in 1867 and opened in 1868. The University covers 1,454 acres (with 252 major buildings) located in the twin cities

of Champaign and Urbana (with a combined population of 100,000) and the surrounding area. UIUC is situated approximately 140 miles south of Chicago, 120 miles west of Indianapolis, and 170 miles northeast of St. Louis. UIUC offers degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels with emphases in science, engineering, technology, literature, business, and other academic areas.

There are 38,291 students enrolled at UIUC: 28,271 undergraduate students and 10,020 graduate and professional students. Undergraduate students typically come from 50 states and 100 nations. Illinois' residents comprise 90% percent of the undergraduate population. There are eight colleges and one institute, offering 4,000 courses and 150 programs of study; 53% of the undergraduate students are men and 47% are women. The ethnic breakdown for the undergraduate student population is as follows: 6.1% African-American; 11% Asian-American; 5.1% Hispanic; and 0.2% Native American. Of the 28,271 students, the breakdown for the total undergraduate population race and gender is included in Table 2.

Sampling Procedure

In this study, an introductory email (refer to Appendix C) was sent to 7,775 UIUC students in the early spring semester of 2004 (February): 2,011 African Americans (the entire undergraduate population); 2000 Whites (randomly selected); 2000 Asian Americans (randomly selected), and 1,764 Hispanics (the entire undergraduate population). The email explained the purpose and the importance of the study and requested that each student complete the online

survey. The introductory email provided details on what the participants could expect from the researcher and instructed each student on how to request a copy of the study results. The email also informed the participants of the process of receiving a gift (a free pen or pencil) for completing the survey.

Table 2:
Undergraduate Enrollment by Race and Gender at UIUC

Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total
African American	780 (39.00%)	1231 (61.00%)	2011
Hispanic	917 (52.00%)	847 (48.00%)	1764
Asian	1952 (54.00%)	1662 (46.00%)	3614
Native American	35 (48.00%)	38 (52.00%)	73
White	10050 (52.00%)	9277 (48.00%)	19327
Other	726 (49%)	756 (51%)	1482
Total	13734	13055	28271

Data Source: University of Illinois Office of Admissions and Records, 2005.

One week later, the email was sent for a second time to all 7,775 members of the sample. During the third week, the email was sent to only those members of the sample who had not yet responded since the second week. And during the fourth week, a final email was sent to those members of the sample who had not responded since the third week.

To prevent the email from being automatically returned to control for spamming and unsolicited commercial email, the Office of Admissions and Records worked with the University Computer and Technology Center to verify that each email address was active. Given the cooperation of the University, there

were no undelivered emails returned. The University Computer and Technology Center confirmed that all 7,775 emails were reviewed.

Sample Description

In this study, the population (n=7,775) included the entire African American and Hispanic student undergraduate population. However, given the number of Whites and Asian Americans enrolled as compared to African Americans and Hispanics, a sample of Whites and Asian Americans was also taken. A random sampling technique (SAS's Random Function) was used by the University of Illinois Office of Admissions and Records to retrieve the names of 2000 Asian American subjects and 2000 White subjects across the four grade levels (500 freshmen, 500 sophomores, 500 juniors, and 500 seniors) and to ensure a proportional representation of subgroups, including gender and regions.

The population consisted of 7,775 undergraduates. 2,011 African Americans (39% of sample male and 61% of sample female); 2000 Whites (50% of sample male and 50% of sample female); 2000 Asian Americans (50% of sample male and 50% of sample female) and 1,764 Hispanics (52% of sample male and 48% of sample female). The table below provides an overview of the sample population by race and gender.

While college practitioners might be likely to be more interested in behaviors of the entire student population, researchers traditionally work with a sample of subjects rather than the full population. To generalize from the sample to the population, the sample has to be representative of the population (Hair et

al., 1995). The table below provides an overview of the sub-sample by race and gender.

Table 3:
Sub-sample Population by Race and Gender at UIUC

Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total
African American	97 (30%)	227 (70%)	327
Hispanic	105 (40%)	155 (60%)	260
Asian	106 (37%)	178 (63%)	284
White	127 (37%)	216 (63%)	345
Total	435 (36%)	776 (64%)	1216

This study did not incorporate the handling of non-respondents and the potential of non-respondent bias. Upon conducting a T-Test to compare the original group with the sub-group by gender and class status, it was determined that the sub-group was not representative of the original group given the skew towards female respondents. According to McPhee and Lieb (1999), females are more inclined to complete surveys, particularly on line surveys, than men. McPhee and Lieb (1999) state that the female population of the Web has increased significantly since 1995.

For the African American sub-sample population (N=327), 59 % reported to have a part-time job while enrolled as students. The average level of parental education was at the junior college level for both the mother and the father. The majority of the students (27%) reported their mother to have had some college experience, but no degree completion. And the majority (22%) reported their

father to have earned at least a Bachelor's degree. The predominate race in high school (53%) and neighborhood (47%) for this sample was African American. African American students involved in the sub-sample, overall, had degree aspirations to obtain a master's degree. The majority reported aspirations for either a master's degree (37%) or a doctoral degree (33%). Most students in this sample attended a private high school (80%). And the majority of students (18%) reported household incomes at $100,000 or more. However the range in reported income varied across the spectrum. Forty-nine percent of the students resided in the residence halls. Among the 327 African Americans, 69% were females (227) and 31% were males (100). The breakdown by classification for African Americans who participated in the study was: 86 freshmen; 84 sophomores; 69 juniors; and 88 seniors.

Overall, the return rate was 15.6%. For African Americans, the return rate was 16.26%; for Whites, the return rate was 13%; for Hispanics, the return rate was 14.7%; and for Asian Americans, the return rate was 14.2%. Compared to mail response rates that tend to remain in the 2% to 3% range (Lazar & Preece, 1999) and telephone survey response rates that remain in the 10% to 12% range (Lazar & Preece, 1999), a 15.6% response rate is reasonable. Most online surveys, including the one administered for this particular study, are announced with an email message that contains a link to the survey page. This format allows users to respond at their convenience, resulting in response rates that are higher (Lazar & Preece, 1999) than the response rates for mail and telephone surveys.

Additionally, when examining sample size, statistical significance is one standard that can be used to approach the issue of whether or not the sample is large enough. The sample size has to be large enough to detect the smallest worthwhile effect or relationship between variables (Hair et al., 1995). If there are too few subjects in the study and the researcher detects a statistically significant effect, then the finding is regarded as publishable. But if the effect is not significant with a small sample size, then the finding is regarded as insignificant (Hair et al., 1995).

Through SPSS, a sample size calculator assisted in determining the minimal number of subjects needed to complete the survey in order to gain results that reflect the target population as precisely as needed. Overall, given the original population of 7,775 students, 1206 students were needed to complete the survey at a 95% confidence level and a 2.59 confidence interval. A total of 1216 students completed the survey, thus gaining the results needed to reflect the target population. For African Americans, given the original population of 2,011 students, 327 students completed the survey, thus gaining the results needed to reflect the target population at a 95% confidence level and a 4.96 confidence interval. For Hispanics, given the original population of 1,764 students, 260 students completed the survey, thus gaining the results needed to reflect the target population at a 95% confidence level and a 5.61 confidence interval. For Whites, given the original population of 2000 students, 345 students completed the survey, thus gaining the results needed to reflect the target population at a 95% confidence level and a 4.8 confidence interval. And for Asian Americans, given

the original population of 2000 students, 284 students completed the survey, thus gaining the results needed to reflect the target population at a 95% confidence level and a 5.39 confidence interval. In summary, while the response rate was modest, it was enough to perform analysis and to examine appropriate data.

Instrument

A survey entitled the "Student Experiences Questionnaire" (refer to Appendix D) gathered data from the respondents. A survey instrument was selected, as it is an efficient means to gather a great deal of information on a large number of students. Salant and Dillman (1994) contend that surveys help quantify data to discover underlying attitudes and issues affecting the student undergraduate experience, as well as to recommend possible institutional responses. For the purposes of this study, the survey instrument allowed me to make descriptive assertions about the population, as well as provided the opportunity for me to examine relationships among pre-college and demographic variables and variables relating to perception, social integration, and academic performance. The survey is organized into three parts: Sections 1 and 2 gathered data on social integration practices and student perceptions regarding the campus climate. Section 3 solicited student demographic and high school information as well as information on the racial make-up of the students' neighborhood and high school.

To ensure that the survey instrument was acceptable and to receive feedback on each survey question, a pilot test was conducted through a series of focus groups. Within the focus groups, participants were invited to complete the survey, provide feedback on the survey template and to ensure that each question was comprehensible and concise. During the discussion, each focus group reviewed the breakdown of which survey questions were related to social integration experiences and which survey questions were related to perceptions. There were a total of 25 questions addressing social integration experiences (refer to Appendix D; questions 1-25 in section A) while 19 questions addressed perceptions (refer to Appendix D; questions 26-40 in section 1 and questions 16-19 in section 3). Overall, the participants determined that the process for completing the survey was succinct, and the questions were understandable. No changes were made to the survey questions and minor edits were made to the survey layout.

The "Student Experiences Questionnaire" (refer to Appendix D) was modeled after the college student survey administered by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) with modifications as deemed appropriate for the purpose of the study. CIRP is a national longitudinal study of the American higher education system. Established in 1966 at the American Council on Education, the CIRP is now administered by the Higher Education Research Institute under the direction of Dr. Linda Sax. The CIRP is the nation's largest and oldest empirical study of higher education, involving data on some 1,800 institutions and over 11 million students. It is regarded as the most comprehensive

source of information on college students. The annual report of the CIRP Freshman Survey provides normative data on each year's entering college students.

The survey method allowed input from a greater number of students, which allowed for a broader cross-section of the population. I was also able to obtain data on a number of variables, not just those that are the main focus for the study. Including a large number of students increased the probability of getting more students to participate.

For the purpose of this study, it was also determined that an online survey would be administered instead of the traditional mail or telephone survey method. Online surveys, in comparison to telephone and mail surveys, provide equally valuable information less expensively and more quickly, and often result in higher response rates (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece., 2003). The format of an online survey can accommodate the same principles of the paper questionnaire design (Dillman, 2000; Oppenheim, 1992; Preece, Rogers, & Sharp, 2002). Online surveys are designed to:

1.   Support multiple platforms and browsers (Yun & Trumbo, 2000);

2.   Prevent multiple submissions (Yun & Trumbo, 2000);

3.   Have the ability to present questions in a logical or adaptive manner, if needed (Kehoe & Pitkow, 1996);

4.   Provide multiple opportunities for saving the work in long questionnaires (Smith, 1997);

5.   Collect quantitative selection option answers (Yun & Trumbo, 2000); and

6.   Provide a "thank you" response upon completion of the survey (Smith, 1997).

During this study, the University Office of Information Management worked closely with the Office of Records and Registration to ensure that the online survey supported multiple platforms and browsers. The online survey tool was designed to prevent multiple submissions and to present questions in a logical or adaptive manner, if needed. The use of the online survey method included an automatic "thank you" response upon completion of the survey.

Each participant was able to access the survey through a link that was incorporated into the email entitled "Proceed to Survey." The last sentence in the email read: "I have read the procedure described above and voluntarily agree to participate in the survey research. I also verify that I am 18 years of age or older." This mechanism served as a consent form for participation. All participants completed the same exact survey. All participants were assured that information given would be kept confidential and that their participation was strictly voluntary.

On large college campuses such as the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an email survey assisted in evaluating student populations that are dispersed across the campus (Carini & Dillman, 2000; Hayek, Kuh & Ouimet, 2001; Tyree, 1997). It is understood in the behavioral sciences that surveys are not perfect vehicles for collecting data, because surveys require subjects to recall

past behavior (Andrews et al, 2003). Research costs, access to subjects, and the scope of the research may make it impractical or financially impractical to use more than one data collection approach. Electronic surveys are becoming increasingly common (Lazar & Preece, 1999), and research comparing electronic versus postal surveys is starting to substantiate that content results obtained from electronic surveys may be no different than postal survey content results, yet provide strong advantages of speedy distribution and response cycles (Yun & Trumbo, 2000; Swoboda, Muehlberger, Weitkunat, & Schneeweiss, 1997). Next, there is a description of the measures.

Measures

Most of the measures used in the study were modeled after the college student survey administered by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), although there were modifications as deemed appropriate for the purpose of the study. Table 4 lists each variable, its definition, and how it was measured.

Race

When comparing African Americans and Whites, previous research has found that African Americans have higher attrition rates, lower academic performance, less likelihood of enrollment in advanced degree programs, poorer psychosocial adjustment, and lower post-graduation occupation attainment and earnings (Allen, 1988). To measure race, four dummy variables were created (refer to Table 4).

Household Income

Nettles et al.'s (1986) conceptual model of factors related to undergraduate minority students' college access, experience, and performance involves a number of different demographic and pre-college variables. One of these variables includes household income. In this study, to examine household income, an 11-point scale was created to quantify income ranging from less than $9,999 to $100,000 or more (refer to Table 4).

Parental Education

An additional variable in this study is the level of parental education. To examine the level of education for the father and mother, an 8-point scale was created, ranging from elementary/junior high school to graduate degree (refer to Table 4).

SAT Score, High School GPA, and Degree Aspirations

Three additional variables included in the study are: SAT score; high school cumulative grade point average; and degree aspirations (refer to Table 4). While these three aforementioned variables were not the focus of this particular study, they were included for the purpose of additional analysis and findings.

Table 4:
Definition of Variables

Conceptual Model Component	Variable (Variable Name)	How the Variable is Measured
Demographic Variables	Race (Ethnicit)	Four dummy variables indicating race of student (African American =1, Asian American =2, Hispanic =3, and White =4)
	Household Income (Incom)	Household income is measured on a 11-point scale from less than $9,999 to $100,000 or more; 1=less than $9,999; 2=$10,000-$19,999; 3=$20,000-$29,999; 4=$30,000-$39,999; 5=$40,000-$49,999; 6=$50,000-$59,999; 7=$60,000-$69,999; 8=$70,000-$79,999; 9=$80,000-$89,999; 10=$90,000-$99,999; 11=$100,000 or more
	Father's Education (Fateduc)	This variable is measured on an eight point scales from elementary/junior high school to graduate degree; 1=Elementary/junior high school; 2=some high school; 3=high school diploma; 4=some college; 5=junior college diploma; 6=bachelor's degree; 7=vocational school; 8=graduate degree
	Mother's Education (Moeduc)	This variable is measured on an eight point scale from elementary/junior high school to graduate degree; 1=Elementary/junior high school; 2=some high school; 3=high school diploma; 4=some college; 5=junior college diploma; 6=bachelor's degree; 7=vocational school; 8=graduate degree; 9=don't know
	SAT Score (Sata)	This variable is measured on a continuous scale from 0-1600.
	High School Final GPA (Hsgpae)	High school current college grade point average measured on a 9-point ordinal scale with 9 indicating strong student performance and 1 indicating weak academic performance; 9=A; 8=A-; 7=B+; 6=B; 5=B-; 4=C+; 3=C; 2=C-; 1=D or less.
	Degree Aspirations (Howfar)	This variable is measured on a four point scale; 1=bachelor's degree; 2=master's degree; 3=professional degree; 4=doctoral degree
	Gender (Gender)	This variable is measured on a two point scale; 1=male; 2=female

Racial Make-Up Variables	Majority Race in High School (Majhsr)	This variable is measured on a five point scale; 1=African American; 2=Asian American; 3=Hispanic; 4=White; 5=Other
	Majority Race in Neighborhood (Majner)	This variable is measured on a five point scale; 1=African American; 2=Asian American; 3=Hispanic; 4=White; 5=Other
Perception Variables	This variable is measured on 5-point scale with 5 representing strongly agree and 1 representing strongly disagree that the campus climate is conducive to student based on race; 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree	
	Perceprc	Perception of Positive Racial Climate
	Peraff	Perception of Interacting with African Americans
	Perasi	Perception of Interacting with Asian Americans
	Perhis	Perception of Interacting with Hispanics
	Perwhi	Perception of Interacting with Whites
	Perndfa	Perception - No Faculty Discrimination
	Peradnd	Perception - No Administrative Discrimination
Social Integration Factors	This variable is measured on a 5-point scale with 5 representing strong social integration and 1 representing no social integration; 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Very Often	
	Affsis	Social Integration Score with African Americans
	Asisis	Social Integration Score with Asian Americans
	Hissis	Social Integration Score with Hispanics
	Whisis	Social Integration Score with Whites
	Sermss	Using Minority Student Services
	Serfavis	Meet with Faculty After Class
	Seracadv	Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor
	Serlibr	Visit Library
Academic Performance (Curgpa)	Current college grade point average measured on a 9-point ordinal scale with 9 indicating strong student performance and 1 indicating weak academic performance; 9=A; 8=A-; 7=B+; 6=B; 5=B-; 4=C+; 3=C; 2=C-; 1=D or less.	

Gender

Research in the area of gender relationship to student success in college has yielded an assortment of results. Coley (2001) examined differences in the gender gap and comparisons across racial/ethnic groups in education and work, and reported several findings. For example, African American, college-bound seniors were the only group where females scored higher than males on the SAT and the

ACT examination. The advantage held by males in college completion during the early 1970s ended by the early 1990s for all racial/ethnic groups. By 1998, White, African American, and Hispanic females held an advantage of a few percentage points over males. This study examined gender differences as they relate to perceptions and social integration practices. To measure gender, two dummy variables were created (refer to Table 4).

Racial Make-up Variables

Hurtado et al. (2002) studied students' pre-college preparation for participation in a diverse democracy and found that students who enter college with substantial interactions with diverse peers (such as peers from racial/ethnic groups different than their own) are more likely to see the world from someone else's perspective and value the importance of engaging in social action to create change in society. For the purpose of this study, two racial background variables were created (refer to Table 4).

Perception Variables

A factor analysis was performed with the 19 survey items relating to perception (refer to Table 5). This analysis was conducted to condense the number of variables into a smaller set of variables. Utilizing a rotation method, 7 factors were extracted. The 7 focal factors explaining perception are shown in Table 6.

Table 5:
Original 19 Perception Variables

Perception – No Discrimination by African Americans
Perception – Easy to make Friend with African Americans
Perception – No discrimination by Asians
Perception – Easy to make friend with Asians
Perception – No discrimination with Hispanics
Perception – Easy to make friends with Hispanics
Perception – No discrimination with Whites
Perception – Easy to make friends with Whites
Perception – Institution Attracts Diversity
Perception – No Faculty Discrimination
Perception – NO Discrimination on Campus
Perception – Faculty are Sensitive
Perception – Open Discussion on Racial Issues
Perception – No Administrative Discrimination
Perception – Race is not an Issue
Perception – Comfortable with White
Perception – Comfortable with African
Perception – Comfortable with Asian
Perception – Comfortable with Hispanic

The literature supports that minority students must make significant personal, family, and social adjustments to attend predominantly White institutions. And the decision to become involved in activities is related to their perceptions of how well they, as members of a minority group, fit into the environment (Chavous, 2000). Information about students' perceptions of their university racial climate was obtained using a 5-point scale, with 5 representing strongly agree and 1 representing strongly disagree on item statements regarding the campus climate based on race. This scale measured students' perceptions of their attachment and belonging to their university. It also evaluated students' feelings of attachment to their college environment as well as the extent to which they feel valued by their university (refer to Table 4).

Table 6:
Final Socialization and Perception Factors Used in the Study

Socialization Variables	Variable Description
Affsis	Social Integration Score with African Americans
Asisis	Social Integration Score with Asian Americans
Hissis	Social Integration Score with Hispanics
Whisis	Social Integration Score with Whites
Sermss	Using Minority Student Services
Serfavis	Meet with Faculty After Class
Seracadv	Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor
Serlibr	Visit Library
Perception Variables	Variable Description
Perceprc	Perception of Positive Racial Climate
Peraff	Perception of Interacting with African Americans
Perasi	Perception of Interacting with Asian Americans
Perhis	Perception of Interacting with Hispanics
Perwhi	Perception of Interacting with Whites
Perndfa	Perception - No Faculty Discrimination
Peradnd	Perception - No Administrative Discrimination

Socialization Factors

Upon collection of the data, a factor analysis was performed with the 25 survey items relating to socialization (refer to Table 7). This analysis was conducted to condense the number of variables into a smaller set of variables. The smaller set of variables are identified through a rotation method. The smaller set is used to explain the fundamental constructs of socialization and perception. Utilizing a rotation method, 8 major socialization factors were extracted (shown in Table 6).

Strage (1999) examined social integration and college success, and similarities and differences as a function of ethnicity and family educational background. Two predictors of retention and success were the degree to which

Table 7
Original 25 Socialization Variables

Academic Interaction with Students in General
Joining Clubs with African Americans
Socialize with African Americans
Study with African Americans
Sat around with African Americans
Socialize with African American Faculty
Joining Clubs with Asian Americans
Socializing with Asian Americans
Study with Asian Americans
Sat around with Asian Americans
Socialize with Asian Faculty
Joining Clubs with Hispanics
Socializing with Hispanics
Studying with Hispanics
Sat around with Hispanics
Socialize with Hispanic Faculty
Joining Clubs with Whites
Socializing with Whites
Studying with Whites
Sat around with Whites
Socializing with White Faculty
Using Minority Student Services
Meet with Faculty After Class
Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor
Visit Library

students become academically and socially integrated into their environment.
The most critical elements in the academic system are performance in the
classroom and interaction with faculty and staff. The elements in the social
system include extracurricular activities and peer group interactions.

Objective indices of students' social integration were developed through
information about students' involvement in extra-curricular organizations and
clubs, study groups, and social groups. Students reported on the racial make-up of
the organizations of which they were a part, the study groups of which they were
a part, and the social groups of which they were a part. These variables were

measured on a 5-point scale, with 5 representing strong social integration and 1 representing no social integration (refer to Table 4).

<center>Academic Performance Variable</center>

One of the main variables used to review college level performance has been grade point average (Allen, 1991). Students submitted information on their current college academic performance by indicating their current letter grade equivalent cumulative college GPA, choosing one grade from a 9-point scale, with 9 indicating a grade of "A" and 1 indicating a grade of "D" or less (refer to Table 4).

Data Analysis Procedure

Overall, this study prompted an interest in the relationship between variables (demographic and perceptions; perceptions and social integration; and social integration and academic performance). As such, a simple correlation analysis was used to determine the association among variables. And for additional analysis, cross tabulations and frequencies were used to examine differences within the African American population by gender and the racial make-up of the high school, on perceptions, social integration experiences, and academic performance. MANOVAs were used to examine how African American students differed from students in the other three ethnic groups on perceptions and social integration experiences.

Research Question 1: To what degree are demographic and racial background variables related to perceptions of the racial climate for African American students?

Research Question 2: To what degree are perceptions of the racial climate related to social integration for African American students?

Research Question 3: To what degree is the extent of social integration related to academic outcomes for African Americans?

Additional Analysis 1: Within the African American population, what are some of the major differences among African American students by gender and racial make-up of the high school on perceptions, social integration, and academic performance?

Additional Analysis 2: Upon observation of the variables used in this particular study, how do African American students differ from White, Hispanic and Asian American students on perceptions and social integration experiences?

Limitations

Upon assessment of the study in general, including the methods taken to retrieve data, the following limitations were identified. As the site for the study only included the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, findings in this study may not be generalized across all institutions of higher learning. Nevertheless, findings may encourage researchers to conduct future studies that would include a wider assortment of institutions. A limitation in the sample size

prevents the ability to generalize findings; however, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted with a larger and more heterogeneous population.

Regarding the limitations in the design of the survey, the cross-sectional nature of the study did not allow for examination of directional influences among variables. While focus groups were conducted to ensure that each respondent understood each survey question, there remains a possibility that the actual respondent may not have completely understood a particular question and thus answered errantly. This study did not incorporate the handling of non-respondents and the potential of non-respondent bias. This would have been important given the modest return rates. Therefore, it is unclear if the respondents differ in any systematic way from the sample.

Though the findings of the present study suggest a directional pattern among the study variables, a longitudinal design would allow direct examination of these patterns. Further, a longitudinal approach would allow for the examination of differences in the student adjustment process, accounting for the influence of demographic factors, perceptions, and social patterns. Limitations to online survey research include the quality of open-ended responses and the relative inability to probe survey respondents for clarification. There is also a difficulty in verifying the identity of online respondents. Although imposters can also participate in research administered through more traditional means, some believe that the relative anonymity provided by the Internet makes it more likely that people will fill out online surveys untruthfully (Lazar & Preece, 1999). On the other hand, many proponents of online research contend that traditional

research methods also suffer from similar problems, and the shortcomings of online research are not much worse.

In summary, this chapter explained the methods used in examining the three research questions posed in the study on whether relationships exist among pre-college experiences, perceptions, social integration experiences, and academic performance of African Americans attending a PWI. Primarily, a simple correlation analysis was used to examine relationships between variables. And for additional analysis, cross tabulations and frequencies were used to examine differences within the African American population by gender and the racial make-up of the high school on perceptions, social integration experiences, and academic performance. MANOVAs were used to examine how African American students differed from students from the other three ethnic groups on perceptions, social integration experiences. The next chapter presents the results obtained for each of the three research questions.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This study posed three (3) research questions relating to the perceptions and social integration experiences of African American students attending a predominantly White institution. The study took place at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In this chapter, the results obtained for each research question are presented.

Prior to analyzing the results of the three research questions, the mean and standard deviation for all variables was evaluated for observational purposes and to obtain a general synopsis of the sample as a whole (refer to Table 8). For the African American sub-sample, the average level of parental education was at the junior college level for both the mother and the father. The mean of the African American college students involved in the sub-sample, overall, had degree aspirations to obtain a master's degree. Typically, students in the sample resided in the residence halls. The average household income ranged between $50,000-$59,999. And typically, students reported having some type of employment. Among the 327 African Americans, more females (227) than males (100) participated in the study. The breakdown by classification for African Americans who participated in the study was: 86 freshmen; 84 sophomores; 69

Table 8:
Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Household Income	$50-000-$59,999	3.604
Father's Education	Junior College	2.373
Mother's Education	Junior College	2.040
High School GPA Number Equivalent	B+	1.133
How far in Education - Goals	Masters Degree	1.066
Positive Perception of Positive Racial Climate	Neutral	.7254
Positive Perception of African Americans	Agree	.8722
Positive Perception of Hispanics	Agree	.7837
Positive Perception of Asian Americans	Neutral	.9675
Positive Perception of Whites	Agree	.9774
Positive Perception - No Faculty Discrimination	Agree	1.0881
Positive Perception - No Administrative Discrimination	Agree	1.190
Social Score with African Americans	Sometimes	1.0183
Social Score with Asian Americans	Seldom	.7040
Social Score with Hispanics	Seldom	.7407
Social Score with Whites	Sometimes	.8319
Visit Library	Sometimes	1.1895
Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor	Sometimes	1.1258
Meet with Faculty After Class	Sometimes	1.1232
Using Minority Student Services	Sometimes	1.3110

juniors; and 88 seniors. Overall, African Americans were impartial on their

perceptions of the college racial climate and interacting with other students. And

in general, African Americans sometimes utilized the library and minority student services, as well as met with their faculty and academic advisor. On the whole, African Americans socialized with other African Americans more than Hispanics, Whites, and Asian Americans.

Results Obtained on Research Question 1: Demographic and Racial Background Variables and Perceptions of the Racial Climate for African Americans

The first question examines whether there are significant relationships between racial background and demographic variables and the perceptions of the college racial climate for African American students. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient statistical procedure was used to determine the association among variables.

Demographic Variables and Perceptions

Upon examination of the results (refer to Table 9), it was determined that there is an inverse relationship between household income and perceptions of positive interactions with other African Americans ($r=-.149$). As the average household income increases among African Americans, the perceptions of having positive interactions with other African Americans decrease. There is an inverse relationship between household income and perceptions of positive interactions with Hispanics ($r=-.143$). As the average household income increases among African Americans, the perceptions of having positive interactions with Hispanics decrease. There is an inverse relationship between degree aspirations and perceptions of perceiving a positive racial climate ($r=-.165$). Among African

Americans, the higher the level of degree aspirations, the more likely they are to perceive that there is a positive racial climate. There is a positive relationship between household income and perceptions of positive interactions with Whites (r=.115).

Table 9:
Relationship between Demographic and Racial Background Variables and Perceptions* for African Americans (N=327)

	Positive Perception of Racial Climate	Positive Perception of African Americans	Positive Perception of Asian Americans	Positive Perception of Hispanics	Positive Perception of Whites	Positive Perception - No Faculty Discrimination	Positive Perception - No Administrative Discrimination
Household Income	.034	-.149(**)	.011	-.143(**)	.115(*)	.045	.054
How far in Education - Goals	-.165(**)	.032	-.126(*)	.022	-.176(**)	-.174(**)	-.159(**)
Predominant Race in High School	.012	.101	-.004	.113(*)	-.061	-.046	-.002
Predominant Race in Neighbor-hood	-.097	.096	-.093	.056	-.126(*)	-.045	-.130(*)
Mother's Education	.078	.012	.077	-.001	.056	.040	.118(*)
Father's Education	.060	.003	.104	.055	.107	.073	.080

* Significance Level = .05; ** Significance Level = .01

Perception variable is measured on 5-point scale with 5 representing strongly agree and 1 representing strongly disagree of having positive interactions; 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree

There are inverse relationships between degree aspirations and perceptions of positive interactions with Whites (r=-.176); degree aspirations and perceptions of positive interactions with faculty (r=-.174); and degree aspirations and perceptions of positive interactions with administration (r=-.159). As their level of degree aspirations increase, African Americans are less inclined to perceive positive relationships with Whites, faculty, and administration. There is a positive relationship between level of mother's education and perceptions of positive

interactions with administration (r=.118). As the level of the mother's education increases among African Americans, so do their perceptions of interacting with administrators. Overall, there were minimal significant relationships between the level of parental education and perceptions of the campus climate.

Racial Make-Up Variables and Perceptions

There is a positive relationship between the predominant race in high school and the perceptions that African Americans have about interacting with Hispanics (r=.113) on campus. African Americans who attended majority White institutions have stronger perceptions of interacting with Hispanics (r=.113). There is an inverse relationship between predominant race in neighborhood and perceptions of positive racial climate (r=.-097). African Americans who come from majority White neighborhoods are less inclined to have positive perceptions of the college racial climate.

Results Obtained on Research Question 2: Perceptions of the Racial Climate and Social Integration for African Americans

This question examined whether relationships existed between perceptions of the racial climate and social integration experiences (refer to Table 10). The Pearson Correlation Coefficient statistical procedure was used to determine the association among variables.

Perceptions of Positive Racial Climate and Social Integration

There are positive relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of the racial climate and socializing with Asian Americans ($r=.148$) and Whites ($r=.270$). Specifically, African Americans who have positive perceptions of Asian Americans and Whites are more likely to socialize with these two ethnic groups. There are inverse relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of the racial climate and socializing with other African Americans ($r=-.371$), socializing with Hispanics ($r=-.200$), visiting the library ($r=-.173$), using minority student services ($r=-.298$), meeting with faculty after class, ($r=-.134$), and meeting with the academic advisor ($r=-.139$). African Americans who have positive perceptions of the racial climate were less likely to socialize with other African Americans, less likely to visit the library, use minority student services, meet with faculty after class, or meet with their academic advisors.

Perceptions of Positive Interactions with African Americans and Social Integration

There are inverse relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with other African Americans and socializing with Asian Americans ($r=-.047$), and socializing with Whites ($r=-.134$). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with other African Americans were less inclined to socialize with Whites and Asian Americans.

Table 10:
Relationship between Perceptions and Social Integration*** for African Americans (N=327)

	Socialize with African Americans	Socialize with Asian Americans	Socialize with Whites	Socialize with Hispanics	Visit Library	Using Minority Student Services	Meet with Faculty After Class	Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor
Positive Perception of Racial Climate	-.371(**)	.148(**)	.270(**)	-.200(**)	-.173(**)	-.298(**)	-.134(*)	-.139(*)
Positive Perception of African Americans	.483(**)	-.047	-.134(*)	.111(*)	.153(**)	.257(**)	.096	.068
Positive Perception of Asian Americans	-.199(**)	.443(**)	.281(**)	.019	-.038	-.198(**)	.002	-.160(**)
Positive Perception of Hispanics	.252(**)	.126(*)	.017	.356(**)	.090	.156(**)	.132(*)	.026
Positive Perception of Whites	-.398(**)	.255(**)	.485(**)	-.143(**)	-.160(**)	-.361(**)	-.053	-.105
Positive Perception - No Faculty Discrimination	-.328(**)	.049	.228(**)	-.217(**)	-.169(**)	-.275(**)	-.141(*)	-.127(*)
Positive Perception - No Administrative Discrimination	-.376(**)	.116(*)	.199(**)	-.212(**)	-.198(**)	-.307(**)	.242(**)	-.220(**)

* Significance Level = .05; ** Significance Level = .01

***Social Integration measured on a 5-point scale with 5 representing strong social integration and 1 representing no social integration; 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Very Often

There are positive relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with other African Americans and socializing with African Americans (r=.483), Hispanics (r=.111), visiting the library (r=.153), and using minority student services (r=.257). African Americans who have a positive perception of interacting with other African Americans are more inclined

to socialize with other African Americans, socialize with Hispanics, visit the library, and use minority student services.

Perceptions of Positive Interactions with Asian Americans and Social Integration

There are positive relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with Asian Americans and socializing with Asian Americans ($r=.443$) and with Whites ($r=.281$). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with Asian Americans are more inclined to socialize with Asian Americans and Whites. There are inverse relations between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with Asian Americans and socializing with other African Americans ($r=-.199$), using minority student services ($r=-.198$) and meeting with an academic advisor ($r=-.160$). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with Asian Americans are less inclined to socialize with African Americans, use minority student services, and meet with academic advisors.

Perceptions of Positive Interactions with Hispanics and Social Integration

There are positive relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with Hispanics and socializing with other African Americans ($r=.252$), Asian Americans ($r=.126$), Whites ($r=.017$), Hispanics ($r=.356$); and using minority student services ($r=.156$) and meeting faculty after class ($r=.132$). African Americans who have positive perceptions of positive interactions with Hispanics are more inclined to socialize with African

Americans, Asian Americans, White and Hispanics. They are also more inclined to use minority student services, and meet with faculty after class.

Perceptions of Positive Interactions with Whites and Social Integration

There are positive relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with Whites and socializing with Asian Americans (r=.255) and with Whites (r=.485). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with Whites are more inclined to socialize with Asian Americans and Whites. There are inverse relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with Whites and socializing with other African Americans (r=-.398), socializing with Hispanics (r=-.143), visiting the library (r=-.160), and using minority student services (r=-.361). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with Whites are less inclined to socialize with African Americans, socialize with Hispanics, visit the library, and use minority student services.

Perceptions of Positive Interactions with Faculty and Social Integration

There are positive relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with faculty and socializing with Asian Americans (r=.049) and with Whites (r=.228). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with faculty are more inclined to socialize with Asian Americans and Whites. There are inverse relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with faculty and socializing

with African Americans (r=-.328) and Hispanics (r=-.217), visiting the library (r=-.169), using minority student services (r=-.275), meeting with faculty after class (r=-.141) and meeting with an academic advisor (r=-.127). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with faculty are less inclined to socialize with African Americans, socialize with Hispanics, visit the library, and use minority student services.

Perceptions of Positive Interactions with Academic Advisor and Social Integration

There are relationships between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with the academic advisor and socializing with Asian Americans (r=.116) and with Whites (r=.199). African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with their academic advisor are more inclined to socialize with Asian Americans and socialize with Whites. There are inverse relations between African Americans having positive perceptions of interacting with administrators and socializing with African Americans (r=-.376), socializing with Hispanics (r=-.212), visiting the library (r=-.198), using minority student services (r=-.307), meeting with faculty after class (r=-.242) and meeting with the academic advisor (r=-.220).

African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with their academic advisor are less inclined to socialize with African Americans, socialize with Hispanics, visit the library, use minority student services, and meet with faculty after class.

Table 11:
Relationship between Social Integration and Academic Performance
for African Americans (N=327)*

		Current GPA
Social Score with African Americans	Pearson Correlation	-.017
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.762
Social Score with Asian Americans	Pearson Correlation	.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.890
Social Score with Hispanics	Pearson Correlation	-.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.928
Social Score with Whites	Pearson Correlation	.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.962
Using Minority Student Services	Pearson Correlation	-.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.802
Meet with Faculty After Class	Pearson Correlation	-.115(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.038
Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor	Pearson Correlation	-.177(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Visit Library	Pearson Correlation	-.052
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.350
Current GPA	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.

*Current college grade point average measured on a 9-point ordinal scale with 9 indicating strong student performance and 1 indicating weak academic performance; 9=A; 8=A-; 7=B+; 6=B; 5=B-; 4=C+; 3=C; 2=C-; 1=D or less.

Results Obtained on Research Question 3: Social Integration and Academic
Performance

This question examined whether relationships existed between social

integration experiences and academic performance. Upon examination of the

results (refer to Table 11), it was determined that there are inverse relationships

between meeting with an academic advisor ($r=-.177$) or faculty after class ($r=-$

$.115$) and grade performance. African Americans who meet with their faculty

after class or with their academic advisor reported having lower grade point

averages.

Results Obtained on Additional Analysis 1:
Differences among African Americans by Gender and Racial Make-Up of High
School on Perceptions, Social Integration, and Academic Performance

This analysis examined differences among African Americans by gender

and racial make-up of high school on perceptions, social integration and academic

performance. Upon examination of differences which were statistically significant

(refer to Table 12), it was determined that African American males are more

inclined than African American females to have positive perceptions of the

campus racial climate. The mean score for African American males on

perceptions of positive racial climate is 3.2. The mean score for females is 2.9.

Females socialize with other African Americans (mean=3.5) more than males

(mean=2.9). Males (mean=2.2) socialize with Asian Americans more than

females (mean=2.0). Females (mean=2.4) socialize with Hispanics more than

males (mean=2.2). And males (mean=3.4)) socialize with Whites more than

females (mean=3.3). On academic performance, males (2.64) report higher grade

point averages than females (2.6).

Table 12:
Differences Among African Americans by Gender, Racial Make-up of High School,
Perceptions, Social Integration Experiences and Academic Performance

Mean Perception* of Positive Racial Climate

Gender		Statistic	Std. Error
Male Positive Perception of Positive Racial Climate	Mean	3.203	.0770
Female Positive Perception of Positive Racial Climate	Mean	2.944	.0446

*This variable is measured on 5-point scale with 5 representing strongly agree and 1 representing strongly disagree that the campus climate is conducive to student based on race; 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree

Mean Social Integration *

Gender		Statistic	Std. Error
Male Socialize with African Americans	Mean	2.938	.1069
Female Socialize with African Americans	Mean	3.545	.0631
Male Socialize with Asian Americans	Mean	2.165	.0672
Female Socialize with Asian Americans	Mean	2.013	.0478
Male Socialize with Hispanics	Mean	2.179	.0687
Female Socialize with Hispanics	Mean	2.405	.0505
Male Socialize with Whites	Mean	3.355	.0839
Female Socialize with Whites	Mean	3.300	.0554

*This variable is measured on a 5-point scale with 5 representing strong social integration and 1 representing no social integration; 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Very Often

Mean Reported College GPA

Gender		Statistic	Std. Error
Male GPA	Mean	2.6475	.05283
Female GPA	Mean	2.6033	.03225

* Current college grade point average measured on a 9-point ordinal scale with 9 indicating strong student performance and 1 indicating weak academic performance; 9=A; 8=A-; 7=B+; 6=B; 5=B-; 4=C+; 3=C; 2=C-; 1=D or less.

Mean Perception Score by Majority Racial Make-Up of High School

(Majority Race in High School)	Mean	Std. Error
(African American) Positive Perception of Racial Climate	3.108	.0552
(Asian American) Positive Perception of Racial Climate	2.801	.0656
(White) Positive Perception of Racial Climate	3.030	.1823
*This variable is measured on 5-point scale with 5 representing strongly agree and 1 representing strongly disagree that the campus climate is conducive to student based on race; 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree		

Mean Social Integration Score by Majority Racial Make-Up of High School

Mean Social
Majority Racial Make-

Integration Score by
Up of High School

(Majority Race in High School)	Mean	Std. Error
(African American) Socialize with African Americans	3.039	.0822
(Asian American) Socialize with African Americans	3.846	.0701
(White) Socialize with African Americans	3.421	.2189
(African American) Socialize with Asian Americans	2.083	.0466
(Asian American) Socialize with Asian Americans	1.964	.0795
(White) Socialize with Asian Americans	1.916	.1649
(African American) Socialize with Hispanics	2.230	.0533
(Asian American) Socialize with Hispanics	2.446	.0743
(White) Socialize with Hispanics	2.505	.1786
(African American) Socialize with Whites	3.591	.0548
(Asian American) Socialize with Whites	2.968	.0842
(White) Socialize with Whites	2.863	.1744
*This variable is measured on a 5-point scale with 5 representing strong social integration and 1 representing no social integration; 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Very Often		

(Majority Race in High School)	Mean	Std. Error
(African American) College GPA	2.6034	.03594
(Asian American) College GPA	2.6287	.05424
(White) College GPA	2.7037	.10999

* Current college grade point average measured on a 9-point ordinal scale with 9 indicating strong student performance and 1 indicating weak academic performance; 9=A; 8=A-; 7=B+; 6=B; 5=B-; 4=C+; 3=C; 2=C-; 1=D or less.

African Americans who attended a predominantly African American high school have more positive perceptions of the college racial climate (mean=5.0) than those who attended a predominantly White (mean=3.0) or predominantly Asian American (mean=2.8) high school. African Americans who attended a predominantly African American high school socialize with Asian Americans (mean=2.1) more than those who attended a predominantly Asian American school (mean=2.0) or a predominantly White school (mean=1.9). Those who attended a predominantly White school socialize with Hispanics (mean=2.5) more than those who attend a predominantly African American (mean=2.2) or a predominantly Asian American (mean=2.4) high school. And those who attended a predominantly African American high school socialize with Whites (mean=3.6) more than those who attended a predominantly Asian American (mean=3.0) or a predominantly White (mean=2.9) high school. And finally, African Americans who attended a predominantly White high school report higher college grade point averages (mean=2.7) than those who attended a predominantly Asian American (mean=2.6) or a predominantly African American (mean=2.6) high school.

Results Obtained on Additional Analysis 2:
Differences among African American, White, Hispanic and Asian American
Students on Variables used in the Study

The comparison of Asian American, Hispanic, and White students to African American students on the perception variables are provided in Table 13. Asian American students were significantly different from African American students on all perception variables. The difference between Hispanic students and African American students was not significant. For White students, except for the perception of interacting with Asian students, all the perceptions were significantly different from African American students. In general, more Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Whites than African Americans had a positive perception of the racial climate. And Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Whites ranked higher than African Americans on the following: 1) having a positive perception of interacting with Whites; 2) believing that there was no discrimination among faculty; and 3) believing that there was no discrimination among administrators. All three groups ranked lower than African Americans on having a positive perception when interacting with African Americans. Asian Americans and Whites had a lower perception of interacting with Hispanics than African Americans. Whites and Asian Americans had a higher perception of interacting with Asian Americans than African Americans. And African Americans had a higher perception than Hispanics on interacting with Asian Americans.

Table 13:
Perceptions by Race

	Perceprc	Peraff	Perasi	Perhis	Perwhi	Perndfa	Peradnd
Asian American vs. AA	.324	-.577	.779	-.241	.256	.363	.549
Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Hispanic vs. AA	.134	-.031	-.060	.286	.178	.183	.267
Sig.	.007	.628	.367	.000	.006	.010	.001
White vs. AA	.360	-.372	.028	-.201	.587	.451	.607
Sig.	.000	.000	.961	.000	.000	.000	.000

Variable Name	Variable Description
Perceprc	Perception of Positive Racial Climate
Peraff	Perception of Interacting with African Americans
Perasi	Perception of Interacting with Asian Americans
Perhis	Perception of Interacting with Hispanics
Perwhi	Perception of Interacting with Whites
Perndfa	Perception - No Faculty Discrimination
Peradnd	Perception - No Administrative Discrimination

The comparison of Asian American, Hispanic and White students to African American students on each social integration variable is provided in Table 14. Asian Americans, Hispanics and Whites ranked higher than African Americans in socially integrating with different races. While Whites ranked higher than African Americans on socially integrating with the same race, Hispanics and Asian Americans ranked lower than African Americans on socially integrating with the same race. African Americans ranked higher than the other three ethnic groups on socially integrating with African Americans. African Americans also ranked higher in socially integrating with Asian Americans than Whites and Hispanics. Whites and Asian Americans ranked lower than African Americans on socially integrating with Hispanics. Asian Americans, Whites, and Hispanics ranked higher than African Americans on socially integrating with Whites. African Americans used minority student services more than Asian

Table 14:
Social Integration Experiences by Race

	Sisdifr	Sissame	Affsis	Asisis	Hisis	Whisis	Sermss	Serfavis	Seracadv	Serlibr
Asian Americans vs. AA	.334	-.153	-1.384	1.164	-.420	.118	-1.365	-.461	-.476	-.107
Sig.	.000	.033	.000	.000	.000	.057	.000	.000	.000	.279
Hispanics vs. AA	.292	-.229	-.256	-.362	.937	.134	.598	-.133	.086	.057
Sig.	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.018	.000	.107	.263	.949
Whites vs. AA	.752	.555	-.437	-.127	-.357	.358	-.932	.079	-.194	-.280
Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.009	.000	.000	.000	.262	.004	.000

Variable Name	Variable Description
Sisdifr	Social Integration Score - Different
Sissame	Social Integration Score – Same
Affsis	Social Integration Score with African Americans
Asisis	Social Integration Score with Asian Americans
Hissis	Social Integration Score with Hispanics
Whisis	Social Integration Score with Whites
Sermss	Using Minority Student Services
Serfavis	Meet with Faculty After Class
Seracadv	Meet with Academic or Faculty Advisor
Serlibr	Visit Library

Americans, while Hispanics ranked higher in their usage. While Whites met with faculty after class more than African Americans, Hispanics and Asian Americans met with faculty less than African Americans.

While Asian Americans and Whites met with their academic or faculty advisor less than African Americans, Hispanics met with them more than African Americans. Finally, Asian Americans and Whites visited the library less than African Americans. Hispanics visited the library more than African Americans.

Social Integration and Academic Performance

The comparison of Asian, Hispanic, and White students to African

American students on grade performance is provided in Table 15. As indicated,

Asian Americans and Whites have higher grade point averages than African

Americans. African Americans have higher grade point averages than Hispanics.

Table 15:
Grade Performance by Race

Ethnicity Difference Contrast		Current GPA
Asian American vs. African American	Contrast Estimate	.591
	Sig.	.000
Hispanic vs. African American	Contrast Estimate	-.333
	Sig.	.000
White vs. African American	Contrast Estimate	.493
	Sig.	.000

This study posed three (3) research questions relating to the perceptions

and social integration experiences of African American students attending a

predominantly White institution. In the next chapter, there is a discussion of the

findings presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

As an aid to the reader, this final chapter of the dissertation begins with an overview of the research problem and a synopsis of the major methods used in this study. The key sections of the chapter summarize the findings and discuss their implications.

As explained in Chapter 2, the study examined African American students' perceptions of a PWI college racial environment and subsequently, how these perceptions influence the students' social integration and subsequent academic performance. Specifically, there was an examination on how individuals' demographic variables and pre-college neighborhood and high school racial composition are related to students' perceptions of the school racial environment. Next, there was an examination of the influence of these perceptions on students' social integration into their university community. Finally, the relationships between students' social integration and academic performance were evaluated.

This study involved 327 African American undergraduate students attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Additionally, data was also gathered from 345 Whites, 260 Hispanics and 284 Asian Americans for

comparable analysis. A survey entitled the "Student Experiences Questionnaire" (see Appendix D) gathered data. The survey was administered via email. An introductory email (see Appendix C) was sent explaining the purpose and the importance of the study and requesting that each student complete the online survey. The introductory email provided details on what the participants could expect from the researcher and instructed them on how to request a copy of the study results. The email also informed the participants of the process on receiving a gift (a free pen or pencil) for completing the survey. The study relied chiefly on correlations.

Demographic Variables and Perceptions

One of the key hindrances to financing a college education for many low-income African American students is unmet financial need. Generally, most college financial aid offices classify unmet financial need as the price of attending college after all aid (scholarships and loans) has been awarded. Such a challenge discourages many students from attending college. And for those who attend despite the financial challenge, enrollment might mean getting a job, borrowing significant amounts of money, or attending school on a part-time basis until the financial situation improves. Such challenges make the goal of attending college almost unfeasible for even the most talented low-income students.

Upon examination of the results, it was determined that as the average household income increases among African Americans, the perceptions of having positive interactions with other African Americans and Hispanics decrease. While

19% of the sample reported having household incomes of $100,000 or more, the reported household income varied considerably across the spectrum.

In a report entitled "America's Untapped Resources: Low-Income Students in Higher Education," scholar Richard Kahlenberg (2003) of the Century Foundation noted that up to 66% of the nation's wealthiest quartile were enrolled in a college within 24 months of graduating from high school. By contrast, only 20 % of the students from the lowest quartile were enrolled in a college or university during that same period of time. Kahlenberg also said that among the nation's most selective schools, 74 % of the students came from the top economic quartile.

Conversely, as the household income for African Americans increased, so did their perceptions of having positive interactions with Whites. For those African Americans who reported household incomes in the upper economic bracket, it's assumed that their high school experiences connected them to more Whites than African Americans and Hispanics. As such, African Americans in the higher economic bracket might be more comfortable interacting with familiar high school peer groups.

For many African Americans, the odds of applying to college, being admitted, enrolling and succeeding, depend very much on whom they are and how they grew up. As such, this may explain the disconnection between African American students from higher income brackets and those from the lower income brackets.

Shifting to degree aspirations, for African Americans, the higher the level of degree aspirations, the more likely they are to perceive that there is a positive racial climate. And as their level of degree aspirations increases, African Americans are less inclined to perceive positive relationships with Whites, faculty, and administration.

Higher education offers a variety of benefits. And for many African Americans, degree attainment relates to the reaping of a better job opportunity. The higher the degree, the better the potential to secure fruitful career opportunities. As such, as the degree aspirations increase, so does the determination on the part of African Americans to achieve good grades and to succeed academically. As a college practitioner, it has been my observation that students who have high academic goals are more inclined to challenge administration and to become more competitive with their peers. It could be that while African Americans are content with their college racial climate, they might become academically more competitive with their peers and become committed to ensuring that their faculty and administration are not serving as roadblocks to their success.

Overall, there were minimal relationships between the level of parental education and perceptions of the campus climate. On average, the sample population reported parents with some college, but minimal degree completion. It might be that a greater number of African American parents recognize the value of sending a child to college, regardless of their own educational history. As such, first generation college students might be more concerned about achieving

academic success and utilizing the support services of the college than they are with their perceptions of the college climate.

While the majority of the sample reported African Americans graduating from predominant African American high schools, their racial background had minimal impact on how they perceive their current racial college climate. For a number of high schools across the country, regardless of the predominant race, a variety of school district reports illustrate the high school community as beginning to incorporate a more cosmopolitan approach to learning. School districts are now encouraging diversity in faculty, diversity in curriculum, and an appreciation of other cultures. While surrounded by peers from their own ethnic background, African American high school students have ample opportunities to become involved in organizations, sports, and an assortment of community events that allow them to interact with students of different races, ethnicities and cultures. As such, the racial background of the high school and neighborhood environment for African Americans might have minimal bearing on how the student will perceive and interact in the college environment.

Perceptions and Social Integration

The findings in this study support the literature suggesting that African Americans are inclined to interact with peers of the same race or ethnicity to search for common bonds. African Americans who have positive perceptions of interacting with other African Americans were less inclined to socialize with Whites and Asian Americans.

Often, given the environment, African Americans would rather stay within their comparable groups than be immersed into the mainstream social culture of the college campus environment. As in most situations, students are more inclined to attach themselves to familiar surroundings. As such, when approaching a new environment, they might be more inclined to search for other students with similar backgrounds. However, African Americans who perceived positive interactions with other African Americans were less inclined to socially integrate with other races.

Because their perceptions lean so strongly towards socializing with other African Americans, they may become even more comfortable and more inclined to interact with other African Americans. They make choices to join African American fraternities and sororities, and ethnic-based clubs and organizations mainly to participate in groups with which they seem to identify. Such thinking might appear to be narrow in approach and limits the possibilities for African Americans to meet and experience different people and cultures. Yet it may be that such choices serve as survival techniques for adapting into a predominantly White college campus life. It also may be that African Americans' strong identification with the college is facilitated by their interactions with persons from the same background. Their definition of social integration may be defined as the extent to which their interaction with other African Americans grants them a sense of being an integral part of the institution, thus experiencing satisfaction with the college experience. In other words, they may be content with their choices, as limited as they may appear, and such choices help them find their own

identity on campus.

Results also illustrate that African Americans with positive perceptions of interacting with White students were more inclined to socially integrate with students of different races. When analyzing the differences between their social integration patterns given their perception of African Americans versus that of Whites, a trend was revealed. Socializing across race contributes to cultural awareness and a wider assortment of college social experiences.

African Americans who prefer to limit their level of social integration to other African Americans may perceive such an interaction as more of a survival technique. Similarly, African Americans who prefer to socially integrate with other races may also view such an interaction as a survival technique. One who desires to learn more about a country's culture may decide to study or travel to this country for a specified period of time. It's assumed that the goal of such an immersion would be to walk away from the experience having a better understanding of the country. Likewise, African Americans who choose to socially integrate with different ethnicities may have determined that they would rather learn more about different types of people. And as such, they would prefer to participate in clubs, activities, and fraternities and sororities that represent a wider diversity of students.

Students who have interracial friendships and relationships socialize across race much more frequently than other students do. College students who do not interact with people outside of their cultural comfort zones may not present the emotional, interpersonal, and intellectual challenges required for change and

development. Antonio's study found that casual interracial interaction is particularly beneficial among students such as African Americans with more racially homogenous social circles because of the interpersonal challenges such interactions present. Perhaps more importantly, socially integrating with different races is also tied to college academic performance. Given that this study found that African Americans were less inclined to integrate with other races than Whites and Asian Americans, and given the literature surrounding social integration and academic performance, this area merits further study in the future.

While African Americans in general appeared to limit their level of social integration to other African Americans, and while these same African Americans are generally content with the college experience given their interactions and perceived identity, there may be a need for intervention on behalf of college practitioners to stress the importance of social integration among races, particularly at a campus that enrolls a diverse group of students. In fact, academic and social circles that represent an ethnically diverse group could serve to be more beneficial in classroom performance as well as providing a stronger identification with the university. Further examination is recommended on the relationship between the social integration of students of different races and academic performance.

Another finding indicates that African Americans perceiving positive interactions with other African Americans were more inclined to meet with their advisor, visit the library, and visit the Office for Minority Student Services. This finding supports an additional finding that African Americans were more likely

than the other ethnic groups to meet with their academic advisors, visit the library, and visit the Office for Minority Student Services. Currently, several predominantly White campuses have designed an Office of Minority Student Services to assist in the retention of African Americans. One of the main goals of such offices is to encourage African Americans to meet with their advisors, create solid study habits, and take advantage of other services that may include career development and an assortment of cultural and ethnic-based events and social initiatives.

While offices comparable to Minority Student Services were designed to assist African Americans with academic success and career goals in general, findings indicate that visiting minority student services, meeting with an advisor and visiting the library had minimal influence on academic performance for African Americans. Additionally, African Americans who generally perceived to have positive relationships with faculty and administration were less inclined to use minority student services. In this particular study, Hispanics were more inclined than African Americans to visit minority student services. Based on these findings, further examination is recommended on the influence of services designed specifically for African Americans on academic performance and academic success. It may be that such services, while not intentionally, encourage African Americans to immerse themselves in the African American culture, leaving little time to socially integrate with other races outside of the classroom.

Social Integration and Academic Performance

The academic success of African American students often depends on initiatives that support their academic efforts once they arrive on campus, such as orientation programs, initial meetings with academic and faculty advisors, and a host of other transitional programs. Often incorporated into the orientation message to new students is an invitation to take advantage of all of the campus resources, including the academic advising team. In fact, an increasing number of higher education professionals are attempting to learn more about minority student performance and achievement on predominantly White campuses.

This data obtained from this study revealed that African Americans who meet with their faculty after class or with their academic advisor reported having lower grade point averages. While this finding seems a bit contradictory, there might be some sense made from such an observation. Based on experience, one of the challenges that many Academic Advising offices face is how to encourage more students to utilize their counsel early in the college process. For the most part, students view academic advisors as a periodic agent to assist them with registering for the classes they need to graduate and to ensure that they are meeting degree requirements. It is rare that students who are succeeding in the classroom arrange an appointment to meet with an academic advisor to discuss their academic success.

As such, in this finding, African Americans were more inclined than the other ethnic groups to meet with their academic advisor. At the same time, their grade point average was lower than Whites and Asian Americans. So it might be

that the need to stay in touch with their advisor is greater, given that it is the role of the academic advisor to assist students who are performing below standard with the development of an action plan to improve performance, sustain retention and to avoid academic dismissal.

While minimal relationships were found between social integration and academic performance, the finding indicating a relationship between academic performance and meeting with academic and faculty advisors was enlightening and provided hope that African Americans are attempting to take advantage of the resources which are necessary for their academic success. Exclusion from such parts of academic life can be detrimental and might prevent students' chances for success in college. Nettles (1986) supports that African American students' academic performance, more than white students' performance, is related to the type and level of interaction they have with their faculty members and academic advisors.

Many scholars agree that the reasons for Black students' lower grade-point averages and retention rates include unequal academic preparation, lower satisfaction with their colleges, and a lack of academic and social integration. Students who take advantage of the resources offered by their university might find themselves performing better in the classroom. It is suspected that such students who are more in tune with cultivating the college climate through academic and social integration might be poised to perform better academically.

Differences among African Americans by Gender and Racial Make-Up of High School

There has been an ongoing discussion about the enrollment and retention of African American men attending college. The creation of historically Black colleges, such as Morehouse College for men and Spelman College for women, suggests that there are gender-based issues in the education of African American college students. As an example, Morehouse addressed the needs of African American men early on and incorporated in its mission for each African American male receiving a degree from Morehouse to develop the personal attributes of self-confidence, tolerance, morality, ethical behavior, humility, a global perspective, and a commitment to a social justice.

Regarding academic performance, there is the perception by some scholars that African American men are falling behind African American women in educational achievement. However, the data obtained from this particular study revealed that males reported higher grade point averages than females. This could be that the University of Illinois houses, as mentioned before, one of the largest fraternity and sorority systems in the country, obliging each member of any Greek-letter organization to maintain a minimal academic standard. With regard to African American fraternities and sororities, there are currently more fraternities than sororities on campus. And a significant number of African American men are members of historically Black fraternities. This might explain the phenomenon of African American males reporting higher grade point averages than females in this study.

The data revealed that African American males are more inclined than African American females to have positive perceptions of the campus racial climate and are more inclined to socialize with White students. Such an observation might also help to explain why African American men are reporting higher grade point averages, as the literature ascertains that students who academically and socially integrate into the college campus gain a better appreciation of the college environment, and develop stronger relationships with faculty and staff.

African Americans who attended a predominantly African American high school reported more positive perceptions of the college racial climate and socialized with different races more than those who attended majority White schools. While not expected, such findings serve as partial evidence that the administrative teams at high schools with majority African American students might be encouraging college-bound students to take full advantage of the college experience. Encouraging social and academic integration might allow for smoother transitions into the college setting.

The data also revealed that African Americans who attended a predominantly White high school reported higher college grade point averages than those who attended a majority African American high school. While there is no evidence, it might be that the majority White high schools provided better academic resources for its students. As such, students at majority White high schools might have received better assistance with academic performance and better college preparation.

Differences by Race

In general, African Americans were the least likely of the four ethnic groups to have positive perceptions of the college racial climate. Given the educational history of access for African Americans, this finding is consistent with the challenges that African Americans face on predominant White campuses. In addition to lower academic performance and higher attrition, feelings of isolation and alienation often affect African American students' perceptions of the college environment. And as stated previously, such feelings are related to African Americans being displeased with the college experience.

The data obtained from the additional analysis also revealed that Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Whites ranked higher than African Americans on having a positive perception of interacting with Whites and believing that there was no discrimination among faculty and administrators. Most of the literature surrounding African American students attending White colleges incorporates a section on their feelings and perceptions. For the most part, freshmen arriving on campus for the first time might experience excitement, anticipation, and a little intimidation from their new surroundings. For African Americans attending majority White campuses, such experiences are exacerbated by feelings of isolation and a potential lack of initial fit. As such, the manner in which students are transitioned into the new college experience, via orientation programs and the like, is crucial to how students perceive the college climate and how students interact with others.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Social integration is more than the student having social interactions. It requires students to see themselves as a member of the academic or social community within the university. It can be viewed as a rite of passage whereby the students move from membership in one community to another—from their previous community to the university. The process of integration is an interactive process in which the student takes an active part.

In terms of African American students attending PWIs, unique challenges have continued to stifle the retention of African Americans at PWIs. These challenges range from hostile environments to societal issues. One of the major challenges for African American students is the campus environment. Human development models suggest that humans develop best in surroundings where they are valued, feel safe and accepted, and have social networks. Because PWIs possess the ability to empower individuals through education, the people they employ must recognize that they have the power to facilitate or frustrate student success. With that in mind, PWIs need to consciously reevaluate the campus environment in which students learn and grow. For PWIs to realistically provide education and service to the entire student population, a commitment to diversity must come from the highest administrator. Moreover, colleges need to take deliberate steps to understand why African American students are not succeeding and devise plans to encourage success.

The lack of success of African American college students at PWIs also points to a larger societal issue. To totally understand the predicament of African

American students at PWIs, there must be a comprehension of the history of access to higher education for African Americans in the United States. African Americans students undoubtedly face challenges at PWIs. There are concrete solutions to help ease the problem. Hiring black faculty and staff, providing support services that target minority students, implementing cultural and social services, and devising comprehensive retention plans are all steps that can facilitate minority student achievement at PWIs.

Contributing to the research, this study presented a comprehensive analysis on the social and academic experiences among African American students attending a predominantly White institution. The results obtained upon examination of the three research questions found relationships among pre-college experiences, perceptions of the racial climate, social integration experiences and academic performance. Such results could benefit higher education practitioners who are interested in the achievement of African Americans on majority White campuses.

Findings suggested relationships between demographic factors for African Americans and their perceptions of interacting with other students. The level of household income and the level of degree aspirations among African Americans are related to how African Americans perceive their interactions with other African Americans and with students of varying backgrounds. For example, as the average household income increases among African Americans, the perceptions of having positive interactions with other African Americans decrease. Relationships linking race-specific factors and perceptions were minimal.

African Americans are inclined to interact with peers of the same race or ethnicity to search for common bonds. Often, given the environment, African Americans would rather stay within their comparable groups than be immersed into the mainstream social culture of the college campus environment. Results also illustrate that African Americans were less inclined than the other three ethnic groups to socially integrate with students of different races. Research illustrates that college students who do not interact with people out of their cultural comfort zones may not be presented with the emotional, interpersonal, and intellectual challenges required for change and development. This area merits further study in the future.

Implications

The findings from this study suggest some important implications for the study and practice of higher education. First, the findings demonstrate that relationships exist among a number of the variables included in the conceptual model. Second, the findings suggest that further investigation on the relationship between pre-college social interactions, current college perceptions, social integration experiences, and academic performance could help explain a wide variety of student outcomes for African Americans.

The findings in this study also have important implications for how we as college practitioners conceptualize social integration. As originally defined, a social integration occurs when there is strong affiliation with the college social environment, including the faculty, academic staff, and peers—but of a social

nature—such as peer group interactions, informal contact with faculty, and involvement in organizations (Nora, 1993). However, the findings in this study suggest that African American students may view social integration as the extent to which the interaction between African American students with other African Americans grants them a sense of being an integral part of the institution, thus experiencing satisfaction with the college experience (Kraemer, 1997). While African Americans who adopt Kraemer's version of social integration may be content with their level of social integration, further examination is needed on the overall effects of limiting one's social integration to one ethnic group.

Such redefining of social integration has particular significance at predominantly White institutions with African American student enrollment. First, higher education institutions must determine the various ways that African Americans define social integration. The identification of how African Americans integrate socially will determine the approach that should be taken to encourage full involvement in college life. The findings from this study suggest that if college practitioners are serious about improving the retention and performance of African Americans on predominantly White campuses, then they must design and implement programs to ensure that the college campus culture reflects the norms and values of a wider variety of students, rather than the norms and values of a select group.

<u>Recommendations for Further Study</u>

Further study should be conducted to examine the differences within the African American population itself, as they relate to perceptions, social interaction, and academic performance. It is also recommended that such studies be conducted with a larger and more heterogeneous population. At some universities, it is left to the discretion of the students' own preferences for engagement with diverse groups. As mentioned throughout the study, African American students prefer the comfort of familiarity rather than integration with people with different background and experiences. Practitioners must be attentive in observing developmental and behavioral patterns among African Americans, and whether informal observations can be made to determine if there is a connection between academic performance and social behavioral patterns and perceptions.

Universities should continue to assess African American perceptions and experiences in order to develop new initiatives designed to encourage full participation in resources, services and formal and informal student groups. Once African Americans begin to take full advantage of their resources, then a future examination of the role of minority student services and comparable programs is recommended. Facilitating student exposure to diverse people and perspectives is a key vehicle for practitioners to learn more about various student groups and for student groups to learn more about each other. And considerable thought must be given to help students learn how to interact with each other, with attention to inter-group relationships. Campuses are encouraged to facilitate inter-group

dialogue activities in courses, residence halls, and student programming.

Attempts should also be made to identify how faculty and student services administrator relationships affect African American student success in a predominantly White university setting. Academic counselors or faculty advisors who are informed on particular pre-college characteristics of freshman African Americans may be able to shape their advising sessions more appropriately, thus promoting a smoother transition into the college experience.

In conclusion, the main focus of this study was to identify the key factors relevant to affecting African American college student perceptions, social experiences and academic performance. The results of this study indicate that there are minimal demographic variables and racial background variables related to African American students' perceptions of a positive racial climate. However there was a positive correlation between perceptions and social integration, and a correlation between social integration and academic performance. The findings of this study should contribute to the body of knowledge regarding perceptions of the college environment, social integration experiences and academic performance of African Americans attending a predominantly White institution. Future research in assessing the factors related to African American student success on predominantly White campuses is recommended.

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APPENDIX A

EMAIL REQUESTING PARTICIPATION

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Higher Education Administration

Department of Administration, Leadership, and Technology
239 Greene Street, Suite 300
New York, NY
10011

You have been invited to take part in a study to learn more about your out-of-class social experiences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). The study will be conducted by Victor Mullins, Department of Administration, Leadership, and Technology, New York University, as part of his doctoral dissertation. His faculty sponsor is Dr. Patrick Love of the Department of Administration, Leadership and Technology. He can be reached at 212-998-5524. Upon completion of the survey, please print out a confirmation and bring a copy of your confirmation to DKH, Room 407 to receive your free gift.

If you agree to participate in the study, please complete the attached survey about your background (age, gender, education, etc) and current out-of class experiences. The survey should take about 15-20 minutes of your time. Your responses will be kept confidential with the following exception: the researcher is required by law to report to the appropriate authorities, suspicion of harm to yourself, to children, or to others. Please note that while each survey question is important, you do have the right to not answer any particular question(s). Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at anytime without penalty. Non-participation or withdrawal will not affect your grade or academic standing.

There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Although you will receive no direct benefits, this research will help us understand student out-of-class social experiences and how they relate to academic success. Your responses will be combined with those of other UIUC students and used to create tables and graphs for a special report. Your involvement will assist in providing valuable feedback on your academic and campus life experiences—information that can be used for student assessment activities, self-study reports, campus planning, and policy analysis. In other words, we want you to enjoy your college experience!

If you have any questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Victor C. Mullins, who is in charge of this survey effort at vmullins@uiuc.edu or call 217-333-5016 between the hours of 9-5, Monday through Friday. For questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects, Office of Sponsored Programs, at 212-998-2121. Thank you in advance for your participation.

I have read the procedure described above and voluntarily agree to participate in the survey research. I also verify that I am 18 years of age or older.

[Proceed to Survey]

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APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

> **Section 1** - Check (√) the <u>one</u> response on each line below that best reflects your attitude.

1. How often do you join clubs or organizations that comprise mostly of Asian American students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

2. How often do you join clubs or organizations that comprise mostly of African American students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

3. How often do you join clubs or organizations that comprise mostly of White students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

4. How often do you join clubs or organizations that comprise mostly of Hispanic students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

5. How often do you socialize with Asian American students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

6. How often do you socialize with African American students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

7. How often do you socialize with Hispanic students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

8. How often do you socialize with White students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

9. How often have you studied with Asian American students?
   1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

10. How often have you studied with African American students?
    1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

11. How often have you studied with White students?
    1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

12. How often have you studied with Hispanic students?
    1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

13. How often have you sat around campus talking with Asian American students?
    1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

14. How often have you sat around campus talking with African American students?
    1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

15. How often have you sat around campus talking with White students?
    1) Never__ 2) Seldom__ 3) Sometimes__ 4) Often__ 5) Very Often__

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16. How often have you sat around campus talking with Hispanic students?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

17. How often have you socialized with a White faculty member?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

18. How often have you socialized with an African American faculty member?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

19. How often have you socialized with an Asian American faculty member?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

20. How often have you socialized with a Hispanic faculty member?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

21. How often have you visited the office for Minority Student Services?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

22. How often have you visited your professor during his office hours?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

23. How often have you met with your Academic or Faculty Advisor?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

24. How often have you visited the library?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

25. How often have you discussed course content with students outside of class?
    1) Never___ 2) Seldom___ 3) Sometimes___ 4) Often___ 5) Very Often___

Section 2 - Check (√) the one response on each line that best reflects your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.

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26. This institution makes an effort to attract students of diverse backgrounds.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

27. Faculty members on campus do not discriminate me against because of my race.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

28. There is little or no racial discrimination on this campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

29. Faculty members on this campus are sensitive to issues that are important to students of my race.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

30. I do not feel discriminated against by White students on this campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

31. I do not feel discriminated against by Asian students on this campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

32. I do not feel discriminated against by African American students on this campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree___ 2) Disagree___ 3) Neither___ 4) Agree___ 5) Strongly Agree___

33. I do not feel discriminated against by Hispanic students on this campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

34. There is open discussion of racial issues on campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

35. The administration on this campus does not discriminate against students of my race.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

36. It has been easy for me to meet and make friends with Asian American students.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__
37. It has been easy for me to meet and make friends with African American students.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

38. It has been easy for me to meet and make friends with White students.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

39. It has been easy for me to meet and make friends with Hispanic students.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

40. Race is not an issue on this campus.
    1) Strongly Disagree__   2) Disagree__   3) Neither__   4) Agree__   5) Strongly Agree__

Section 3: Please answer (√) the following questions.

---

1) What is your gender?   1. Male _____   2. Female _____

2) What is your age?   _____

3) What is your Ethnicity (e.g., African American, Jamaican American, Asian American)?

(Please specify_____)

4) Where were your parents born?

(Please specify)   1. Mother_____   2. Father_____

5) What is your Academic Status?   1. Freshman   _____
                                         2. Sophomore   _____
                                         3. Junior   _____
                                         4. Senior   _____

6) What are your best estimate of your own and your family's annual gross income (before taxes) from earnings last year (2002)?

Income Ranges	Your Income	Family's Income
1. *Less than* $9,999	_____	_____
2. $10,000-$19,999	_____	_____
3. $20,000-$29,999	_____	_____
4. $30,000-$39,999	_____	_____
5. $40,000-$49,999	_____	_____
6. $50,000-$59,999	_____	_____
7. $60,000-$69,999	_____	_____
8. $70,000-$79,999	_____	_____
9. $80,000-$89,999	_____	_____
10. $90,000-$99,999	_____	_____
11. $100,000 *or more*	_____	_____

7) Where do you live while you are in school?
    1. At home with parents   _____
    2. In an off-campus apartment   _____
    3. Residence Hall   _____
    4. Other (Describe)   _____

8) How far would you like to go in school?
    1. Bachelor's degree   _____
    2. Master's degree   _____
    3. Professional (e.g., Law, Dental degree)   _____
    4. Doctoral (Ph.D.) degree   _____

9) What kind of high school did you attend?   1. Private ___   2. Public ___   3.

Other_____

10) The majority of students who attended my high school were (Please Check One)

1. White ___   2. African American ___   3. Asian ___   4. Hispanic ___   5. Other (Describe)

_____

11) The majority of residents who lived in my neighborhood prior to college were (Please Check One)

1. White ___   2. African American ___   3. Asian ___   4. Hispanic ___   5. Other (Describe)

_____

12) Check the highest level of your mother and father's education.

	Mother	Father
1. Elementary/Junior High school	_____	_____
2. Some High School	_____	_____
3. High School Diploma	_____	_____
4. Some College	_____	_____
5. Junior College Diploma	_____	_____
6. Bachelor's Degree	_____	_____
7. Vocational School	_____	_____
8. Graduate Degree	_____	_____
9. Don't Know)	_____	_____

13) Indicate your current letter grade equivalent cumulative college GPA by choosing one grade from the following list:

9=A   _____

8=A-   _____

7=B+   _____

6=B   _____

5=B-   _____

4=C+   _____

3=C   _____

2=C-   _____

1=D or less. _____

14) What was your Composite SAT Score? _____

15) What was your final High School GPA? _____

16) When I interact with White students, I am

Very Comfortable ____   Comfortable ____   Uncomfortable ____   Very Uncomfortable ____

17) When I interact with African American students, I am

Very Comfortable ____   Comfortable ____   Uncomfortable ____   Very Uncomfortable ____

18) When I interact with Asian American students, I am

Very Comfortable ____   Comfortable ____   Uncomfortable ____   Very Uncomfortable ____

19) When I interact with Hispanic students, I am

Very Comfortable ____   Comfortable ____   Uncomfortable ____   Very Uncomfortable ____

20) While attending college, do you work?

Yes ____   No ____

If yes, how many hours a week do you work while attending school? ____