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**SUPPORT, ACHIEVEMENT, EXCELLENCE, SUCCESS:
EXPERIENCES OF UNDER-REPRESENTED STUDENTS IN
A PRE-COLLEGE ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM**

BY

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THESIS

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2000**

Urbana, Illinois

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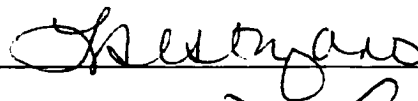
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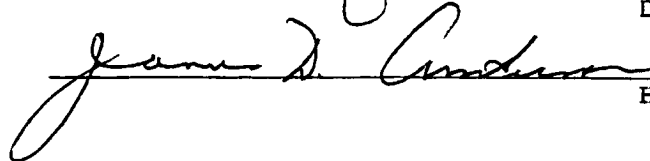
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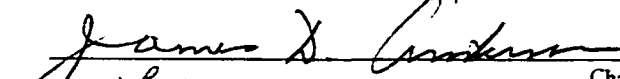


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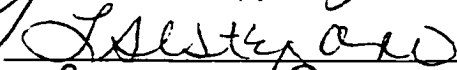


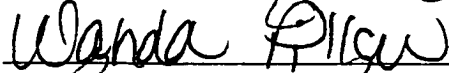
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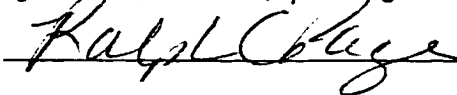
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I would like to dedicate this thesis to Dr. James D. Anderson, whose support and guidance made this work possible. To Franklin and Loida Irizarry, my parents, whose unconditional love and commitment to my education kept me focused throughout the years. This is also dedicated to my children, Wilson and Ariana Pierce, who I hope value and enjoy learning as much as I do. To Ron Woolfolk and the Summer Bridge family, I dedicate this thesis for sharing its work, experiences, and struggles. Finally, to my friends and extended family, for their invaluable encouragement, love and respect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the thesis writing process, many have wondered and commented on how do I manage being a single parent, supporting my family, and finding the time to write this thesis. It has not been easy. I could not have done it without the support and encouragement from so many of my friends and family. To them I am eternally grateful.

I am most thankful to James D. Anderson, my academic advisor and the chairman of my doctoral committee. From the beginning of my graduate studies, he has been my role model and friend. The years I have spent, as one of his advisees has been a rich learning experience. He has always been supportive of my work, providing advice and encouragement throughout my graduate studies and particularly this thesis. Without his confidence in my ability, this thesis would have been very difficult to complete.

I am also grateful to Dr. Lizanne Destefano, Dr. Ralph Page and Dr. Wanda Pillow, who served on my committee for my preliminary and final oral examinations. They are some of the most knowledgeable and welcoming people I have had the pleasure of knowing. They provided advice rich in their areas of specialty making this thesis more significant to me. Their comments and ideas were always helpful and insightful.

I gratefully acknowledge the Illinois Consortium of Educational Opportunity Programs (ICEOP) for the fellowship they awarded me from 1996-2000 and the University of Illinois through the Office of Minority Student Affairs for the assistantship they awarded me throughout my graduate studies. Both made it possible for me to concentrate on my studies without worrying too much about financial matters.

My gratitude is also extended to Ron Woolfolk for allowing me into the Summer Bridge Program. His encouragement and excitement in my study made this research all

the more inspiring. I also thank those in the program who took the time to speak to me and share their innermost thoughts and feelings thereby giving me insight into their perceptions of the program. I especially acknowledge the four students, Sara, Doris, Luis, and Andre, for allowing me to “shadow” them on their trek to success. They allowed me to witness their ups and downs, without holding back on their feelings and thoughts thus, again, making this thesis all the more significant to me. They have my sincere thanks and best wishes in their future endeavors.

I am very thankful to the Office of Minority Student Affairs family for always looking out for me, being helpful and encouraging. Since my arrival to the university as a freshman in 1988, I have had the constant support from people like Michael Jeffries, Otis Williams, Greta Hogan, and Debbie Corsino. They made living away from home not so bad. I admire the work of OMSA and its staff in meeting the needs of students like myself. I would not be at this stage in my studies or my life without their support and faith in my abilities.

I owe a depth of gratitude to others that helped make this thesis possible. To Joy Williamson I thank for the invaluable advice given to me on the whole thesis process, from qualifying exams to thesis deposit. As I moved along, she prepared me for the upcoming challenges. To others like Angelica Rivera, Arisve Esquivel, Lilia Fernandez, Marilyn Walker, Myrna Feliciano, and Rebecca Vega, their encouragement and affection throughout this process meant so much to me and I appreciate it wholeheartedly. And to Veronica Sandoval, whose been there for me since my freshman year, I owe my deepest gratitude for being so caring and understanding through the years.

My special thanks and admiration go to my parents, Franklin and Loida Irizarry for their unconditional love, continual advice and encouragement. Coming to a foreign country, not knowing the language and making it was living proof for me that all things are possible including obtaining a college education. Thank you both for allowing me to attend the university, even if it meant living away from home for several years. To my brother Franklin Irizarry, Jr. and my sister Karyleen Irizarry for their unconditional caring, love, and support throughout my life, especially while away at school.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my extended family in Chicago. The love, support, and advice given throughout the writing of this thesis made it all the more valuable. To Carmen and Elbert Pagan, their children, Elbert, Jr., Carmen, and Onybert, I extend my special thanks for opening your home and nourishing me with your companionship. To Wanda Figueroa, Horacio Peralta, and their son Gabriel, my sincere thanks and appreciation for all that has been done for my children and me.

Finally to my children, Wilson and Ariana Pierce. When you can read this, know that I love you with all my heart. I could not have completed this without the constant reminder that I am doing this for you. There were times when giving up seemed so easy. Yet, looking at your faces and knowing that your well-being depended on me kept me focused. I hope that this thesis serves as an example that all things are possible no matter what the odds as long as you have the strength and courage to try.

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SUPPORT, ACHIEVEMENT, EXCELLENCE, SUCCESS:
EXPERIENCES OF UNDER-REPRESENTED STUDENTS IN
A PRE-COLLEGE ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM

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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2000
Dr. James D. Anderson, advisor

The value placed on education has always been critical to the development of this country. Throughout the past forty years, this value has continually put education in the forefront of the country's agenda resulting in the creation and implementation of programs that seek to assist in the development of a "productive citizen." The push to create programs for this purpose became even more critical with the release of two landmark reports detailing the deficiencies evident within the American school system.

These reports, *The Coleman Report* and *A Nation at Risk*, also placed emphasis on the academic development of under-represented minority students and gave birth to academic support programs to increase their educational attainment and contribution to society. These programs, available throughout the country, were primarily funded by the federal and state government, located on college campuses, and operated throughout the year. Services provided by these programs included curriculum based instruction, ancillary services, supplemental instruction, or a combination of all three. Students that were most often targeted included low-income, first-generation, and a member of a racial or ethnic minority.

For this study, I spoke with students, instructors and program staff, surveyed former program participants and observed the Summer Bridge program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Instructors, tutor counselors, tutors, and program administrators were there to encourage and provide additional support for students.

Aside from program staff, students sought the help and encouragement from their peers – each other. For many students, working in groups to complete assignments or to study for the next test was beyond valuable, it was the start of bonds that would last through Summer Bridge and college.

This constant support created a space for students to reflect on their past high school experience and allowed them to step into a realm where change for the better was possible and necessary. It allowed for students to believe that by surviving Bridge, anything was possible including graduating from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The value placed on education has always been critical to the development of this country. Founders of education have thought of it as a necessary process in shaping citizens to be as productive as possible for the betterment of their lives and that of the country. Throughout the past forty years, this importance has continually put education in the forefront of the country's agenda resulting in the creation and implementation of programs that seek to assist in the development of the "productive citizen." In fact, the Educational Policies Commission (1965) stated in The Central Purpose of American Education that,

Individual freedom and effectiveness and the progress of the society require the development of every citizen's rational powers. Among the many important purposes of American schools the fostering of that development must be central... The instrument which will realize this possibility is that kind of education which frees the mind and enables it to contribute to a full and worthy life. To achieve this goal is the high hope of the nation and the central challenge to its schools (p. 8).

The push to create programs for this purpose became even more critical with the release of two landmark reports detailing the deficiencies evident in the American school system. These reports, discussed later, also placed emphasis on the development of under-represented students and gave birth to academic support programs in the hopes of increasing their educational attainment and their contribution to society.

The relatively low socio-economic status and poor quality of schooling among many under-represented minority students has led to the development of academic support programs. These programs, established throughout the country, were primarily funded by the federal and state government, located on college campuses, and operated

throughout the year. Services provided by these programs included curriculum based instruction, ancillary services, supplemental instruction, or a combination of all three. Students that were most often targeted included low-income, first-generation, and members of a racial or ethnic minority.

The enrollment and retention of under-represented students in colleges or universities rose while their academic performance in higher education institutions also increased. Students participating in academic support programs experienced representative changes in academic development. Some of these transformations included increases in abstract thought, idealism, organization, language sophistication, logical reasoning, perspective taking, and egocentrism (Santrock, 1990).

Likewise, the self-confidence, aspiration level, and educational expectations of under-represented students who participated in these programs increased as well. The Institution of Virginia State Council of Higher Education (1992), found that academic skills not only permit students to succeed at the academic tasks in college, they also affect educational aspirations, social integration into college, and self-confidence.

Although the enrollment of under-represented students at the undergraduate and graduate levels is positive, the overall picture is still grim. The amount of dollars being spent on academic support programs is still inadequate. Over two decades, some programs that assist under-represented students prepare for post-secondary education have been eliminated, and for the ones that are still in existence, less money is being given.

These cuts have taken place despite the positive gains in the educational attainment of under-represented students who participate in these programs. According

to Richardson & Bender (1985), “although black students from urban schools made strong gains in mathematics and reading scores during the 1970’s, much of the credit has been given to federally funded compensatory programs that are now being cut or eliminated” (p. 47). This can and is having detrimental effects on the educational attainment of under-represented students. According to the Institution of Virginia State Council of Higher Education (1992), “public higher education – one of the few areas where America still ranks supreme - is being pounded by state spending cuts, producing many young victims” (p. 25).

Thus, academic support programs have been critical in increasing access to post secondary education by preparing under-represented students for college. The number of students enrolled in higher education institutions has increased steadily for the past forty years. Yet, it is reasonable to question whether current policy trends will reverse the improved educational attainment levels of these students and their improved participation in society.

Purpose of the Study

This is an investigation of the experiences of under-represented students and how their academic and personal development has transformed while participating in a mid-western university academic support program. It is an intense study of the students in the Summer Bridge Program - a six-week program designed to prepare its participants for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This is not a study of the global effects of participation in the Summer Bridge program, although I am aware of its significance. Nor is this a study of academic achievement and retention rates. Instead, this study focuses on the “process” rather than the “product.” That is, the process or transformation of

academic and personal development through participation in the Summer Bridge Program.

During the summer of 1993, I had the opportunity to work for Summer Bridge as head tutor counselor for the women. My role, as live-in counselor, was to provide academic guidance. I helped students prepare for class, complete homework assignments, and study for exams. As I spent time with the students, I became aware that my role expanded to one that offered friendship, support, and encouragement. When students felt depressed or needed an extra dose of motivation, I was there offering my support. I saw how important it was for them to receive both academic and personal guidance in their quest to successfully complete Summer Bridge and achieve enrollment status at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

In the fall semester of 1996, I had a chance to extend my knowledge of the Summer Bridge program using my former experience as the foundation. I decided to develop an evaluation project on Summer Bridge for one of my methodology requirements under the direction of Dr. Lizanne Destefano, a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It was a survey study focusing on the perceptions of former Summer Bridge students, their experience, and their level of satisfaction with the program. As time passed, I saw this as a great opportunity to investigate beyond my original intent. That summer I decided to study the dynamics of the Summer Bridge Program, its uniqueness, daily operations, and the people involved specifically the interactions among its participants.

In June 1996, I began my study of Summer Bridge and its students. Most of the students were from Chicago's inner city high schools with a small number coming from

suburban high schools near Chicago, or outside the Chicago-land area. There were a total of 52 students, with the majority being African Americans followed by Latinas/os and more than half was males. By the end of the six-weeks, 50 of those students progressed to the next stage – enrollment at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

During my investigation, I decided to focus on four students who agreed to share their experience, perceptions, feelings, and ideas. I also looked at their interactions with others particularly their instructors and fellow Summer Bridge mates. Thus, I set out to become acquainted with the students, their reasons for participating in Summer Bridge and their academic experience prior to the start of the program. I wanted to learn what kind of students and persons they were and whether, consciously or not, they were transforming into more knowledgeable and skilled students.

I also paid attention to ways that program staff and instructors in promoted and extended the acquisition of knowledge and skills, specifically in engaging students in this transformation process. I wanted to know if there were interactions among the instructors and program staff, especially with program administrators, to negotiate strategies to promote change among the students who were least engaged and low performing.

By the end of the summer, I had gathered enough information to begin my analysis. Taking what I had learned and observed during the summer along with my previous study of the perceptions of former Summer Bridge participants, I developed a survey. I wanted to extend my knowledge of what other student participants were feeling and showcase their collective thoughts next to the four students highlighted in this study.

The following summer, I went back to verify my findings and collect data on what I had missed the previous summer. During this time, I also became one of the

computer instructors. Here, I had a chance to live out what some of the teachers experienced and shared with me for this study. I engaged students to learn through similar techniques discussed in this thesis. During this time, I also developed personal ties to the students. Again, as with my previous role as tutor counselor, I assisted students with their academic and personal trials and triumphs. Thus, I have tried to capture my research and experience with Summer Bridge in this thesis that combines both the richness of a naturalistic study and that of survey research.

Justification for the Study

This work was designed to illustrate strategies useful to the Summer Bridge program and promoters of innovative and reform programs, particularly those facing reductions in resources. The intent of this study is to provide an understanding of the educational process in the Summer Bridge program, a process that transformed students who were challenged because of a lack of academic preparation. To better understand how students transform academically and personally, this study also examines the effects of strategies used in situations such as those experienced by the students in the program where changes in learning and the effective application of skills were needed.

Research Questions

In this study, the following questions were addressed:

- How do students perceive the role of the Summer Bridge Program in the transformation of their academic and personal development?
- How do students perceive their role in the transformation of their academic and personal development while participating in the Summer Bridge Program?
- What are the operations and activities of the Summer Bridge Program and what are its responsibilities? How do these affect the transformation of the academic and personal development of its participants?

- What are the strengths and obstacles to academic and personal development of pre-college students in academic support programs?

Research Assumptions

The following are several research assumptions extended throughout the study.

- Participation in the program does affect the development of the students' academic and personal skills.
- The transformation of these skills will help prepare the students for the upcoming challenges at the university in the fall semester.
- Participants are intelligent and competent students whose historical backgrounds have not prepared them adequately for college.
- Students who lack adequate academic and personal skills can be given a chance to succeed through participating in academic support programs that provide assistance to increase these skills necessary for success at the post-secondary level.
- Students need to adjust to campus life for which academic support programs help them do.

Definitions

In considering educational services for under-represented minority students as the basis of increasing educational attainment, it is essential to keep in mind that there have been many kinds of services available and terms used to describe these services. Within the last thirty or more years, the following terms have been used to describe programs and services offered to under-represented students. These include, but are not limited to, compensatory education, learning assistance, remedial services, and developmental programs.

Each of these terms carried its own interpretations yet essentially sought to achieve the same goal – to increase the educational attainment of under-represented

students. Christ (1971) defined learning assistance as using all possible resources to help students learn more in less time with greater ease and confidence.

Likewise, the California Community College Board of Governor's Policy, "Actions Concerning Remediation," stated that, by definition, remediation was, "that process which is designed to assist students to attain those learning skills necessary to succeed in college transfer, certificate or degree courses and programs, and includes classroom instruction as well as other support services interventions to assist students in the pursuit of their educational goals and objectives" (Cox, 1985; p. 16).

Finally, Enright's (1988) definition of developmental education was, "that which does not remedy or heal or make-up for student deficiencies, but which helps the student become all that he/she can become" (p. 4). Together, these three definitions added their own dimension to the definition of programs that assist under-represented students.

Although each of these terms sought the same goal, their negative connotations contributed to the idea that there was something inherently wrong with those who benefited from these services instead of recognizing that problems in academic preparation stemmed from their environments. To end this perception, a new term to define these services was essential. As Reese (1968) stated, these perceptions "must be corrected in order that those within can develop as unique human beings, with potential to be tapped and with opportunities to contribute positively not only to their narrow situation, but to the wider community" (p. 32). For this reason, the term "academic support programs" will be used throughout this paper to identify those services provided to under-represented students.

The following definitions will also be used:

- **Academic development:** Improvement in performance of study habits including time management, lecture note-taking, test-taking, text book study techniques, and an increase in basic understanding of core courses taken.
- **Personal development:** Increase in motivation, responsibility, confidence, aspirations, and expectations necessary for students to do well in college.
- **Target population:** This will include all students who participated in the Summer Bridge Program. For this study, special emphasis will be given to those students who participated in the program during the summers of 1995, 1996 or 1997.
- **Transformation:** This term will be used to refer to the process of change. For this study, the “change” means any academic and personal development experienced by the Summer Bridge participants.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this literature review, several topics will be discussed to demonstrate the importance of academic support programs and their contribution to the educational attainment of under-represented students. A brief history of the development of academic support programs will be given followed by a discussion of the factors that affect educational attainment and the need for these programs to deal with the social, academic, and personal deficiencies experienced by under-represented students.

This will be preceded by an overview of what academic support programs are available, their delivery of services, and their effects on the academic achievement and personal development of under-represented students. Finally, this review will examine what has been learned as a result of providing academic support programs for these students.

Historical Overview

Two major shifts in American education took place with the release of landmark reports that described the declining state of the nation's education and its effects on the country as a leading world power. These two reports, known as Equality of Educational Opportunity (a.k.a. the Coleman Report) and A Nation at Risk, placed education at the forefront of the country's agenda. Out of these reports arose reform movements that targeted under-represented students as members of society needing academic assistance throughout their educational years.

In his 1966 report, Equality of Educational Opportunity, Coleman stressed that "environmental factors of deprivation in the life of the young deprived child so deeply

affect him that they counteract the influences the school would have on his achievement and carry through to remain the same detrimental attributes of his adult life” (p. 5). From this report and others like it, the government began passing legislation to help alleviate the problems associated with the educational attainment of under-represented children in poverty. Out of this reform movement grew the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA). These Acts sought to combat the detrimental effects of poverty on the educational attainment of under-represented students.

The ESEA was created to provide assistance to different facets of the field of education. Some of the program services included the distribution of grants to poorer sections of the country, funds for administration and staffing of programs for state and local agencies, planning and operational grants when including an innovative program, and funding for guidance of children at the elementary and secondary levels (Manning & Baruth, 1995). When the ESEA passed in 1965, it provided \$1 billion in Title I funds to supplement and improve the education of economically challenged students (Manning & Baruth, 1995). The programs that have been enacted as a result of these Acts support education, from pre-school and beyond.

At the post-secondary level, the HEA of 1965 provided assistance for academic support programs to increase higher education attainment levels. Sergeant Shriver, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity said, “One of America’s greatest wastes occurs when capable young people who could succeed in college never attend because of the psychological, social, and physical conditions of poverty backgrounds. This waste is especially cruel when we remember that more than ever before, higher education holds

the key to so many jobs in the future” (Reese, 1968: p. 68). To deal with this “waste,” resources were given to support improving libraries, increasing instructional materials and equipment, strengthening academic programs, and developing talent search programs (Manning & Baruth, 1995). Thus, several measures were used to tackle the problems faced in education.

During this time, academic support programs that target under-represented students were created including the Title IV TRIO programs: Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, Educational Opportunity Centers. The Training Program for Special Services Staff and Leadership Personnel and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program are other academic support programs that came out of this Act. From that point on, a concerted effort among government and educational leaders developed and continued to ensure that under-represented students were being served and adequately prepared for post-secondary education. Yet, as it would be shown two decades later, these efforts were not enough.

The push for improvements in education came to the forefront of national issues once again with the release of the 1981 National Commission on Excellence in Education’s (NCEE) report, *A Nation at Risk*. The NCEE set out to study the quality of the nation’s educational system and found that if it continued to deteriorate, the country would not be prepared for the twenty-first century and, thus, would decline as a world power. This report sent shock waves throughout the country and consequently became another catalyst that propelled, for the second time in four decades, a powerful reform movement.

Like the previous report, it evaluated the education of under-represented students and found that changes needed to take place. Consequently, more money was funneled to increase the educational attainment of under-represented students. And by 1988, the ESEA's Chapter I expenditures exceeded \$4 billion per year and other federal academic support program funds added more than \$2 billion (Ornstein & Levine, 1993). Once again, the development and implementation of policies and programs that sought to increase academic achievement became a top priority in the national agenda.

This report also called for educational policies to be developed. Educational commissions were assembled to review policy, establish standards, and examine court-adopted issues such as school financing (Manning & Baruth, 1995). Here, they developed policies that raised educational standards and increased graduation requirements for students, dealt with issues affecting teachers and reformed accountability systems, reorganized administrative and local school structures, and involved parents and communities in the educational process (Ornstein & Levine, 1993). Thus, a multi-faceted restructuring of the nation's educational system took place.

In addition, new academic support programs were developed for all students and for under-represented students. Some of the programs that grew out of this movement included the Goals 2000, the Educate America Act, the Training Program for Special Services Staff and Leadership Personnel, and The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. These programs were designed to spur nationwide academic excellence and higher achievement. To understand what led up to the development of academic support programs, factors affecting the educational attainment of under-represented students must be examined.

Factors Affecting Educational Attainment

Understanding the causes of low educational attainment among under-represented students have been studied by many for countless years. This movement became especially critical in the early sixties and continues today. So far, there is a consensus that there are social and economic factors that directly and indirectly affect the academic achievement of certain individuals who live under specific circumstances. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (1995),

Many potential students face one or more economic or educational disadvantages. They may lack role models (especially in their own families) to demonstrate the importance of attending college, they may lack the financial resources required for higher education, and they may lack the academic knowledge and skills required for success in college (p. 21).

These socio-economic, academic factors, and student characteristics will be examined below to help understand how they affected the educational attainment of under-represented students.

As indicated, socio-economic factors along with distinct academic deficiencies among under-represented students impeded their success in school. Likewise, there were a number of demographic and personal characteristics that created barriers to their educational attainment. The combination of all these factors led educational leaders and government officials to establish academic support programs. As in the past, these barriers are still seen today despite efforts to address them.

Living in poor and economically disadvantage neighborhoods coupled with society's racial barriers impede the educational attainment of under-represented students. According to Manning & Baruth (1995), "the often dismal effects of poverty, parent's low educational attainments, racism, and sometimes discrimination toward lower classes

makes rising above one's plight difficult or even impossible" (p. 66). This indicated a strong relationship between social class and educational achievement. Richardson & Bender (1985) stated that,

A correlation exists between income and education achieved. Low-income students do not achieve as well, persist as long, or complete programs of study in the same proportion as students from middle- and upper-income groups, who typically have had the advantage of greater encouragement and support at home, better schools offering more academic preparation, and a cultural expectation of a collegiate education (p. 23).

Consequently, these socio-economic barriers have made education beyond the secondary level more difficult for under-represented students.

Their low socio-economic status was also closely related to family structure. The increase in single parent families took a toll on the socio-economic and educational attainment of under-represented students. As poverty rates among dual parent families substantially declined during the past three decades, the proportion of the poverty population that lives in single parent homes accordingly has increased (Manning & Baruth, 1995). The 1991 U.S Bureau of the Census reported that, 7,135,000 children under the age of 18 lived in single parent households. Of those, 6,519,000 children under 18 lived in female-headed households (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991).

Because of the higher rates of poverty among students living in single parent families, they are more likely to experience barriers to educational attainment. Manning and Baruth (1995) noted that single parent families had fewer financial resources to provide experiences that contribute to personal, social, and academic growth. They also had less time to spend together since one parent has to assume total responsibility for the household and parenting roles (Manning & Baruth, 1995). The lack of time spent with the student also impacted the time spent dealing with school matters. For example, single

parents may have been unable to provide sufficient assistance with school activities and functions. What has resulted is the low rate of educational attainment of under-represented students.

The effects brought on by socio-economic barriers are evident in the higher education enrollment and completion rates. According to a study by the National Center for Educational Statistics (1995), the educational attainment of low-income students was less than that of students in the middle and upper soci-economic strata. This report stated that,

While 86 percent of unmarried 18- to 24-year-old high school graduates in the top family income quartile were either currently enrolled in college or had previously been enrolled, only 52 percent had been enrolled among those in the bottom income quartile. In fact, while college attendance overall is growing, the differences in college completion rates by age 24 based on family income are actually increasing and are wider than they have ever been in the twenty-three years of available data (p. 11).

These figures also indicated that the opportunity to attend college was still not distributed equally throughout the population whether it was because of the lack of college preparation among these students or an issue of race, gender, or class. These will be investigated below.

Academic factors have also affected the educational attainment of under-represented students. Some of these include differences in high school curriculums, lack of college preparatory courses, the lack of basic skills necessary for successful academic achievement, and placement in vocational versus academic courses.

The differences in school curriculums have resulted in deficiencies in the educational services provided to under-represented students. Students in central cities were often confronted with schooling that was inferior to those attending suburban

schools (Myers & Myers, 1990). For example, they were tracked in less academically centered programs. According to Richardson and Bender (1985), “minorities are disproportionately more likely than whites to be enrolled in special education and involved in vocational education programs. They are less likely to be involved in academic programs or programs for the gifted and talented” (p. 18).

They also lacked resources such as computers, science equipment, and books that are commonly available at suburban schools. On top of that, these students may have been unable to experience a true learning environment since they have other pressing issues to worry about outside of school (Richardson & Bender, 1985). As a result of their lack of participation in educational programs that contribute to the development of higher-order cognitive skills and abilities, their educational attainment is negatively affected.

Another problem was the lack of basic skills and college preparatory courses among under-represented students. The majority of these students did not have college level skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. Cox (1985), stated that, “among the college bound, minorities are more likely to have experienced fewer years of coursework in math and physical sciences than whites” (p. 5). For many, this meant that they had to enter post-secondary education unprepared.

Consequently, their access to four-year universities was limited and thus they turned to community colleges for post-secondary education. Richardson & Bender (1985) stated that, “urban minorities in large numbers turn to community colleges as their point of access to higher education.” In 1983, urban community colleges accounted for 60% of minority student enrollment in higher education (p. 28). This became a problem

when students were not transferring to four-year universities to obtain their baccalaureate degrees. Cohen and Brawer (1982a), noted that the number of people moving on from two to four year institutions was about 5% of the total enrollment during the 1970's. For whatever reason, these students were not entering into four-year universities, thereby limiting their level of educational attainment.

Demographic and personal characteristics also varied and were consistent in establishing a relationship between them and the low level of educational attainment among under-represented students. Some of these characteristics included race, gender, socio-economic status, and being a re-entry student (Cox, 1985; Gainous, Hanna, and Romine, 1985). Characteristics that have also affected their capacity to enter or finish college included residential situation, parents' educational level, emotional and financial support that families offer, and their aspirations and interests (Institution of Virginia State Council of Higher Education, 1992). Consequently, under-represented students who have any of these characteristics or a combination were less likely to perform well academically and increase their level of education.

Now that some of the factors that have affected the educational attainment of under-represented students had been discussed, reasons why academic support programs were needed will be considered in the following section.

The Need for Academic Support Programs

During the past four decades, the need for academic support programs has been consistent. When the "Coleman Report" (1966) and A Nation at Risk (1983) came out, these programs became essential to under-represented students. They provided services to under-represented students for their educational, personal, and social development. In

this section, several responsibilities of academic support programs will be examined to illustrate their historical importance. These include the responsibility to increase the academic knowledge and experience of these students and to increase their educational attainment. The responsibility of society to under-represented students is also discussed.

One of the responsibilities of the academic support programs was to increase the academic knowledge of under-represented students at an early educational stage. Some programs did this by providing services before these students entered post-secondary education so that they would be better prepared to handle the rigors of college. For example, programs identified under-represented students with college potential to strengthen their academic achievement and motivation in preparation for college (National Center for Education Statistics, 1995). Some of these programs sought under-represented high school students and offered services during the academic year and summers while others provided services to high school graduates usually during the summer preceding their college enrollment (Christ, 1971; Cox, 1985; Fujita, 1993; New Jersey Basic Skills Council, 1991; and Porter, 1988).

In addition, the presence of academic support programs at the college level was another way of increasing the academic knowledge of under-represented students. According to Gainous, Hanna, & Romine (1985), "the role of remedial/developmental education in that process is undeniable. Without opportunity to learn, little else is possible. Remedial/developmental education is for many students the opportunity to learn and must be enhanced and continued where there are identified needs" (p. 24). There were programs that took place at the community college level throughout the country. At the Jefferson College Learning Center in Missouri, students who needed to improve their

basic academic skills prior to enrollment in college level course work could enroll in developmental course work at the Center (Lange & Fundis, 1994). Likewise, Porter (1988), stated that programs at the Mercer County Community Colleges in New Jersey were provided to assist students with development of basic academic skills in preparation for successful entry into career and transfer programs. Thus, academic support programs were provided throughout post-secondary education and across the nation.

Another responsibility of academic support programs was to increase the educational attainment of under-represented students. In order for this to happen, these students needed to be prepared for the challenges of college. With an appropriate amount of preparation, their access to higher education and their retention at these institutions would be better than when these programs did not exist. It was in this learning process that academic support programs took an active role. Fujita stated,

The challenge for the college is to carry out this instructional function at such a high level of excellence that students requiring and completing developmental education will be able to hold gainful employment, take part fully in the life of their community, and if they choose, continue their education in degree programs (p. 4).

Thus, academic support programs provided students with academic skills in reading writing and math necessary for success. By providing these services under-represented students were better prepared for college, thereby increasing their chances for success.

Finally, academic support programs were responsible for providing under-represented students with the ability to increase their overall educational experience. According to R. Steinmiller and G. Steinmiller (1991), the purpose of these programs was to increase the “sophistication” of students and help them make use of their educational experience. This was done by providing education experiences that enabled students “to

read effectively, to think critically, to communicate ideas clearly, to solve math problems correctly, and to use these skills competently in every day life” (Steinmiller, R. & Steinmiller, G., 1991: p. 3). Without these services, under-represented students would have had a more difficult time succeeding in college and, thus, possibly becoming less productive citizens.

These programs became even more critical when the student’s productivity in society depended on their level of educational attainment. What then is the responsibility of society to the lives of under-represented students and to maintain the existence of academic support programs? Historically, public support for education has been promoted for the common good of the country. Yet in order for this to have happened, society needed to be active participants in this process.

It was society’s responsibility to provide open access to opportunities through post-secondary education. According to Reese (1968),

As the deprived struggle for higher levels of social status and a higher economic level, it is essential that we provide for them and for their children the type of education that will permit them to become the people they desire to be, an education preparing them for the social interaction, the intercommunication, the self-realization, and the self-actualization that they are now glimpsing as their goals (p. 38).

The monitoring of student success was a way of being responsible for student access.

Academic support programs sought to improve educational experiences for under-represented students. Proponents of these programs believed that support services and activities would compensate for the disadvantages experienced by students and result in more effective learning and increased academic achievement (Christ, 1971; Gordon & Wilkerson, 1966; Jensen, 1973; and Reese, 1968). The belief was that through open access and student success, all would benefit and profit.

What developed was a wave of academic support programs that were different from each other and used numerous approaches to help under-represented students prepare for post-secondary education and beyond. These programs will be addressed in the subsequent section.

Program Characteristics and Delivery of Services

Throughout the country, there are various academic support programs available for under-represented students. As stated earlier, these programs exist in almost every level of our educational system, from pre-school to graduate school. For the purpose of this paper, only the pre-collegiate programs that target under-represented students who have graduated or are still in high school will be discussed. Here, emphasis will be placed on the characteristics of the programs available, the delivery of the services they offer, and the characteristics of the students they serve.¹

In a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, educational institutions across the nation were surveyed to obtain information regarding their largest academic support program available that targeted pre-collegiate students. Each institution in this survey was asked a series of questions regarding program characteristics. These included size, number of students served, funding sources, location, and operating hours. Their delivery of services and student characteristics were also included in this study. Below, each of these will be examined to provide an overview of the academic support programs available in this country.

¹ Most of the following figures cited are from the National Center for Education Statistics (1995) study unless otherwise noted.

The size of these pre-collegiate programs varied among programs in the country. This study found that roughly one-third, 32%, of all institutions offered at least one program for pre-collegiate students in 1993-94 (NCES, 1995). Programs were also more common at large institutions, 71%, and public institutions, 45% (NCES, 1995).

The largest programs served many of the students. At 47 percent of the institutions with programs, the largest pre-collegiate program accounted for all of the pre-collegiate students served by the institution. In 1993-94, the largest pre-collegiate programs served 317,400 students (NCES, 1995). These numbers increased when all pre-collegiate programs for under-represented students are included. In the following year, the enrollment was at least 525,100, with about 90,000 expected to graduate from high school (NCES, 1995). Although many under-represented students were served through these programs, they were not sufficient to serve all qualified. According to the study, the estimated 90,000 high school graduates contrasted with 1.1 million students of a comparable age who were economically disadvantaged and available to be served through the programs (NCES, 1995).

Funding was another characteristic found among the pre-collegiate programs surveyed in this study. Half, 51%, of the institutions said that the federal government was the primary source of funding for the program. State and/or local government funding was the next most common primary source at 20% followed by institutional funding with 14% and private sources at 13% (NCES, 1995). As indicated by these figures, federal support formed an important part of the largest pre-collegiate programs.

The location of these programs was also a characteristic found in this study. Approximately 80% of the pre-collegiate programs used the college campus as their

primary location (NCES, 1995). Programs were also more likely to be held on campus at private institutions than public institutions, 91% versus 73%, at 4-year institutions; 2-year institutions, 83% versus 73%, and at small institutions than large or mid-sized institutions 88% versus 74% (NCES, 1995). Despite widespread use of college campuses, there were some location differences based on the goals of the programs. According to the NCES (1995) study, the greatest use of elementary and secondary school locations occurred when programs had as their top goal either increasing high school completion, 34%, or increasing college enrollment, 24%.

Another characteristic found was the programs' operating hours. The largest pre-collegiate programs operated mostly during both the academic year and the summer. The NCES (1995) study reported that 57% of the pre-collegiate programs operated during the academic year and summer, 33% operated during the summer only, and 10% only during the school year. Pre-collegiate programs at large institutions were also more likely to have full-year programs than those at small institutions, 74% versus 47%, while close to half, 45%, of the programs at small institutions offered activities during the summer only (NCES, 1995). Finally, more students were in full-time programs. Of the students participating in pre-collegiate programs, 58% of them were involved in full-year programs than part-year programs (NCES, 1995).

This and other studies found a variety of approaches used to deliver program services. The delivery of services that were offered included curriculum-based support, supplemental instruction, ancillary services, or a combination of these services.

Programs that offered curriculum-based services focused on creating and implementing instructional strategies such as team teaching and cooperative learning

(Martin, 1986). The purpose was to keep unmotivated students with college-going potential in school, preparing them adequately, and minimizing their chances for failure. One approach used, according to Roueche (1985), was “interfacing instruction with subsequent courses” (p. 7). The goal was to link instruction to the regular college curriculum so that the students would apply their new academic skills effectively to their classes.

Other programs using this model allowed the student to work independently. Lange & Fundis (1994) stated that this approach, “espouses the developmental education model in which the course objectives are competency based and students work in a self-paced” (p. 19). Here, students take no more than two semesters to successfully complete courses. This was later supplemented with classroom instruction once a week for an hour each session (Lange & Fundis, 1994).

By contrast, other academic support programs offered supplemental instruction as their model of choice. Here, these programs usually provide remedial instruction, special activities, and supplemental services. These services were provided to make instruction for under-represented students more effective and to increase their level of academic achievement (Fujita, 1993; Martin, 1986; and New Jersey Basic Skills Council, 1991). These programs were “wholistic” in that the development of the “whole student” was in mind. The services they offered included counseling, tutoring, learning assistance, and basic skills (Fujita, 1993; Martin, 1986; and New Jersey Basic Skills Council, 1991).

For a number of the pre-collegiate programs reported in the NCES study and throughout the literature, ancillary services were provided to under-represented students. These services targeted students qualified for going on to college, but coming from

backgrounds with no history of college attendance (Fujita, 1993). This approach emphasized individual attention and support through counseling and mentoring. For example, at the Mercer County Community College, students scheduled three appointments with the Counseling Center to discuss career, job prospects, and personal concerns (Porter, 1988). This approach also provided activities that included test preparation, college campus visits, and role playing for jobs to help prepare them for the college application process (Fujita, 1993 and Porter, 1988).

Many academic support programs, however, implemented a combination of these approaches for the delivery of services. As Martin (1986) notes,

...We determined that we needed a total pragmatic approach. That is (1) an integrated, holistic curriculum that is competency based, (2) assessment and advisement, (3) homogeneity of groups based on skill competency levels, (4) individualized instruction and learning contracts, (5) a range of multi-media systems, (6) formal support counseling groups, (7) referral counseling, and (8) tutoring” (p. 14).

Another reason for using this multi-varied approach was to help students who were “at risk” of failure make sound educational decisions as they experience college life. In some programs, teachers provided a one on one consultation with students as their needs arose and monitored their progress in course work (Fujita, 1993; Martin, 1986; New Jersey Basic Skills Council, 1991, and Porter, 1988).

Several student characteristics were also found throughout the literature and in the NCES (1995) study. These included socio-economic status, parent’s educational level, gender, race, and year in school. The top three characteristics targeted for participation in pre-collegiate academic support programs were being low-income, being first-generation in college, and belonging to a racial or ethnic minority group.

The student characteristic that was most often targeted was low income with 70% of the responses (NCES, 1995). Two other characteristics were among the top three targeted characteristics for a third or more of the programs: being first-generation in the family to attend college at 49%, and belonging to a racial or ethnic minority at 40% (NCES, 1995). Overall, 68% of all pre-collegiate students in the largest programs were from low-income families, and 59% were female. In addition, 39 % of the students served across all pre-collegiate programs were African American, while 29% were Latino and 24% were White (NCES, 1995).

High school students were also targeted to participate in pre-collegiate academic support programs. Almost two-thirds, 64%, of the pre-collegiate program participants in 1993-94 were high school students while middle or junior high school students accounted for 25% of total participants (NCES, 1995). For 44% of the programs, students usually entered the program in the freshman or sophomore year of senior high school and on average participated for 2.9 years (NCES, 1995).

Other programs brought under-represented minority students in before their freshman year of college. This was done to get them acquainted to the social and academic environment of the college campus (Institution of Virginia State Council of Higher Education, 1992). There were only 13% of the largest pre-collegiate programs that targeted high school graduates to participate in their academic support programs. Programs in the Northeast were more likely than programs in the Central or Southeast regions to have programs for high school graduates, 31% versus 1% to 4% (NCES, 1995).

As indicated, academic support programs varied in their program characteristics, approaches used to deliver program services, and in targeted student characteristics. Yet more than anything, they used a combination of approaches to help under-represented students prepare for post-secondary education. The next section will examine how these programs affected the academic achievement and personal development of these students.

Effects on Academic Achievement and Personal Development

The effects of academic support programs on under-represented students ranged from an increase in enrollment at higher education institutions to an increase in educational aspirations and expectations. These trends are illustrated in two institutional-based post-secondary education fall enrollment surveys conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics: Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) and the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System Survey (IPEDS) (Schmitt, 1994). Data presented are limited to approximately 3,600 post-secondary institutions accredited at the higher education level in the 50 states and Washington, D.C. When these survey data cannot be applied, the findings of several academic support programs throughout the country will be utilized.

It was difficult to determine whether academic support programs had a direct effect on the enrollment rates of under-represented students at higher education institutions. There was very little information available that included a general analysis on the overall effects of academic support programs across the nation on the enrollment of under-represented students at post-secondary institutions. Even with this lack of research, several observations were still possible using information from academic

support programs that have conducted studies on their effectiveness in assisting under-represented students reach their potential, enroll in college, and succeed.

Throughout the review of several academic support program evaluations, positive outcomes were found indicating that under-represented students who participated in these programs improved in many areas. These include increases in college enrollment, retention, academic performance, self-confidence, and academic aspirations and expectations. These areas will be examined in the following section.

First of all, the number of under-represented students in post-secondary education has increased since these programs and others like it have been around. According to the HEGIS and IPEDS surveys, enrollment by minority students between 1991 and 1992 had grown. Specifically, enrollment by African Americans increased 4.4%, by Latinos 10.1%, and by American Indians or Alaskan Natives 4.5% (Schmitt, 1994). Enrollment in 1992 as compared to 1982 showed an overall increase of 17% with enrollment by minority students increasing more than enrollment by Whites. In this time period, enrollment increased 8.7% for Whites, 26.6% for African Americans, 83.9% for Latinos, and 35.1% for American Indian or Alaskan Natives (Schmitt, 1994). This increase reflected an increase in the population and an increase in the proportion of high school graduates attending college.

The retention rate of students who participated in these programs also increased. In a study conducted by the Sinclair Community College Office of Instructional Planning and Research (1994), there was a 40.4% retention rate overall for the 3 year period for under-represented students participating in the college's academic support program, retaining the greatest percent of their incoming students. It also found that students who

took all recommended developmental courses tended to stay in school longer than those who took some or no recommended courses and also had a higher retention rate than those students that did not have any developmental courses recommended (Sinclair Community College, 1994). Porter (1988) also found that the Mercer County Community College academic support program had a high completion and retention rate. He stated that program participants achieved higher retention rates in second spring than that those of students who entered with college level skills.

The New Jersey Basic Skills Council also experienced similar rates in retention. It stated that, “based on multiple indicators of effectiveness, the public higher education system, in general, is providing effective remedial/developmental education services to students identified for remediation” (NJBSC, 1991). Findings included high retention rates in reading, writing, computation, and in elementary algebra.

In reading, 68% of the students who completed program courses were retained in college compared to 60% of non-participants while only 22% of those who did not complete the courses were retained (NJBSC, 1991). Likewise, in writing, 66% of students who completed program courses were retained in college compared with 71% of non-participants, while 23% of those who did not complete the courses were retained (NJBSC, 1991). In computation, 65% of students who completed program courses were retained compared with 66% of non-participants, while 28% of those who did not complete the courses were retained (NJBSC, 1991). Finally, in elementary algebra, 77% of students who completed program courses were retained compared with 76% of non-participants, while 42% of those who did not complete the courses were retained (NJBSC, 1991).

The academic performance of under-represented students participating in academic support programs also increased. Positive outcomes in basic skills acquisition were also found at Sinclair Community College and at the California Community Colleges. At Sinclair, students who took all recommended courses tended to have a higher ratio of credit hours earned to credit hours attempted than those who took some of their recommended developmental courses (Sinclair Community College, 1994). Similarly, studies by Butle, City College of San Francisco, San Joaquin, Delta, Santa Barbara Community Colleges, Sacramento City College, and the Puente Project have findings supporting improved skills in reading, writing, and math (Cox, 1985). The average skill growth in reading, writing, and math is, at minimum, twice that expected in a semester growth period, and can be as great as four times the expected skill growth in that period (Cox, 1985).

The self-confidence and the educational aspirations and expectations of under-represented students were also positively affected by participation in academic support programs. The Institution of Virginia State Council of Higher Education (1992), found that academic skills not only permit students to succeed at the academic tasks in college, they also affect educational aspirations, social integration into college, and self-confidence. In the California Community Colleges study, after taking remedial courses, students report a major increase in self-confidence needed to complete college programs (Cox, 1985). The students' success in these academic and social areas depends on how well they think they can succeed at these tasks and their confidence to try new things.

Although measuring attitudes of the students can be very subjective in nature, one can not disregard the importance of students' views of themselves and their experiences

(G. Steinmiller & R. Steinmiller, 1991). Studies have shown that the self-confidence of students influences academic achievement cognitive developmental as well as social development and overall social well being (Manning & Allen, 1987 & Santrock, 1990). According to Manning & Allen (1987), students with self-confidence will be more likely to take social chances, make new friends, feel psychologically safe in school, work cooperatively, and feel comfortable in social settings. Their self-confidence on their academic achievement and social abilities has vast implications for addressing the needs of under-represented students.

Despite the positive outcomes stated throughout this section, some findings were not as positive in indicating that participants' academic performance is better than non-participants are. According to the Sinclair Community College Office of Instructional Planning and Research (1994), students who took all recommended coursework did not surpass the level of academic performance of the students who chose to take none of their recommended courses or those who needed no academic support. Similarly, academic success, as measured by grade point average (GPA), could not be predicted on the basis of course participation. All students improved their performance over time and the typical student attained a GPA of "C" or better by the end of the two years at Sinclair (Sinclair Community College, 1994). Apparently, it seemed as if it was better for the students to take all academic support courses or none at all in order to be successful.

At any rate, improvements have been made in the educational attainment of under-represented students participating in academic support programs. Their increase in college enrollment, retention, and personal development indicate that these programs are providing valuable services that meet their needs.

Conclusion

Throughout the literature, the socio-economic status and academic deficiencies among under-represented students has led to the development of academic support programs. These programs, available throughout the country, were primarily funded by the federal and state government, located on college campuses, and operated throughout the year. Services provided by these programs included curriculum based instruction, ancillary services, supplemental instruction, or a combination of all three. Boylan (1983) said that “programs that showed the greatest gain scores, GPA improvement, and retention also tended to be comprehensive in scope, mission, and services” (p. 42).

Students that were most often targeted included low-income, first-generation, and belonging to a racial or ethnic minority. The rate of African Americans participating in these programs was slightly higher than that for Latinos. Finally, high school students were targeted to participate. Freshmen through high school graduates participated in these programs.

The effects of participation in academic support programs on the academic achievement and personal development were also indicated. The enrollment and retention of under-represented students in colleges or universities rose while their academic performance in higher education institutions also increased. Yet there was a question of whether complete participation or non-participation made a significant difference.

Despite this limitation, other positive outcomes were found. Representative changes in cognitive development include increases in abstract thought, idealism, organization, language sophistication, logical reasoning, perspective taking, and

egocentrism (Santrock, 1990). The self-confidence, aspiration level, and educational expectations of under-represented students who participated in these programs increased as well.

Academic support programs have been critical in increasing access to higher education by preparing under-represented students for college. The number of students enrolled in higher education institutions has increased steadily for the past forty years. According to the National Center of Education Statistics (1995), from 1955 to 1995, college enrollment grew from 2.6 million to 14.9 million. Furthermore, enrollment in higher education institutions increased by approximately 132,000 students between 1991 and 1992 (National Center for Education Statistics, 1995). Undergraduate enrollment in higher education increased by 15% between 1982 and 1992 and 1% between 1991 and 1992.

When broken down between public and private institutions, more students enrolled in public colleges and universities. The National Center for Education Statistics (1995) found that enrollment in public institutions accounted for nearly 80% of the total enrollment at institutions of higher education in 1992. For under-represented group, this was also the case. About 79 to 87 percent of African Americans, Latinos, Asian or Pacific Islanders and American Indian or Alaskan natives and 67% or non-resident aliens enrolled in institutions of higher education were at public institutions (Schmitt, 1994).

Graduate enrollment also has been increasing. Between 1982 and 1992, the enrollment rate increased by 35%, and between 1991 and 1992, by 1.9%. Graduate enrollment by minorities and non-resident aliens increased by approximately 5.4% and those by white non-Hispanic by less than 1% between 1991 and 1992 (Schmitt, 1994).

The National Science Foundation 1995 Survey of Earned Doctorates also reported an increase in doctorates earned by U.S. citizens. The number of doctorates earned for this group grew from 23,086 in 1986 to 27,603 in 1995. Furthermore, both the number of U.S. men and women doctorates have increased with the number of women rising at a faster pace than the number of men. In 1995, women accounted for 46% of all U.S. doctorate recipients, up from 41% in 1986 (Syverson, 1996).

The number of U.S. citizen minority group members earning doctorates in 1995 also increased. In general, the number of minorities earning doctorates increased for both men and women, and across all fields. For most groups, 1995 was the peak year since we began collecting racial/ethnic data in 1973. African American numbers increased from 1,095 to 1,287 in 1995, finally surpassing the earlier peak of 1,116 in 1977. Latino numbers continue to increase, with 916 U.S. citizens in this group earning doctorates in 1995. The number of American Indian doctorate recipients was 148, up from 1994, but just one less than the peak of 149 in 1992 (Syverson, 1996).

Although the enrollment of under-represented students at the undergraduate and graduate levels is positive, the overall picture is still grim. About 90,000 students in these programs were expected to graduate from high school in the next year and thus potentially enter post-secondary education, compared with a total higher education enrollment of 14.5 million. In fact, according to Mortenson (1993), while college attendance overall is growing, the differences in college completion by age 24 based on family income are increasing and are “wider than they have ever been in the 23 years of available data” (p. 14).

Under-represented student enrollment figures increased but still do not match up to majority rates. The same can be said for under-represented students earning doctorate degrees. While the total number of doctorates earned by U.S. citizens 1995 was 27,603, only 2,351 African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians earned doctorate degrees. That year, whites accounted for 23,811, slightly over 86% of doctorates earned (Syverson, 1996).

Even worse is the amount of dollars being spent on academic support programs. For the past few decades, programs that assist under-represented students prepare for post-secondary education are being eliminated, and for the ones that are still in existence, less money is being given. According to Richardson & Bender (1985), “although black students from urban schools made strong gains in mathematics and reading scores during the 1970’s, much of the credit has been given to federally funded compensatory programs that are now being cut or eliminated” (p. 34).

This can and is having detrimental effects on the educational attainment of under-represented students. According to the Institution of Virginia State Council of Higher Education (1992), “public higher education – one of the few areas where America still ranks supreme - is being pounded by state spending cuts, producing many young victims” (IVSCHE, 1992). These cuts have taken place despite the positive gains in the educational attainment of under-represented students who participate in these programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Procedure

For the purpose of this study, the “multi-method” approach was applied. Several methods including case study, survey research, and content analysis was used. The orientation of this study was to explore, interpret and verify. From what was learned in the initial study, the analysis led to more situated interpretations of the academic and personal transformations of students and the program. Together, these methods were used to gather the necessary information from the program and its participants to answer the research questions guiding this study and to provide information that will assist in the modification of the Summer Bridge Program.

The questions that guided this study were drawn from readings of the literature on academic support programs, from my initial evaluation project of the perceptions of former Summer Bridge participants, as well as my involvement with the students, program staff, and instructors. Once again, these questions are:

- How do students perceive the role of the Summer Bridge Program in the transformation of their academic and personal development?
- How do students perceive their role in the transformation of their academic and personal development while participating in the Summer Bridge Program?
- What are the operations and activities of the Summer Bridge Program and what are its responsibilities? How do these affect the transformation of the academic and personal development of its participants?
- What are the strengths and obstacles to academic and personal development of pre-college students in academic support programs?

Although these were the questions that laid the framework for my study, they were not the only ones that drove my inquiry. I tried to capture understandings about learning and the transformation process, particularly what was dynamic, problematic, and complex from the point of view of the students, instructors, and program staff. Those I spoke to constructed meanings to make sense of their experiences. Their beliefs guided their actions and understandings about learning and laid the grounds for adoption or rejection of the transformation process.

Sources of Data

The primary methods used for data gathering included case studies of four participants, observations of the program, document analysis, and analysis of a student questionnaire. This study was designed to use multiple approaches for data collection and multiple techniques for the collaboration of data. The use of multiple methods, techniques, the time spent at the setting and the survey enhanced valid and reliable findings.

The role of Summer Bridge in transforming the academic and personal development of the students reflected by the students' experiences was described using data from the case studies and the student questionnaire. This was also the case for investigating the role of the student in the transformation of their academic and personal development.

To examine the program's operations and activities, case studies of the students, program observations, and documents were used. Finally, all data gathering tools that include the case studies, observations, program documents, and the student questionnaire were used to explore any program strengths and obstacles to the academic and personal

development of Summer Bridge students. Below, Figure 1 illustrates how the data was used to answer my research questions.

	Role of Bridge	Role Of Student	Bridge Operations And Activities	Program Strengths and Obstacles to Development
Case Studies of Students	X	X	X	X
Observations of Summer Bridge			X	X
Program Documents			X	X
Student Questionnaire	X	X		X

Figure 1. Use of Data to Address Research Questions.

The Students

For the purpose of this study, only the students who participated in either Summer Bridge 1995, 1996, or 1997 were included. Below, each method of inquiry utilized will describe which of these students were considered for the study and the rationale.

Case Studies of Four Students

The purpose for including case studies of students was to obtain a better understanding of the complex interrelationships among the students, their experiences, the program, and anything that is associated with it. It was also to obtain the descriptions

and interpretations of these students about the Summer Bridge Program. I chose this research paradigm because of the complexity and uniqueness of the program and its participants - as they transformed in the natural environment.

Case studies are descriptive and strongly context oriented, paying close attention to different contexts that may affect meanings and manifestations of the transformation process. The analysis of these case studies contains direct interpretation of the interviews. Here, relationships were teased out, issues were probed, and data was collected to help in understanding each case.

By conducting these case studies, I planned to

- become familiar with the students' academic experience and their reasons for participating in the program
- learn how knowledge, study skills, and personal development have been affected by participation in the Summer Bridge program
- learn the formal and informal exchanges among the students and others and whether these exchanges improved their knowledge, skills, and personal development.

As I became familiar with the students of the 1996 Summer Bridge class, I approached several of them about participating in my study. I explained the purpose of the project, why I felt it was important, and what entailed their role as participants of the study. While some declined, four agreed to take part in my investigation under the condition of anonymity. These students were rather representative of the others in the program yet displayed different educational experiences. As part of this approach, I followed the students around and spent many days with them in various settings including class, during breaks, at lunch and/or dinner, in study center, and after hours.

During this time, I had many informal conversations with these students discussing topics ranging from school to private matters. There were also three taped in-depth interviews conducted with each student ranging from 45 minutes to an hour that took place during the summer. The first interview dealt with getting to know the student while the other two consisted of their experiences during Summer Bridge and life afterwards. Although I developed a list of questions to utilize during the interviews, the questions were shaped according to each interviewee. Since they had unique experiences to tell, I wanted to ensure that the list of questions would not confine the interviewee and instead be used as a guide.²

Observations of Summer Bridge

In the summers of 1996 and 1997, I conducted observations in the classrooms, the cafeteria, residence hall, corridors, study center, student meetings, the director's office, field trips, and anywhere the program, staff, instructors, or its students were present. I observed every phase of the program on a continuous basis. At times it felt as if I was one of the students. During these observations, some formal and many informal interviews took place with those associated with the program. When I began my observations at the start of the program, I avoided taking notes for fear that I would be looked upon as an intruder. As I became a familiar face, I felt more comfortable taking notes except when it became distracting.

The purpose for observing two Summer Bridge classes was to get a better understanding of the complexity of the program and to gain insight into other aspects of Summer Bridge. Being that the program is only six weeks long, I felt it necessary to

² Included in the appendix are the questions that were used as a guideline during each interview.

extend my observations to verify what took place during the prior summer and include issues that were missed. I also wanted to include stakeholder values and perceptions to ensure the political fairness and justice of the study. Some of those included strategies used to encourage learning, the roles that staff and students play in stimulating educational growth, and daily operations of the program. Where presented, fictitious names were used for instructors and program staff. Only Ronald Woolfolk, the director, and Pam Greer, the assistant director retained their names.

Program Documents

The content analysis of important documents was used to allow for a better understanding of the historical significance of why the program was needed in the first place and its original intentions. This included the reading of a number of Transition Program documents including the original proposal, annual reports on students, program information given to students, course syllabi, and any university documents concerning the program dating from the time of the program's establishment to the present.

By including a review of program documents, I wanted to

- look for program norms and structures that supported or obstructed collaborative relations, acquisition of knowledge and study skills, and the transformation process
- learn of priorities and responsibilities of program staff and how they relate to those of the student and to the transformation process.

Program documents were also used to serve as substitutes for records of activities that could not be observed directly. Finally, the collection of documents was used as a supplement for the overall analysis of the data.

Student Questionnaire

Survey research, on the other hand, allowed for an overall description of student experiences with the Summer Bridge Program. Using what I had learned in my initial study of the program, I developed a student questionnaire to see how they viewed their experience in Summer Bridge and the role it played in their academic and personal lives. This questionnaire contained items that were closed. This questionnaire used the Lickert scale to rate student responses and ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

During the fall semester of 1997, I called students who had participated in the 1995-1997 Summer Bridge class to get responses in a timely manner. I chose these students because I wanted to get an idea of what students in three Summer Bridge classes felt about the program. I also chose them because I believed most of them would be able to recollect their experience with more detail and would be easier to reach.

I attempted to reach each of the 152 students that had successfully completed Summer Bridge regardless of their enrollment status at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. For those students who were not enrolled, I used their last known home phone number that I obtained from the program director. For those students enrolled, I obtained their phone numbers from the university’s web site or from the program director. I called each student at least five times during different hours of the day and night. Most of the time I left messages on answering machines or with roommates.

When I was able to talk directly to the student, he or she usually cooperated. A few times I was told to call back later when it was more convenient. I called for a period of three months. By the end of the third month, the semester had ended and I had a total

of 49 completed questionnaires from students that were currently enrolled in the university. Out of those, 13 were from the 1995 Bridge class while both the 1996 and 1997 classes had 18 students each. Unfortunately, I was unable to reach those students that were no longer enrolled.

For the questionnaire, descriptive statistics that generate overall percentages were used to assess demographic information. Included in Appendix C are breakdowns by race, gender, socio-economic status, high school type, and high school location. Likewise, frequencies were run to attain percentages by race, gender, and Bridge class. I decided to analyze the responses by Bridge class since they provided more variation. To search for significant differences between classes, ANOVA with post hoc Scheffe (alpha level of .05) was conducted for each item. While many questions were asked and all were analyzed, I included only those items that added to the issues I discussed.

Data Analysis

During each phase of this study, I brought home my notes, interviews, documents, and survey responses. There I internalized them, thought them through, and integrated them when appropriate. I tried to concentrate on one issue at a time but found that webbing issues to see where they interconnected was more feasible and easier to manage and, thus, understand. Using the multiple methods of inquiry, I tried to triangulate the data returning to the program site to expand upon my descriptions. Once there, I spoke to students and program staff. I continued this until I was satisfied that my interpretations were as the students, staff, and instructors meant them to be.

CHAPTER 4

THE TRANSITION PROGRAM

Since 1968 the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has sponsored an Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) designed to recruit, admit and facilitate success for in-state students who, for various reasons of social circumstance, might not seek and/or gain admission to the University. This program granted special admission to students who, while possessing entrance profiles less than competitive with that of their entering peers, predicted at least a 50% chance of success.

These students were selected on the basis of high school percentile rank, standardized test scores and high school subject pattern. Students in this program were provided intensive academic assistance in the form of tutoring, supplemental instruction and monitoring. They were also provided with personal counseling. Because of its success, EOP became the model of the campus academic assistance and recruitment/retention for minority students. Consequently, since 1970, the average campus enrollment in EOP has been approximately 1200 students, 3.4% of the total undergraduate enrollment. Moreover, approximately 40% of students entering the program graduate after 5 years, with a retention rate of 60% after that same 5-year period.

Over the years, a variety of direct intervention programs in the high schools particularly those in inner city Chicago have generated stronger prospective university students. Through these initiatives, the entrance profiles of students targeted for EOP have been steadily enhanced. The average ACT composite score has risen from 13 in 1970 to an average of approximately 19.5 today. At the same time, the campus became more selective with 90% of admits ranking in the top 15% of their high school graduating

class. This increased the campus average ACT score. The average ACT composite scores rose from a campus average of 23 in 1970 to an average of 27 in 1998.

Aside from EOP, other campus initiatives have introduced additional cohorts of students into the special admission melange. These include an expanded group of student-athletes, including a growing women's program, and the President's Awards Program (PAP). In the PAP, the university selects applicants that are at the higher end of the academic criteria for admissions who score at least 24 on the ACT. Moreover, these students are usually national merit semifinalists and African American or Latina/o.

The Need for Transition

As general competitive campus admission became more selective, enrollment pressures on popular curricular areas escalated the admissions requirements for these programs. The net effect of this on minority student access, enrollment and retention was that many students still admissible to the university under previously established special admission criteria were not being selected for admissions to the popular curricular areas or in general. These were students on the lower end of the entrance profile spectrum that found themselves much more "at risk" in comparison with many of their special admit peers and most of their traditionally admitted peers.

To help understand this phenomenon, a special task force was actualized in 1984. In it, a number of senior faculty and staff were appointed by the Chancellor of the University to assess why students at the lower end of the application pool were not being selected, what could be done to lessen this problem, and how to go about it. After a year of study, the task force issued a report recommending the establishment of a program that worked to bridge the gap between marginal high school preparation and the level of

academic preparation necessary for success during the freshman year at the University³. The report also recommended that under this new program, a series of intensive skills development transition experiences be provided during the first two years of college study for students in the lower end of the special admit cohort. The report was accepted and the university consented to develop and implement the Transition Program.

The Transition Program

Established in 1986, the Transition Program is a two-year campus sponsored academic support program designed to provide assistance to selected students that are admitted each year to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. These are students who have academic weaknesses that could place them “at-risk” if they were admitted to the university without academic support. Each year, the Transition Program selects 100 new students to begin their freshmen year at the university. Of those, 50 students are selected to participate in the Summer Bridge component. In any given year, approximately 100 freshmen and 100 sophomores are participating in the Transition Program.

Through the Transition Program, students are provided with both academic and personal services. While in the program, students receive intensive academic advising and personal career counseling. They also receive the opportunity to enroll in support-based sections of existing courses. In addition, tutoring, diagnostic testing, developmental skills enhancement, enrichment activities, and other services are provided to students as needed.

³ Information from this report was obtained from a summary highlighting significant findings, recommendations, and a brief description of the program.

Once in the Transition Program, the students and staff work together to establish a support network. It is this strategy that allows students to know where they can turn to for assistance. In the Transition Program description brochure given to prospective students, it states:

The goal of the Transition Program is to provide the students with a “home base” where they feel comfortable to ask questions, express their concerns, and receive support, advice, and encouragement they need to be academically successful at, and to graduate from, the University of Illinois. In the Transition Program, students are consistently encouraged to succeed, more important, students are shown how to succeed in the college classroom.”

The Academic Year Component

The Transition Program is divided into two major components - the academic year component and the Summer Bridge component. Each component provides similar academic support services to its participants. According to the Transition Program brochure, students are provided with:

- intensive academic and career counseling
- extensive academic and personal support services
- opportunities to enroll in support-based sections of existing courses
- comprehensive developmental skills-enhancement activities
- enrichment activities

Despite commonalties the academic year component and Summer Bridge, each one is unique. Since this thesis focuses on the Summer Bridge experience, this section will focus on the services that are provided by the academic year component as part of the Transition Program.

Admission

Before selection into the Transition Program, prospective students must officially apply to the University as regulated by the Office of Admissions and Records and meet campus and program application deadlines. Once this is done, applicants are considered

for admission through the Educational Opportunities Program. Final consideration for placement in the Transition Program is then decided by both the directors of the Office of Admissions and Records and the Transition Program who acts on behalf of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. As Transition Program participants, these new students are admitted to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' General Curriculum where they may stay and receive developmental academic support for a period of up to two academic years.

To determine whether an applicant should be placed in the academic year or Summer Bridge component, several assessments are used. These include ACT Math and English sub-test scores and a personal interview conducted by program staff. The scores and the interview are, however, catered to each of the two components. Below is a description of what criteria is used for the academic year component. Admission requirements for the Summer Bridge component will be discussed in the following chapter.

For placement in the academic year component, applicants must have a score of 17 or lower on the ACT English sub-test area or a score of 18 or lower on the ACT Math sub-test area. A personal interview with program staff may also be required before an admission decision can be reached. Once placed into the academic year component, the applicant is eligible to enroll in the fall semester at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Program Services

Each fall, 100 new students begin their affiliation with the Transition Program. As stated previously, these students will have initially applied to colleges and programs

throughout the university. Although they are not immediately admissible to their program of choice, they have been granted admission to the university through the Transition Program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. They remain in the program for two years and receive structured academic assistance, personal, and career counseling. Once the students successfully complete the Transition Program, they transfer to the curriculum of their choice.

While in the Transition Program, the students are provided with developmental activities in the following areas: The Curriculum, Evaluation of Student Progress, Advising and Personal Counseling, Tutoring/Supplemental Instruction, Career Development, and Program Completion. This takes place throughout the academic year.

The curriculum. To achieve its objective, the Transition Program offers a core group of courses for participants through which they may satisfy general education requirements for most Colleges within the university while continuing to develop their academic skills. Sections of several introductory college courses are specifically tailored for these students in an attempt to address their academic deficiencies. These courses are small and allow for more extensive teacher/student interaction.

To be included in the Transition Program curriculum, academic departments must go through a selection process. Departments are invited to submit proposals to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences each year. During this time, they are told that class size will be limited (ideally no more than 15 students) and that these will be special sections of regular course offerings with traditional departmental performance standards.

Although lessons are taught with the needs of the students in mind, all coursework in the Transition Program curriculum is taken for regular grades and degree credit.

Departments are also encouraged toward creativity and innovation of instructional format to meet the developmental academic needs of these students. This includes team-teaching and cooperative learning strategies. Those departments that submit successful proposals receive funding to offer courses within the Transition Program.

Evaluation of student progress. The academic progress of the students is evaluated on a regular basis and by several individuals including instructors, graduate counselors, and other program staff. As part of this assessment, instructors for the Transition Program – sponsored courses meet regularly with the program staff and submit weekly reports on the progress of the students. During this time, program staff, the student's graduate counselor and the student try to determine what areas need additional improvement and provide the student with that help. This process continues through the end of the semester.

Advising/personal counseling. Besides a full-time director and assistant director (staff associates), the Academic Year Component employs several graduate students as graduate counselors. These individuals engage in continuous training under the direction of the program administrators. They are responsible for on-going monitoring of the progress of students, devising positive intervention strategies as needed, providing personal and career counseling, assisting the students in structuring their programs of study and referring students to appropriate campus resources when necessary. They also make sure that the students are making good use of their time, are utilizing all of the resources available to help them succeed, and are studying effectively.

Students in the Transition Program are assigned to a specific graduate counselor. They meet with their graduate counselor on a regularly basis, at least once a week, to

discuss any types of problems and to get advice. During these meetings, students determine the courses they will take each semester with the help of their graduate counselors. Although they are offered Transition courses, they are not required to limit their selection to those courses. Indeed, they are encouraged when possible to take “mainstream” courses, especially in pursuit of meeting the requirements of their desired major.

Tutoring/supplemental instruction. The Transition Program uses the services of the Academic Support Services of the Office of Minority Student Affairs and the Academic Services Center of the Athletic Association, as appropriate, for tutorial, study skills enhancement and supplemental instruction for students in the program. In addition, some academic departments maintain academic assistance centers for use by the Transition students.

Career development. The Transition Program sponsors a course in career development and exploration under the auspices of the Department of Educational Psychology. This course is provided to help students attain information on career choices. Each student in the Program is required to take this course for one semester. In addition, students in the Transition Program use the services of the campus Career Development Center. Again, students are provided with information on a variety of careers. Here, students can explore at their leisure and investigate a field of interest. Students may also request to meet with a career counselor to help facilitate the visit.

Partnerships with Other Academic Programs

Since the prime objective of the Transition Program is to provide academic support services to its participants, partnerships with other campus departments are

essential. The program staff develops close relationships with college deans and other school officials to ensure that the needs of the students are addressed. The stability of these relationships become more critical when a student's academic progress is examined and when students request admission to their desired curriculum.

Aside from the partnerships with college deans and school officials, the Transition Program also has close relationships with the Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) and the Athletic Association. It is with these two entities that the Transition Program shares decision making in determining how best to serve the needs of the students.

Since students in the Transition Program are also in the Educational Opportunities Program, they may from time to time be referred to the OMSA for support services. These services include tutoring, financial advising, and supplemental instruction. As part of the students' study skills development, workshops on test-taking, note-taking, textbook study, and time management are also offered. All academic support services that are provided by OMSA are available at no additional cost to the student. Other support services offered by OMSA include personal computer training, funding for leadership conferences, career development activities, and regional graduate and professional school conferences.

The Transition Program also has a partnership with the University of Illinois' Athletic Association. Like OMSA, the Athletic Association offers academic support services to students in the Transition Program. Yet, only students who are officially participating in intercollegiate athletics are eligible to receive assistance⁴. Although the

⁴ The Athletic Association targets student athletes who are in need of academic support services and meet Transition Program requirements.

Athletic Department funds these services, the Transition Program staff provide input to determine what services are necessary to address the needs of the students.

Program Completion

As part of the design of the Transition Program, students are continually assessed to determine what are their academic needs and how they are progressing in their studies. This begins when a student applies to the university and ends at the completion of the two-year program commitment. Each component determines a student's academic progress using a series of assessment data. Since detailed descriptions of the Summer Bridge component are discussed later, this section will focus on the requirements for program completion of the academic year component.

After a student has successfully completed four semesters in the Transition Program, an admission space is reserved in the college and/or curriculum of his or her choice. To qualify, students must be in good academic standing, achieving a cumulative G.P.A. of a C average or better. They must also have fulfilled the course requirements that indicate normal progress toward the degree of their choice. While the majority of students enrolled through the Transition Program will remain in the program through the end of the sophomore year, as is the case with most general curriculum students, transfer can occur earlier if the student meets the same requirements as other students pursuing the desired curriculum.

Upon completion of the Transition Program, the deans of the Colleges in which the students have expressed a desire to transfer review the students' records. This review is conducted in consultation with the Director of the Transition Program. Once it is determined that the student has successfully completed the Transition Program and the

prerequisites for the curriculum of their choice, they are allowed to transfer to that curriculum.

While in their chosen curriculum, the rules and regulations of their chosen college apply. If they have not been able to maintain the minimum GPA requirement, they can petition to the dean of the College. This can be done by requesting special consideration based on extenuating circumstances. In such cases, students are either dropped or permitted to continue and placed on academic probation as determined by their college.

CHAPTER 5

THE SUMMER BRIDGE COMPONENT

Summer Bridge is a program that was part of the original design for the Transition Program. Although part of the Transition Program, Summer Bridge is unique. For six weeks during the summer and prior to their freshmen year, students are provided with room and board on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus. During this time, they are given intensive academic support services via courses, tutorials, workshops, and testing. This component also provides students with extracurricular activities like “Turkey Run,” “Team Challenge,” and “Cultural Day.”

Yet despite its uniqueness, the Summer Bridge component closely resembles the Academic Year component. For example, students are assigned a graduate counselor who provides extensive academic and personal support services, given academic and career counseling by program staff, and are furnished with comprehensive developmental skills enhancement and enrichment activities.

The Need for Summer Bridge

To attain a better understanding of the need, importance, and uniqueness of the Summer Bridge component, I interviewed the Program Director, Ronald Woolfolk, during the summer of 1996. He has served as director of the Transition Program since 1987. For many years, Ron Woolfolk has worked with underrepresented “at risk” students. In the mid seventies, he came to the university to pursue a Doctorate in Education during which time he was a graduate counselor for college students admitted through the Educational Opportunities Program housed under the Office of Minority Student Affairs. He later became director of the university’s Upward Bound Program, a

federally funded academic support program targeting first generation low-income minority high school students. After years as director of Upward Bound, he applied and became director of the Transition Program. Since then, he has been an inspiration and role model to many students including non-participants of the Transition Program.

Throughout the summer we discussed his perceptions of Summer Bridge, his beliefs about the program, the need for it and how they help students prepare for college. In one session, we discussed extensively how race and socio-economic status plays into the lack of educational readiness of students and, thus, the need for Summer Bridge. He stated that since there are barriers that students encounter, programs such as Summer Bridge are essential. He elaborated by saying,

As long as there are two Americans, one black and one white, there will always be a need for the Bridge program. In this country, students always get shafted. A lot of it has to do with their background. This is America. That's just the way it is. So we need to compensate for that imbalance.

Well, these kids come from poor neighborhoods and where there's a poor neighborhood, there are poor schools. As long as there are such schools in the system, there'll always be problems and a need for Bridge. These kids do not come prepared for college and the challenges that they will face. That's where Bridge comes in. We provide the kids with immediate support. We help them attain study skills necessary for success at the university as well as concentrate on their reading, writing, and math skills so that they can be ready when the semester begins (Interview, July, 1996).

In another session, Woolfolk discussed how Summer Bridge aids students in believing that anything is possible with hard work, determination, and confidence to meet head on the challenges of college life. A great deal of this conversation centered on the relationships that are formed between program staff and students and how these relationships influence students' learning and self-esteem. Woolfolk stated,

We are interested in them as people. We want them to succeed and we help by personalizing the education process. What we try to do is reinforce the belief that, "yes you can" no matter how long it takes, as long as you put the time. If they are

willing to pay the price, anything is possible. The consistency of support we offer helps the student stay on target with their academic endeavors. What we try to do here is always be there for them. They need somebody to depend on and help them. We are like the sailboat they need to make it across tough waters. If that sailboat is not there, they will have a hard time getting through the tough waters. Likewise, if the sailboat is weak.

We know the kids and know what they expect. It's not like other programs similar to Bridge. We develop a friendship that resembles other relationships. The elements of trust and understanding are critical. This element of trust is very important. We care about them and look out for them. Sometimes they don't always like it but they know we do it because we care about them. This is a part of the partnership we have with them. Sometimes it's hard for them to understand that life isn't full of what you want. But even when this happens, they know they have a friend in us and that we'll always be there for them even during their ups and downs. It's not just about academics anymore. It's about having what it takes to survive and be successful at this University (Interview, July, 1996).

Woolfolk went on to describe how Summer Bridge teaches students to survive in school and, ultimately, in life despite the obstacles. Here, he also reaffirmed the need for Summer Bridge. As he said,

I wish we had a program like this when I went to college. It gives students who aren't supported to get a chance and make it. Many of our students have gone on to graduate or professional school. These are kids who weren't supposed to make it because their scores were too low or for whatever reason. They put a cap on the individual without knowing them or giving them a chance. We tell our students not to let anyone tell you what you can't do. You have to put in the time and effort. And, if it so happens that plan A doesn't work, use plan B. That's what we show our students. We show them how to survive.

We show them how to become resilient and to learn to beat the odds. By nature of admittance, they are already defying the odds. The selection index says that they can't be here. No one knows you or what you're made of. They just follow whatever is on those pieces of paper. What we tell our students is that all things are possible if you're willing to pay the price. At the same time, however, we tell our students to be realistic with their major. Sometimes they come in with unrealistic dreams. They want to be doctors or engineers. We tell them that they should be responsible and that there is life after fallen dreams. Their expectations may be too high for what they are capable of. It's hard to get them to understand to be yourself and excel in what you enjoy and what you have skills in. They want to chase rainbows because they're after the big bucks. They want to be at the top of the heap. But first they need to concentrate on what they like and what they can excel in.

So you see, the need for Bridge is there. We just have to make sure we meet those needs the best way we can so that the students come out all the better and ready for any challenges that come their way whether in school or in their daily lives (Interview, July, 1996).

Summer Bridge

During the time I observed Summer Bridge, the students were staying in a university residence hall considered by many to be one of the best on campus for its location and quality. Positioned close to the center of campus, this residence hall was within minutes of campus buildings visited frequently by the students. Some of these include La Casa Cultural Latina (the Latina/o Cultural Center), the African American Cultural Programs house, the Undergraduate and Main Libraries, the Illini Student Union, the Intramural Physical Education Building, and the three buildings that Summer Bridge classes were given. The most students had to walk were approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Despite the closeness, they had the option to take public transportation at no additional cost, which many chose to do.

Unlike so many others, this residence hall was recently remodeled. Despite its modernization, it retained a rustic and comely quality thus making it feel like home. The first floor and basement space was utilized for a study center. These rooms were large enough to comfortably accommodate at least 25 students. Here too it had the feel of home with plenty of soft light, cozy couches, tables, and chairs.

On the second floor of the residence hall, the men were housed. Here, 24 students were paired up randomly and given a double occupancy room. The male support staff that included the head-graduate counselor and two undergraduate tutor counselors each had their own room. The women were assigned the third floor with similar

accommodations as those of the men. The rooms had walls made of large industrial bricks with a fresh coat of yellow paint and a window large enough to see the outside panorama.

Each floor had its own set of communal bathrooms, regarded as the highlight of this residence hall. In the bathroom, the showers were state of the art with shiny knobs and sturdy shower doors instead of the typical plastic curtains you see in other residence halls. And despite the many shower stalls and toilets, it was cozy enough to feel like you were given your own private space. Interestingly, these accommodations for some of the students were better than home.

When it came to eating, again, for some students, it was more than what they were used to at home. Students were allotted three meals a day except on Sundays when only breakfast and lunch were served. To eat, students had to leave their residence hall and walk about three blocks to another residence hall. Here, students selected from a variety of dishes, fruits, vegetables, and juices and ate as much as they wanted since the cafeteria functioned in a buffet style. All this was provided to the 52 students selected for placement in the Summer Bridge program at no cost to them.

The students also received institutional financial assistance to cover tuition and books for the six weeks they were on campus. Moreover, some of them received \$20.00 a week to pay for personal items, snacks, movies, or other forms of entertainment. At the end of the six weeks, these students were given a lump sum payment after successfully completing the program with a grade point average of a C or better and enrolling in the Academic Year component in the fall. Those students who did not receive the weekly allowance or the lump sum payment were students who upon enrollment will participate

in intercollegiate athletics. These students were not eligible for such added financial assistance under National Collegiate Athletic Association regulations.

Despite all the perks, for some students it felt like the military. Since it was summer and a time for relaxing and hanging out with friends, the thought of following a rigorous schedule and studying until the brain could no longer take it regardless of the time of day or night was not appealing. And for many, eating cafeteria food was too much for the young high school graduate to take. On top of that, having a curfew of 10:30 on weekdays and 12:00 on weekends was a bit too much for some that were used to coming and going as they pleased.

Yet, knowing that they were there to improve their academic skills and enter the university in the fall well compensated for any resentment they harbored for not being home for the summer. During my summer observations, one of the students said, "I was happy. I had such a positive attitude and was so mentally prepared that nothing bothers me about this. I was like o.k. I'm ready for the game." For him and for others, in the end, the benefits definitely outweigh the sacrifices. As it states in the Transition Program brochure,

The Bridge experience offers students an invaluable opportunity to get a head start on their undergraduate education and to make important adjustments to the multiple demands of college life. Those students who have completed the Summer Bridge experience affectionately refer to it as "boot camp." Indeed, the demands are rigorous, but each student learns the difference between *getting by* and *getting ahead*. At the end of Summer Bridge, each student fully understands the relationship between hard work and success in the college classroom. The summer experience makes a difference – *a significant difference*.

Targeted Students

During the summer of 1996, 52 students began their trek through Bridge. During that term, 31 students were male while 21 were female. In addition, 37 were African

American, 12 Latina/o, and 3 were White/Not Hispanic. When comparing Bridge classes in the ten years prior to 1996, as indicated in Table 1, on average, the typical student in the Summer Bridge program tended to be African American and/or females.

Although males comprised about a third of the total number of students participating in the program, their numbers increased in subsequent years, specifically after 1988. Thus, by 1995, the ratio between males and females were close to even with 47.4% of the targeted population being male and 52.6% female.

African Americans have consistently maintained high numbers per year for students in the program. They have averaged 65% or higher with 1987 showing the highest at 90.2% of the total number of students and ending with 71.9% in 1995.

Latinas/os, on average, comprised less than a third of the total number of students participating in the program. Yet, their numbers have been slowly increasing.

Table 1

Demographic Information for Summer Bridge Participants

Year	Male	Female	African American	Latina/o	Asian or Pacific Islander	White (not-Hispanic)
1986	38.5%	61.5%	69.2%	15.4%	0%	15.4%
1987	32.8%	67.2%	90.2%	6.6%	3.3%	0%
1988	39.2%	60.8%	81.1%	14.9%	2.7%	1.4%
1989	44.8%	55.1%	75.5%	18.4%	0%	6.1%
1990	49.1%	50.9%	66.0%	28.3%	0%	5.7%
1991	46.0%	54.0%	78.0%	22.0%	0%	0%
1992	40.0%	60.0%	72.0%	24.0%	4.0%	0%
1993	57.1%	42.9%	67.3%	28.6%	0%	4.1%
1994	53.1%	46.9%	65.3%	34.7%	0%	0%
1995	47.4%	52.6%	71.9%	26.3%	1.8%	0%

While in 1986, Latinas/os comprised 15.4% of the total number of students, by 1995, their numbers increased to 26.3 percent. Asian or Pacific Islanders and White (not-

Hispanic), on the other hand, accounted for less than 10 percent of the total number of students in Summer Bridge with numbers fluctuating from year to year. The White (not-Hispanic) category, while only consisting of 15.4% of the total number at the start of the program, has demonstrated the largest drop in students attending the program in subsequent years. The category of Asian or Pacific Islander, in contrast, has been consistent in total number of representation from year to year, with less than 5% of the total number of students participating in the program.

As an academic support program, Summer Bridge developed out of the need to lessen the gap between marginal students and those that were academically prepared. More than that, Summer Bridge offered students an invaluable opportunity to get a jump-start on their undergraduate education and to make important adjustments to the multiple demands of college life. Part of the success of Summer Bridge is targeting students that were ready to accept and handle the challenges that come with being in the program. What the program staff tried to do was make sure that these students were serious about their education and wanted to go to college but needed help in getting prepared. The next few tables break down by Bridge year how the students surveyed responded about this.

As indicated in Figure 2 students, overall, took their schoolwork seriously in high school. Approximately 71.4% of the students surveyed agreed while only 28.5% disagreed. When broken down by Bridge year, a wide range of responses was demonstrated. For Bridge year 95, 23.1% of the students strongly agreed and 38.5 % agreed while 38.5% disagreed. This was the group where the largest portion of disagreement came from followed by Bridge year 97 with 33.4%. Bridge year 96 had the least with 16.5% and the highest portion of students who strongly agreed with 44.4%.

When dis-aggregated by Bridge year, there was no significant difference below the .05 level for the ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years (ANOVA: 0.150).

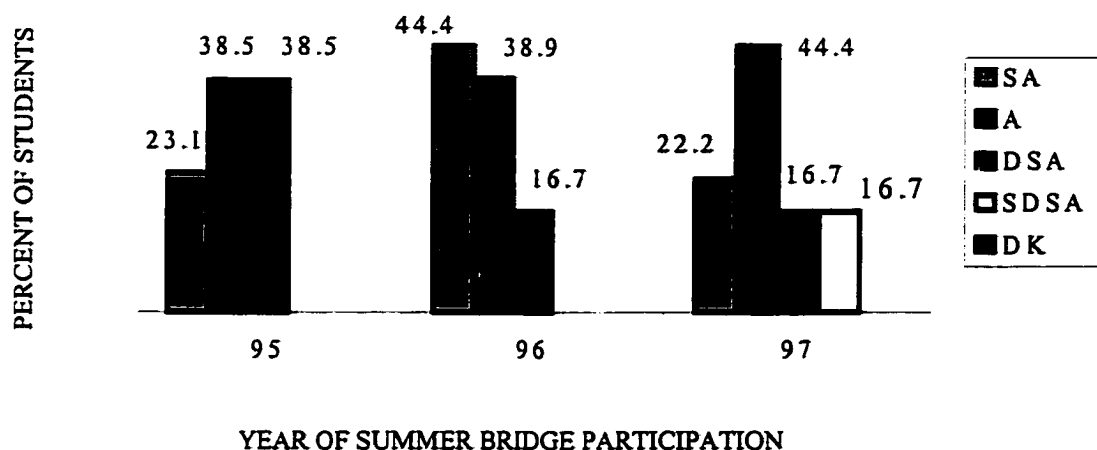


Figure 2. Summer Bridge Survey: I took my schoolwork seriously in high school.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

Students were also in agreement in that they wanted to do well in high school so that they could go to college. The desire of continuing with their education beyond secondary school was strong. Overall, 91.9% of the students agreed with the statement while only 6.1% disagreed and 2.0% did not know. Figure 3 shows how each Bridge year fared.

As you can see, for Bridge years 95 and 96, most of the responses fell in the “strongly agree” category with 69.2% and 77.8% respectively. For the 97 Bridge year, however, 44.4% of the responses fell in both the “strongly agree” and the “agree” categories. Only 5.6% of the responses fell in the “Don't Know” category and came from Bridge year 97. Again, when dis-aggregated by Bridge year, there was no

significant difference below the .05 level for the ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years (ANOVA: 0.144).

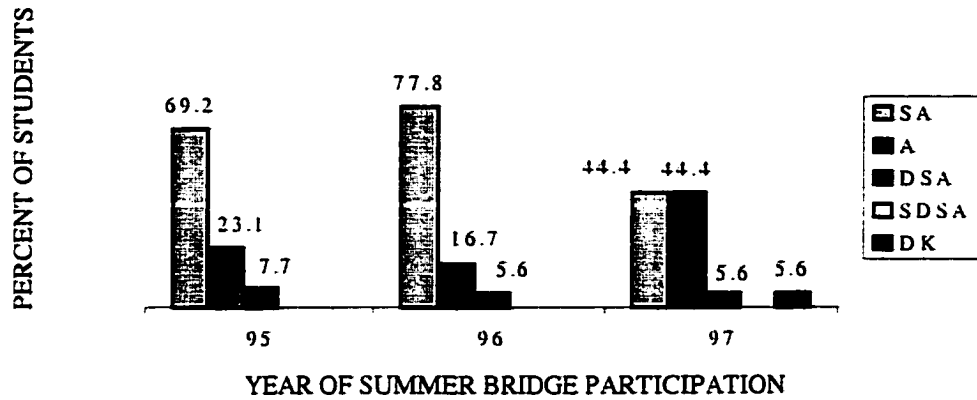


Figure 3. Summer Bridge Survey: I wanted to do well so that I could go to college.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

Effective study skills were also lacking in high school for the students who participated in this survey as seen in Figure 4 below.

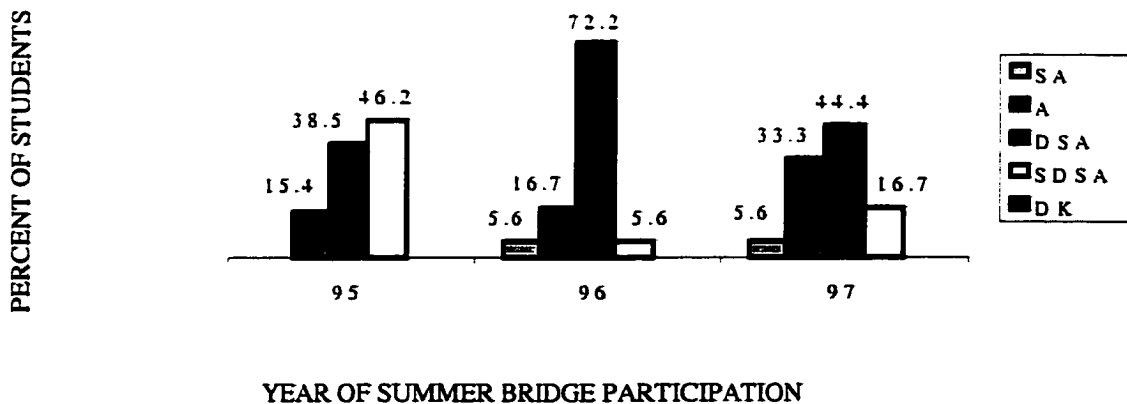


Figure 4. Summer Bridge Survey: I knew how to study effectively before Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

Overall, 73.5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, “I knew how to study effectively before Summer Bridge,” while only 26.5% agreed. When separated by Bridge year, the class of 97 showed the highest agreement. Here, 33.3% of the responses fell in the “agree” category and 5.6% in “strongly agree.”

Bridge class 95, however, indicated the largest percent of disagreement with 38.5% in the “disagree” category and 46.2% in the “strongly disagree” category. Bridge class 96 also had a large proportion of students who disagreed with the statement, 77.8%. When dis-aggregated by Bridge year, there was no significant difference below the .05 level for the ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years (ANOVA: 0.770).

The need for Summer Bridge was strongly demonstrated by students who participated in the survey. In answer to the statement, “I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepare for college,” 89.8% of the students agreed with 57.1% of that falling in the “strongly agree” category. Only 10.2% of the students disagreed with the statement.

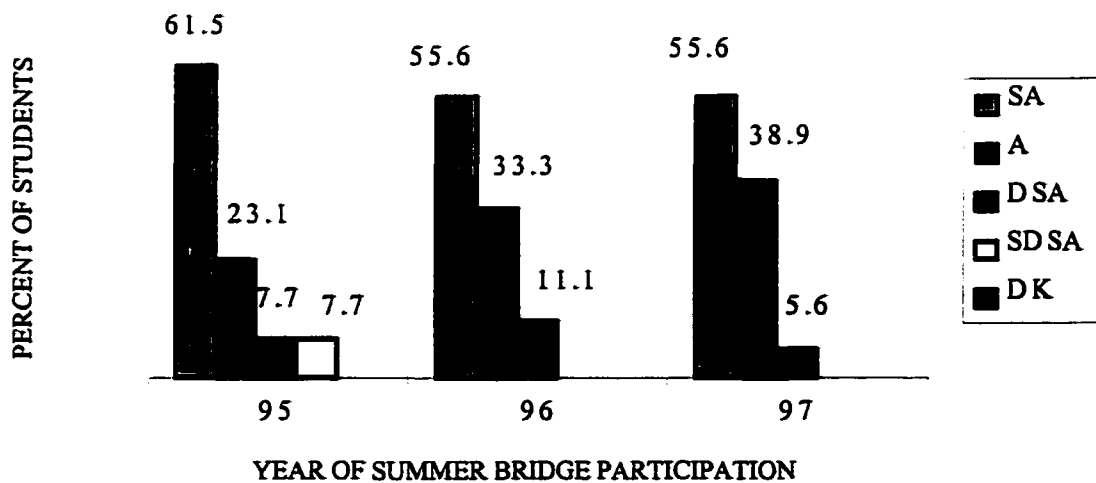


Figure 5. Summer Bridge Survey: I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepare for college.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

In Figure 5, all Bridge years had the highest percentage in the “strongly agree” category with the class of 95 at 61.5% and the classes of 96 and 97 at 55.6%. Moreover, Bridge year 97 had the lowest percent of disagreement with 5.6% of the responses in the “disagree” category followed by Bridge year 96 with 11.1%. Bridge year 95, on the other hand, had the highest percent of disagreement among the three with 15.4% of which 7.7% fell in the “strongly disagree category.” Again no significant difference below the .05 level for the ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years was found (ANOVA: 0.915).

Admission

Aside from targeting students who are “ready” for the challenges of Summer Bridge, the Transition Program uses a set of criteria to determine whether these students meet program requirements. Here, students that scored lower on the ACT math or English sub-tests and whose academic needs were greater are selected.

The criteria used for placement in the Summer Bridge component are, however, different. Here, applicants must have a score of 15 or lower on the ACT English sub-test area or a score of 16 or lower on the ACT math sub-test area. Applicants will then be placed in the Summer Bridge component unless there is strong evidence that participation in Summer Bridge is not necessary for their academic success.

However, if an applicant has a score of 15 or lower on the ACT English sub-test and a score of 16 or lower on the ACT math sub-test area, he or she must be placed into the Summer Bridge component. Below, Table 2 demonstrates the average high school rank and ACT scores for ten years beginning in 1986, the start of the Bridge/Transition Program, for Summer Bridge participants.

High school class rank has maintained an average of 70% or greater between 1986 to 1995. Students in Summer Bridge have consistently ranked in the top 70th percentile of their high school class. Furthermore, in all categories of the ACT, scores have steadily increased, yet remain below the state and national average of 19. The largest increase came in the ACT Reading sub-test. In 1986, the average ACT sub-test score in Reading was 10.27 while by 1995, it increased to 16.84.

Table 2

General Information for Summer Bridge Participants

Year	N	High School Rank	ACT English	ACT Math	ACT Reading	ACT Composite ⁵
1986	39	70.33	14.54	13.14	10.27	13.78
1987	61	78.61	16.43	11.25	14.63	15.03
1988	74	79.05	16.10	12.15	13.60	14.84
1989	49	71.35	14.33	10.79	12.73	13.65
1990	53	74.66	14.61	13.48	12.81	13.81
1991	50	74.46	17.28	16.72	18.94	17.94
1992	50	74.38	16.51	16.06	17.37	16.86
1993	49	71.57	15.76	16.06	16.47	16.63
1994	49	71.51	15.11	15.57	16.53	16.34
1995	57	72.19	15.27	15.84	16.84	16.43

Once placed in the Summer Bridge component, new students are then given a series of diagnostic tests designed for the Transition Program to determine what are their academic needs. Students are tested in the areas of reading comprehension, vocabulary, mathematics, and writing. This is then followed by a personal interview with the program staff. For one student, this admission process did not seem to be too difficult. During the middle of Summer Bridge, I interviewed Michael Rodgers. He is African

⁵ ACT Composite includes score in Social Studies sub-test. This test was not included in Table 6.

American and a native of Chicago. He went to high school in one of the south suburbs of Chicago. When describing the admission process he stated,

I had an interview and then a little test in vocabulary and math to take. And really, to tell you the truth, the test that we took really wasn't hard. It was kind of easy. And I thought maybe they would test you a little bit or the test would be a little harder to see what class you'd take. It was real easy, like an hour and a half to take. I had interviewed with Ron. He just told me a synopsis of Bridge and what it would be like. He asked somebody to come and talk to us who I guess was a T.C. [Tutor Counselor] with us to talk to us about Bridge and stuff and what it had done for him. That's pretty much it. They gave us some papers and that's pretty much it (Interview, July 12, 1996).

To facilitate the administration of the diagnostic tests and interviews, several dates are set aside. The process begins in February of the applicants senior year of high school and end in April. Beginning in February, program staff go to the University of Illinois at Chicago or to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville to provide prospective applicants with an orientation of the Transition Program and a description of the admissions process. The rest of the time is spent administering diagnostic tests, interviewing, and making final selection of students for the academic year and the Summer Bridge components. Most of these dates take place on Saturdays and usually take a full day.

Program Staff

To ensure that Summer Bridge students are successful, careful selection of program staff is conducted by Woolfolk and Greer. At the top of their list of criteria is former experience working with at risk students, particularly Summer Bridge students. For the instructors, prior experience teaching minority students at the undergraduate level at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was mandatory. Many of them were graduate students at the university and had been teaching for several years. Others

worked with the Transition Program year round. Most of them were returning for their second or third year as instructors in Summer Bridge.

Whether as graduate students or year round staff, they all bought into the program's mission – to prepare the students for the fall semester. For some of the students, this meant constant support by the instructors via academic or personal counseling. While most of the time was spent delivering academic content, at other times I found many of the instructors providing the students with encouragement and guidance.

Like instructors, tutors were selected based on their prior experience in working with at risk students. Most of them worked as year round tutors for the Academic Support Program of the Office of Minority Student Affairs. Several were former Summer Bridge students. Once hired, tutors were assigned to a class. As part of their role, tutors were required to attend class at least once a week and consult with the instructor regarding class assignments, exams, and student progress.

Tutors were also required to attend study center and provide support to their assigned students, though most provided support to whichever students required assistance. While not required to stay after study center was over, there were several that remained to continue helping students complete homework assignments, prepare for class, or study for exams.

In addition to meeting similar criteria as the instructors and tutors, tutor counselors were selected based on their former participation in Summer Bridge and their success as current university students. Since tutor counselors were required to live with the students, being able to share their experience as former Summer Bridge students and as successful university students was critical. Each tutor counselor was assigned at least

10 students to monitor. As part of their role, they were required to ensure that the students were up in the morning and ready for class on time. They were also required to check in the students at 11:00 p.m. for curfew. Unlike tutors, however, tutor counselors were not assigned to a class. Most of them were taking summer courses at the university or at Parkland, the local community college, thus making it difficult to attend class with the students.

Despite their absence during the day, tutor counselors were visible during meal times and in the evening. They were required to attend study center and provide the students with assistance in completing homework assignments, studying for exams, or preparing for class. When not discussing academic matters, tutor counselors engaged in conversing with the students about their experience as students in Summer Bridge and the university – both the academic and social life.

Thus, all program staff met similar requirements when selected to become a part of Summer Bridge. Likewise, they were all providing the students with academic and personal support, both critical to the success of the students as illustrated below and in Chapters 6 and 7.

Program Services

As part of Summer Bridge, students undertake a six-week intensive academic program that is structured to provide developmental activities in the following areas: Summer Courses, Teaching Strategies, Developmental Academic Skills, Study Center, Student Meetings, Integrative Experiences, Advising/Counseling, and Evaluation of Educational Progress. It is the hope of the program staff and the goal of Summer Bridge

that participation in these activities will better prepare the students for the fall. Below is a description of each of these activities.

Summer courses. Students enrolled in several courses including Basic Mathematics/ Intermediate Algebra and Basic Composition and received daily classroom instruction in each area for the six week period. Section size was limited in these classes to no more than 15 students. Enrollment in a lecture-based course was also required with class size usually being about 25 students. Programs of study were individually structured for the students and were based upon their performance on diagnostic placement and proficiency testing administered at the beginning of the summer program.

For the 1996 Summer Bridge component, the Transition Program offered several courses in various areas to prepare the students for the fall semester. Below, Table 3 illustrates a schedule of the classes.

Table 3

Summer Bridge Class Schedule

Class	Days/Week	Hours/Week
Mathematics	5	11
Computer Orientation	4	4
Literature Lecture	3	3
Language Arts and Study Skills	5	7.5
College Writing	5	6
Academic Skills	1	1

Each of these classes were taught by either graduate students who already worked for the Transition Program teaching courses during the academic year component or graduate students that were hired for the summer to teach the class. For many of the teachers, however, working for Summer Bridge was a regular part of their summer

employment. These teacher assistants taught courses ranging from computer orientation to writing. Following are descriptions of each of the courses offered to the students.

Mathematics. The math instruction was provided at several levels so that each student received assistance at the appropriate level. Even though not all students at the University of Illinois are required to take math courses for their degree, understanding of math at a basic level is important to many courses students are required to take and critical in many careers. Students not intending to take math in college were provided instruction in math necessary for career goals; those intending to take math in college were provided instruction to assist the transition between high school and college levels.

There were four math sections, each addressing different levels of competency. The two higher-level math classes had students who were inclined to major in an area that requires advanced math. The other two classes were designed for students who performed poorly on the ACT and the placement math exam and also for people not interested in majors requiring advanced math. Each section had one instructor and a tutor. Tutors also attended study session to assist students in understanding the material that was presented in class. They usually worked with the students that were assigned to them but also helped others as well. Students were given homework, quizzes, and exams.

Computer Orientation. Since computers are used in many subjects, from writing papers for rhetoric to learning calculus to science, proficiency in this area was critical. This was especially advantageous for those students who had not used a personal computer before. Likewise, Students who had experience with computers became more proficient.

Students were taught to use both IBM compatible computers and Apple Macintosh computers. They were taught how to turn the computer on, computer language, e-mail, different software programs and their purpose, and conducting research on the internet. As indicated in Table 3, this course met for an hour and a half twice a week. Assignments were given in class but not to take for homework, since the purpose of the class was to help them utilize their newly acquired computer skills for other homework assignments such as in lecture or writing. The students' work was not graded but participation was mandatory.

Literature Lectures. There were two lectures that summer. These included the *Introduction to Conceptual Foundations in Philosophy* and *Introduction to Ecology*. Students were assigned to one of the courses on the basis of diagnostic testing in reading comprehension and writing skills. A faculty member of the university was the instructor so students would get used to the kind of teaching that is prevalent in freshmen classes. In this class, students were given homework, quizzes, and exams on the lecture material. The lecture material was also used extensively in the reading/study skills and composition classes as an organizing feature for the entire verbal portion of the academic program.

Language and Study Skills. The reading/study skills classes concentrated on reading comprehension, note-taking skills (using the lectures as the practice ground for the students to take class notes), and the study skills. This particular class is critical to the success of the students in the fall. Since most freshmen have difficulty learning how to take notes in class, students were taught how to effectively take notes, how to decipher between main ideas and examples, and how to organize the lecture notes in a

comprehensive manner. Students also worked on vocabulary words deriving from the lecture class and other materials. Every week, students were given a vocabulary list of about 35-40 words that they then used in sentences, writing assignments, and on tests.

College Writing. The composition classes concentrated on fundamentals of writing with material covered chosen from actual problems that the Bridge students encountered in writing. Some of these included stressing practical grammar usage, developing main ideas more clearly, and using various modes of writing. In addition, much of the writing was on topics related to the lectures. In this class, students concentrated on improving their writing and in learning how to write for their college classes. Just like during the regular semester, students were required to use computers to write their papers and follow similar formatting techniques. They were also allowed to submit rough and final drafts. Classroom assignments, homework, and essays comprised the materials used to assess the student's academic progress.

Academic Skills. Each student was provided with one hour of guided academic skills development activities per week. Topics included

- Time Management
- Selecting the Appropriate Major
- Transferring Colleges
- Introduction to Campus/Community Resources
- Academic Dishonesty
- Changing Labor Market
- Stress Management
- Rights of Students
- Understanding Financial Aid
- Research Tools
- Grading System and Regulations

These activities, consisting of traditional study skills development, reading comprehension were also tailored to the students' individual needs based upon diagnostic

testing. Most of these workshops were led by a trained staff member from the Academic Support Services program of the Office of Minority Student Affairs. During this time, students were given hand-outs describing techniques that could be used for taking quality notes, how to dissect main ideas from sub-points, and strategies to use when taking multiple choice tests. Since these workshops were interactive, students took as much time discussing what they did not understand and asked many questions.

Developing test taking skills also took place in the classroom. In many of the classes, students were given test-taking strategies and told what to expect in the fall. In one math class, the teacher used the time to explain the benefits of reviewing the answers. Tina suggested to her students, “when you take a math test in the fall, make sure you always review your answers and always show your work. Sometimes, even though, you’ll get the answer wrong, you might get partial credit for showing your work. Other times you won’t get credit at all. You’ll get a zero instead. That’s why you need to review your answers. And if you’re still not happy, contest the grade. It might work toward your advantage.” Although her students seemed surprised by the injustice of it, they felt relieved that there was something they could do instead of sitting back and accepting things as they came.

Teaching strategies. For a program that seemed to be at the forefront of innovation, the teaching philosophies practiced in Summer Bridge were individualized. Especially in the math and lecture courses, each teacher had his/her own conceptions of what teaching should be and how it should be done. Here, teachers ranged from one end of the spectrum to the other, supporting traditional teaching styles to that of cooperative learning. And, although many teachers were integrating “hands-on” teaching into their

courses, still others, preferred teaching lecture style. Following are two vignettes, each portraying two completely different styles of teaching. The first is from a math class I observed. Here, students worked cooperatively to find solutions to the math problems that were presented.

It's 1:30 in the afternoon and the students just finished having lunch. The sun is shining and for some students the thought of being in class again is too much. The class is getting ready to settle down but it's taking a while. Maybe it's the weather or having full stomachs that make it hard for anyone to concentrate. But concentrate they must for their future depends on it.

The classroom looks like any ordinary college room. The walls are bare except for a few spots of chipped paint. The chalkboard is empty except for a few smudges of former words that were erased in preparation for the next lesson. Along the back side of the room, some of the windows are cracked open to allow the cool breeze to rid the room of the stifling heat that seems too stubborn to leave.

There are about 14 students in this class, all getting ready for today's lesson. The students seem very relaxed and comfortable with each other and the instructor. The format for instruction is similar to the other math classes. Students could ask questions freely or comment without waiting to be called on. They also sit in clusters and are encouraged to work together to solve the math problems that are assigned to them.

Right now the students are being handed a review sheet and are being broken up into groups so that they can discuss the review sheet and work out some problems together. The discussion went as follows.

John: I will be going around to each group to help out and answer any questions that you guys may have.

In one group, the students are arguing with John about the answer.

Student A: I think the answer is 24.

John: Sorry, but that's the wrong answer. Here, the answer is 18. Now show me how you can get 18.

Student A: I don't understand how you got the answer.

John: Well, all I could say is that you have the wrong answer and you need to figure out where you went wrong.

Finally John sits down with her and explains the problem so that she could redo it.

It is a bit quieter now since the students are working on the review sheet. Some of the students begin talking about how tired they are but continue to do their work. They are all a bit nervous because they will be taking a major test in a couple of days.

One of the students looks frustrated because he does not know how to solve the problem. He slams his book shut and puts his head down. Then he says, "Hey John, I need some help and I've been calling you all day." John respond by telling him, "you know you're welcome to move around from group to group to get the help that you need. You don't need to wait for me to help you. In fact, you know you can always come to where I'm helping the others instead of sitting there waiting for me to come around. So, come on, if not, go to another group and work out the problem." After a few seconds, the student gets up to get some help (Observation, July 14, 1996).

Students were constantly encouraged to work together. This was typical of most of the math classes.

Lecture classes, on the other hand, did not allow for group activity to take place during class time. Here, instruction resembled that of the traditional college course.

Students were seated in rows and took notes while the instructor discussed the lesson for the day. Below is another vignette of one of the lecture classes given during Summer Bridge.

It's 8:00 in the morning and it looks like it might rain today, if the mist is any indication... The students are dragging in. Last night most of them stayed up passed one in the morning to finish up homework that is due today.

The classroom resembles a miniature theatre. There are rows of cushioned chairs bolted to the floor. Again, the walls are bare with nothing on them except pieces of old tape. There is a rustic walnut colored desk in front of the chalkboard with a podium resting on top. The entire left side of the room is covered with oversized windows overlooking the center of campus. It's getting darker outside. Looks like it's gonna rain...

This is the philosophy class. The atmosphere here is tenser than in the other classes. The students are not seated in groups and instead are seated in rows. They do not speak among themselves. Here students must also raise their hands. They seem very quiet. Could it be that it's early in the morning or that talking will not be tolerated? Look's like a bit of both.

In this class, students are taught how to argue and to critically analyze an argument. For homework last night, a set of arguments was given to the students. They were to work in groups to find the positives and negatives of the assignment and analyze them.

Mary, the instructor begins class by saying, "O.k. class, you were supposed to work in groups last night to figure out how to make the arguments more solid. What were the premises, assumed premises, and the conclusions?" Teresa, why don't you come up and tell us what you did? Tell us what was right and wrong with the argument. Remember you guys can make comments and help her figure out how to make her arguments better."

The rest of the time was spent going over the premises, assumptions, and conclusions of the arguments. Students volunteered information but had to wait to get called on. Despite this formality, students participated actively until the end of the period.

Although this teaching style was different than those used in the math class, students, nevertheless, participated and seemed to grasp the concepts. Fortunately, they are allowed to work in groups while doing homework. This permits them to share ideas, negotiate, and argue for a better answer. The use of different teaching strategies helps students prepare for the fall since many of the classes taught at the university use similar techniques.

Study center. There were two rooms that were used for Study Center, The main lobby and the basement. The main lobby was used as the math room while the basement was used for composition. Study Center also included two sessions. Between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30p.m. Session 1 took place. Session 2 began at 8:30 p.m. and ended at 10:30 p.m. Students tended to stay where they needed the most help. Yet, for those students that wanted help in both areas, switching between sessions was frequently practiced.

Like in the classrooms, the atmosphere was very relaxing. The students knew that they had to study and the pressure was there, yet they seemed to be handling it pretty well. They were working together, seeking the help of the tutors and each other. This relaxed atmosphere allowed for socializing as well. During study breaks, students

discussed how their day went, what they had been doing lately in their free time, and which family members they had spoken with lately. Despite the frequent breaks, studying continued.

Aside from students and program staff attending Study Center, tutors came to assist as well. The tutors that attended math classes returned to assist the students understand and complete any homework assignments that required further explanations. Tutors were also there to help students grasp difficult math concepts discussed during class or there just for support. During one of the math study sessions, I observed about 6 students and two tutors working together. Here the students were working on a math problem that they were having trouble understanding. As the students tried to figure out how to do the problem, the tutor guided them through it and had them explain how they got the answer.

Despite Study Center being four hours long, seldom was it enough time for students to finish their work. Studying continued usually past one in the morning, although program staff discouraged it. Here is a snapshot of one study session that took place on July 10, 1996.

Well, study time is officially over, however, many of the students have decided to continue studying. Some are in the math study room while others are in the composition room. Still others are out in the lounge practicing their math problems or composition papers. Several students have gone back to their rooms.

One interesting thing that is occurring is that a philosophy group has been formed to study the material. Once again, the same techniques are being used here as in the other classes already observed. Students are very interactive in their learning. For example, they share ideas, socialize a bit, and return to the task at hand. What they are working on now is developing argumentative skills and determining what makes a good argument. All this is done to complete their assignment.

During this time, some tutors volunteered to stay and help the students finish their assignments. For one tutor, however, this time was spent helping a student who was in jeopardy of getting kicked out of the program. She looked over his math homework, found some problems wrong, and erased them. She then had him work the problems in front of her so that she could guide him along. Afterwards, she helped him with his composition paper. She said, "it's hard for me to critique papers since I know that's my weakness, but, for his sake, I gotta keep trying."

Student meetings. Student meetings usually took place at least everyday right after the last class. Summer Bridge support staff (undergraduates that work in the office) went around to each class and distributed flyers that said, "Student Meeting...Today at 4:30 Sharp!" Usually, the meetings informed students about deadlines, gave praise to students that were doing well, or reprimanded those that were performing poorly in class. The meetings started off with general information.

Once this was done, students were free to go except those that had been asked to stay. It was usually the students who were not performing well that were asked to remain seated. During this time the director of the program and the assistant director spoke to the students. In one of these meetings, several students were called out and told, "shape up or ship out." Here's what happened.

Well, another student meeting. This time several students were called out specifically for this meeting. These were students who were not being successful in Bridge. Woolfolk told them, "There is no time to play. You know that returning in the fall depends on your success here and now. You all either need to shape up or ship out. Jackie and Nathan have already been kicked out. Will you be next...? This weekend you're all going home for the fourth of July. I suggest you take that time and instead of partying think about this... How bad do I want to make it and be a U of I student. What do I have to do to make it through the summer? If you can't come up with the right answer, don't bother coming back. We can't help people who don't want to help themselves."

One student in particular was told to stay after the meeting to discuss his progress. He was told that it would be in his best interest to think about going somewhere else because if he continued to act that way (joking around, failing classes, not completing homework assignments) he would fail Bridge and not be permitted to return in the fall. The student was trying to excuse his behavior and explained that he would try to improve.

Integrative experiences. This was a structured program providing weekend (usually Saturday) recreational entertainment. Some of the activities included horseback riding, golf, roller-skating, swimming, fitness classes, picnics, plays, concerts, and movies. Students were also provided with two-hour mid-week seminars in which stress management, substance abuse, safety issues, career exploration, campus/community access and resources were discussed. As part of Summer Bridge, three major activities were included in the program. These were Team Challenge, Turkey Run, and End of Summer Cultural Celebration.

Team Challenge took place the third weekend of the program. Located in a forest preserve Monticello, Illinois, Team Challenge is an obstacle course designed to help groups bond by working together to overcome the difficulties presented. Students and program staff were split up into 6 groups and sent in different directions. The objective was to overcome all 8 obstacles in a timely manner without losing a single team member.

For one of the obstacles, all team members had to get on an elevated square that was only three feet wide and hold the position for ten seconds. The trick was figuring out how to get all on the block. To do so, the students had to work collaboratively, accept each other's ideas, and try different approaches. Another obstacle was climbing up a gangplank and falling back. The objective was to develop a trusting relationship with your teammates to put your life in their hands.

Team challenge came at the right time. Students were frustrated with classes, each other, program staff, and with Summer Bridge. For many, Summer Bridge was the hardest that they had ever worked in their lives. They needed to relax and refocus. Team Challenge provided that outlet.

After finals, students celebrated the end of Summer Bridge by having a mini block party. Since the African American Cultural Programs house and La Casa Cultural Latina are on the same street, both were used. At the Latino Cultural Center, different ethnic foods were prepared while the students watched television at the African American Cultural Center. Once the food was prepared, students came in, got served, ate, and went outside to chat and listen to music. The height of the evening was the piñata. Students took turns hitting the piñata. By the end of the evening, everyone had a full stomach and had a great time knowing Summer Bridge was finally over.

Advising/counseling. Graduate Assistants (GA's) who were graduate students at the university were employed as live-in residence hall counselors for the Program. These individuals engaged in a continuous training program supervised by the Director of the Transition Program through the summer and then served as the primary pool from which advisors were selected for the academic year program. They were responsible for monitoring the daily progress of students in the program, academic advising and personal counseling. Undergraduates were also selected to live with the students as tutor counselors. They were responsible for making sure that students were in their rooms during curfew, were getting ready for class, and following Summer Bridge rules.

Informal advising took place everyday at any time. It came from tutor counselors, instructors, program staff, tutors, volunteers, other college students, and anyone that came

into contact with the Summer Bridge students. Frequently during meal times, students and program staff sat together and discussed college life. In many cases, I sat down to observe the students. Here's how one of those conversations went.

- Tony: Hey Chris, what're doing after dinner?
- Chris: Well, I'm gonna chill for a while before study center. I stayed up 'til 3 last night working on some math.
- Tony: Hey Mark, what's up with that? All we do is study and go to class. There's no time to do nothin' else. When I came down here to visit my sister, she didn't do all that.
- Mark: All I could tell you is that your first semester is gonna be like Bridge. If you can handle Bridge, you can handle what's coming. You just got to know how to play the system. If you get your studying done during the day between classes and right after class until dinner time, you can chill at night. You don't have to stay up late studying. That usually happens to people who wait 'til the last minute to study and have to pull "all nighters."
- Chris: What's that?
- Mark: That's when you don't get no sleep cause you're too busy playing "catch up" with your school work.
- Tony: Yo, that ain't for me. I hate doin it now. I showl' ain't gonna do it in the fall.
- Mark: Yea well, just make sure you study as much as you can when you got some free time or you'll be doing "all nighters."

In one way or another, all took part in counseling the students in academic and personal matters. It was this informal sharing of knowledge that let the students know what real college life was about - from the people who had experienced it first hand.

Evaluation of student progress. Unlike those applicants who were placed in the academic year component, all applicants who were required to participate in the Summer Bridge component had to successfully complete the summer program and be recommended by the program director to continue enrollment in the fall semester. It is at this point that these students are placed in the academic year component.

To assess the students, the academic courses were structured to provide students with scheduled evaluations consistent with the traditional evaluative scheme equivalent to regular college courses. These included hour exams, a mid-term exam and final exam. Students were tested on a weekly basis and received grades throughout the summer. At no point was the student unaware how he/she was fairing. Once a week, instructors turned in student progress reports informing the program director how their students were performing and what actions, if any, needed to be taken to ensure success.

Midway through the summer, the instructors and program staff got together to discuss the students' academic progress on a case by case basis.

Bridge Staff Meeting

Friday, July 25

The Race is Almost Over !!!

AGENDA

1. Mid Bridge Reports --- Who is in academic trouble?
2. Schedule for finals
3. Schedule for Post Tests
4. Student Evaluations due August 6th Program Evaluations due August 6th
5. Teacher/Student Conferences are scheduled for August 7th and August 8th
6. Collect books on August 7th
7. Distribute Bridge Grade Reports to students on August 8th
8. Other

Figure 6. Agenda for the staff meeting on July 25, 1996.

As illustrated in Figure 6, an agenda was handed out to each person of the instructors and program staff attending the meeting. Together they discussed how to resolve any problems that students had and made recommendations. The meeting began by discussing which students were in academic trouble, why, and how to help. According to Woolfolk, the program was already in its fourth week, so immediate action needed to be taken.

As several students were discussed, Woolfolk asked input from each of their teachers, the tutor counselors, and tutors. For one of the students discussed, this is what occurred.

- Language Arts Teacher: I'd like to talk about Randy. He doesn't want to take notes in class, says he's tired.
- Woolfolk: What I want to know is the bottom line. Can he make it?
- Language Arts Teacher: Yes
- Woolfolk: Listen folks, we've been here for 4 weeks now. Let's not keep expectations. We'll only be hurting him if we say he can make it when he can't.
- Language Arts Teacher: Well, as of now, no. But I know he can.
- Woolfolk: We've got to make a decision now. Can he make it or not. I'm not trying to pressure you.
- Language Arts Teacher: What do you think, Cindy?
- Literature Teacher: It's hard to say. Sometimes he spaces out, but I can't tell if it's a skills problem.
- Woolfolk: We'll have to talk to his parents and ask them if he was the same in high school.
- Language Arts Teacher: Another problem is that you can barely hear him or understand him. He mumbles a lot. I don't know if it's that he doesn't want to engage in class or what.

He's gonna have to engage cause right now, he doesn't have the engagement skills that students need.

Math Teacher: He's doing O.K. in math. He does engage in class, especially when we're working in groups. And he's doing about average in the class. I'd say he's one of my better students.

Woolfolk: We need to pull him aside and talk to him. Find out what's going on and let him know that he needs to bring his grades up. Where does he fall with the rest of the students?

Language Arts Teacher: In the content area, he's at the lowest. Things go in through one ear and out the other. It's not that he's not intelligent because he makes good points in class. I just think it's more that he doesn't have the study skills.

Woolfolk: Well, let's give him another week. We'll talk to him and find out what's going on. Let's let the tutors give him extra attention. Those of you who have him in your class, get together and figure out how you can help him pass Bridge.

Similar conversations took place for about three more students. As for this student, he successfully completed Summer Bridge with a C+ average. Part of it was the result of the extra help provided to him by his teachers and tutors. The other was the result of the conversation he had with the director and his determination to meet the challenge and succeed.

CHAPTER 6

ACADEMIC TRANSFORMATIONS.

There is a purpose to all this madness. Although some students feel that this is all too much, you know, with the rigorous schedule they have, they will come to see that all this work and sacrifice was necessary to prepare them for the fall. Sort of like “growing pains.” Everybody has them. They have to know what its like to stay up late until your eyes close by themselves while you’re trying to study. They got to know that the time you put in now means that you’ll be ready when it counts. When they take classes in the fall, they’ll know how to write papers, understand what they’re reading not just the words, but the meaning behind the words. They’ll know how to study and manage their time and realize that time is precious and can’t be wasted. It may be painful to go through now, sometimes to the point where they might want to quit, but it will be worth it in the end. I know, I’ve lived it and have survived (Interview July, 1996).

These were the sentiments of Mary Thomas, graduate of the Summer Bridge class of 1993 and one of the Tutor Counselors for the class of 1996. Like most of the staff, she believed that participation in this program sets the tone for how students will behave and handle academic challenges in the fall semester. During their six week intensive academic development, these students reflect on what they have learned and how they will transfer their experience when they return as freshmen of the University of Illinois. This self-reflection or process supplies them with the ammunition needed for academic survival and success.

In this chapter, a journey through the academic transformations of four Summer Bridge students will be taken. It begins with their high school experience, specifically the time when this academic transformation started and continues through their experience in Summer Bridge. Here, improvements in core courses and the attainment of study skills will be explored. Finally, we will examine what ideas these students will

transfer to the fall. When applicable, the perceptions of the students surveyed will be included to allow for a better understanding of the academic transformations taking place.

The High School Experience

Part of the transformation process is recognizing that there is a need to change. For some, this recognition exists at the start of high school. They know that academic excellence is essential for entrance into college. For others, this recognition comes much later. Thoughts of getting good grades and being the “responsible” student are not a priority. For the four students highlighted below, this was the case. For them, “getting by” with C’s was acceptable. However, midway through high school, thoughts beyond high school took precedence. Alas, the transformation process began, continued through Summer Bridge, and ended with their academic expectations becoming higher.

Sara Lopez

This was true for Sara Lopez. Sara went to a high school regarded as one of the best and largest in the Chicago Public School system. This school was also known for its diverse student body for which a multitude of races and ethnic groups were represented. When describing her school, Sara said, “my school was about 17% Black, 26% Latino, 8% Asian, others from different countries, and the rest white.” Yet, despite this diversity, segregation existed and conflicts among racial groups occurred frequently but did not affect her beliefs or judgement. According to Sara,

Little fight would break out because of so many ethnic groups going to the same school. I did not care about racial tensions. I was taught not to judge according to race. My sister and brother had different kinds of friends so I did the same. Being at school, I got to see a different side of the world. It got me to open up to different races. Coming from a diverse school has helped me see not to judge people by their race but their person inside (Interview, July, 1996).

Getting first hand experience in an environment with racial tension did not prejudice Sara. Instead, it created in her a sense of respect for others different than her, a trait that would come in handy during her experience in Summer Bridge and in the fall semester.

Aside from its diverse student body, the school was well known for the variety of programs of study available. These included Music, Art, Math and Science, Drafting, Industrial Mechanics and the College Preparatory Program. Classes ranged in level from regular to advanced placement. There were no courses classified as remedial. In fact, there was an underlying assumption that attending the school led to college. It was expected that all students, regardless of chosen curriculum, would continue with their education beyond high school. To do so, students had to study hard and do well in class. Yet, for Sara, this did not matter. Studying and getting good grades were at the bottom of her list of priorities. She said,

My first and second year, I didn't care for grades. I got straight D's all the way across my first year but my grades did improve a little my sophomore year. I got mostly C's then. Anyway, I didn't care about school. It was a joke to me, especially since I had teachers that my brother had. My teachers knew my brother and well I used it to my advantage. I would cut class and get off scott free.

One time, I was failing biology and the teacher told me that he would pass me if I participated in the science fair. Well, I did and got a D. And, you know what, I was all right with it. In all my classes, I did enough to get by, to pass. I didn't study. And if I did, it was for about ten minutes. I'd read a chapter and be done. So, if I got a D here and there, oh well. I didn't care (Interview, July, 1996).

It was not until junior year that Sara began to look at school differently. She saw that her sister was going to college and that it was time to get serious. Her priorities clanged and she began to study more and raise her grades. She said,

My junior year, I saw that I wasn't learning anything. I was passing just to pass. I wanted to get something out of high school and I wanted to go to college like my sister. When she went to college, I saw how much fun she was having. And I

decided it was my turn to settle down. It was time for me to get on the ball. After that, I was very focused in high school.

My teachers got on me to improve my grades. They gave me the motivation to work for my grades. By my 3rd and 4th year I spent more time studying, like an hour on each subject, and had my sister tutor me. When I applied to Bridge, I had A's, B's, and an F in chemistry. I did not expect this but then I raised my f to an 84% in three weeks. I did this because I wanted to go to college. In my junior and senior year, I turned out to be a B student (Interview, July, 1996).

Luis Rivera

Unlike Sara, Luis Rivera, took school seriously his first two years. And, unlike Sara, Luis went to a school that was reputed as one of the worst public high schools in Chicago. Located in the northwest side of Chicago, this school was infested with your typical inner city social problems. Gangs were rampant and shoot-outs in front of the school were regular occurrences. Showing up to class "high" was an acceptable practice and regarded as "the thing to do." Teen parenthood was common among the students. The assumption was that students either joined the gang, became parents, dropped out, or died. Thoughts of graduation, let alone college were difficult, if not, impossible for students that had other things more pressing to worry about than getting A's.

For Luis, doing well in school was his priority when he began high school. By sophomore year, his grades got him into the Scholars Program, a college preparatory curriculum. Once in the program, however, Luis slacked off and began hanging out with gang members and later joining the gang. During this time, he cared less about school and began experimenting with drugs. He said,

During freshman and sophomore year, I was doing work. I went to my classes and if I didn't understand something, I tried to get by with the teacher's help. At first I was trying hard to be an A/B student and by sophomore year I became an A/B student and joined the Scholar's program. Getting accepted into the Scholars Program felt good. I knew it would get me into a better college.

I started getting involved in the program when I saw they get better teachers, get you involved in school, and look out for you. Later on, I became sergeant-at-arms for the program. But once I joined, I stopped working so hard and only did enough to get by. Then, I joined the gang and hung out with friends that were in the gang and in school with me. That's when I started smoking weed.

Doing drugs and hanging out were mostly done by the regular students. The students in the Scholars Program did the work, stayed in school, and were on time. Since I hung out with both, I did both. Get high and do the work. But, getting high slowed me down. I might have gotten A's and B's because it wasn't hard to pass class. Since I hung out with everyone, it did affect me when my friends would convince me to skip class and smoke up. Thinking back, I see that I should have been in class, take the 40 minutes, and get the credit for it instead of smoking up (Interview, July 1996).

Things began to change for Luis when he got arrested for possession of marijuana and had to lie to his mother about it. It was this life changing experience that pushed him to end friendships he had since childhood. Although difficult, it was something that needed to be done. In their place, Luis chose to develop friendships with students who thought positive and wanted to do something constructive with their lives after high school. He began setting higher goals and thinking about college. During our interview he said,

I started thinking more about my future after getting arrested. I got caught up with some weed and had to tell my mother it was my friend's. I don't think she believed me but she didn't tell me. I eventually confessed to her that the weed was mine. But she knew all along. My friends were mostly in gangs and were bad students.

Going into my junior year I started thinking that drugs and gangs were not worth it. I decided that I didn't need those friends or the gang. It was something I had to do, to get rid of them because I needed to get to the right places. If I still hung out with them, I would turn out just like them and I didn't want that. So, I decided to get more involved with school.

I started hanging out with people I can talk to and could influence me at being a better student. They thought different than others at school. They thought about hope and success in the future instead of dealing drugs. My goals were set after I left the gangs and bad friends. Before, I looked forward to being chief of the gang and not education. My goals were set higher after that. I wanted to do well in school, play football, and stay in the Scholars Program. I knew that was the way to get a college education, to make it to college (Interview, July, 1996).

Doris Jones

Like Luis, Doris Jones went to a high school that had its share of social problems. Teen parenthood and drug use were just some of the problems represented at the school. A more serious problem was the increase of gang activity. Located between two rival gang areas in the south-side of Chicago, the school frequently had gang conflicts. These ranged from small fights to drive by shootings. On several occasions, some of Doris' friends were victims. During our interview, Doris said,

One of my friends died in a car accident. Supposedly he was getting chased by rival gang members and crashed. Well, they got out of their car and went after him. Since he was hurt by the car accident, he couldn't run away. And when they got to him, they just shot him up. I had another friend who got set up and shot by rival gang members too. But I really don't know what happened there. I know people who are involved in gangs but I don't know much about it.

A couple months went by and another friend got shot and killed right outside of the school. You see, he was always hanging out after school. I would always see him on my way home and tell him he needed to stop hanging out before something bad would happen. Well, he didn't listen and one day, the rival gang came driving by and killed him (Interview, July 1996).

Despite these gang conflicts, the school was highly rated among Chicago Public High Schools. Like Sara's school, this school had a college preparatory program and required special admission. The school viewed academic excellence and post secondary education as the most important goals for which students had to aspire to meet. The assumption was that attendance at the school meant admission to college. Because of this, students throughout the south side of Chicago sought to become a part of the school.

Doris was an active student in high school. Her peers considered her one of the most popular and outspoken students at the school. Her popularity grew when she became involved in several extracurricular activities. She was co-captain of the Pon Pom Squad and a member of the Drama Club. Other memberships included the Student

Council, the Debate Team, the Social Club, and Black Student Union. In class, she frequently took part in the class lessons and asked many questions. However, like Sara and Luis, she put forth minimal effort to do well. Doris said,

My first year, I did fairly well. I was an average student getting mostly C's and a couple of B's. I went to class, did my work, and passed my classes. But I did not try to be better. I studied enough in high school to get by. At some point I studied longer than usual, but it depended on what the assignment was (Interview, July, 1996).

For Doris, school was more about fun than excelling academically until her junior year. During this time, she began to think about what she wanted to do after high school and what she needed to do to get there. Doris said,

I always knew I wanted to continue with my education and live the "American Dream," have a good job, make lots of money, and have a nice house. So I decided to continue with my education so that I could be happy and get a job. I knew that if I wanted to be happy and comfortable, I had to keep going (Interview, July, 1996).

These thoughts became more pronounced when her mother confronted her about some of the friends she was keeping. Aside from knowing gang members, Doris hung out with students who, for whatever reason, were not acceptable to her mother, even though some of them valued education. Needless to say, Doris was not happy with this and defended her choice of friends. She said,

My parents believed that my friends were a bad influence on me but I don't think so. I had all kinds of friends. I didn't discriminate who I hung out with. Some were into their studies and others not. Some did drugs and others were social or too social. Some friends were lazy and others were nerds.

But my mom still had a problem with them especially one of my closest friends. She got pregnant in high school but that didn't stop her. She still got on the honor roll. But my mother didn't care. She didn't want me hanging around her. One time she got so mad that she drove me around really bad neighborhoods and told me that I'd wind up there if I didn't do well in school or go to college. My mom is successful and she expects me to be the same. Both my parents went to college and this motivates me to do well and be like them (Interview, July, 1996).

By junior year, she realized that academic excellence was critical for admission to college. She said, “my junior year I realized that colleges are going to look at grades and I asked myself what would I do if my grades are not good enough to get me into college. Reality hit me and I started to get serious about school.” Once she realized her outlook on academics had to change, Doris took steps to improve her grades. She began by studying more for her classes. Instead of just studying enough to pass the test, she studied to do well and earn high grades. She also began to seek the help of teachers and other students. If she had questions or did not understand the class lesson, she would go to the teacher and request an explanation. She also sought her academically talented friends for help. On other occasions, Doris initiated study groups to prepare for tests that highly impacted her grades. She felt that since colleges heavily weighed high school grades, performing extremely well was critical.

Andre Thomas

High academic performance was also important for Andre Thomas. Unlike the other three Summer Bridge participants, however, Andre went to a school outside of Chicago. Located in the south suburbs of Chicago, this school was considered affluent and so were the students that attended. Most of the students came from working or middle class families. Very few came from low-income families. Although this was the case, the school still had its share of gangs, though not as severe. Fortunately for Andre, these gangs did not interfere with his academic performance.

During his freshman and sophomore years, Andre was an average student. He participated minimally in extracurricular activities and focused more on schoolwork. His goal was to become part of the National Honor Society and attend college. His friends

were those students who were already a part of that group and were considered the “smart kids” of the school. To achieve his goals and be a member of the “smart kids,” he focused on his academics. He attended classes regularly and completed his homework assignments.

At one point, however, Andre became overzealous and signed up for classes in which he was not academically prepared to take. Some of the classes he had during this time were difficult and resulted in his grade point average dropping to a “C” average. Although he was doing enough to stay abreast of his classes, Andre felt that he was not focused that year. He said,

During my freshman and sophomore year, I was an average student. But, I wanted to do better. Most of my friends were taking harder classes than I was and were in the National Honor Society. I wanted the same so I took two of the same classes as them. It was o.k. at first but then it got harder. I don’t know what happened. I was taking harder classes but was not doing good. I just wasn’t focused enough (Interview, July, 1996).

For Andre, his poor performance were not the result of his lack of preparation but because he was not focusing hard enough in these classes.

Like Sara, Luis, and Doris, things changed during his junior year. Andre knew that this was the time to perform well since colleges and universities would look to admit exceptional students to their programs of study. Although he kept the classes he had, he concentrated on studying more and asking for assistance from his friends. Andre said,

By my junior and senior year, I became more focused. I improved a lot from beginning to end. I had the goal in mind to come to college and I focused on this the last two years of high school. When it came time to studying, I would do it for three hours every night, even if my friends wanted to go out. I would tell them that after 8:00 at night when I was done studying, we could go out. But, if I wasn’t done with my work, then I would just tell them that I couldn’t go or ask for their help so that I could finish and go out with them. They were good for that. If I had any questions or needed help with my homework, all I had to do was ask (Interview, July, 1996).

He also sought the encouragement of his teachers in his quest to perform well. This helped him stay focused on his goal to attend college. When assignments were returned to him or exams graded, teachers would continually praise him for his improvements. Getting this type of feedback from his teachers kept Andre from reverting back to his former study habits which included studying only enough to complete the homework assignment and not reviewing the answers. And, when he was tired of the continuous hours of studying, he would think about what his teachers would say to help motivate him. He said,

I was very confident and motivated by what my teachers were saying about me and the grades I was getting. They would tell me that I was doing better and to keep up the good work. They'd say that if I kept improving, my grades would get better and I would have a better chance of getting into college. I had to keep motivating myself to keep going. And when I couldn't, I would think about my teachers. My goal to go to college helped with that too (Interview, July, 1996).

Once he became accustomed to this study routine and remained mentally focused, his grades improved. His grade point average went from a "C" to an "A-/B+" average. By his senior year, Andre made the honor role and became a part of the National Honor Society.

For Andre and the others, junior year was a critical time when decisions and attitudes were changed in preparation for their future. For all four students, that future included enrollment in college. By senior year, they began the process of applying to different colleges and universities, one of which was the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Although they had each improved their grades, it was not enough to get admission to the university. Instead, these students were given the opportunity to apply to the Bridge/Transition Program since their ACT scores and grades met program

guidelines. Once the Bridge/Transition application process ended, Sara, Luis, Doris, and Andre were chosen for the Summer Bridge Program and were on their way to begin a new chapter in their lives. For the next six weeks, they were given academic, cultural, personal, and social experiences to prepare them for the fall semester at the university.

Academic Boot Camp

As stated previously, all Summer Bridge students were taking mathematics, computer orientation, lectures, language and study skills, and college writing. In all but the lecture courses, students were grouped according to ability with the total not to exceed 10 students per class.

The schedule I followed was similar to the student's daily schedule. Figure 7 illustrates the program's daily planner that students had to follow. This included the day and time of classes, breaks, and study center were given. During the time I spent at Bridge, I spoke with, at least once, to all the students, tutor counselors, study center tutors, and instructors.

Initially, I focused on the program, what it offered, its schedule, philosophy, personnel, and daily happenings. Throughout this, I paid close attention to the students, specifically the four that agreed to be interviewed in depth. I sat in each class at least once, concentrating on curriculum, teaching strategies, classroom dynamics, student interactions, and how each of the four students interfaced in these areas.

I attended classes, went on breaks with them including lunch and sometimes dinner, and sat in during study center. Most of my days, I stayed after study center to observe and conduct some of my interviews. Given the rigorous schedule and the large amount of work the students had, many of the interviews had to be rescheduled.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday																																																								
7:00	Breakfast																																																														
7:30																																																															
8:00	Language Arts and Study skills	Literature Lecture	Language Arts and Study Skills	Literature Lecture		Open																																																									
8:30		Language Arts and Study Skills		Language Arts and Study Skills																																																											
9:00				College Writing	College Writing																																																										
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10:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch																																																												
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12:00	Computers 3:40-4:40	Computers 3:40-4:40		Computers 3:40-4:40	Academic Skills Wkshp 3:40-4:40																																																										
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Figure 7. Summer Bridge Program Daily Planner

During my observations and interviews, I was interested in learning how participation in the Summer Bridge Program contributed to the improvement of their

academic skills and knowledge. I also wanted to determine if the students, particularly the four I interviewed, had incorporated into their everyday learning what they were getting both from the Bridge classes and study center. Finally, I wanted to ascertain if there were extensions of what was learned beyond the classroom, which conditions appeared to facilitate the process of improving learning, and how this affected or impacted the academic expectations of the students.

Improvement in Core Courses

The students I surveyed voiced improvement in academic performance. In responding to the statement, “I felt an improvement in my academic performance during Summer Bridge,” students overwhelmingly agreed. Approximately 95.9% of the students felt an improvement while only 4.1% disagreed. Again, there was no significant difference to the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years (ANOVA: 0.210).

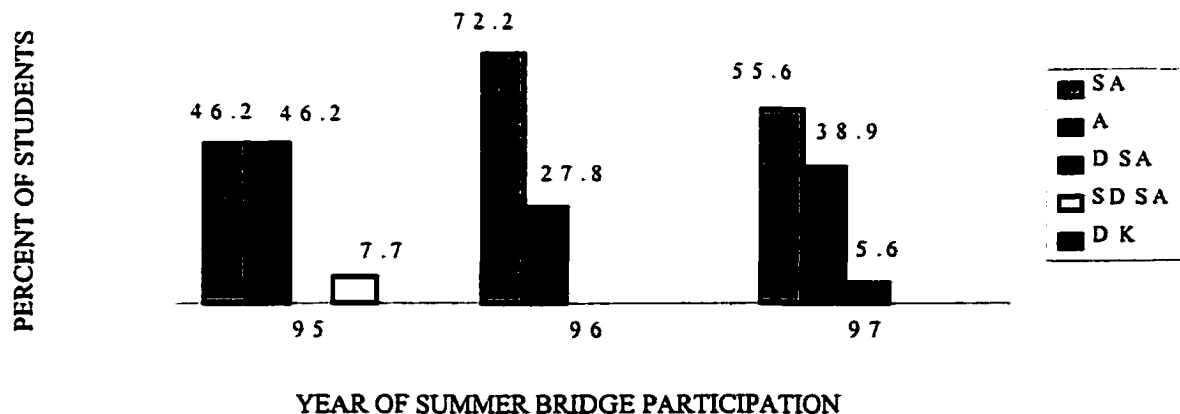


Figure 8. Summer Bridge Survey: I felt an improvement in my academic performance during Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SD SA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

As shown in Figure 8, most of the responses fell in the “strongly agree” or “agree” category. For Bridge years 96 and 97, more than half of the students surveyed

strongly agreed, 72.2% and 55.6% respectively; the highest percentage indicated by Bridge year 96. The rest of their responses fell in the “agree” category with 27.8% for the former and 38.9% for the latter. A small percentage of the responses for Bridge year 97, 5.6%, disagreed. Only Bridge year 95 indicated the “strongly disagree” category with 7.7% of their responses. The rest of the responses were evenly divided between the “strongly agree” and the “agree” categories at 46.2% each.

Students also overwhelmingly disagreed when asked to respond to the statement, “I did not learn anything in Summer Bridge.” Approximately 95.9% of the students disagreed while only 4.1% agreed that they did not learn. When analyzed by Bridge year, again, no significant difference to the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of bridge years was found (ANOVA: 0.678).

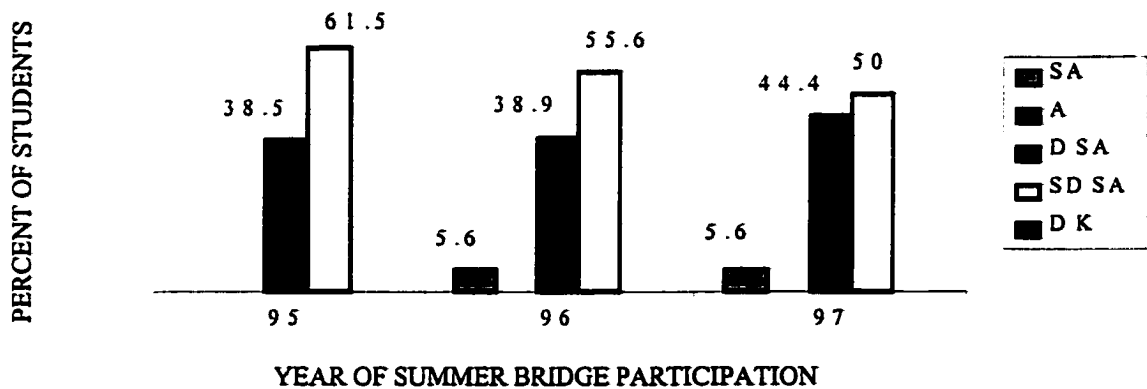


Figure 9. Summer Bridge Survey: I did not learn anything in Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

As indicated in Figure 9, 50% or more of the responses for each year fell in the “strongly disagree” category, with 61.5% reported for Bridge year 95, 55.6% for Bridge

year 96, and 50% for Bridge year 97. Only Bridge years 96 and 97 reflected agreement, yet each only reported 5.6% of the responses falling in the “strongly agree” category.

During Summer Bridge, the students talked about their improvement in learning and study skills. The program was seen as helping some students assimilate new strategies and techniques into existing skills and others in developing a repertoire of approaches. Instructors aimed at helping students inquire into their practices, attitudes, and beliefs about learning while providing them with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the content areas. Students talked about mastering new learning strategies, study skills and the activities done during class and study center to facilitate this process.

For the four students highlighted in this study, I was interested in finding out whether participation in Summer Bridge contributed to improvements in math, writing, language arts, and study skills. I also wanted to discover how were these improvements incorporated into their everyday learning, whether they extended beyond the classroom, and under what conditions. To get these answers, I followed the students around, sat in their classes, and spoke to them afterwards. Each had many things to say about their classes, yet focused on one class as the most helpful.

Mathematics. When Luis started in Bridge, most of the time he felt that he knew very little. This was hardest when classes started and he was asked to be a part of a group and contribute to the discussion. This anxiety resulted from not being familiar with cooperative learning techniques while in High School. To him, participating in work groups provided an opportunity to copy someone else’s work. None of the time spent in

these groups was to figure out how to solve problems or provide each other with tips.

Luis stated,

In work, like in math work, I used to copy everything in high school and stuff. Because I did one problem I thought I knew it. I also copied other people's work in high school. It's not like that now (Interview, July, 1996).

While in Bridge, things changed for Luis. He became very positive about his academic progress. He said that one of the biggest benefits of participating in Bridge was learning the "how to" when solving math problems. This was very helpful because he wanted to understand the subject matter and what he was doing instead of just going through the motions of completing an assignment without thought. When I asked him how things were going for him in class, he said,

Where parts where I was weak at, I feel that I've improved. Now I'm working with different problems and I'm able to learn how to work with problems. So it [Bridge] helped me to learn the work, how to prepare myself to go and read into the work, and find out different ways of working out that problem (Interview, July, 1996).

While Luis described what had changed in his learning of math during his participation in Bridge, I asked if he had encountered some of the problems his classmates had mentioned. He felt that at times the schedule and workload was overwhelming. Yet, he knew it was necessary. He also mentioned that those students who did not like all the work and tried to do the minimal would have problems when they had to take exams or try something new. Unlike some of those students, he took the time to learn, applied new skills to his studying, and was not afraid to try new things. In fact, he met them with anticipation. He added, "Now that I know what steps to take to solve math problems, I look for the ones I have the most trouble with or the ones I never seen before."

He recognized that the reason for his successful experience in math was because of the amount of time spent concentrating on learning strategies and application facilitated through cooperative learning. Luis learned to value cooperative learning and tried hard to take advantage of it whenever the opportunity presented itself in class. Here follows what I observed in his math class on July 8, 1996.

It's 1:30 in the afternoon as I enter Luis' math class. The students in his class already know me so to them it's no big deal that I'm here. Before class began, I spoke to the instructor, Mary, to make sure it was all right for me to sit down and observe the class. I decided to sit in the back of the class so that I could get a good view of the teacher, the students, and Luis. The room was large, well lit, but very plain. The walls were bare and the chalkboards clear of writing but very dusty. The desks were scattered about the room. This is a large class. At least 15 students, more so than the other classes. I guess this is all right.

Well, today these students are going over their first test. Students that got certain problems right are on the board working them out and demonstrating it to the entire class. Mary hopes that these problems will work as a "key" for the exam and others to use. She also gave the students a copy of the test, but with the wrong answers. She hopes that the students acquire skills from correcting exams and use them when taking the exams. They're laughing now at the name of the person who took the test with the wrong answers- Ron, the director of the program, took the test.

Students are now splitting up into groups. Mary wants to foster a climate of cooperative working relations among her students, so that they feel comfortable in sharing ideas, listening, discussing, and respecting each others ideas. Like in other classes, students are encouraged to communicate with each other to work on problems and socialize on the side. Well, some groups are talking among themselves to get the right answers. However, there is a group where the students are working more independently from each other.

While the students were working in work groups, I spoke to Mary about their progress. So far, she believes that the students are doing well. On the test, which she believes was difficult; there was a wide range of scores from 30 to 99. Yet, despite this large range of scores, she believes that overall, the students are progressing quite well. She mentions that even for students that scored low on the test, they can pass Bridge by switching classes to one that is at their level or by deciding not to major in an area that requires advanced math. Mary's motto is that no one fails unless they want to.

Mary is now giving advice to the students on what college tests are like by letting them know that sometimes students will not get partial credit for a math problem on a test. What will happen instead is that they'll get zeros. The students seem surprise and upset about this so Mary tells them that it's always best to review the answers and contest the grade.

Now that the exam review activity is over, students have begun to work on a math worksheet. They are helping one another solve problems. I can hear several of them shouting out answers and asking if anyone else got the same answers. They work in work groups yet they seek the help of others outside of their group as well.

While observing the class, I paid close attention to Luis and how he was interacting with the others in his group. This was one of the louder groups in the class. They spoke about the math problems, each taking turns to provide input. In several instances, a few of the members in his group including Luis left the group to confer with other students. Luis was changing. He went from a student who copied the work of others without asking questions to one that sought out the advice in order to figure out the answers.

Like Luis, students that responded to the survey also felt an improvement in their basic skills knowledge in math during Summer Bridge. Approximately, 81.6% of the students responded that they agreed with the statement while 18.3% did not. When broken down by Bridge year, no significant difference to the .05 level for the ANOVA for any pairs of Bridge years was found (ANOVA: 0.384).

As shown in Figure 10, more than half of the respondents for each year agreed. For Bridge year 95, a little over two thirds of the students responded that they either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, 30.8% for the former and 38.5% for the latter. The rest of the students, 30.8%, disagreed with 23.1% falling in the “disagree” category while 7.7% in the “strongly disagree” category. Bridge year 96, however, had most of the responses in the “agree” category with 50% followed by 27.8% in the “strongly agree” category. The rest of the responses, 22.2%, were evenly divided with 11.1% in both the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” categories.

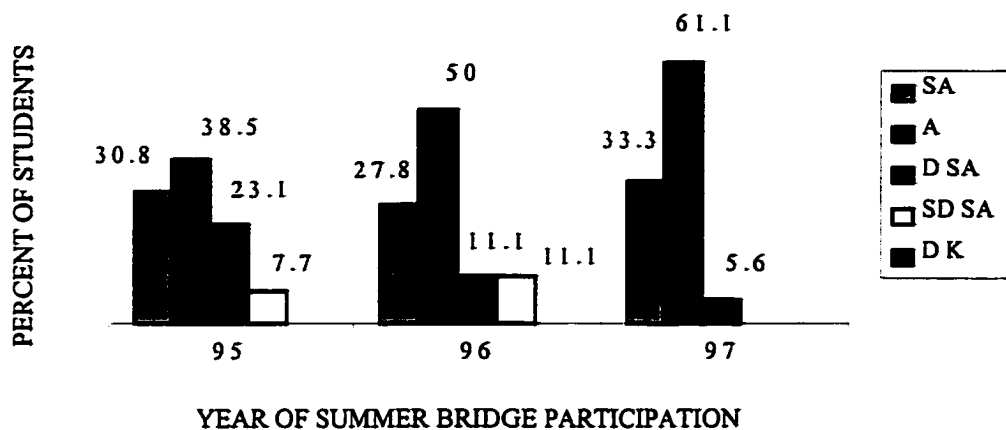


Figure 10. Summer Bridge Survey: I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in math during Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SD SA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

Bridge year 97 had the least number of students that disagreed with the statement. Here, only 5.6% of the responses fell in the “disagree” category. Most of the students agreed that they felt an improvement, with 61.1% falling in the “agree” category. The rest of the students, 33.3%, strongly agreed with the statement.

Writing. Participation in the Bridge program made Doris more aware of what she was expected to do, in particular to put more emphasis on adapting learned skills to her repertoire of strategies. Doris described her learning as “stacking up” to what she already had. She and students like her represented a challenge to the Bridge program as to how to help them deepen their understanding and beliefs related to knowledge, learning strategies, and application when these students felt they already had a significantly successful base of knowledge and understanding. For Doris, writing was not a problem. She knew the steps to take and what to do. As Doris described it,

I mean, no matter what writing you're doing, you always have to have a rough draft, you always do a spell check, and you always do a revision of it and all that.

And I always think that. That part didn't change. That's the way I was in high school (Interview, July, 1996).

Yet, participation in the program reinforced what she had learned in high school and took it a step beyond. When assignments were returned, students had the opportunity to inquire about comments made by the instructor and solicit advice on how to approach the rewrite. Moreover, students were encouraged to seek the advice of each other and the tutors that were provided for them during study center. The opportunity to ask for assistance from the instructor and fellow students made Doris more inclined to incorporate writing strategies into her everyday assignments.

During writing class, her instructor, like the others, continually provided constructive feedback on writing assignments, regardless of how well written or not. Students were told that improvements were ongoing, meaning that to reach the final draft stage, there were many stages in between and that was o.k. and expected. The instructors encouraged the students to express their ideas in detail and support their facts with evidence during the rewriting stage. Simply making a statement without explanation or stating a fact without documentation would not do. It was this type of teaching style that aided Doris in extending her writing skills. As she pointed out,

Bridge did really teach me how to study and how to write better because my writing, it was o.k. But now I believe it has improved, even my teachers say it has. The final paper is what changed because I know more about expressing my ideas and expressing my fact onto paper than I did before. I used to always say them but now I write them and explain them in detail. I mean I had my opinions but even now, when I have my opinions, I have to explain with back up, detail. You got to get support. Every little question you ask, every little topic you write about you have to give support and that was something I got to work on while in Bridge (Interview, July, 1996).

For others like Andre, the program helped develop a repertoire of writing strategies to aid in the overall writing process. Constant feedback provided students with

the opportunity to understand where they were in the writing process, where they needed to be, and what were their strengths and weaknesses. Andre mentioned that,

The people who work for Bridge as teachers help a lot. We ask questions and get lots of feedback both negative and positive to make our papers better. Well, I think that helped me learn how to write more efficiently. I think now that because of all the writing we did, I know where I stand on my writing skills. I know that I have to work harder on grammatical corrections. I think that it helped me understand where my writing skills are at and where they need to be. I think writing about articles, understanding them, and picking out important ideas of the article are a must. These are things I've learned and things I will continue to learn throughout this program (Interview, July, 1996).

Students were also taught the differences in writing styles, audience, and how to reference articles. Andre acknowledged that he lacked the basic skills to do, for example, persuasive or expository papers. He stated that the majority of students in his class did not know the steps involved in writing either style. He also mentioned that he and most students in his class lacked the ability to dissect the thesis from an article or develop a sound thesis for a writing assignment. To alleviate this, the instructor practiced drills with them. Here the differences between writing styles and the writing steps involved in each were reviewed along with determining a strong thesis from a weak one. As part of their daily activities, students also worked on journal entries and summaries. As the weeks progressed, Andre stated,

One of the things I really learned was writing techniques, how to write summaries, how to write persuasion sentences, papers, essays, how to read articles, comprehend them and pick out ideas. I think the hardest thing for me was reading articles and getting the thesis out of the article. And not just have a vague thesis but have something broader and something, something greater like a three-sentence thesis, something more than just the one little sentence to sum up the whole article. And I worked hard at getting a good thesis because a good thesis is what really makes the whole paper good. You really need something to get the reader's attention. So I think I improved in that area (Interview, July, 1996).

It was apparent that Andre was able to improve on his mediocre writing and comprehension skills. He described his writing classes as very informative and easy to follow, yet very time consuming. Although he considered the class to be very skilled oriented, he was used to doing less work. For him, all the work took some time to get used to, but well worth the knowledge he attained while doing it. He learned to appreciate the class activities and assignments.

Again, survey respondents resonated Doris' and Andre's sentiments. In fact, improvement in writing was the subject that the respondents most agreed on. Overwhelmingly, they felt an improvement in their basic skills knowledge in writing during Summer Bridge. Approximately 95.9% of the students surveyed agreed while only 4.1% disagreed. In Figure 11, similar results were reflected.

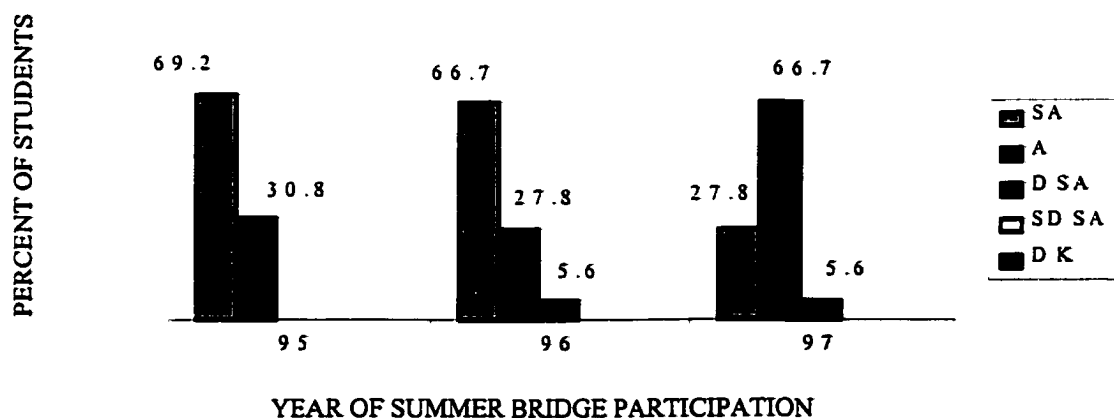


Figure 11. Summer Bridge Survey: I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in writing during Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SD SA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

However, there was a significant difference between two of the three Bridge years (Formula Sig: .042; MC: .077; Scheffe: .067). Yet, in no case did the post hoc Scheffe test find a significant difference to the .05 level for any pair of Bridge years. While

Bridge year 95 had 69.2 % of the responses falling in the “strongly agree” category, Bridge year 97 had its greatest portion of responses, 66.7%, in the “agree” category. Yet, both overwhelmingly agreed with the statement, with 100% and 94.4% respectively. Only Bridge year 96 and 97 indicated responses in the “disagree” category, both with 5.6% of the responses.

Language arts. When Sara began in Summer Bridge, I initiated conversation with her from the start. Although at the time my focus was on the program itself and the students as a whole, I took the opportunity to talk with Sara. I also sat in on Sara’s classes and study sessions. My interviews with her, as I mentioned before, had to be rescheduled several times, mainly because of the workload and commitment she had to complete her assignments and studying. Although I spoke to her many times informally, we did not sit down for an interview until half way through the program. Despite her busy schedule, she found the time to talk with me and let me follow her around.

As did the other students I interviewed, Sara credited the program for her improvement in reestablishing and in some cases developing learning strategies, techniques, and a base of knowledge. Most of her improvement, however, was in language arts. It was in this content area that Sara noticed an increase in her understanding and improvement in applying learned skills to her assignments.

As part of the Bridge program, students participated in one literature course and one language arts class. As indicated in Table 3, students were in literature and language arts activities for 5 days a week for a total of 10.5 hours. Lectures were held in larger classes while language arts classes were broken up into smaller groups of students, usually 10 to 12 students per class. As with the other classes, teaching strategies used

here were similar. Students worked collaboratively and usually led discussions and activities. Here follows what I observed in Sara's language arts class on July 16, 1996.

It's 9:00 a.m. – Reading time. The students just got out of the Psychology class and are starting to settle in. It's a bright sunny morning. The sun and the summer breeze are coming through the row of open windows, making the heat and humidity bearable. So far, the students don't seem to mind. It's very relaxed here. The students speak to the instructor and to each other freely like a group of friends discussing a favorite movie.

Today, as part of their vocabulary quiz, students have to take the role of teacher and select another student for an oral review. First, however, the students were given an assignment where they had to work in-groups and pick six unfamiliar words from a vocabulary section. The objective was for the students to learn through the teaching of others of how to spell the vocabulary words.

Right now the students are discussing the rules of the assignment. Some are not content with the rules so they begin to negotiate new ones. One of the students wants the quiz to be difficult while another said to the instructor to make it easier. The instructor responded that "what's the point of making a test easy. Life's not easy."

Sara was placed with the intermediate students for her language arts class. She was assigned to the lecture class entitled, *Introduction to Conceptual Foundations in Philosophy*, where the material discussed in class was used extensively in her language arts and writing classes. I followed her from lecture directly to her language arts class, chatting with her about the program between classes and afterwards. I usually observed and later discussed with her what the class was doing in reading and how she was doing in it.

Even though at times Sara shared with me that things were going tough for her in Bridge with the amount of homework given and the length of time it took to complete, she was quite happy about her change in attitude about reading. When I first interviewed Sara, she said,

You know, I don't remember ever reading so much. Before, I guess I read whatever we had to in class. But it was usually a few pages maybe. To tell you the truth, I don't like reading much. I only read books that I want to read real bad.

It's different in this class. We read a lot of articles. And in some ways, we read so many articles that you have to get accustomed to reading articles, articles, and articles.

This was hard at first. I didn't see the point of having to read so many articles when reading one or two would do. And really like at home, to tell you the truth, I was not at home reading articles and stuff like that. When I came here I wasn't reading. It's like funny because I didn't question myself. Now I do if I'm not reading. I want to read now. I want to read it because I probably won't do it at home. And when I got here I just didn't want to read. I didn't care about not reading. And now reading is something that's helping me out a lot more (Interview, July, 1996).

Overall, Sara asserted that participation in Summer Bridge improved her reading comprehension skills and vocabulary. She also declared that the program helped her to take some of the techniques learned in class a step further. She mentioned her studying style and homework approach as examples. When completing assignments, Sara would seek the help of other students, tutors, and anyone that was available. She would also find or create study groups to learn class material. All this, she contended proved fruitful to her academic development.

Like Sara, students for the most part agreed that they felt an improvement in their basic skills knowledge in reading during Summer Bridge. Approximately, 83.7% of the students surveyed agreed while 16.3% disagreed. Although there was more of a variety of responses, there was no significant difference to the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years (ANOVA: 0.450).

As you can see, most of the responses for all Bridge years fell in either the "strongly agree" or the "agree" category. For Bridge year 95, 38.5% of the students surveyed strongly agreed and 30.8% agreed while 15.4% both disagreed and strongly disagreed. Out of the three Bridge years, there were more students in Bridge year 95 that

disagreed, with 30.8% of the responses. Below, Figure 12 reflects the variety of responses by Bridge year.

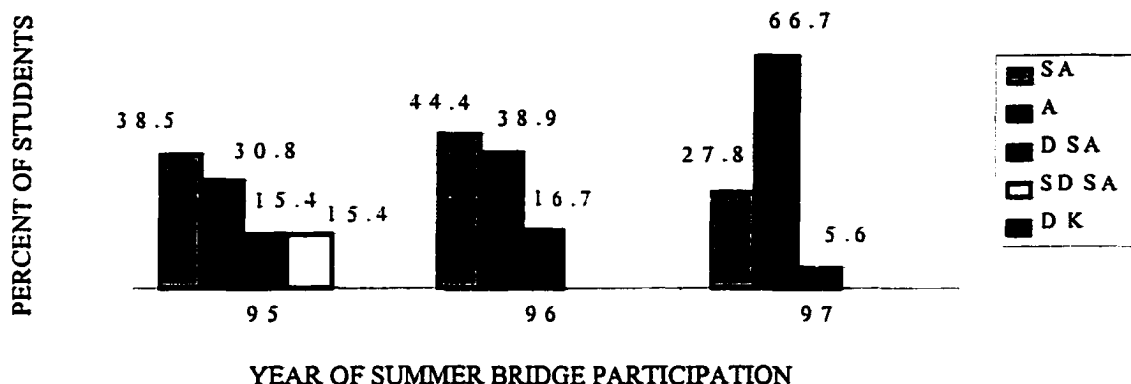


Figure 12. Summer Bridge Survey: I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in reading during Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SD SA: Strongly Disagree DK: Don't Know

Bridge year 96 had the second highest portion of students that disagreed, with 16.7% of the responses falling in the “disagree” category. The rest of the responses for Bridge year 96 either fell in the “strongly agree” or the “agree” category, with 44.4% in the former and 38.9% in the latter. Bridge year 97 had highest number of responses, 66.7%, falling in the “agree” category and the fewest number of responses, 5.6%, falling in the “disagree” category. The remaining 27.8% of the students strongly agreed.

Improvement in Study Skills

A major component of the Bridge program is to prepare students for the university through the proliferation of study skills activities and techniques. For previous Summer Bridge students, participation in the program proved to be beneficial. When given the statement, “I learned how to study better in Summer Bridge,” students, again, overwhelmingly agreed.

As seen in Figure 13, approximately 93.9% of the students responded that they either strongly agreed or agreed, with the responses evenly divided between the two categories. Only 4.1% of the students disagreed while 2.0% chose the “no answer” category. Again, no significant difference was found when divided by Bridge year (ANOVA .450).

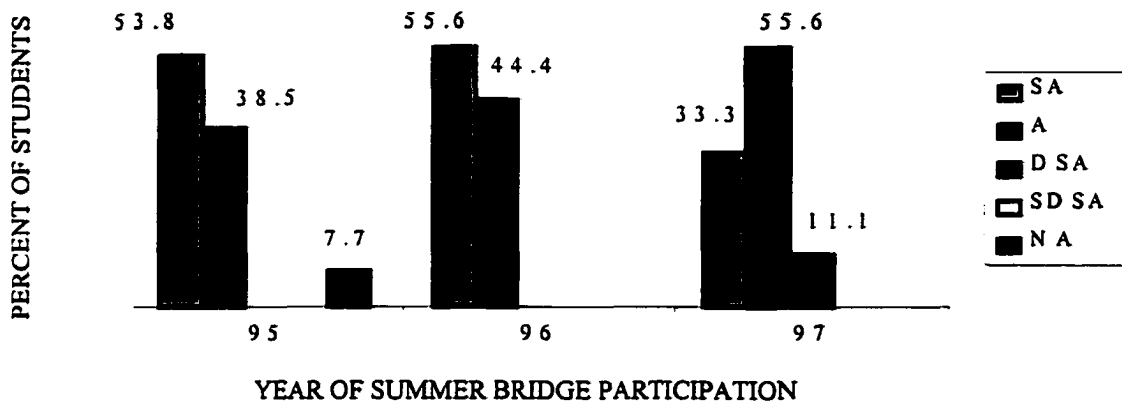


Figure 13. Summer Bridge Survey: I learned how to study better in Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

For Bridge year 95, 53.8% of the students strongly agreed that they learned how to study better in Summer Bridge while 38.5% agreed. The remaining 7.7% of the responses fell in the “no answer” category. Bridge year 96, had 100% agreement among the students surveyed with 55.6% strongly agreeing and 44.4% agreeing. Bridge year 97, however, was the only year that disagreement occurred. Approximately 11.1% of the students responded that they disagreed. The rest of the students either strongly agreed, 33.3%, or agreed 55.6% with the statement.

Throughout the summer, students were continually provided with study skills throughout the day and well into the night. From the time they went to class to the time

they went to bed, most of the activities incorporated some form of study skills. Formal study skills workshops also took place every Friday for an hour. For the most part, these activities centered on helping students manage their time, increase their time on tasks, and integrate various forms of resources to complete assignments and study effectively.

Time management. The minute students arrived on campus to begin their participation in Summer Bridge, they were given their first dose of time management. Each student was given a folder that included a daily schedule as illustrated in Table 5, course syllabi, a list of important dates to remember, student responsibilities, and other program information. Once all the students were assembled, each item was discussed, with emphasis on the schedule. Here's what happened on that first day.

Today is move-in day. It's a hot summer day, a bit humid, but nonetheless, a great day for beginnings. This year's students have just arrived on time. Many of them came with their parents, loved ones, and several suitcases. As they check in, they bid their farewells, some with eagerness and others with sadness.

All program staff is present including tutor counselors, instructors and tutors. As they assemble in the residence hall's multipurpose room the students for the first official meeting for Summer Bridge 1996, in walks Ron and Pam, the director and assistant director of the program. They're dressed in military fashion. Wearing camouflaged army green fatigues and hat and shiny black combat boots, they present a very rigid and, needless to say, intimidating picture.

Some stragglers walk in late to the meeting. Looking straight across the room, Woolfolk says, "Time is critical and this is your last chance to make it. This is not a game. You're all here to learn. Every minute of every day for the next six weeks will determine whether you have what it takes. This means arriving on time to class, study center, and meetings. If you're late, you will fail."

The students are very quiet. To stress his point, Woolfolk, pulls out the daily schedule. He tells the students to review it, paying close attention to the times. After about five minutes, the rules were laid out. Woolfolk says, "Everybody look at Monday. For those of you who eat breakfast, the cafeteria is open from 6:45 to 8:15, but you have to be in class at least 5 minutes before it starts. Here's your first math lesson. If it takes you 15 minutes to get to class, by what time should you leave the cafeteria? No one responds. He then says, "You should leave no later than 7:40. Expect the same time for lunch. Folks, this is not a game. You're here to learn. This is your last chance. That means that I shouldn't have to tell you to be in class on time. Now look at study center. It's from 6:30 to 11:00 Sunday through Thursday. Do not arrive late or you'll get

written up. And what happens then?" The students reply in unison, "we go home." "That's right, you get sent home," Woolfolk informs them.

During the meeting, students sat attentively as they listened to what Woolfolk had to say. As he explained the purpose of Bridge and the students' role, they continued to review the folder materials or took notes of what was being discussed. Some of the discussion included what to do and not to do during Bridge, course objectives, and an overview of the daily schedule. Students were also informed about extracurricular activities including Team Challenge, Turkey Run, and the End of Bridge Celebration.

This first meeting was not the only time students received information on time management. As they followed their schedules and attended study skills workshops, they were continually reminded of the importance of managing time and how to optimize it. For Andre, this was critical to his learning and study habits. As he said,

In the beginning at high school I really didn't study. And when I got here it was like, man, we gotta study every night, after dinner, when you come home, any time you had a long break. At 6:30 we had study session and that was giving an hour, devoting an hour to each subject. Like reading, you had an hour and for math you had an hour. So, knowing when I had to study and how much time I had helped. I mean, with study center, it helped me out a lot, not to procrastinate on my homework cause I had to have everything done (Interview, July, 1996).

Learning how to manage his time also made Andre aware of maximizing time for studying and not for participating in frivolous activities. In fact, taking part in these activities, like watching television, made him feel guilt-ridden. According to him, time management helped him realize that every minute counts. He said,

Like with time management, I don't even miss TV. I mean, I can't sit down and watch it anymore. I feel guilty. I feel like I'm not doing something right which I know I shouldn't feel that way, but time management... It's given me enough.

Like Andre, Doris credited time management for her improvements in learning. She was able to get used to a detailed schedule, take advantage of free time for studying

or resting. This was important to her since she habitually stayed up late to get extra studying done or complete assignments that needed more work. As she stated,

You know, following the schedule helped me get back to waking up early after only having a couple of hours of sleep. I can do that cause I use my breaks for naps cause I know I'll be up late and have to get up early. But I'm pretty good at that anyway. You know, I could go to bed late and wake up early and not have a problem. But I mean, the schedule helped me get more accustomed to that. That's one thing I learned was to manage my time more.

Time on task. The intensive study skills and follow-up support was given to the students in class, during study center, and even afterwards by tutors who volunteered to help. Many times I observed what was happening. Most of the time was spent working on assignments or studying for tests. During study center, many students spent blocks of an hour or longer concentrating on one subject at a time, reviewing material or completing a homework assignment. During our second interview, I spoke to Sara to learn what she thought of the amount of time that she spent studying. She indicated that although a lot of time was spent, the program was tailored to help enhance her studying. Here, she was able to focus and devote time to each subject. Sara said,

I got to a point where I'm not going to be distracted. I can just sit down and if I want to do my math for an hour, I'm going to do my math for an hour. Not, ok, I'll take a half hour here and, you know, ten minutes to do this, ten minutes to do that and come back and well, I have ten minutes left and that's not even an hour and twenty minutes. It also made me not wait to the last minute to pick up my grade (Interview, July, 1996).

During the time she spent studying, Sara focused on completing her task without interruption. From the beginning of her task to the end, she concentrated until she had a good understanding of the subject matter. Regardless if she finished her homework, she would drill herself repeatedly. This meant that if it took her two hours to understand, then that would be the time she spent studying without interruption. For her, taking

breaks meant the possibility of losing track what she was doing. This was unacceptable and a waste of time. As she said,

Let's say I start up at 6:30 in math. I wouldn't stop until I got it. Some people study and take breaks. But, I really don't need a break. I mean, I just study and study until I get done with it so I won't have to be interrupted. Because usually when you get interrupted you come back and do the same work. And I learned to practice and practice and practice more. Not just do something once, do something more than once so you could get better at it (Interview, July, 1996).

Although she believed that breaks were intrusive, she nonetheless, saw them as necessary when transitioning from one subject to another. She said,

I know that I need to ease off a little and take breaks in between, after certain subjects like math. No cramming because it's not going to help you when you get to the test. You'll be like, ok. I forgot (Interview, July 1996).

By doing this, Sara was able to clear her mind, relax, and get mentally prepared for the next task. Yet, she avoided taking extensive breaks for fear that it would slow her down or take her out of the studying mode. Given the extra demands on performing well on class assignments and in exams, Sara made sure her breaks were no more than twenty minutes.

Use of multiple resources. During my observations of study center, I paid close attention to how students were studying and what materials, techniques or resources they used to complete assignments. For the most part, students took advantage of the assistance of others, integrated skills learned in one class and applied it to others, and learned to use a variety of materials as supplements to their texts.

In one session, I had informally talked to a group of students attending the math section. The overall comments were that they liked working together to arrive at the answers and appreciated the help of others. They cited tutors and tutor counselors as most helpful in providing assistance consistently. One student said, "we have tutors and

everything. The tutors help you if you have any questions. And I get a lot out of it from all the assistance they give.” Another student said that on occasion, instructors would stop by to clarify an assignment or help their students study for the exams. Again, this was admired.

Luis was a part of this study group. I later asked him what he thought about working with other students. He indicated that working together to accomplish a goal was one of the best parts of the Bridge program. As Luis said,

When we get together to study for a test like in math, it helps that we’re all together. If one of us doesn’t know how to solve a problem because he forgot the steps, the others are here to remind him what to do. I like this because sometimes, I forget what to do and having someone whose in my class there to help me remember makes my studying not so bad (Interview, July, 1996).

Yet, he had a few reservations about study groups. Luis felt that a good study group included students who were involved heavily in completing the assignment. He also mentioned that even if there were one or two students that were not contributing, this was acceptable as long as they were eager in learning. For him a good study group had to have a balance – students who knew what they were doing and a few to keep it interesting.

Luis also believed that being able to integrate skills learned in one class to others was another highlight of the program. Part of that was due to the design of Summer Bridge. The program was structured so that several classes support each other. As mentioned previously, the writing and the language arts classes work hand in hand to teach students reading comprehension and vocabulary. To some extent, the literature lecture course takes part in this. I spoke to several instructors to learn how this is done. One instructor indicated,

Sometimes we get together and plan our lessons to coincide with each other. So if the writing teacher wants the students to work on a persuasive essay, we take what they're doing in writing, use what they're learning in lecture, help them with vocabulary, and start them off on the assignment (Interview, July, 1996).

For this to work smoothly, students had to be placed in ability groups. Usually each group stayed consistent from language arts to the writing class with variation in the lecture class. Likewise, students had to implement what they had learned to other subject areas successfully. For Luis, this helped him manage his assignments. He said,

Everything we learn in reading class relates to things we're learning in other classes. It makes studying easier cause I'm not learning a whole bunch of different things at the same time. If we're learning write opinion papers in writing class, then our teacher in reading helps us how to do it. She gives us opinion papers and asks us to read them and talk about them. So by the time I have to write my paper, I know what I'm doing (Interview, July, 1996).

Students also used class notes, review sheets and sometimes library materials to study. Most of the time I spent observing them in study center, I noticed that they usually had a notebook for each class. As they studied, I also noticed that they relied on their notes or review sheets more so than their text-books. I also asked Luis about this. He said,

I like using my notes to study cause I wrote them so I understand them. To make sure I wrote down the right stuff, I ask the teacher to look them over or I ask one of the students. I use the book when I have to copy problems down like in math or when I need more information. So I take notes and look back at my notes and using them, you know, in my homework (Interview, July, 1996).

For Luis, Andre, Doris, and Sara, the study skills illustrated here helped them manage their time, stay focused, and learn to maximize the use of various resources. As I observed other students in the process of focusing my attention on these four students, others took advantage or were practicing similar techniques.

Time, Stress and Learning

Most of the students, however, were concerned with the amount of time they spent preparing for class, going to class, and studying for class. When I first interviewed Sara, Luis, Doris, and Andre, I asked them how they were adapting to Summer Bridge. They all agreed that Summer Bridge was stressful and rigorous but well worth the trouble. In fact, Doris summed up their feelings when she said,

Bridge is tough. It's a lot of hard work. I don't remember ever working so hard to learn all it is I need to make it here. When I go to my classes or go to study center, all I do is work. Even when I sleep, it's work. But I always remind myself that all this hard work and stress will pay off when I start school. Yeah, it's stress today, but I just got to keep in mind that it will help prepare me for my future (Interview, July, 1996).

She also mentioned that in the two weeks that she has been in the program, her academic skills and abilities have shifted from mediocre to comprehensive. Because of this, she wanted Bridge to redefine her as a student. During our interview she said,

So far, I think all the work and stress we've been going through is helping. When I sit down to study, I know how to do it. I have a plan that I use. Like, I start by reviewing my notes, deciding what to concentrate on, especially if it's something I don't understand. Then, when I get it, I move on to my homework. If I need to work in a group, then I work like that. Otherwise, I work on my own and ask the tutors for help when I need it.

Afterwards, I review my work and ask the tutor to look over it for me. If there's something wrong, then I fix it with the tutor's help. I never did this before Bridge. Before, I just went and did my homework without reviewing anything. Now I feel that I can get a degree. And I think it's because of Bridge. I want it to mold me to be the student that I should be. I want to be able to study right and still have fun. The program has skills for people to take and I know I have some of that now (Interview, July, 1996).

To Doris, the stress and the enormous amount of work were more beneficial than burdensome. The academic preparation skills provided by Bridge, as is the case for Doris and the others, seemed to be the anecdote for their lack of proficiency. Help was needed

not just in academic preparation, but in improving their learning habits and working on attaining basic college level skills.

These students came from different socio-economic backgrounds, neighborhoods, and schools. Their learning experiences and social problems prior to Bridge interfered with their ability to prepare effectively for college. Yet, these students agreed that they had to absorb all they could as well as integrate their newfound skills into their everyday activities. Many students called it their “only chance” to make it, succeeding in Bridge meant succeeding in college.

Bridge pressured students to prepare for the future, to be single-mindedly oriented to preparing themselves for college courses and exams. When I started this study in the summer of 1996, preparing students for college life was a concern for several of them. These students felt the pressure to orient their learning toward improving academic skills, especially in comprehension and mathematics. Yet for some, spending time learning academic skills that were already known was a waste of time. They doubted that, even with cramming piles of schoolwork, their academic skills would improve significantly from that which they already had. They more or less expected to perform on average, just enough to get by but not enough to excel.

One of them defined their learning as redundant for they had been assigned to learn skills that were already familiar. Yet, despite these feelings, these students agreed that Bridge would provide them with an opportunity that no other program could offer, the chance to experience college life first hand for six weeks. One student said, “It’s preparing me to work harder, spend time better, not think about TV so much, study more and concentrate on important things instead of high school stuff.”

For many others like Sara, being in Bridge was a second chance to get the skills needed to enter and succeed in college. It was a chance to show off and let others know that she is capable of being a prosperous student. She said,

Now that I've been through two weeks of Bridge, I know what it takes to get the grade. I want to get all A's through Bridge and in the fall. I want to get on the Dean's list and tell the administration, hey you didn't want me but look, I'm doing good. I go to all my classes and study every chance I get (Interview, July, 1996).

Being in the program also helped her see that she can aspire to do better in her classes and raise her level of expectation. Bridge also made it possible for her to critically view her skills and determine which ones needed her attention. She said,

I know that to do great, I have to do more. I want to improve my math skills and my comprehension, so I know that that's what I have to concentrate on in the next few weeks. I know that in a couple of more weeks being in Bridge, I can make my B+ into an A and my A to an A+. You know, I can decide what to get out of it and where I can go from there and move for improvement. And there's always room for improvement, no matter how perfect you think you are.

There's always something you can improve yourself on. So, I'll take that every chance I get and I can use that. Well, if I got a C on this test, my goal is for an A, if I get a B, my goal is still for an A. I'm always shooting for an A now, not just to get by with a C. I wasn't like that in high school but now I have to be. Why be here if you're making minimal effort? And I'm not gonna be making minimal effort (Interview, July, 1996).

Students who participated in the survey also experienced a change in their academic perceptions, even though they previously mentioned taking high school seriously. In Figure 14, students, overall, felt that Summer Bridge made them take school seriously. Approximately 95.9% of the students surveyed agreed. A small percentage of the respondents, 4.1%, did not have an answer. When dis-aggregated by Bridge year, there was no significant difference below the .05 level for the ANOVA for any pair of Bridge years (ANOVA: 0.070; Scheffe: 0.084).

As indicated, Bridge year 96 showed the highest percentage of students who felt that Summer Bridge made them take school seriously, with 55.6% in the “strongly agree” category. Bridge years 95 and 97, on the other hand, had their highest percentage in the “agree” category, with 46.2% and 55.6% respectively.

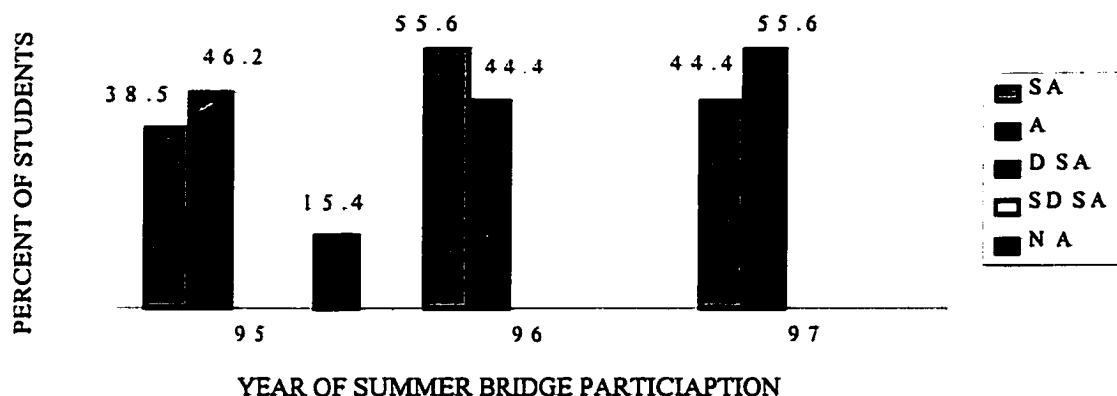


Figure 14. Summer Bridge Survey: Summer Bridge made me take school seriously.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

The rest of their responses fell in the “strongly agree” category, with 38.5% for the former and 44.4% for the latter. Only Bridge year 95 had students who responded that they had no answer, with 15.4 percent.

For most of the students, the major contributions from Bridge were its focus on academic preparation through cooperative learning and the attainment of study skills. When I walked through the residence hall corridors, observed classes, and sat in during study center, I saw that in many cases, students were working together in groups. During class, desks were either paired up or grouped in fours. In study center, students who were working on similar assignments were together. Sometimes, more than 7 students met to discuss the assignment and how to complete it. Beyond the structured time allowed for

academic activities, students regrouped in each other's rooms to continue the discussion, complete the assignment, and prepare for exams.

CHAPTER 7

PERSONAL TRANSFORMATIONS

The 1996 Summer Bridge class was comprised of students from various backgrounds and geographical areas. Only students that came from the same high school knew each other. Likewise, very few were familiar with the university and its way of life. For these students, facing the next six weeks would be more of an academic challenge, assuming they had a support network established with those they knew. The rest of the students, however, were meeting for the first time. For them, the only familiar faces were those of Woolfolk and Greer, the assistant director of the program.

When I sat in during the first student meeting, very little interaction among the students was taking place. As they quietly sat listening to Woolfolk orient them on the rules, class guidelines, and services, I wondered if some of them wished they were back home, somewhere familiar. I wondered how being away from home for the first time would affect their learning. Would they be able to adjust? And, if so, to what extent? What would they need to make the transition from home to Bridge, and eventually, the university go much smoother? How can Bridge and the people involved with the program facilitate that process?

After spending many hours with students, staff, in the classrooms, at study center, and other informal settings, I found that self confidence, support networks, and balance between academics and social life were critical in successfully transitioning the students. Likewise, the assistance of Bridge program and the students' receptiveness and reciprocity were also critical in facilitating this process.

Adjusting to the University

One of the benefits of being in the program most commonly mentioned by students was attaining first hand knowledge of living at the University of Illinois. For six weeks, students had the opportunity to understand what it meant to be a student at the university. And as the program brochure stated, “the Bridge experience offers students an invaluable opportunity to get a head start on their undergraduate education and to make important adjustments to the multiple demands of college life.” For most of the students, the major contributions from Summer Bridge were its focus on helping them adjust to the campus, adjust to the classroom dynamics, and learn to balance academics with their social life. As Luis stated,

It's preparing me for college. Being here helps me see that college is no joke. Before Bridge didn't know what to expect. I had no one to talk to me about college except that it's a party school. I didn't have realistic picture of college life, the work, or the studying. So being here gave me a better understanding of college life, the course work, and how to deal and talk to professors (Interview, July, 1996).

Woolfolk mentioned that mandating students to participate in a six week program while living on campus was precisely to facilitate the transition period from home to college so that it would not negatively impact their learning process. Woolfolk said,

You know that those first weeks down here in the fall are the most critical for students. It either makes them or breaks them. Being away from home, away from mom and dad, is really tempting to go out and have fun and not pay attention to your classes. Other kids get homesick and can't concentrate. So those first few weeks are critical. That's why we have the program here on campus. We want the kids to get used to it so that the newness of it all doesn't get in their way (Interview, July, 1996).

This was also a major contribution to the students who were surveyed. Aside from providing students with academic skills, Summer Bridge allowed its students the opportunity to get a glimpse of what college life was like. By providing this opportunity,

it was expected that students would be able to adjust better when they returned in the fall semester. Figure 15 below provides a clearer picture.

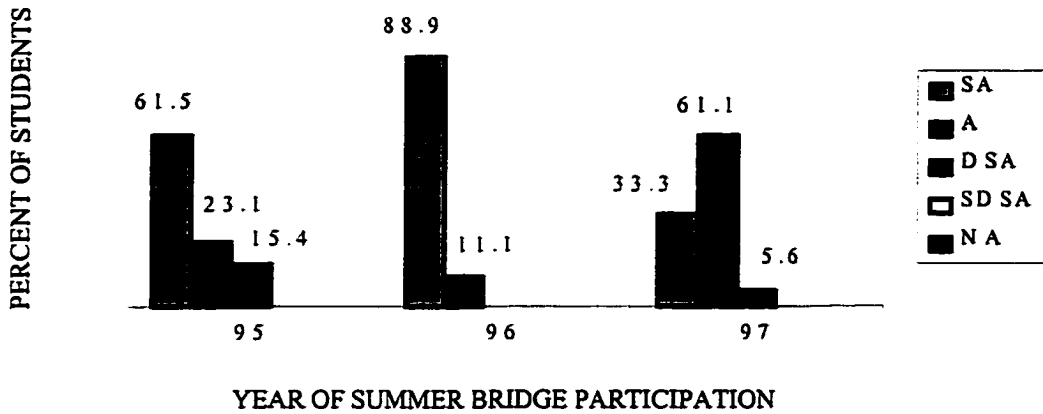


Figure 15. Summer Bridge Survey: Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus when I started in the fall semester.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

When read the statement, “Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus when I started in the fall semester,” 93.9% of the students surveyed agreed. In fact, the majority of the responses, 61.2%, fell in the “strongly agree” category. Only 6.1% of the students disagreed.

When compared between Bridge years, a significant difference below the .05 level for ANOVA was found. In Bridge years 96 and 97 the post hoc Scheffé test found a significant difference at the .05 level (ANOVA: 0.007; Scheffe: 0.009). Here, the students in Bridge year 96 felt stronger about the statement. Yet, both overwhelmingly agreed.

As you can see, most of the responses for Bridge year 96, 88.9%, fell in the “strongly agree” category and the rest, 11.1%, in the “agree” category. Bridge year 97,

on the other hand, reported 61.1% in the “agree” category while reflecting 33.3% in “strongly agree.” The remaining 5.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. For Bridge year 95, its highest responses, 61.3% came in the “strongly agree” category while also having the highest percentage of disagreement, with 15.4% in the “disagree” category. The rest of its respondents, 11.1%, agreed.

All students, particularly those I interviewed made positive comments about the opportunity to live on campus. During Bridge, they talked about the university, what it had to offer, and how being in Bridge would help them get accustomed to student life. The program walked students through the whole process, from learning to adaptation. To the students and others, both worked hand in hand and that made the six weeks a more valuable experience.

Adjusting to Campus

Luis was very positive about his stay on campus during Summer Bridge. He said that one of the most influential experiences from being there was the opportunity to observe up close and personal the daily happenings of the university. He wanted to go beyond the “typical” freshman experience of not knowing. I asked him to describe what he meant and he replied,

I got a chance to walk around campus, see the people, experience going to class, and meet students. If I didn't come to Bridge, I would've been lost like the other freshmen. I wouldn't know where to go or how to find places and I wouldn't have as many friends (Interview, July, 1996).

This was very helpful to him because he wanted to understand what to expect in the fall.

He felt comfortable knowing where to go and how to find places. He added that,

When I come here in the fall, I'm gonna to know where the majority of the things are like the buildings and houses of certain fields. I'm gonna know where my classes are. I'm gonna know how to get around on the bus or where to walk and

I'm gonna know where certain stores are to get what I need and other school supplies. Most freshmen won't know where to go. They don't even know where they're living or how to get to the closest mailbox or whatever (Interview, July, 1996).

Part of the notion of adjustment to campus was the ability to get around without difficulty. Since the university campus is extremely large, getting lost was a great possibility. For many students, their participation in Summer Bridge gave them the opportunity to learn the geography of the campus and, to some extent, a comfort zone.

When surveyed students were given the statement, "Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to get around campus without any problems," 95.9% agreed, with 44.9% reported in the "strongly agree" category and 51% in the "agree" category. Only 4% disagreed, with 2% in both the "strongly agree" and "agree" categories. When split by Bridge year, as indicated in Figure 16, no significant difference at the .05 level for ANOVA was found for any pair of years (ANOVA: 0.348). Bridge year 96 had the highest percentage of responses in the "strongly agree" category followed by Bridge year 95 with 46.2% and 33.3% for Bridge year 97.

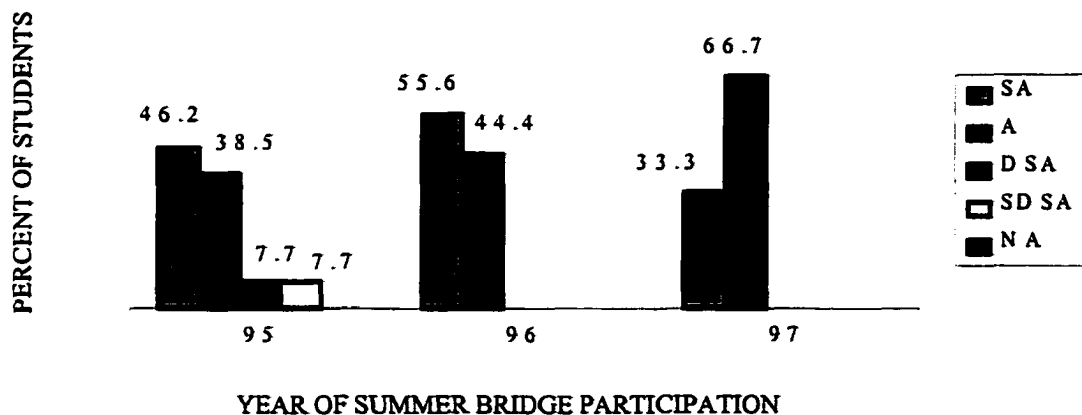


Figure 16. Summer Bridge Survey: Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to get around campus without any problems.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

Although the lowest in that category, Bridge year 97 had the highest percentage of responses in the “agree” category with 66.7% reported. This was followed by Bridge year 96 with 44.4% and then by 38.5% for Bridge year 95. Only Bridge year 95 indicated respondents that disagreed with the statement, with 7.7% in both the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” categories.

Despite the benefits of being on campus for six weeks, some students still felt hesitant about the upcoming semester. While Summer Bridge provided the opportunity to experience campus life first hand, it was at a much smaller scale. Fewer students attend the summer session and thus are not representative of the fall semester. For Andre, this was a bit intimidating. He stated,

It's going to be different because it is like thousands and thousands of people coming down here. I don't know how many people or what's the number of people in the housing. It's just somewhat scary to see all those people on the quad at one time. Maybe if I see it one time, then I'll know what to expect (Interview, July, 1996).

However, knowing that there would be students he developed relationships with during Summer Bridge helped him feel more comfortable. He said, “I don't think it will be too much of a problem because I know a lot of people here and even though they say the you'll never see them walking through the quad, which is probably true, but I would feel kind of comfortable.”

Other students like Doris felt uncomfortable being one of a few African Americans on a campus with so many diverse people. This was difficult for her to get used to since she hailed from a high school that was predominantly of her racial background. However, she knew it was something she had to overcome and being in the program would help. She went on to say,

There are different ethnic backgrounds on campus. I must get accustomed to it. I live with it now and talk to different people. I will adjust real well. I might have problems later, but I'm learning something new that I didn't learn before the summer and it's to not let racism bother me cause I belong here as much as anyone else. So I look at that as motivation. (Interview, July, 1996).

To be able to interact with others comfortably, Doris had to remind herself that she was just as capable as others were and had a right to be studying at the university.

Sara, on the other hand, did not have this problem. She came from a school that was very diverse and celebrated its diversity. For her, coming to the university in the fall along with other students from various racial groups was not an issue. She went on to say, "I think of it as a bigger high school. It's no different just bigger. It's not a shock. I will re-act the same way personally and socially as I did in high school."

Adjusting to the residence hall was also mentioned as one of the benefits of living on campus. Summer Bridge provided students the opportunity to develop a working relationship with roommates and neighboring students. Learning to share accommodations with others whether the same room or bathrooms was cited as one of the benefits. Another was the ability to develop friendships. According to Doris, living in the residence hall was like "living in a mini community." Yet for Doris, living with others proved to be a challenge at first. She continued,

At home I had my own room. I had a full bed and a whole bedroom and I was comfortable. It was hard at first to get used to it but I'm glad I had the summer to do it. And now, instead of just coming here in the fall, having to adjust to one little bed, and all these classes thrown at me I was able to adjust during the summer (Interview, July, 1996).

Doris also believed that being in one of the better residence halls helped her make the transition from home to campus less traumatic. She said, "this is a nice dorm so me

coming here to a nice place and being able to have a little bed and sharing the room with someone else, I think, adjusted me to what to expect in the fall.”

Despite the benefits of living on campus, students mentioned that getting accustomed to the food served in the residence hall cafeteria had proven to be very difficult. They frequently compared the food to that served back home. Many mentioned favorite dishes that their mothers or grandmothers would prepare just for them. And when the menu for the day proved to be unappetizing, references to mom and her food were heard. As Luis said, “I miss my mom and her food.”

Adjusting to Classroom Dynamics

Being in the program also made students understand what classroom behavior was expected. One of the handouts given to the students on the first day of Summer Bridge were syllabi from each instructor that included classroom rules. On the first day of instruction, teachers went over the syllabi, carefully detailing the rules. Some of the more common rules included,

- All homework should be done neatly and completely. Remember that your work represents you, so always create a good impression.
- Coming to class late can affect your final grade. If you are absent on a day of an in-class assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment. Missed in-class work may not be made up.
- You are responsible for coming to class prepared every day. If you miss a class, please contact one of your classmates or me, to find out what was covered in class and what announcements were made.
- You are expected to contribute to class discussions. Non-volunteers will be called upon to share their views with others. Volunteers will also be called upon. Negative class participation and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and will automatically count as a zero for the grade assigned for class participation.

For students that violated these rules, a discussion with Woolfolk was mandatory. As mentioned previously in Chapter 7, a pep talk with Woolfolk meant being reminded of the students' purpose in Bridge and the ramifications for disobeying rules. This happened to Doris. Speaking out of turn or disrupting class was part of her repertoire of antics while in high school. She said,

The things you do in high school, I brought some of that with me like silly ways of talking. If a teacher starts talking in class lecturing, they ask questions. Me in high school, in most of my classes some people wouldn't participate so I would be one of the people that would just, you know, yell out the answer with out raising my hand. There was no one else raising their hands so why raise mines (Interview, July, 1996).

Unfortunately, she thought behaving the same way she did in high school was acceptable in Summer Bridge. She learned quickly that this was not the case. Doris continued,

And here, I did that in some of my classes and the teacher didn't like that and they told Ron and Pam about it. They told me about it saying that, you know, that's not how it is anymore. They told me, 'How is it you act like that in a university class, they will kick you out and you will get an E for that class' (Interview, July, 1996).

Luckily she changed her behavior and made it through Summer Bridge without further reprimands from her instructors or Woolfolk.

Balancing Academics with Social Life

Another component of adjusting to college is learning to cope with college life beyond the classroom. For those students that were surveyed, most felt that Summer Bridge prepared them for "college life" outside of academics. Approximately 77.6% of the students agreed of which 32.7% were in "strongly agree" and 44.9% in the "agree" category. The rest of the respondents, 22.5%, disagreed with 18.4% in the "disagree" category and 4.1% who strongly disagreed.

Again, no significant difference at the .05 level for ANOVA was found for any pair of years (ANOVA: 0.360). As demonstrated in Figure 17 below, the largest percentage of responses came from Bridge year 97 with 72.2% in the “agree” category followed by “strongly agree” and “disagree” both with 11.1% of the responses and 5.6% in the category of “strongly disagree.”

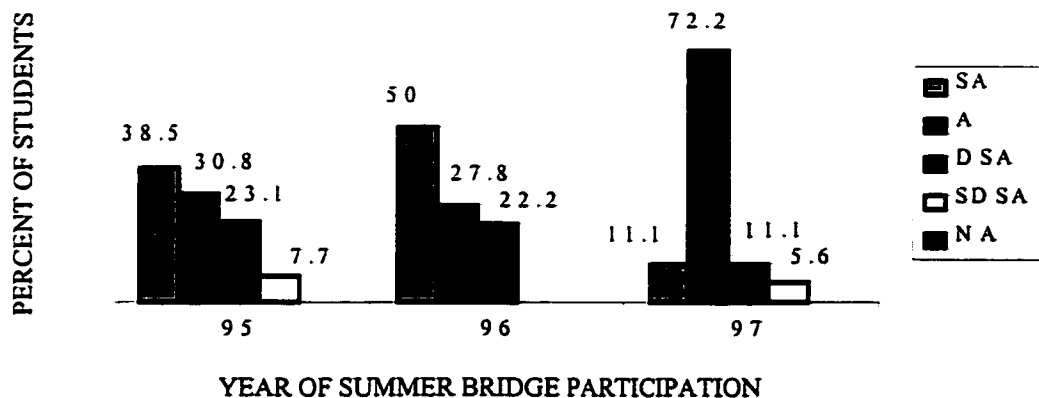


Figure 17. Summer Bridge Survey: Summer Bridge prepared me for “college life” outside of academics.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

Bridge year 96 had the second largest percentage of responses with 50% in the “strongly agree” category. This was followed by 27.8% in “agree” and 22.2% in the “disagree” category. Bridge year 95 reported 38.5% in the “strongly agree” category and 30.8% of the respondents that agreed. Bridge year 95 did, however, report the highest disagreement with 23.1% in the “disagree” category and 7.7% in the “strongly disagree” category.

Since one of the purposes of Summer Bridge is to prepare students for the rigors of college life, I turned my attention to the students and their social lives. I wanted to learn how they were balancing schoolwork and free time. More importantly, I wanted to

learn how peer pressure affected that balance. When I was observing the students on weekends, I sat in the lounge area located a few feet away from the exit door. This was the favorite area to congregate since it was one of the few places where both the young men and women could meet.

Here, I saw students ask each other what was on their agenda of things to do. They shared their itineraries. Some students mentioned staying in to catch up on studying while others made reference to shopping. Still others decided that sleep was the better option. In some cases I witnessed students trying to convince others to take time off from studying to go to the local mall. In several cases, they were successful. For those that declined, catching up on schoolwork was more important than shopping.

This ritual took place at night as well. However, this time it was not shopping that was mentioned, it was going out to a campus party. Since there were university students staying on campus to study or work over the summer, “get togethers” were common. Several of the Bridge students were invited and wanted to get their first experience of what a college party was like. Again, while some of the students decided to go, others took advantage of the opportunity.

Luis was one of the students that went. He wanted to know what it was like and his curiosity got the best of him, even though he knew there was still work to be done. While he was there, he had a good time. However, when he returned, the work caught up to him. He was overwhelmed. When I interviewed him he told about his weekend and said that he left home to get away from peer pressure but it was still present. He said,

I got away from my friends because if I were to stay in the city, it would be like my friends would invite me to parties. And I'd just go. But I have the same problem here with my friends influencing me. So now I have to choose whether

to go or not to that party. So I chose to go and now I'm playing catch up (Interview, July, 1996).

Luis learned a valuable lesson that day. As he said, "I'm gonna take that time and, you know, not stress myself out but be able just do my work and have some free time whenever I don't have work to do." The rest of the weekend was spent catching up on sleep and work.

Being the Best of the Best

The Bridge program provided academic development services for improving study skills and knowledge, particularly in mathematics, language arts, and writing. Aside from these formal services, however, Summer Bridge provided students with the non-academic tools necessary to be successful. To help facilitate this, those involved with the program continually encouraged students to be the best. As Woolfolk said,

We want the students to be ready when they start the fall semester. We want them to be able to do well academically as well as be able to handle the university community. For us to do this, we make sure that we constantly encourage our students and keep them informed of the possible pitfalls to avoid. And, above all, we tell them to be the best of the best, never give up no matter how tough it gets and no matter what they have to give up to get there (Interview, July, 1996).

The effect on the students was an awareness of ability and an increase in self-confidence. With that came the drive to set higher academic standards and never quit. And finally, for some students, this also meant making sacrifices for the sake of learning.

Going for It

In order to promote higher academic standards, Summer Bridge continually encouraged students. Instructors, tutor counselors, tutors, and program administrators took many opportunities both formal and informal to animate students to try harder and be the best. Sometimes in the form of simple comments or in conversation, they were

aimed at developing the students' self-confidence and took place in class, during study center, in the cafeteria, or during breaks. Some of the comments I heard were,

"Come on, let's figure this out. I know you guys can do this,"

"I know you're the best now show me you're the best, show the university,"

"Listen guys, I know it's tough. But think of it this way. When you learn this you'll be unstoppable in the fall."

Woolfolk believed that supplying students with encouragement would impact their self-confidence and, thereby, enhance their learning ability. He also believed that for this to be effective, encouragement had to occur as much as possible and done by as many people. In our interview he said,

Let's face it. It's tough out there. Even if you're smart, you have to believe that you are and demonstrate it. And if you don't know how to tap into your intelligence, which is where believing in yourself and obtaining the tools to succeed come into play. And that's where we come in. We give these students the tools and tell them every chance we get that they are the best and to keep trying. Now it's up to them what they want to do with that. They can either use it to their advantage or try to get by on what they know (Interview, July, 1996).

When I interviewed Sara for the second time, I asked her how participation in the Bridge program had changed her personally. She told me that Summer Bridge helped her believe in herself and her ability to do well, yet knew that work still needed to be done. She said,

I'm very confident. I know I'm going to do great, not good, great. But, I still feel that the skills I have are not enough. And right now, I feel that the program will help me make those skills better.

And, although Sara believed she would be successful, she nonetheless felt that there was still room for improvement. The constant reinforcement she received from her teachers and those that helped her made her feel more positive about the future. She continued,

My study habits are awful but being here will help me improve them so I'm ready when I come down in the fall. You know, I'm not scared. I'm positive about accomplishing something. And when the teachers tell me I'm going good, I take it to heart cause I know what they say counts (Interview, July, 1996).

For others like Andre, confidence in his ability fluctuated from one subject to another despite participation in Summer Bridge. This was more evident in the beginning. However, he attributed the program with helping in overcoming his shyness. By the end of the summer, he was able to take chances in class to demonstrate his knowledge. Andre said,

I remember when we first started Bridge. I didn't feel too good about my work in some classes like math. I was good in some and not so good in others. It varied. But the more time we spent doing work, even though it was a lot of work, too much sometimes, I felt better about it. I have more confidence in math now than when I was in high school. Now I'm not afraid to go to the board to do my work and show that I know how to do it. I kind of feel like that about all my classes. Now I'm overall confident in all my subjects (Interview, July, 1996).

Like Andre, many of the students surveyed felt that their confidence grew during Summer Bridge. Approximately 95.9% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed, with 53.1% in the former and 42.9% in the latter. Only 4% of the responses disagreed and evenly divided among the "disagree" and "strongly disagree" categories. Again, no significant difference to the .05 level for ANOVA was found for any pair of years (ANOVA: 0.090; Scheffe: 0.099).

As illustrated in Figure 18, Bridge year 96 had the highest percentage of responses, 72.2%, in the "strongly agree" category while reflecting the lowest portion in the "agree" category. None of the students in Bridge year 96 disagreed with the statement. Bridge year 97 showed the highest portion of students, 61.1%, responding in the "agree" category followed by the lowest percentage in the "strongly agree" category.

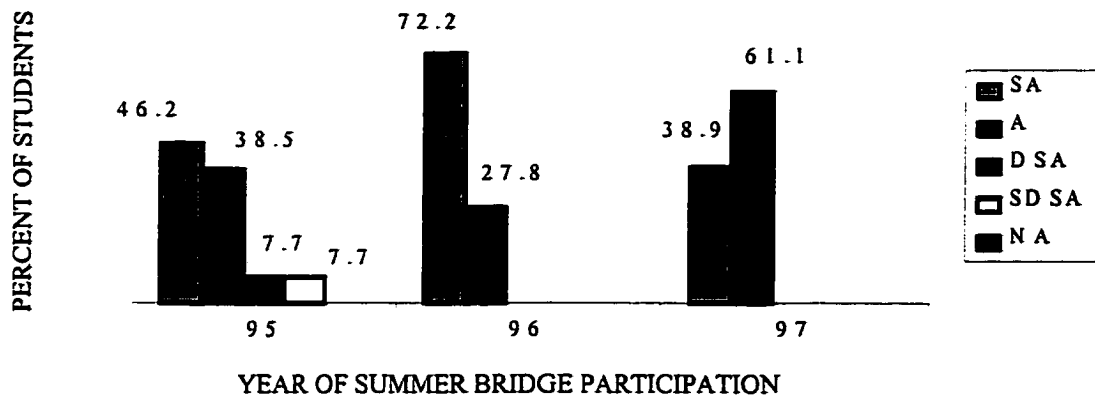


Figure 18. Summer Bridge Survey: My confidence grew during Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

Again, none of the students in Bridge year 97 disagreed with the statement. In contrast, Bridge year 95 indicated having 15.4% of the responses in either the “disagree” or “strongly disagree” category, each sharing similar percentages. The largest portion for Bridge year 95 fell in the “strongly agree” category followed by 38.5% that agreed.

For most students, an increase in self-confidence resulted as well in higher academic standards. This was true for Sara. Although she did not care while in high school about grades until the end, she wanted to get an earlier start in college. This meant that she had to set higher goals for herself and not accept failure. During one of our conversations, she said,

Everyday I tell myself that I’m going for a 4.0. When I study, I sit down and do my work no matter how long it takes me to finish. I’m not gonna wait until later to bring up my grades like I did when I was in high school. That time, I got lucky. But this time, I’m going for a 4.0 from the start. You should have seen me when I got a B+ in philosophy, I thought I was going to cry. People said what’s wrong with you, that’s a B+. Well, B+ for me isn’t good enough. It’s not good enough (Interview, July, 1996).

To Sara, such reaction was mandatory. Her colleagues, however, could not understand. They could, nonetheless, comprehend her intentions to perform well. For

all, high stakes were involved. They either worked very hard to achieve good grades and have the opportunity to enroll in the fall or they went back home to deal with whatever they left behind. While this for some was not too much of a problem, for many others it meant going back to the street life. Luis summed it up when he said,

I know what's out there for me if I don't do good in Bridge. Being here helped me to see myself as a person. It helped me to see that life wasn't a piece of cake, like people said it was. Life is something that you gotta work for if you want something good out of it. And I know that being here is better than what I left back home. Hanging out, doing drugs, whatever (Interview, July, 1996).

The thought of going back home for many was motivation enough to do well in Summer Bridge and increase their academic standards. Most of them did whatever it took to ensure that they would perform well in class. Staying up past 2:00 in the morning was customary and so was studying during breaks. For many, failure was unacceptable.

As Luis said,

I don't want to fail. That keeps me going just by, you know, doing the work, keeping me up and keeping me doing the work and not having me fail. So that helped me and people encouraged me to just try harder and always do better. Being here helped me to realize that life ain't that easy so you take what you get and you work with it. If you don't have what it takes, go out and get it some other way, you know (Interview, July, 1996).

While most students during the summer received encouragement, those that needed the extra push obtained more in order to do well academically. These students were usually pulled to the side to receive additional pep talks. During this time, instructors also took the opportunity to find out if there were circumstances that impeded academic progress. Some of these circumstances included homesickness, family problems, or lack of motivation.

I had informally talked to some of the instructors about these pep talks. The overall comments were that they believed they were taking a proactive approach to

problem solving, and thereby confronting the problem before the students' academic performance worsened. One instructor said, "I like giving these talks because it helps me see if there are problems that need to be resolved for learning to continue."

Problems that were easily resolved between the student and teacher were dealt with accordingly. Usually, both would agree to a resolution. I had the opportunity to see this after writing class one day. I was still in the back of the room taking notes on what I had observed during instruction. One student was asked to wait while the others left. At this point I felt as if I was intruding on a private conversation so I excused myself. The instructor then told me to stay. I asked the student if it was all right and he said yes.

Here is how the conversation went.

Instructor: So, Tony. What's going on? I noticed you weren't paying attention in class. Is there something bothering you?

Tony: Naw. It's just that I didn't get much sleep last night. I stayed up studying for math and didn't finish til 2:30 in the morning.

Instructor: O.K. I'll let it slide this time but you have to stay focused in class. Otherwise you'll miss important information on your next assignment. Do you know what we talked about today?

Tony: Commas and stuff?

Instructor: We started off with punctuation and then we discussed how to begin the research process for the final paper. Since I didn't see you take notes, get together with Lisa and find out what you need.

Tony: Can I ask Mark instead? I like the way he takes notes better.

Instructor: O.K. as long as you get it done. And let me see them afterwards. I want to make sure you didn't miss anything.

Had the problem been a more serious one, Woolfolk would have been notified. In this case, the teacher, student, and Woolfolk would meet to discuss what is happening and how to rectify it. These student conferences were usually followed up with a group pep talk after a student meeting. Here, students that were not performing well were congregated to hear what was expected of them and what were the ramifications. During this talk, students were reminded of their responsibilities in class and were usually told to “shape up or ship out.” The purpose of Summer Bridge was to prepare students for the university, through threats or praise. Most of the time, these talks helped student refocus and improve their academic performance.

Never Quitting

In the beginning of Summer Bridge, some students acted as if being in the program was part of the process of enrolling in the fall and thus were not too concerned about it. Others took it more serious. By the time classes started on the third day of the program, students realized that what Woolfolk and others were saying was true, “Bridge is tough, and you got to give it your all.” Students soon recognized that the pressure was on to perform well or risk being sent home and with that any chance of enrolling in the fall.

The thought of being sent home forced students to learn - to focus on preparing themselves for the fall. The demand to succeed started on that first day and continued until final grades were distributed. During this time, students felt the pressure to orient their learning toward demonstrating progress, especially in mathematics, language arts, and writing. To ensure that substantial success was achievable, students were constantly

studying, working in-groups to complete assignments, or seeking help to clarify their tasks.

As weeks went by, the pressure was unbearable, especially when there was a lack of progress exhibited. The level of anxiety and stress reached high. At times, the students' self-confidence was rattled as demands mounted. It was here that thoughts of quitting entered minds, however brief. Yet, they were soon replaced by the drive to keep going. Many times, I heard students tell each other, "just a few more weeks and it's all over." The motto heard around the residence hall was, "when the going gets tough, the tough get going." This desire to keep going and not quitting kept students motivated and focused. As Doris said during our second interview,

I think just from me getting good grades and all the work that I did, I was working that as a guide to myself. And all the papers we've had and all the work we've had to do. I really kept at it day in and day out, never really about to give up, about to go half way out and always trying my best and stuff like that. I think seeing the grades, trying to find out that I'm passing, and I got a few days left before I'm really out of here and I can look forward to three and a half weeks before coming back to the U of I kept me motivated (Interview, July, 1996).

The pressure came from many directions. It came from program staff, instructors, and other students. Yet the motivation to keep trying was also coming from those sources. For Doris, seeing other students try kept her going. Knowing that other students were performing well made her feel that she was just as capable as they were. This helped her stay focused in class and during study center. She said,

If anybody can, if 49 students can do all the hard work that they said and everything else that they have to put up with, then why shouldn't I? So I know that if they can do it, I can do it. The difference is that if one person gets it out of fifty, then there's the problem, you know. But if everybody can do it, then I know I could surely do it. And when I have to do something that I don't understand, I think about this and it keeps me going (Interview, July, 1996).

This was especially helpful when she was pressed to incorporate new study skills, make the necessary connections to assignments, and increase her test performance.

Students also sought motivation from family members as well. For Luis, getting encouragement from his mother and sisters kept him focused. This became critical when his performance in psychology was in question. In this class, he was not performing well. He had received two D's in previous assignments and had a test coming up in a few days. He knew that how he performed on this test determined whether he would be sent home or left to continue the program. Woolfolk had already spoken with him regarding his progress and stressed the importance of the test. This came out in one of our interviews and I asked him how he felt about the conversation he had with Woolfolk. He said,

It was time for them to say, 'you know what? You're not trying hard enough. You gotta quit.' That made me feel like I don't have what it takes. Since I knew I wasn't a quitter, I knew I wasn't gonna give up there and then. I just gotta try my best. I took their advice and knowing that I'm not a quitter, that I can do it and show them on the next quiz (Interview, July, 1996).

Throughout this ordeal, he spoke to his family. According to Luis, talking to his mother and sisters about his struggles kept his from being depressed and giving up. The constant encouragement he received was his source of power. For Luis, his family his vehicle to help extend his motivation and self-confidence. This is what he said.

My family had a lot to do with it making me try harder. They would tell me, 'you know what? You're good and you know it. You don't need to be depressed cause you're not a quitter.' My family would give me calls and I would tell them what problems I had like with this philosophy class. I would tell them that it ain't cutting it for me. I'm passing all my other classes with B's at least and this philosophy class is making me feel down. They would be there, tell me it's o.k. They would tell me, 'you just make that you're first priority. Learn and study that class hard and you'll get through it cause you can do it.' It made me feel good afterwards knowing that they believed in me (Interview, July, 1996).

Although the Bridge program and its staff continually pressured students to do well, they also made it a point to recognize students' efforts. When this was done, it usually took place during student meeting where those that overcame obstacles were praised for their efforts and successes. This happened to Luis. After talking to Woolfolk and his family, he concentrated on psychology. He asked many questions in class and spoke to the instructor individually. Every chance he got, he studied philosophy, took part in study groups, and sought the help of the tutors. The work finally paid off and he was recognized for it. He said,

On Friday, I passed that philosophy quiz with an A and at the student meeting, Ron was talking about how some people had to leave. He said people are leaving and some people are at the risk of leaving. But he said that some people make great comebacks, you know. And he told me to stand up, you know, 'Luis, stand up and tell them what you did today, what you got on your philosophy quiz.' And I said an A and everybody started clapping.

That was a good moment for me cause I felt like I accomplished something. It made me feel good that Ron called me out and everybody was clapping. I was happy, you know. After that, I went home and called my mom and told her that I passed the test and called my sisters cause all my sisters were behind me. They were like, 'you're gonna pass, you're gonna pass. Don't worry about it.' So I studied and I passed (Interview, July, 1996).

Students who were surveyed also felt the need to do well and attributed their desire to try to the program. Figure 19 below breaks down the responses by Bridge year. When given the statement, "Summer Bridge made me feel that I could do anything," again, respondents overwhelmingly agreed. Approximately 91.8% of the responses fell in either the "strongly agree" or "agree" category, with 46.9% and 44.9% respectively. Of those surveyed, only 4.1% disagreed while another 4.1% had no answer. Again, there was no significant difference at the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of years (ANOVA: 0.122).

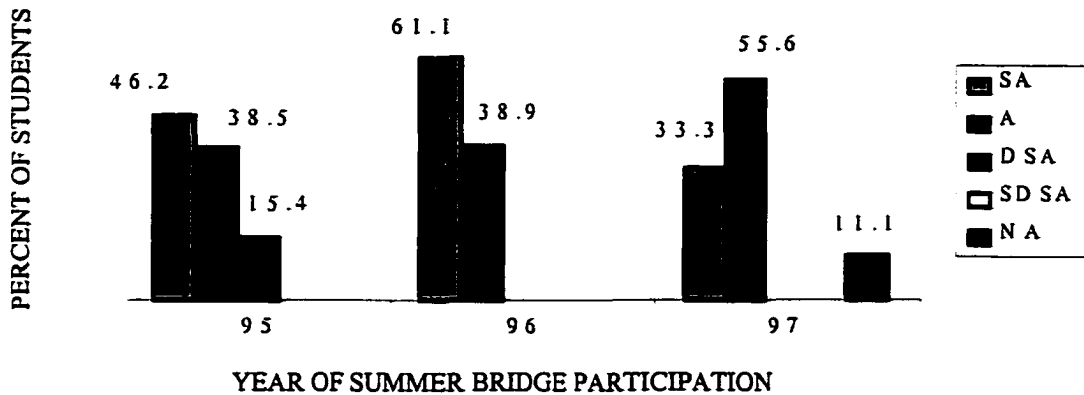


Figure 19. Summer Bridge Survey: Summer Bridge made me feel that I could do anything.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SD SA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

For Bridge year 95, most of its students, 46.2%, strongly agreed while 38.5% agreed. Yet, it was the only Bridge year reflected in the “disagree” category, with 15.4% of the responses. Bridge year 96 also had its largest percent of responses fell in the “strongly agree” category while the rest, 38.9%, fell in the “agree” category. None of the respondents disagreed. Bridge year 97, on the other hand, had most of its responses, 55.6%, in the “agree” category while 33.3% of the students strongly agreed with the statement. It did, however, have students, 11.1%, who chose “no answer” as a response.

Making Sacrifices

To be the best, students also had to learn to sacrifice. As one student said, “sometimes sacrifices comes in life that you have to sacrifice some things for others.” For the four students I interviewed, this meant staying off drugs, forgoing weekend home visits, or not participating in fun activities. Again, they kept in mind that too much of their future was at stake. They did not have a problem taking time off to relax and unwind but knew that there would be enough time when the program ended. For them,

every minute counted, thus, each one had to be spent learning, studying, and preparing for the next class.

For Luis, focusing on Bridge helped him stay away from drugs. He felt that Bridge was difficult with him being sober let alone one drugs. Yet, as long as he was off drugs, he would be able to manage the workload. When I asked him how he was handling Bridge without smoking marijuana, he said,

I see how hard it was to go through Bridge and I'm sober. I don't have any drugs in my body and I'm still figuring out how hard it is. And drugs tend to slow me down. So, I know I couldn't have done it doing drugs and in this program at the same time. I couldn't have made it. So it just helped me realize that I don't really need it. I'm better without it. I don't know if it'll still call me when I have fun or whatever but I'm gonna try my best just to don't worry about it cause I don't need it (Interview, July, 1996).

Knowing that he was succeeding in Summer Bridge without the use of drugs changed his attitude about them. He no longer saw the need to use them and felt that the program helped him stay away from drugs. He said, "it's kept me away from the drugs cause I have no use for drugs or whatever. So it's got me thinking, you know, I don't need drugs and stuff." His independence from marijuana while in Bridge made him want to be that way when he returned back home. As he said, "so when I go back to Chicago I know I won't be looking to do drugs. I'm more like keeping away from it."

For others like Doris, sacrificing weekend home visits were necessary to do well in Summer Bridge. As part of the program, students were allowed to go home for the Fourth of July weekend. Each student had the option to go, unwind, and have a good time. Yet, for those who were concerned about their academic performance or had too much studying to do, going home for the weekend was not an option. It was a waste of

time. It was difficult at first for Doris to accept but necessary. She felt she needed to get serious about studying and staying would help. She explained,

You know, I could've gone home but I knew I had a lot of work to do that I couldn't get done back home. There'll be other times. Maybe next time I'll go home. And if not then I guess I'll go the next, next time. If I have to wait until the end of Bridge, you know, wait until I graduate to go home, then I guess I gotta do it, cause right now, I gotta get serious about everything (Interview, July, 1996).

Doris as well as other students agreed that staying behind to study was in their best interest, even if this meant not seeing their loved ones for six weeks. How else would they be able to catch up on all the studying? To them, this was an important question. Doris told me that she doubted she would have been able to catch up on her studying if she took her work home. At home, there were too many distractions to tempt her away from studying. This included hanging out with her friends, going shopping, spending time with her family, and visiting relatives. Thus she opted to stay in the residence hall to get some work done. According to Doris, it was her choice and a wise one.

During the time I spent observing the students, I also noticed that some students passed up on weekend excursions. Since the students had free time from the end of class on Friday until study center Sunday night, going to the local mall or around campus was common. With the \$20.00 they were given, many students would go and find anything to spend it on. Some went to the pharmacy store to pick up odds and ends while others went to catch a movie. Still others went out to eat to get a change from the cafeteria food. Yet, students that had work to do had to sacrifice this free time and forego the fun activities.

Andre was one of those students that stayed to study. Rarely did he go out to unwind. However, he made it a point to go out for a few hours and study the rest of the time at his leisure. And if he wasn't studying, he was catching up on sleep. For him, both of these activities were more important than going out. It was a matter of prioritizing and having fun was not as important at the moment as making academic progress. He attributed this to the program as he explained,

That's also a skill that this Bridge program gave me. They help me think, you know. You do this first because this is more important other than going to have fun or doing other things. Get this done first and, you know, then worry about other things. So, I made sure I studied and got a couple of z's instead of hanging out and wasting time (Interview, July, 1996).

If he completed his assignments and caught up with his studying, then he would allow himself time to relax. It was then that he would go out with other Bridge students.

Establishing Support Networks

During Summer Bridge, students received intensive coursework that required extensive hours of studying. As a way to manage studying, students looked upon each other and those around them for support. Students worked individually and in-group in content specific tasks or assembled to discuss other related issues. Given the demands placed on the students, seeking assistance from others was common. And for many, support from others served a dual purpose – to do well academically and to stay motivated.

Woolfolk encouraged this practice. He constantly reminded the students that they were in Bridge together and should depend on each other for support. Woolfolk associated Summer Bridge to a chain whose strength depended on the integrity of its links. He saw each student as a link and thus looked to them as a source of support. As

he said, "I'm always telling the students to help each other out, be there for each other. I tell them that they're in Bridge together and if one fails, they all fail. It's all for one and one for all."

For him, the students in Bridge were a collectivity and as such, should support one another at all times. He expected students to develop relationships with each other and program staff. He believed that by doing so, students could count on one another in times of need whether academic or emotional. He also wanted them to collaborate with each other when studying and completing assignments. For him, this was part of the learning process – to learn from your peers. In one of our informal conversations, Woolfolk said,

You know, one of the best ways to understand something you're having difficulty with is to have your classmates explain it to you. I think it's because they already have that rapport with each other where they feel comfortable asking questions. Besides, they have more access to each other and can work together for hours. And that's how they'll make it through Bridge (July, 1996).

Thus, developing relationships and collaborating with others were critical to the success of the students.

Developing Relationships

The four students I interviewed talked enthusiastically of the opportunity to share with other students. This sharing started on the first day of Summer Bridge and continued until the end of the program. Throughout the program, the staff was trying to encourage the development of a network among students, especially those that shared similar classes. They focused efforts to encourage students to participate in work groups and get them involved in the learning process. At the same time, staff encouraged students to develop relationships with each other.

For many students, making friends that would be there for them during Summer Bridge was important. It was a way to help ease the pain of going through Bridge feeling alone. It was also a way to learn from others. For Sara, she wanted to make friends with people she could go to for advice on academic and personal matters. As Sara said,

I want new friends, new acquaintances, and people I can count on. I want to draw strength from the people I know instead of walking around with blinders on. I want to feel like I can go to them to get help with school if I need it and to just talk about how our day went. Cause, let me tell you, it can get really lonely here if you keep to yourself (Interview, July, 1996).

She knew from first hand experience what it felt like to be alone. When she started the program, she usually kept to herself, not wanting to trust others. This affected her rapport with the students and her involvement in study groups. She said, “the only person I can trust with my work is me. I went through a lot to get here and I’m not gonna blow it.” She soon changed her mind when students kept away from her and thought of her as uptight and bossy. Sara explained,

Yea. In the beginning I was a real bitch and they thought I was very mean very bossy. And so I mean, I take offence to it cause they don’t know that I don’t mean it. I take this knowing how hard it was for me to get in, not wanting anybody to mess it up for me which they don’t know. And if they knew where I was coming from maybe they’ll understand. So, they stayed away from me thinking that I was a bitch. That didn’t feel too good. But now it made used to people who with different attitudes than mine and personalities. And I can even learn something I don’t know from it. And I like it better now that I have a few friends I can count on and go out with (Interview, July, 1996).

Spending time together also made students feel united. Since Woolfolk stressed working together and taking the team approach when it came to surviving Bridge, students saw themselves as a unit, a collectivity. As Andre said, “Unity. You are one as a group. The program encourages people to motivate others and help with studying. And

it helps overall the sense of being a team.” Andre believed that working together as a team kept him focused on his learning.

Making friends that would be available in the fall was also important to the students. Knowing that in a large university where there were over 26,000 undergraduate students was overwhelming. Yet, having friends that they could relate to and share their daily experience with made it bearable. For Luis, it made him feel secure. Luis said,

Hopefully, yea, hopefully when it comes to the fall, I’m gonna have friends there who are struggling and working and I’m struggling and working. And hopefully together we can all work to solve the problems. So I do hope to see them in the fall (interview, July, 1996).

Having the opportunity during Summer Bridge to work in-groups and collaborate with friends helped form bonds that would likely carry over to the fall semester. Luis attributed this to the program. He said, “this program has already helped me since day one. I’ve been working in a group and have made this into my family. It makes them trust you and each other. And I know if I need help in the fall, I can count on them.” For him, these friends became a surrogate family, a family away from home.

For the students that were surveyed, searching for help in the fall was a reality. Part of the purpose for creating the program was to provide students with a home base where they would feel comfortable enough to seek help. Again, students overwhelmingly agreed with the statement, “I sought help after Summer Bridge when I needed it.”

As indicated in Figure 20, approximately 95.9% of the students agreed while only 4.1% disagreed. Most of the responses fell in the “agree” category, 69.4% while less than a third, 26.5%, or the students strongly agreed. When dis-aggregated by Bridge year, again, no significant difference at the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of years was found (ANOVA: 0.147).

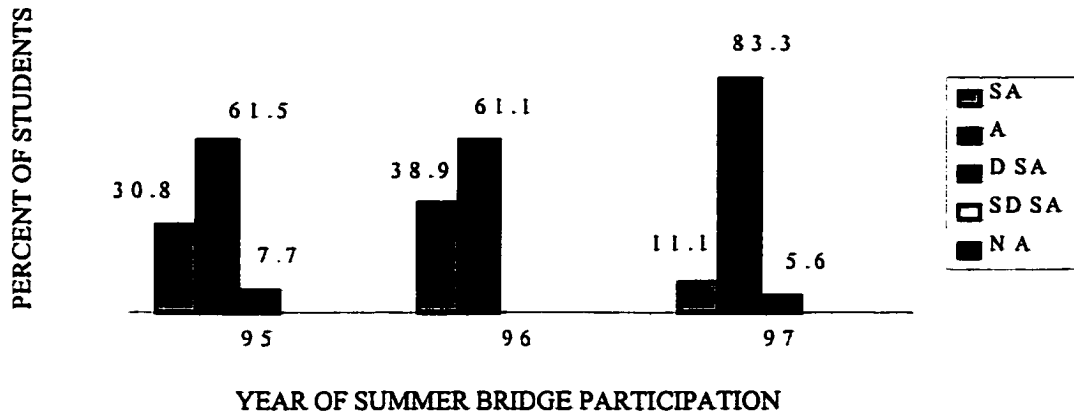


Figure 20. Summer Bridge Survey: I sought help after Summer Bridge when I needed it.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

Most of the responses fell in the “agree” category with Bridge year 97 having the highest, 83.3%, followed by Bridge year 95 with 61.5% and 61.1% for Bridge year 96. The “strongly agree” category fell second for all Bridge years with Bridge year 96 having the highest, 38.9%, followed by 30.8% for Bridge year 95 and 11.1% for Bridge year 97. Only two Bridge years had responses fall in the “disagree” category. The highest came from Bridge year 95 with 7.7% followed by 5.6% for Bridge year 97.

To determine whether or not students had a support network to turn to when they sought for help, students were read the statement, “I did not have a support network established when I finished Summer Bridge.” Of those that responded, 4.1% strongly agreed and 10.2% agreed. While 14.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement, approximately 85.7% disagreed with most falling in the “disagree” category, 49% and the rest, 36.7%, in “strongly disagree.”

When split by Bridge year, again, no significant difference was found at the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of years (ANOVA: 0.970). Figure 21 describes this in

more detail. As you can see, only Bridge years 96 and 97 had responses in the “strongly agree” category with 5.6% reported for each year. Bridge year had the highest portion of agreement with 23.1% of its responses in the “agree” category.

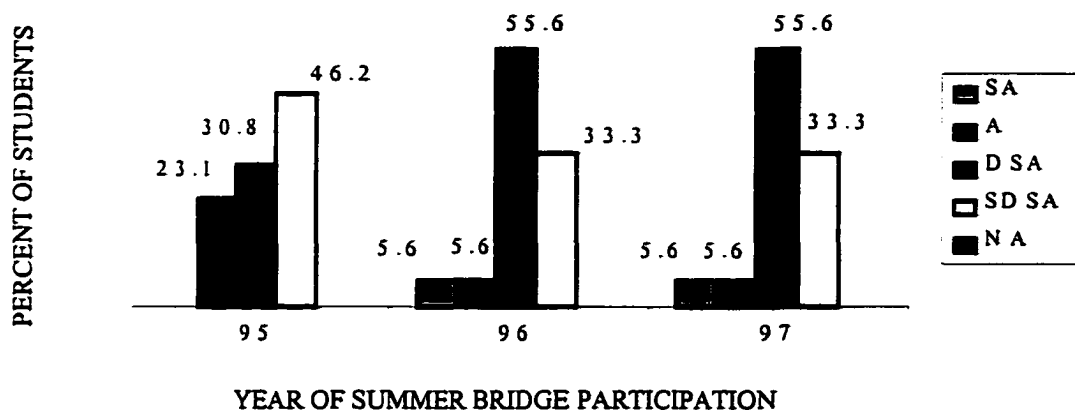


Figure 21. Summer Bridge Survey: I did not have a support network established when I finished Summer Bridge.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SD SA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

The other two years again reported 5.6% of their responses in the “agree” category. The majority of the responses for Bridge years 96 and 97 fell in the “disagree” category with 55.6% reported for each. Bridge year 95 reflected 30.8% for that category. Its largest portion of responses, 46.2%, fell in the “strongly disagree” category. Also in that category, Bridge years 96 and 97 reported 33.3% each.

Students also benefited from the daily interactions shared with program staff. Administrators and instructors worked together to make a positive academic impact on students. More than that, however, they ensured that well-rounded students would make the transition to college by encouraging students to depend on each other. They were also invited to share their Bridge experience with the staff. In turn, staff would share their college experience. As Cynthia Robins, one of the writing instructors said,

I know it takes more than good academics to make it here. Students have to be able to maneuver around problem situations to be successful. They have to know what it's like when class is over and how to handle all that time. They have to be disciplined and know who they can trust. My job is to let them know what the university is like not just about how to write an essay. I'm here to let them know that they can make it and that I'm here for them and will be there for them when they start in the fall (July, 1996).

Cynthia was one of the instructors that frequently visited the students in the residence hall during study center. Many times she provided extra assistance to her students or clarified any questions related to the class assignments. Her assistance seemed to be appreciated by those she helped. So much so that once it was known that she arrived, her students would drop what they were doing and joined her. As one student said, "I like it when she comes cause I know she'll make sure I do the work right."

Students also sought the help of other program staff. They looked toward the tutors and tutor counselors for support. These people were usually closer in age to the students and were enrolled at the university and, thus, easier to relate to. According to Woolfolk, the role of the tutors and counselors was in helping students achieve academic success through encouragement and support so that all Summer Bridge students had the opportunity to reach the highest standards. To that extent, staff members had to develop partnerships with the students. Woolfolk said,

That's why we assign about 10 kids to each tutor counselor. We want to make sure there's someone there that the students can talk to and stay in touch with. If something comes up that needs to be addressed, then the student will feel comfortable talking about it with someone closer to them that is an authority figure (Interview July, 1996).

During the program, each student was assigned a tutor counselor. Some of the tutor counselor responsibilities included making sure students checked in for curfew and

were up and ready for class the next day. Others included providing support and encouragement. To facilitate this, tutor counselors were available during study center, in the cafeteria with the students, and after curfew when, many times, studying continued.

Tutors were also there to provide support and encouragement to the students. As stated in Chapter 7, tutors frequently volunteered time after study center to help the students. During these times, they were not only receiving academic assistance, they were attaining pep talks and encouragement as well. As a result, several students wanted to extend their relationship beyond the summer.

For some students, having the tutors available for advice or additional tutoring was important. This was the case for Sara. She stated,

Well, I know I've already made a deal with one of the tutors here, Frankie, who was in 95 and I asked if he could help me in math which I know I am because math isn't my strong point even if my grades show that it is. He goes, 'fine.' So, I'll be working with him for tutoring, get my sister who's in Transition and get her friends that went through Bridge to give me ideas and not get me lost like they did. But yea, most likely I will work with them as a team (Interview, July, 1996).

Frankie was one of the math tutors that were available to Sara. Although not the tutor assigned to her class, she continually sought his assistance. After a while, conversations besides math were taking place. Sara and Frankie talked about home, school, what it was like on campus in the fall, and how to stay focus. By the end of Summer Bridge, they had formed a special bond. She saw him as her mentor and friend.

Another purpose of Summer Bridge was to allow students the opportunity to become familiar with faculty and staff on campus. The idea is that if students familiarize themselves with faculty and staff, they may also have the opportunity to establish some sort of relationship that will be beneficial in the fall semester. When read the statement, "Summer Bridge helped me develop relationships with faculty and academic staff on

campus,” again, students overwhelmingly agreed. Figure 22 below reflects the frequency of responses by Bridge year.

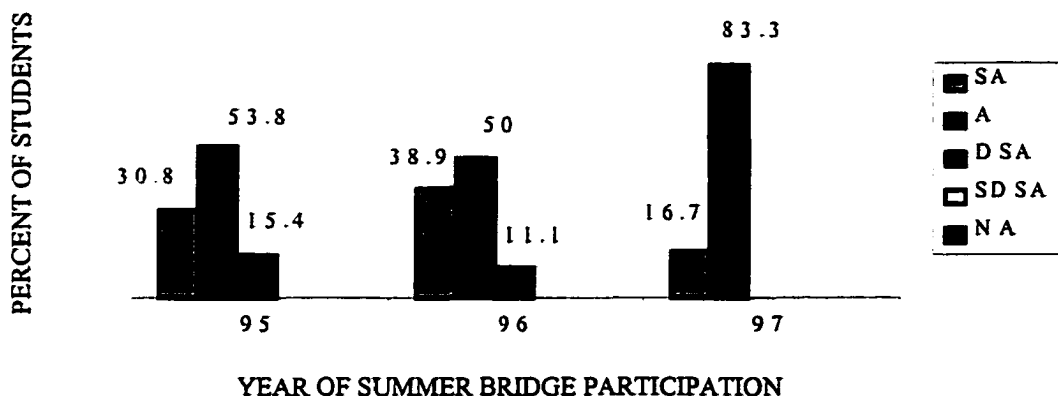


Figure 22. Summer Bridge Survey: Summer Bridge helped me develop relationships with faculty and academic staff on campus.

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree DSA: Disagree SDSA: Strongly Disagree NA: No Answer

Approximately 93.9% of the students agreed with more than half of the responses, 63.3%, falling in the “agree” category while 28.6% strongly agreed. The remaining 8.2% of the responses were reflected in the “disagree” category. Again, no significant difference was found at the .05 level for ANOVA for any pair of years (ANOVA: 0.798).

Most of the responses fell in the “agree” category with Bridge year 97 reflecting the highest, 83.3%, while Bridge year 95 showed 53.8% and 50% was indicated for Bridge year 96. In the “strongly agree” category, Bridge year 96 had the highest with 38.8% followed by Bridge year 95 at 30.8% while only 6.7% was indicated for Bridge year 97. Only Bridge years 95 and 96 had respondents disagree with the statement, 15.4% for the former and 11.1% for the latter.

St 2: Ok. We already said books, magazines, journals, and newspapers. What else is there? That pretty much covers it.

Doris: I can't think of it. How about you, any ideas?

St 3: Well, we use the internet all the time to look for stuff. Can't we use that?

St 4: That's a great idea! We can do a search to find out if there's anything we can use to write our paper.

After this conversation, they went on to develop a thesis with supporting claims based on the sources they agreed upon. This was typical of how most workgroups collaborated.

An hour and a half went by before the students separated to do other assignments.

In our second interview, I asked Doris about her participation in study groups.

She explained with enthusiasm that working with others allowed her to attain information she lacked and, at the same time, learn from others. Doris stated,

I learn a lot when I work in groups cause someone will know something that you don't and you might know something that they don't. And that way you can learn from each other. So everybody's learning together. So yea, they always help me (Interview, July, 1996).

She also believed that collaborating with others provided her with an assortment of ideas for her to select. In fact, this allowed her to select at times ideas that were more developed than hers. As Doris stated,

You know, you got other options than your own to go by. Maybe someone else's idea is better than yours. So maybe you can go with his idea and have a lot of different perspectives and a lot of different views from different people. That's what's good about working in groups (Interview, July, 1996).

Thus, collaborating with others allowed her to become accustomed to sharing, a skill that she attributed the success of the study groups to Summer Bridge and its staff.

According to her,

They always want you to study in groups and it's good because you get used to sharing and you get to see how different people think. And I felt that was real good about the Bridge program. They help you learn how to work as a group and get different ideas from people (Interview, July, 1996).

Students that got along with each other and worked well together created most study groups. While this was usually the case, there were instances in which students were assigned to work together. This was done by either Woolfolk or the instructors. It was also a way to prepare students for the fall where collaborating with classmates that were not acquaintances was expected. So during Summer Bridge, the idea was to get students that did not get along or rarely spoke to one another to talk.

In one of my informal conversations with one of the math instructors I brought this up. I wanted to learn why students that had problems working together or very seldom spoke to one another were assigned to do just that. Mildred stated that, "they're in this program together. And as such, they have to work out their differences. This is a way to ensure that they put those differences aside to get the assignment done. Besides, they have to do that when they come back" (July 26, 1996).

For Sara, working collaboratively with others helped her put differences aside to get the job done. As stated previously, Sara kept to herself in the beginning of the program, rarely looking towards others for help with her schoolwork. She said, "I avoid even being with them so I don't come around them and they don't come around me. I say hello, they say hello and that's it" (Interview, July, 1996).

The times she had to collaborate with her classmates were when the instructor assigned her to do so. Even then, she did not trust. Sara continued, "I've had to work with people I don't like and those days I let by gones be by gones and that was then and this is now and we worked as a team." As Summer Bridge progressed, she saw the need

to change her behavior and learned that collaborating with others was valuable and worthwhile. She said that the benefits of working collaboratively were,

- Getting to know people and being able to see different sides and not thinking yours is the right side all the time,
- Being able to take people's criticisms if they're good and working with them,
- Knowing that you can trust somebody either with your life or academically (Interview, July, 1996).

Collaborating with others also allowed students to become accustomed to working with others from backgrounds dissimilar to theirs. Many of the students had gone to high schools where most of the student body was of their racial background. And although Summer Bridge did not include a variety of racial diversity in its students, it was more than most were accustomed to. This was the case for Andre as he said during our second interview, "I'm not used to talking in class or with people than those like myself" (July, 1996).

As time progressed and students had to work with each other, whether voluntary or mandated, their perceptions changed. For Andre, he began to feel more comfortable speaking to others from different backgrounds. During our second interview he stated, "now that I've worked with a few nationalities, I'm more comfortable speaking with them." This was important to him since he will have to do so in the fall and credited his outlook to the program. Andre continued, "it's like there's different nationalities in this program just like the university will be and that's all there's going to be but with more people. And the program encourages students to talk more and interact. It helps you learn about other people in the program."

CHAPTER 8

REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

During the time I spent in Summer Bridge, I spoke to students, instructors, and program staff. I observed classes, study center, and other informal settings. I wanted to learn about the program and what transformations, whether academic or personal, had manifested among the students and how they would prepare them for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I wanted to witness this myself and, at the same time, see it through the eyes of the students, particularly those belonging to Sara, Luis, Doris, and Andre.

With most students, progress in the learning of language arts, mathematics, writing, and study skills occurred at a rapid pace. With only six weeks to prepare for the fall semester, there was a rush to consume and integrate what was learned into their assignments and activities. Similarly, students were making fundamental changes in their repertoire of study skills. Those that were used in high school yet ineffective during Summer Bridge were replaced by skills that proved to be effective and would outlast the summer. Even for students that came with an assortment of skills, the inclusion of better ways to study was practiced. The pressure was on to succeed and thus all available strategies were the vehicles used to increase academic performance.

Their primary aim had been to successfully complete Summer Bridge to be able to attend the University of Illinois in the fall semester. In that trek to success, personal transformations took hold. Students had the opportunity to adjust to the university by becoming familiar with the campus, learning classroom behavior, and balancing their academic and social lives. They learned to collaborate with others and developed

relationships that provided encouragement and support through Summer Bridge and beyond. Finally, they learned to believe in their ability to succeed, always going for the best, never quitting, and willing to make sacrifices to achieve that end.

However, as I reflect on the time I spent with the students and program staff, I ask myself, what do the students feel were the most valuable lessons learned and how can the experience be better? How do the students plan to extend their experience beyond Summer Bridge? Is Summer Bridge a true reflection of what the University of Illinois will be like? And finally, what aspects of the program need further exploration?

Lessons Learned

Throughout the summer, instructors, staff, and program administrators created an on-going context for students to learn. Their aim was to help students develop individual and collective responsibility for improving academic achievement through increased content knowledge and study skills. At the heart of this process, partly as an objective and as consequence, students learned to value time, how to survive, and rely on the support from others, as described in Chapters 6 and 7. They saw these as the vehicles through which to pursue success.

For six weeks, the importance of time was stressed to the students. Although their schedule was extensive with little room for free time, each minute counted toward success or failure. How the students chose to use their time, whether mandated or not, was critical. Program staff and instructors promoted active rather than passive participation. They encouraged students to spend quality time on task to complete assignments, study for understanding, and in preparation for class.

Time was precious since they only had six weeks to prepare, as Doris quickly found out. For her time management was a valuable lesson. She stated, "I learned how to manage my time more. I learned how important time is cause in this program time will go by so fast. If I'm not careful, I'm up doing my one assignment starting at 9 and I'm still doing it at 11:30 when during that time I gotta get to my math homework and not even sleep." For Doris, it became a matter of how best to maximize her time so that all that needed to get done was accomplished efficiently.

Despite the commitment by students to manage their time efficiently, there were many moments that time was running out. Countless homework assignments and exams were crammed in six weeks. To the four students I interviewed and many others, Summer Bridge felt like a race against time. Knowing that every minute counted and that there were only six weeks to prepare for the fall semester, the students felt enormous pressure and high levels of stress.

Many times, the students commented on the vast amounts of work and their frustrations in trying to complete assignments and still get enough sleep to be functional for class the next day. Yet, while they expressed their frustration, they knew Summer Bridge was their last opportunity to become University of Illinois students. Consequently, many of the students went on to handle the pressure and stress so that assignments and other class related tasks were done in a timely manner.

Another lesson learned was survival. While in the program students were constantly under stress created by the pressure to succeed. Summer Bridge was their last chance to demonstrate that they deserved and were ready to be students at the University of Illinois. For students like Luis, the alternative was bleak. A life on the streets coupled

with gangs and drugs was enough to keep them motivated regardless of the stress. Luis said, “The program really taught me a lot. It taught me how to survive, how to be able to keep up and I don’t regret the stress cause I learned a lot. I learned what it takes for me to go through this college and now I know what they’re gonna throw at me.” Learning to survive despite the stress was for Luis the rite of passage toward the upcoming challenges.

Students also learned to rely on the support of others. Both instructors and program staff developed opportunities to help students create on-going contexts to collaborate. Both aimed at establishing support networks for students to utilize towards improving their academic performance. In class and during study center, students worked in-groups to complete assignments or prepare for exams. The instructors or Woolfolk assigned some of the groups while the students created others.

Likewise, students were encouraged to maximize these support networks to acquire encouragement, motivation, and comfort. By the end of the program, students learned unity and trust. As Andre expressed, “It’s like whatever you do you always have help, always have somebody there pushing you and telling you, go ahead don’t give up. They tell you, you can do it and there’s nothing hard about it and to work with others to help you out and trust each other no matter what.”

At times, the encouragement was coercive rather than proactive where threats of expulsion were mentioned. Instructors and program staff constantly reminded the students of the perils of failure. If the students were performing poorly in class or not following program rules, they were threatened with expulsion. These were not idle threats. During the summer, students witnessed as two of the students that were not

complying with the program rules were sent home. For the students that remained, it was a clear picture of what would happen to them if they did not perform or behave as mandated. With the desire to become university students so high, this form of pressure worked to keep them in line.

The students, however, learned to understand this form of motivation and in some cases saw it as necessary. Sara stated, "I feel people need to wake up and realize that college is not a piece of cake and I wouldn't change how strict Ron and Pam are cause they do it to benefit us. They don't do it for themselves and they did a lot for me. They kept me on my toes." It was a way to realize that being a student at the university required responsibility, a serious attitude, and commitment. And if these attributes were not present and practiced, the outcome would be just as detrimental.

Room for Improvement

Although students defined their experience in Summer Bridge as "stimulating" and the "best program" available, they nonetheless provided suggestions for improvement. As participants of the program, they felt qualified to recommend change. For students such as Luis and Sara, change toward the structure of Summer Bridge would make the experience less stressful and would extend their knowledge and learning skills. Their recommendations included minimizing the amount of work and shortening class periods.

Luis felt there was not enough time to complete the assigned work. He believed that too much work was given in a limited amount of time. This created stress to the point of giving up. The turnover for assignments was one or two days in every class. Most nights the students had several assignments to complete not to mention studying

and preparing for class. For many of the students, this did not allow for free time or sleep. As Luis stated,

They stress you out with all this work til 3 in the morning so you only have 3 hours of sleep. You gotta get up at 6 to go to breakfast to start your class at 8 to then be in class all day, only having breaks maybe at 12 to go back to lunch. Then you go back to class to then having 1 hour to ½ hour to maybe do a little bit of work to then having study session (Interview, July, 1996).

On days like this, which were many, Luis came close to giving up and going home. He had not experienced this much work in high school and was not prepared to handle it. He went on to say,

It's like 24 hours of studying straight studying so it's like real stressful and that's what made it hard on me. I never even did half this stuff in high school. So it's like every day, every other day it's real stressful on me. It gave me reasons to quit. All these were just piling up reasons to quit and it was like I'm trying my best and it was not good enough and it wasn't my fault. It was just that they were giving us too much work (Interview, July, 1996).

Students were under pressure to perform well and were given enormous amounts of work that caused them to stay up very late to study. The result was little sleep. When students began class the next day, they were tired and often fell asleep. The stress, amount of work, and lack of sleep created anxiety and thoughts of quitting. Yet, this was their "last chance," as many expressed, to be admitted to the university. Thoughts of the alternatives kept students from giving up.

Like Luis, Sara believed that modification was required. For her, shorter class periods without affecting total hours of instruction would keep her focused. This was critical for her since she was one of the many students that stayed up late to study. Maintaining focus and not falling asleep during class was difficult and sometimes impossible to do. As Sara stated, "one time I fell asleep during class and I sat right in front of the teacher. I was gone. I even had to get up one day, that same day, and stand

by the window just to keep up. It was too long, too long.” Being in a class for three hours straight was overwhelming. She continued, “it was too long, three hours, you can’t have one person sit in the classroom for three hours.”

Beneficial as was the experience of Summer Bridge recommendations were still made. Changing the workload and class schedule would make it, according to Luis and Sara, that much better. For them, the content knowledge and strategies learned were not going to change the purpose – to prepare them for the academic rigors of the university. It was their way of managing a difficult six weeks.

As I spent time conducting my research, I also thought of ways to make the Summer Bridge program better. As I did this, I kept in mind the purpose of Summer Bridge while at the same time reflecting on the pressure and stress of the students. To address both issues, I thought of two recommendations.

First, I believe extending the program to 8 weeks would allow students to manage preparing for class, studying for exams, and completing assignments more effectively. By extending the program, the curriculum could be spread out to alleviate some time and pressure. Consequently, by the end of the summer, students are still attaining the necessary information in preparing for the fall semester without the added stress of not having enough time to sleep or to thoroughly integrate what was learned in class.

Second, including more activities to relieve stress would be easier for the students to manage both learning and the pressure to succeed. As stated in Chapter 5, Summer Bridge has in place activities like Team Challenge and Turkey Run where students are taken outside of the university to enjoy nature and step away from the rigors of the

program. When I spoke to the students, these activities were highly praised as some of the most memorable experiences. As Doris stated,

When we went to Turkey Run, it was nice to get away from studying. We didn't have to worry about what to study for next or what homework to finish. I'm glad we got to go when we did. When I go back, I felt tired but a lot better cause I had a chance to let go of some stress just like with Team Challenge, the same thing.

Team Challenge and Turkey Run were critical in relieving her stress. She felt the activities came at the right time when levels of stress were high and at times difficult to handle. By extending the program, students would be able to enjoy more of these types of activities to help them release some of that stress and thus allow them to learn.

Extending the Experience Beyond Summer Bridge

For the students, applying what they had learned in the program to their college experience was never a question – it was what they intended to do. The extensive hours spent learning, sharing, crying, or working were to know how to maneuver through the many challenges of the university. Students were convinced that the struggles they experienced were to shape them into self-confident, competent, and motivated students. Their goal was to overcome the struggles of Summer Bridge, succeed academically, and move on to the next level. While some students added to their repertoire of knowledge and skill, many others developed an arsenal. They were ready and now it was a matter of how they would apply that experience to their college education.

Students like Luis believed that the point of spending time and effort struggling was to be ahead of “the game” and knowing how to approach homework assignments, studying, and college life was the way to win. As he stated,

All the skills I learned in the program I'm gonna use them cause if I don't use them, I'll still be where I was before I was in the program and that's behind. Now

I use these skills because I know how to do my work and I know how to deal with situations better (Interview, July, 1996).

Students learned that the key to winning was to not waste time. To ensure that each moment counted towards success, students had to learn to be organized with their committed and free time. To do so, daily planners such as those used during Summer Bridge would be implemented and used continuously. In one of our discussions, Andre shared this with me. He said,

In the fall I plan on coming down with the mindset of free time is not to be wasted. I'd make daily things like outlines to put on the wall to remind me of set times, set dates, be organized. It's essential to be organized to do the things we need to do in college if you want to stay on top of things (Interview, July, 1996).

Other students like Doris mentioned that they would take what was learned in Summer Bridge and modify it to their liking. For her, studying in intervals was more effective. She said, "when I have so much work I would not try to do it like we do here. We all have to do it at once. I wouldn't do it at once, I'd do it in different sections, in different times, and different days." Setting time aside throughout the day was easier for her to learn than having to study in one sitting. She continued, "I would spread it out because I think you work better when you spread things out and you do it on a consistent basis. I can better comprehend and take in more and understand more."

However, when it came to her homework, she would not alter what was learned in Summer Bridge. For the most part, students stayed on task until the assignments were done, regardless of the time. If this meant that very little sleep was possible, then it was accepted as a reality and the work continued. During our conversation, she voiced, "but when it comes to homework, I'd do it all at one time. I learned how to stay at it until I

finish it, that way, at least I'll have my homework ready." Being able to stay focused to complete an assignment was important to her regardless of the sacrifice.

Is it Virtual Reality?

At the end of this study, program staff and instructors were well aware that some students would continue to need assistance more than others beyond the summer do. They were dedicated to the improvement of academic performance and thus would continue to provide support for two years under the Transition Program. The hope was that after Summer Bridge, the students would adapt what was learned and extend it to their college experience.

To the students, Summer Bridge was as close to the university as they got at that time. For most of them, without prior knowledge of what being a university student entailed, starting from ground zero was common. From day 1 to the end of the six weeks, the students were taking in whatever was necessary to make the transition to the fall semester a smoother one. They went to class, studied, and they explored campus. Yet, throughout the summer, the students were monitored closely, threatened with expulsion or given some other form of reprimand, and worked to the point of wanting to quit. So, again I asked myself, is Summer Bridge a reflection of what the university experience will be like?

During the summer, students were monitored on a continuous basis. From wake up to curfew and beyond, students were supervised. During class, their coursework, progress, and behavior were monitored on a daily basis. In addition, the instructors submitted weekly reports to the program director to notify him of the students' progress. If progress was not evident, it resulted in a conference between the student, instructor,

and program director where consequences of failure and steps to ensure success were discussed, as described in Chapter 6.

The rest of the times, specifically study center and past curfew, were spent monitoring the students' behavior in completing assignments, working with others, and studying. Here, other program staff minus the instructors took part in supervising. Students were provided with tutors, who in turn monitored their progress. They made sure the students completed homework assignments and studied.

Likewise, tutor counselors monitored students during curfew and beyond. Once students checked in, if they chose to continue studying past curfew in the lounge area, which usually was the case for most, notification was required. To ensure the proper supervision of the students, several tutor counselors were assigned to monitor. If the students were not making good use of the time, again, conferences between program staff and the students occurred.

Unlike Summer Bridge, a limited amount of supervision will be in practice during the regular school year. Once the students successfully complete Summer Bridge, they enroll under the Transition Program. As described in Chapter 4, for two years, the students are provided with similar academic and support services as those of Summer Bridge. However, while academic progress is monitored closely, what occurs beyond the classroom is not, unless the student provides that information. When students go home, how they choose to study or do with their time is in their hands. Likewise, they spend more time monitoring themselves than during Summer Bridge.

As with differences in the amount of supervision, the ramifications of failure are in contrast as well. Aside from being reprimanded for poor academic performance,

students were disciplined for misbehavior during Summer Bridge, as described in Chapter 7. Students either received a “pep talk” or were threatened with expulsion from the program. In some cases, if there was a large number of students misbehaving, then all students were disciplined. In this event, free time on weekends was taken away and no one was permitted to leave the residence hall until the students modified their behavior.

In contrast, once the Summer Bridge students become university students, college expulsion rules apply. These include not meeting minimum progress as mandated by the university or committing an infraction serious enough to mandate expulsion by university standards. Here, threats of expulsion by program staff are no longer effective. Now, the responsibility falls on the students and only they can create an avenue for expulsion to thrive. As for the program staff, they can only advise the students on what are the consequences for poor academic progress or misconduct.

Finally, the schedule followed by students was rigorous and with little time for rest and relaxation, or as some would say, rockin’ and rollin.’ There was no time to play. Their time was spent preparing for the many demands of the university. Even during eating times, discussions relating to class or studying occurred. When free time was available to the students to either catch up on sleep or listen to some music, they chose instead to study. For them, high stakes were at hand and their winning depended on the amount of time they studied. Yet, when the students return in the fall, their schedules will allow for more free time. With an average class load of 15 semester hours, students will have time to study, get involved in extracurricular activities, and even hold a part-

time job. Again, the responsibility falls on the student to determine how best to use the time.

So, how will these differences affect the students' ability to handle the academic and personal rigors of college life? This dissertation research was not undertaken to explore similarities or differences between Summer Bridge and the regular academic year. Yet whether real, unreal, or an extended version of finals week, students considered Summer Bridge the foundation of their academic stability and potential.

As Sara stressed, "It's a backbone to my education. It's getting me ready to face the fall by attending classes, having tutors, talking to teachers, and having support groups." Participating in the program, although required before enrolling at the university, indeed was a personal choice. Students were aware of their option to discontinue in the program yet were reluctant to do so regardless of the stress, workload, or lack of sleep.

To Andre, it was a sacrifice well worth his time. As he said, "It's a sacrifice but a good sacrifice and I wouldn't lose. We get lots of information and interact more in class and in-group settings. We learn a lot. I wanted to come through Bridge to better myself before the fall and if I had the choice, I'd still go through Bridge." Their dedication to succeed in the program coupled with their dreams to enroll in the university and the support and encouragement from those around facilitated the process of learning that led to graduation.

Extending Insights to the Research

As I reflect on this study, I ask myself what did I miss that could have added insight to the experiences of Summer Bridge students and the program itself. There were

many areas I wanted to discuss in this thesis. Yet, doing a thorough job of it would have been difficult considering the amount of information and work I had already put into this study. I do, however, believe that to understand the Summer Bridge program in its entirety, these areas need to be explored, analyzed, and shared.

One of the areas that need further exploration is the experiences and perceptions of students who did not “make it” through Summer Bridge and those of students who no longer were enrolled in the university. As mentioned previously, I tried to contact those students to complete the survey, yet was unsuccessful in my efforts. To understand the impact the program has on its students, knowing what caused these students to leave the university, under what conditions and what role the Summer Bridge program played in their lives is important and should be investigated further.

Equally important is understanding to what extent the students who did “make it” apply what they learned through Summer Bridge as university students. The complexity of my study did not allow for me to integrate thoroughly the experiences and perceptions of the students once enrolled at the university. Although I was able to survey currently enrolled students who participated in the Summer Bridge program, their responses were limited in this area. Thus, calling upon graduates and even those students currently enrolled would add insight to the success of these students and the role that Summer Bridge played in their academic performance and personal lives.

Finally, understanding how “others” feel and perceive Summer Bridge would encase the program enough to get a complete picture of its impact, effects, and importance. Again, my study did not explore the perceptions of “others” outside of the circle of those involved directly with Summer Bridge. To understand Summer Bridge in

its totality, it is important to explore ideas, perceptions, and experiences of individual departments that service current and former Summer Bridge students. Likewise, researching university administrators that influence policies affecting Summer Bridge will aid in understanding their perceptions of the program.

Yet, exploring and analyzing these areas are of no use if the knowledge attained is not shared. Throughout my research of programs like Summer Bridge, it was difficult finding extensive studies that thoroughly explained the programs. Most of the sources I read discussed enrollment and retention rates. Likewise, they were programs funded with federal dollars unlike Summer Bridge that is funded entirely with university monies. Other studies provided brief descriptions of the services with limited input by the participants. In few of the studies I found focused on what the students thought of the services they were getting. And when they were, it was through surveys that the information was attained.

This prompted me to conduct my research in the manner that is presented here in this thesis. It is my hope that this thesis will provide others interested in understanding and replicating Summer Bridge and programs like it a blueprint to guide them as they explore, analyze, and share their knowledge with others.

Conclusion

For two summers, I spoke to students, instructors, program staff, and observed the Bridge program. And as I did this, I saw academic and personal transformations taking place. Students that were once deficient in academic and study skills were by the end of the six weeks proficient in these areas. Students were in class from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. five days a week and were studying countless hours beyond those set aside for study

center. Throughout the summer, they practiced and practiced and practiced until they felt comfortable enough to say, “yes, I know how to do this.”

Instructors, tutor counselors, tutors, and program administrators were there to encourage and provide additional support for the students to get to that point. When times got tough, words like, “you can do it,” “be the best you can be,” and “show them you know,” with “them” being those on the outside that do not believe students like them should be at the university, were like rays of sun after a stormy night.

Aside from program staff, student sought the help and encouragement from their peers – each other. What better way to believe you can make it than encouragement coming from those that are experiencing the same struggle? As Luis said, “even though there were times when I wanted to give up, wanted just to leave, I’m failing classes, I’m thinking I can’t make it and that made me want to go home, their support pushed me to go further.” For many students, working in-groups to complete assignments or to study for the next test was beyond valuable, it was the start of bonds that would last through Summer Bridge and hopefully college.

This constant support created a space for students to reflect on their past experience in high school and step into a realm where change for the better was possible and necessary. It allowed for students to believe that by surviving Bridge, anything was possible including graduating from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. As Luis stated, “this is the stressfulest 6 weeks I’ve ever been through and I’m glad it’s over. But knowing that I could get through something like this showed me that I’m dedicated, showed me that I’m ready to get into college life and that I can make it.” And as the students walked down the isle of Smith Music Hall to commemorate the

culmination of Summer Bridge, I witnessed enthusiasm, pride, and hope as they celebrated the beginning.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview #1: "Getting to Know You"

1. What type of student/person were you in High School? How focused were you with your studies? How confident were you as a student?
2. Who were your peers? What type of students/persons were they? What was the racial/social atmosphere like in High School? How did you feel about it? How did this affect you academically, personally, and socially?
3. What were some of your High School academic accomplishments? What were some of your disappointments? How did you overcome these disappointments? What changes did you make?
4. How long have you thought about attending college? What made you decide to continue with your education? Who encouraged you? Who were your role-models? What did they do for you?
5. Why have you chosen the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign? What attracted you?
6. How confident are you now concerning your academic skills? Do you feel they are sufficient for success at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign? Why or why not? How does this make you feel? What changes do you need to make academically and personally?
7. What are your academic and personal expectations of the Summer Bridge Program? What are your views of the program? What do you see the program doing for you? How can the program help you attain the skills you need to become a better student and person? What would you like to improve and attain from the program?
8. How do you see yourself adjusting to University life as a student and as a person? How about socially? How can the Summer Bridge Program help you adjust to campus life?

Interview #2: "Summer Bridge Experience"

1. How did you get into the university? What qualifications did you have when you applied to the University of Illinois, ACT, High School GPA, and class rank? What process did you go through? What happened? How did this make you feel?

2. How did you feel when you were selected to go through the next stage of the application process, i.e. Summer Bridge/Transition Program? Why? While you were going through that process, what were you thinking about and feeling?
3. Why do you think the Summer Bridge staff selected you to participate in the program? Why did you accept to participate in the Bridge program? How did you feel when you found out you were selected to participate in the program? How did you think the Summer Bridge program would help you?
4. How do you feel about Bridge? Has it helped you so far? How so: academically, personally, socially?
5. Do you think you got any study skills out of it at all? What did you get out of it? How did you apply these skills while you were in the program? Are you going to use them during the school year? How and why?
6. Did the Bridge program help you in your adjustment from home to college during the summer? How so? Do you think the program is going to help you adjust to campus life in the fall semester? Do you see your Bridge experience helping you adjust to campus life? What adjusting did you do while in Bridge? Are you going to apply these in the fall? Why and how?
7. Has the Bridge program helped you work as a team with other Bridge participants? To what extent has the program done so? Are you going to use this during the regular school year?
8. What improvements have you made academically, personally, and socially? Do you think any of these had something to do with you being in the program? How will you use these improvements throughout the regular school year? Do you think they will be helpful or not? Why?
9. Do you think the Bridge program is just a waste of time? Why or why not? What parts of the program do you think are a waste of time? What would you change about the program? What would you keep the same?

APPENDIX B

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

SUMMER BRIDGE
Telephone Survey/Questionnaire for
1995, 1996, or 1997 Participants

Pin Number: _____

My name is Kayleen Irizarry and I am a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the Department of Educational Policy Studies. As part of my dissertation, I am conducting a study on the contributions that the Summer Bridge Program makes in the educational and personal development of its participants.

I am inviting you, a former participant of Summer Bridge, to participate in this research project. If you accept to participate, I ask that you take a few minutes to complete a survey by answering some questions. This should take no more than 15 minutes.

The information obtained during this research project will be kept completely confidential. If confidential information needs to be revealed, your permission will be sought beforehand. No one but me will know your identity. Your participation in this project is also completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time and for any reason without penalty.

Do you agree with the above statement and would like to continue with the telephone survey?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Do you give me permission to use any of the information you provide as long as your identity is kept anonymous?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Demographic Information:

Now I would like to ask you a few questions that deal with demographic information. If you do not understand any of the questions, let me know.

1. What is your race or ethnicity?

_____ African Am. _____ Latina/o _____ White _____ Other

2. What is your gender?

_____ Male _____ Female

3. Are you enrolled in school? _____ Yes _____ no

4. If yes, what school? _____

5. Is that a 2 or 4 year school? _____ 2 year _____ 4 year

6. Are you still dependent on your parents or do you have your own household now? _____ yes _____ no

7. How many people live in your household? _____

8. What is your parent's combined annual income? Is it under:
 \$10,000/yr b/w 10 and 20 b/w 20 and 30 b/w 30 and 40
 b/w 40 and 50 b/w 50 and 60 b/w 50 and 60 over 60
9. What is the highest grade completed by your mother?
 elementary high school college graduate school
10. What is the highest grade completed by your father?
 elementary high school college graduate school
11. Do you or have you worked during your college years? Yes no
12. Some people work different hours when school is not in session and some people work all year round. Think back during the school year. How many hours per week did you work?
 under 10 hrs/wk 11-20 hrs/wk over 20 hrs/wk
13. Did you attend a public or private high school?
 public private
14. Where was your high school located?
 in Chicago Chicago suburbs outside Chicago-land area
 central Illinois southern Illinois outside Illinois

Next, I would like to ask you to respond to a few statements and tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. These statements deal with your high school experience.

1. I sought academic help when I needed it in high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
2. I was not at grade level in reading in high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
3. I was not at grade level in writing in high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
4. I was not at grade level in math in high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
5. I took my schoolwork seriously in high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
6. I was not confident in my ability to do well in high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
7. I wanted to do well so that I could go to college.
 5 4 3 2 1
8. I did not want to go to college after high school.
 5 4 3 2 1
9. I expected to do well in high school and go to college afterward.
 5 4 3 2 1

Now I would like you to give me some information or chose from several responses to answer the following questions.

10. What kind of student were you in high school?
___ A student ___ B student ___ C student ___ D student
11. How many hours a week did you study outside of class?
___ none ___ less than 5 hrs/wk ___ 5-10 hrs/wk ___ more than 10 hrs/wk
12. List three study habits you practiced regularly while you were in high school? For example, you reviewed material as you studied or you studied from your notes and the text book.
-
-
-

Next I would like you, again, to respond to a few statements and tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. These statements deal with your Summer Bridge experience. I only want you to think about your experience during the time you were in the Summer Bridge program.

13. I knew how to study effectively before Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
14. I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepare for college.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
15. I was prepared academically for college before Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
16. I felt an improvement in my academic performance during Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
17. I did not seek help during Summer Bridge when I needed it.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
18. I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in reading during Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
19. I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in writing during Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
20. I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in math during Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
21. I did not learn how to study better in Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
22. I did not spend time after Summer Bridge classes studying.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
23. I took schoolwork seriously during Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
24. My confidence grew during Summer Bridge.
___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

25. Summer Bridge made me feel that I could do anything.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

26. Summer Bridge was a waste of my time while I was there.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

This next section is just like the previous one where you tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. This time, the statements deal with your experience after Summer Bridge.

27. I did not feel an improvement in my academic performance after Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

28. I sought help after Summer Bridge when I needed it.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

29. I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in reading after Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

30. I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in writing after Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

31. I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in math after Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

32. I learned how to study better in Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

33. I did not spend time after Summer Bridge studying more.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

34. I did not take schoolwork seriously after Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

35. My confidence did not grow after Summer Bridge.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

36. I credit Summer Bridge for making me the good student that I am today.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

37. Summer Bridge made me feel that I could do anything.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

38. Summer Bridge was not a waste of my time.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

39. Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus when I started in the fall semester.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

40. Summer Bridge did not help me balance my social life with my academic life.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

41. Summer Bridge helped me develop relationships with faculty and academic staff on campus.

___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

42. I did not have a support network established when I finished Summer Bridge.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
43. Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to get around campus without any problems.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
44. I was familiar with the UIUC campus before coming here as a student.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
45. I had friends or family members that were currently students at UIUC when I got there.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
46. Summer Bridge did enough to help me get ready for college.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
47. Summer Bridge made me feel that I could not make it in college.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
48. Summer Bridge prepared me for "college life" outside of academics.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
49. Summer Bridge was realistic to how college was really like.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
50. Summer Bridge made me take school seriously.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1
51. Summer Bridge did not prepare me for UIUC.
 ___ 5 ___ 4 ___ 3 ___ 2 ___ 1

Now I would like to ask you a few questions. These questions are open-ended so you can say anything you wish.

52. What role if any has Summer Bridge played in your academic life?

53. What role if any has Summer Bridge played in your personal life?

Thank you for your help. Your responses will be of tremendous value as we work towards understanding how participation in Summer Bridge contributes to the educational and personal development of its students. If you have any questions about this research project, please call me, Kayleen Irizarry at (217) 333-2446 or (773) 235-0414. You can also e-mail me at irizarry@students.uiuc.edu. You may also, if you wish, contact my faculty advisor, Dr. James D. Anderson, by telephone at (217) 333-7404 or by e-mail at janders@uiuc.edu.

APPENDIX C
SURVEY DATA

Demographic Information:

Race	N=49	Frequency	Percent
African American		33	67.4
Latina/o		11	22.4
White		4	8.2
Other		1	2.0

Gender	N=49	Frequency	Percent
Male		22	44.9
Female		27	55.1

Income Per 1000 (Mean Household Size=4)	N=49	Frequency	Percent
Under 10		10	20.4
10+		5	10.2
20+		9	18.4
30+		9	18.4
40+		2	4.1
50+		2	4.1
60+		5	10.2
No Answer		7	14.2

High School Type	N=49	Frequency	Percent
Public		42	85.7
Private		7	14.3

High School Location	N=49	Frequency	Percent
Chicago		41	83.7
Surrounding Suburbs		3	6.1
Outside Chicago Area		4	8.2
Outside Illinois		1	2.0

I took my school work seriously in high school.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I took my schoolwork seriously in high s	Between Groups	3.004	2	1.502	1.979	.150
	Within Groups	34.915	46	.759		
	Total	37.918	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I took my schoolwork seriously in high s

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.43	.317	.403	-.37	1.23
	97	-.12	.317	.927	-.93	.68
96	95	-.43	.317	.403	-1.23	.37
	97	-.56	.290	.172	-1.29	.18
97	95	.12	.317	.927	-.68	.93
	96	.56	.290	.172	-.18	1.29

I took my schoolwork seriously in high s

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.72
95	13	2.15
97	18	2.28
Sig.		.209

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a. Uses Harmonic Mean
Sample Size = 15.955

I wanted to do well so that I could go to college.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I wanted to do well so that I could go t	Between Groups	2.446	2	1.223	2.024	.144
	Within Groups	27.799	46	.604		
	Total	30.245	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I wanted to do well so that I could go t

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.11	.283	.931	-.61	.82
	97	-.39	.283	.388	-1.11	.32
96	95	-.11	.283	.931	-.82	.61
	97	-.50	.259	.167	-1.16	.16
97	95	.39	.283	.388	-.32	1.11
	96	.50	.259	.167	-.16	1.16

I wanted to do well so that I could go t

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.28
95	13	1.38
97	18	1.78
Sig.		.203

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I knew how to study effectively before Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Next I would like you to respond to a fe	Between Groups	2.998	2	1.499	2.705	.077
	Within Groups	25.491	46	.554		
	Total	28.490	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Next I would like you to respond to a fe

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.53	.271	.159	-.16	1.22
	97	.59	.271	.108	-1.0E-01	1.27
96	95	-.53	.271	.159	-1.22	.16
	97	5.56E-02	.248	.975	-.57	.68
97	95	-.59	.271	.108	-1.27	9.99E-02
	96	-5.56E-02	.248	.975	-.68	.57

Next I would like you to respond to a fe

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
97	18	2.72
96	18	2.78
95	13	3.31
Sig.		.096

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepare for college.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepar	Between Groups	.101	2	5.1E-02	.089	.915
	Within Groups	26.021	46	.566		
	Total	26.122	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepar

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	5.98E-02	.274	.976	-.63	.75
	97	.12	.274	.915	-.58	.81
96	95	-5.98E-02	.274	.976	-.75	.63
	97	5.56E-02	.251	.976	-.58	.69
97	95	-.12	.274	.915	-.81	.58
	96	-5.56E-02	.251	.976	-.69	.58

I needed Summer Bridge to help me prepar

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
97	18	1.50
96	18	1.56
95	13	1.62
Sig.		.911

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I felt an improvement in my academic performance during Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I felt an improvement in my academic per	Between Groups	1.324	2	.662	1.613	.210
	Within Groups	18.880	46	.410		
	Total	20.204	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I felt an improvement in my academic per
Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.41	.233	.217	-.18	1.00
	97	.19	.233	.713	-.40	.78
96	95	-.41	.233	.217	-1.00	.18
	97	-.22	.214	.586	-.76	.32
97	95	-.19	.233	.713	-.78	.40
	96	.22	.214	.586	-.32	.76

I felt an improvement in my academic per

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.28
97	18	1.50
95	13	1.69
Sig.		.199

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I did not learn anything in Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I did not learn anything in Summer Bridg	Between Groups	.405	2	.202	.391	.678
	Within Groups	23.799	46	.517		
	Total	24.204	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I did not learn anything in Summer Bridg

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.17	.262	.809	-.49	.83
	97	.23	.262	.690	-.44	.89
96	95	-.17	.262	.809	-.83	.49
	97	5.56E-02	.240	.974	-.55	.66
97	95	-.23	.262	.690	-.89	.44
	96	-5.56E-02	.240	.974	-.66	.55

I did not learn anything in Summer Bridg

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
97	18	3.39
96	18	3.44
95	13	3.62
Sig.		.676

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in math during Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I felt an improvement in my basic skills	Between Groups	1.338	2	.669	.977	.384
	Within Groups	31.479	46	.684		
	Total	32.816	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I felt an improvement in my basic skills

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	2.14E-02	.301	.997	-.74	.78
	97	.35	.301	.505	-.41	1.12
96	95	-2.14E-02	.301	.997	-.78	.74
	97	.33	.276	.487	-.36	1.03
97	95	-.35	.301	.505	-1.12	.41
	96	-.33	.276	.487	-1.03	.36

I felt an improvement in my basic skills

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
97	18	1.72
96	18	2.06
95	13	2.08
Sig.		.486

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in writing during Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I felt an improvement in my basic skills	Between Groups	2.087	2	1.043	3.390	.042
	Within Groups	14.158	46	.308		
	Total	16.245	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I felt an improvement in my basic skills

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	-8.12E-02	.202	.922	-.59	.43
	97	-.47	.202	.077	-.98	4.07E-02
96	95	8.12E-02	.202	.922	-.43	.59
	97	-.39	.185	.121	-.86	7.89E-02
97	95	.47	.202	.077	-4.1E-02	.98
	96	.39	.185	.121	-7.9E-02	.86

I felt an improvement in my basic skills

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
95	13	1.31
96	18	1.39
97	18	1.78
Sig.		.067

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I felt an improvement in my basic skills knowledge in reading during Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I felt an improvement in my basic skills	Between Groups	1.049	2	.524	.814	.450
	Within Groups	29.645	46	.644		
	Total	30.694	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I felt an improvement in my basic skills

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.35	.292	.484	-.38	1.09
	97	.30	.292	.596	-.44	1.04
96	95	-.35	.292	.484	-1.09	.38
	97	-5.56E-02	.268	.979	-.73	.62
97	95	-.30	.292	.596	-1.04	.44
	96	5.56E-02	.268	.979	-.62	.73

I felt an improvement in my basic skills

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.72
97	18	1.78
95	13	2.08
Sig.		.465

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I learned how to study better in Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I learned how to study better in Summer	Between Groups	1.528	2	.764	.812	.450
	Within Groups	43.248	46	.940		
	Total	44.776	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I learned how to study better in Summer

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.40	.353	.528	-.49	1.29
	97	6.84E-02	.353	.981	-.82	.96
96	95	-.40	.353	.528	-1.29	.49
	97	-.33	.323	.591	-1.15	.48
97	95	-6.84E-02	.353	.981	-.96	.82
	96	.33	.323	.591	-.48	1.15

I learned how to study better in Summer

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.44
97	18	1.78
95	13	1.85
Sig.		.509

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

Summer Bridge made me take school seriously.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Summer Bridge made me take school seriou	Between Groups	7.585	2	3.793	2.815	.070
	Within Groups	61.966	46	1.347		
	Total	69.551	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Summer Bridge made me take school seriou

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.94	.422	.095	-.13	2.01
	97	.83	.422	.157	-.24	1.90
96	95	-.94	.422	.095	-2.01	.13
	97	-.11	.387	.960	-1.09	.87
97	95	-.83	.422	.157	-1.90	.24
	96	.11	.387	.960	-.87	1.09

Summer Bridge made me take school seriou

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
			1
96	18		1.44
97	18		1.56
95	13		2.38
Sig.			.084

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus when I started in the fall semester.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus	Between Groups	3.503	2	1.751	5.511	.007
	Within Groups	14.620	46	.318		
	Total	18.122	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.43	.205	.126	-9.2E-02	.95
	97	-.18	.205	.672	-.70	.34
96	95	-.43	.205	.126	-.95	9.17E-02
	97	-.61*	.188	.009	-1.09	-.14
97	95	.18	.205	.672	-.34	.70
	96	.61*	.188	.009	.14	1.09

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Summer Bridge helped me adjust to campus

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1	2
96	18	1.11	
95	13	1.54	1.54
97	18		1.72
Sig.		.112	.657

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to get around campus without any problems.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to	Between Groups	.881	2	.440	1.080	.348
	Within Groups	18.752	46	.408		
	Total	19.633	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to
Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.32	.232	.384	-.26	.91
	97	.10	.232	.907	-.49	.69
96	95	-.32	.232	.384	-.91	.26
	97	-.22	.213	.583	-.76	.32
97	95	-.10	.232	.907	-.69	.49
	96	.22	.213	.583	-.32	.76

Because of Summer Bridge, I knew how to

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.44
97	18	1.67
95	13	1.77
Sig.		.364

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

Summer Bridge prepared me for "college life" outside of academics.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Summer Bridge prepared me for "college l	Between Groups	1.427	2	.714	1.046	.360
	Within Groups	31.389	46	.682		
	Total	32.816	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Summer Bridge prepared me for "college l

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.28	.301	.655	-.48	1.04
	97	-.11	.301	.934	-.87	.65
96	95	-.28	.301	.655	-1.04	.48
	97	-.39	.275	.377	-1.09	.31
97	95	.11	.301	.934	-.65	.87
	96	.39	.275	.377	-.31	1.09

Summer Bridge prepared me for "college l

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.72
95	13	2.00
97	18	2.11
Sig.		.420

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a- Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

My confidence grew during Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My confidence grew during Summer Bridge.	Between Groups	2.008	2	1.004	2.537	.090
	Within Groups	18.197	46	.396		
	Total	20.204	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: My confidence grew during Summer Bridge.

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.49	.229	.111	-8.8E-02	1.07
	97	.16	.229	.789	-.42	.74
96	95	-.49	.229	.111	-1.07	8.76E-02
	97	-.33	.210	.292	-.86	.20
97	95	-.16	.229	.789	-.74	.42
	96	.33	.210	.292	-.20	.86

My confidence grew during Summer Bridge.

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.28
97	18	1.61
95	13	1.77
Sig.		.099

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

Summer Bridge made me feel that I could do anything.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Summer Bridge made me feel that I could	Between Groups	3.361	2	1.681	2.206	.122
	Within Groups	35.047	46	.762		
	Total	38.408	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Summer Bridge made me feel that I could

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.30	.318	.637	-.50	1.11
	97	-.31	.318	.629	-1.11	.50
96	95	-.30	.318	.637	-1.11	.50
	97	-.61	.291	.122	-1.35	.12
97	95	.31	.318	.629	-.50	1.11
	96	.61	.291	.122	-.12	1.35

Summer Bridge made me feel that I could

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.39
95	13	1.69
97	18	2.00
Sig.		.153

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a- Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I sought help after Summer Bridge when I needed it.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I sought help after Summer Bridge when I	Between Groups	1.001	2	.500	1.996	.147
	Within Groups	11.530	46	.251		
	Total	12.531	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I sought help after Summer Bridge when I
Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.16	.182	.688	-.30	.62
	97	-.18	.182	.633	-.64	.29
96	95	-.16	.182	.688	-.62	.30
	97	-.33	.167	.148	-.76	8.88E-02
97	95	.18	.182	.633	-.29	.64
	96	.33	.167	.148	-8.9E-02	.76

I sought help after Summer Bridge when I

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.61
95	13	1.77
97	18	1.94
Sig.		.182

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

I did not have a support network established when I finished Summer Bridge.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I did not have a support network established	Between Groups	3.9E-02	2	2.0E-02	.031	.970
	Within Groups	29.308	46	.637		
	Total	29.347	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: I did not have a support network established

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	6.41E-02	.291	.976	-.67	.80
	97	6.41E-02	.291	.976	-.67	.80
96	95	-6.41E-02	.291	.976	-.80	.67
	97	.00	.266	1.000	-.67	.67
97	95	-6.41E-02	.291	.976	-.80	.67
	96	.00	.266	1.000	-.67	.67

I did not have a support network established

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	3.17
97	18	3.17
95	13	3.23
Sig.		.975

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

^a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

Summer Bridge helped me develop relationships with faculty and staff on campus.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Summer Bridge helped me develop relation	Between Groups	.156	2	7.8E-02	.227	.798
	Within Groups	15.803	46	.344		
	Total	15.959	48			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Summer Bridge helped me develop relation

Scheffe

(I) Bridge year	(J) Bridge year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
95	96	.12	.213	.845	-.42	.66
	97	1.28E-02	.213	.998	-.53	.55
96	95	-.12	.213	.845	-.66	.42
	97	-.11	.195	.851	-.61	.38
97	95	-1.28E-02	.213	.998	-.55	.53
	96	.11	.195	.851	-.38	.61

Summer Bridge helped me develop relation

Scheffe^a

Bridge year	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
96	18	1.72
97	18	1.83
95	13	1.85
Sig.		.837

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 15.955

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, May 2000. Ph.D. Dissertation: "Support, Achievement, Excellence, Success": Experiences of Under-Represented Students in a Pre-College Academic Support Program.

M.Ed. Educational Policy Analysis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, January 1995

B.A. Political Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, May 1992

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

Graduate Administrative Assistant and Study Skills Coordinator, Academic Support Services, Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1997-May 1998)

Research Assistant, Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1996-August 1997)

Researcher, Bridge/Transition Program, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (January 1996-December 1996)

Teaching Assistant, Bridge/Transition Program, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (May 1997-August 1997)

Graduate Counselor, Office of Minority Student Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1995-May 1997)

Research Assistant, Department of Educational Policy Studies, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Summers 1993, 1996, 1997)

Transitional Bilingual Teacher, Chicago Public Schools (September 1993-June 1995)

Graduate Administrative Research Assistant, Office of Minority Student Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1992-August 1993)

PUBLICATION AND REPORT

Flores, Carmilva S. and Irizarry, Kayleen. (1998). "Maintaining Change: Pedagogical and Organizational Reform Following Three Years of Academy Support" in Renewal and Transformation. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois.

Irizarry, Kayleen. 1996. The Use of Perceptions of Program Participants in Evaluating Summer Bridge: An Evaluation Study of the University of Illinois' Summer Bridge Program. Urbana, IL: Bridge/Transition Program.

PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Irizarry, Kayleen. April 2000. "Readiness for Change and the Change Agent: Experiences of a College Bound Latino in an Academic Support Program." Annual Conference/American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Irizarry, Kayleen. November 1999. "Crossing the Bridge: Experiences of a Latino Student in an Academic Support Program." Tenth Annual Fellows Conference/ Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program and Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunity Program, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Irizarry, Kayleen. January 1998. "Affirmative Action and Academic Support Programs: Where are We Headed?" First Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Conference/University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois.

Irizarry, Kayleen. April 1996. "The Educational Attainment of Puerto Ricans." Fourth Annual Eyes on the Mosaic Conference/University of Chicago Minority Graduate Student Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

Irizarry, Kayleen. February 1993. "The University of Illinois Project 500 and Affirmative Action: Yesterday, Today, and Implications for Tomorrow." Annual Conference/Mid-American Association of Educational Opportunity Programs and Personnel, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENT

Presenter, American Educational Research Association Conference (New Orleans, LA. April 2000)

Presenter, Tenth Annual Fellows Conference, Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program/Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunity Program (Kalamazoo, MI November 1999)

Attendee, American Educational Research Association Conference (Montreal, Canada April 1999)

Presenter, First Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Conference/University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Urbana, Illinois January 1998)

Attendee, Eighth Annual Fellows Conference, Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program/Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunity Program (Chicago, Illinois November 1997)

Attendee, Seventh Annual Fellows Conference, Illinois Minority Graduate Incentive Program/Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunity Program (Edwardsville, Illinois November 1996)

Attendee, American Educational Research Association Conference (New York, New York April 1996)

Presenter, Fourth Annual Eyes on the Mosaic Conference/University of Chicago Minority Graduate Student Association (Chicago, Illinois April 1996)

Presenter, 1993 Annual Conference/Mid-American Association of Educational Opportunity Programs and Personnel (Lake Geneva, Wisconsin February 1993)

HONORS AND AWARDS

American Educational Research Association Conference Fellowship, Department of Educational Policy Studies, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (April 2000)

American Educational Research Association Conference Fellowship, Department of Educational Policy Studies, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (April 1999)

Academic Fellowship, Illinois Consortium of Educational Opportunity Program, State of Illinois (August 1996-present)

Assistantship, Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1996-August 1997)

American Educational Research Association Conference Fellowship, Department of Educational Policy Studies, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (April 1996)

Assistantship, Office of Minority Student Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1995-May 1997)

Assistantship, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1995-August 1996)

Academic Fellowship, Minority Academic Partnership Program, Graduate College, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1992-August 1993)

Assistantship, Office of Minority Student Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1992-May 1993)

Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities (1992)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1996-August 1997)

Researcher, Bridge/Transition Program, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (January 1996-December 1996)

Research Assistant, Department of Educational Policy Studies, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Summers 1993, 1996, 1997)

Graduate Administrative Research Assistant, Office of Minority Student Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1992-August 1993)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Study Skills Coordinator, Academic Support Services, Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (August 1997-May 1998)

Teaching Assistant, Bridge/Transition Program, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (May 1997-August 1997)

Transitional Bilingual Teacher, Chicago Public Schools (September 1993-June 1995)

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Educational Policy Analysis

The Policy-Making Process

Educational Stratification

Educational Attainment of Underrepresented Populations

Evaluation of Educational Programs

Evaluation Theory

Multi-Dimensional Research Methods

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

American Evaluation Association (1998-present)

American Educational Research Association (1995-present)

Kappa Delta Pi Professional Fraternity in Education (1996-present)

Phi Delta Kappa Professional Fraternity in Education (1996-present)