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Transfer student involvement: Patterns of involvement at Rowan University

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**TRANSFER STUDENT INVOLVEMENT: PATTERNS OF INVOLVEMENT AT
ROWAN UNIVERSITY**

by

Marissa Porter

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
For the degree of
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at
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Thesis Chair: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

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Dedications

I dedicate this thesis to my parents. Your love, support, and encouragement has driven me to continue my schooling and always follow my dreams.

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I would like to thank the transfer student participants who generously gave their time and energy to partake in this study.

Thank you to my family and friends for their love and support, especially my wife, parents, siblings, and in-laws. With gratitude, I also thank Sara Scalzo-Mason and Jeffrey Kniple for supporting and encouraging me as a transfer student myself at Loyola University Maryland during my undergraduate career. Your support and guidance led me to this graduate program, thesis topic, and career interests.

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Abstract

Marissa Porter

TRANSFER STUDENT INVOLVEMENT: PATTERNS OF INVOLVEMENT AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY

2017-2018

Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

Master of Arts in Higher Education

The goal of this study was to explore the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University. The target population of this study was all transfer students new to the university during the fall 2017 semester. A total of 688 students were surveyed using a modified version of the Ohio University *Student Involvement Questionnaire*. The survey measured variables such as student demographics, self-reported levels of student involvement activities, and self-reported levels of satisfaction of student involvement, post-transfer to Rowan University in September of 2017 (Williford & Moden, 1995). There were 302 student responses collected. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze responses, by use of factor groupings set by the five sections of the survey. Variable frequencies, standard deviations, and means were identified through analysis of the factor groupings (Williford & Moden, 1995).

Common themes found in this study shed light on the relationship between involvement patterns, importance and satisfaction of involvement, campus environment, and academic success. While subjects were relatively neutral about the importance and satisfaction of involvement, campus environment, and academic success, some moderate to weak correlations were found between involvement patterns and demographics such as residence status, employment status, and academic success.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Vignette

Following her senior year of high school, Jane packed her belongings and enrolled in classes at her dream university. Upon her arrival, the orientation team was excitable, the university was decorated, the dorms were bleak but the students all seemed incredibly happy. There were events and programs offered for the first-year students to discover clubs on campus which interested them. Jane joined the jazz band and intramural sports league. Throughout the first weeks of the semester, Jane and the other first year students were surrounded by events and resources aimed at helping them feel comfortable and succeed in college.

With all the activities for first-year students to do, Jane had a blast her first semester of college. Though she was having a great time, Jane was struggling in her coursework and with her emotional state. Depression and anxiety ate away at Jane. When she disclosed her feelings to her friends, she felt alienated and judged. Very quickly, Jane realized she was alone and unhappy, miles from home.

Unhappy in her current situation, Jane decided to transfer to another college. Upon transferring, Jane was invited along with other transfer students to attend a small orientation put on by two students who had transferred to the college the year prior. Jane felt confident that she would feel welcome and happy at her new college. While the orientation was indeed helpful, Jane felt lost as the semester went on. About halfway through her first semester at the college, Jane went through a personal struggle and realized she again had no support system.

Jane thought back to her first semester of college and how the first school she attended offered numerous programs for the incoming first year students. Beyond the brief orientation at Jane's new school, she began wondering why there were no specific resources for people like her – transfer students. All the resources and events on campus seemed to be geared toward first year students.

Knowing she needed support, Jane contacted one of the students who ran the transfer student orientation she attended at her new school. The orientation leader mentioned that the college was looking for additional orientation leaders. Despite Jane's lack of confidence, she applied for the position. Much to her surprise, Jane was accepted into the orientation leader group.

Jane's involvement in the student group changed the course of her college experience, and future career interests. Jane gained friendships she never thought were possible, found confidence in herself to be a leader, and discovered ways to help incoming students accustom themselves to the campus and surrounding areas.

Introduction

Transfer students within the American higher education system are often categorized into naturally freestanding groups of students, such as new students or commuter students. While all transfer students are indeed new students at one point, and many may additionally be categorized as commuter students or adult learners, colleges and universities across America often fail to offer resources specifically oriented for the success and inclusion of transfer students as a freestanding population.

Research from the 2015 *National Student Clearinghouse* notes an overall increase in student transfers from one institution to another across America within the recent past

(Porter, 2017; Shapiro et al., 2015). With the ever-growing number of transfer students in American higher education, this lack of resource and attention directed specifically for the care and success of transfer students may be viewed as a form of neglect on the part of the college or university. Such neglect may have negative outcomes for transfer students.

Statement of the Problem

With the increase in student transfers in American higher education, an increase in research regarding this specific group of college students is necessary. The national statistics on student transfer show that 37.2% of the students entering college for the first time in 2008 transferred once or more during the following six years (Shapiro et al., 2015). Breaking this statistic down further, the same report notes that of the 3.6 million students who were part of the first-time college student 2008 cohort, 2.4 million of them became part of the transfer student population between the years 2008 and 2014 (Shapiro, et al., 2015). With more than one third of the incoming first year students of the 2008 cohort transferring colleges at least once within six years of their enrollment date, greater research and attention is necessary to better understand transfer students, and the college experience through the eyes of a transfer student (Shapiro et al., 2015).

The current knowledge base, largely comprised of research focused on the topics of transition theories and the challenges of student transfer, lacks research on the post-transfer lives of transfer students. Current research has mapped patterns of challenge that transfer students have faced upon transferring, which have been generalized to predict the potential challenges of current and future transfer students. This existing research has led way to the creation of institutional admissions protocols and procedures to aid in the

actual transfer of a transfer student. An example of the creation of admissions protocols for transfer students following the research on credit loss post-transfer is the New Jersey Transfer Agreement, which is further described:

Recently, the Governor and state legislature created a law that established a statewide transfer agreement for students transferring from a New Jersey community college to a New Jersey public four-year college or university. Students can now seamlessly transfer their academic credits from a completed community college Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree program to a Bachelor's degree program at New Jersey's public four-year colleges and universities. (NJ College 2 College website, 2017)

Comprehensive State-Wide Transfer Agreement, 2008:

An A.A. or A.S. degree from a New Jersey community college will be fully transferable as the first two years of a baccalaureate degree program at New Jersey public four-year institutions. Students transferring with an A.A. degree into a B.A. program or an A.S. degree into a B.S. program will have accepted for transfer exactly half of the credits required for the basic four-year degree and will have exactly half of the credits to complete at the four-year institution. Such students will have junior status upon enrollment at the four-year institution. (Comprehensive State-Wide Transfer Agreement, 2008)

While transitional research of transfer students, such as credit loss has successfully led way to the creation of protocols aimed to limit the challenges transfer students face during a transfer from one institution to another, determining the needs of transfer students through subsequent research on the post-transfer involvement, overall

social success, and academic success of transfer students is essential. Similarly, the current knowledgebase houses a great deal of research on the involvement patterns of native college students; however, little research has been conducted regarding the involvement patterns of transfer students specifically.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to research the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University. The university has seen significant growth in transfer student applications, admissions, and enrollments in the past five years (Common Data Set, 2012, 2016). At Rowan University alone, the transfer student population has increased more than 45% from 2012-2016, based on 1248 enrolled transfer students in 2012 and 1811 enrolled transfer students in 2016, with an average increase of nearly 10% each academic year (Common Data Set, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016). Research into the involvement patterns of this specific population of college students may create better understanding of the on-campus and collegiate sponsored needs of transfer students. With better understanding may come the creation of increased tools and resources specifically designated to promote and facilitate the academic and social success of transfer students, post-transfer.

Significance of the Study

This study sought to add knowledge to the current knowledgebase for comparative purposes regarding the student involvement patterns of native and transfer college students in American higher education. By researching the involvement patterns of the transfer student population, colleges and universities may discover additional needs or challenges transfer students may face. Such discoveries may then be utilized to create

additional programs and resources specifically designated for transfer students, as a freestanding college student population, as well as the development of further study of transfer students and student involvement.

Assumptions and Limitations

It is assumed that all subjects of this study held a conceptual understanding of the research problem, were honest and truthful in their survey responses, and answered each question to the best of their abilities.

As only new transfer students from the fall 2017 semester were selected to participate in this study, the study may be limited if the population selected does not hold all the characteristics of the entire transfer student population at Rowan University. This research study utilized both online and in-person surveys, which resulted in use of a convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling may be a limitation of this study, as the data may not be fully generalizable to the greater Rowan University transfer student population. A goal response rate of 50% was set by the researcher; however, a response rate of 44% was achieved, with 30 of the 302 surveys left unfinished. Additionally, though I attempted to remain neutral during this study, my experience as a transfer student during my undergraduate career may have increased the possibility of researcher bias.

Operational Definitions

1. Academic Success: Increase in self-reported student grade point average (GPA) as of the fall 2017 semester.
2. Collegiate Sponsored Activities: All activities, programs, organizations, or events planned by Rowan University for the benefit of students.

3. Community College: A two-year institution of higher education in the United States.
4. Four-Year Institution: A college or university in the United States that students attend to receive a bachelor degree or more.
5. Native Student: A student who began their college career at Rowan University and has continuously been matriculated as a student, without being matriculated at any additional college or university.
6. Post-Transfer: The semesters of matriculation following the transfer to Rowan University.
7. Reverse Transfer Student: A student who began their college career at a four-year institution and ultimately transferred to a two-year institution (Clemetsen et al., 2013).
8. Social Success: Self-reported feelings of good standing emotional health outside of the classroom, specifically regarding campus life.
9. Student: An individual participant matriculated at Rowan University.
10. Student Involvement: The self-reported level of social participation in collegiate sponsored clubs, programs, events. Events may take place on or off campus.
11. Student Involvement Satisfaction: The self-reported amount of satisfaction in regard to the students' levels of involvement in collegiate sponsored programs, organizations, and activities at Rowan University.
12. Swirling Student: A student who takes the quickest and most economical path toward degree or certificate completion by use of swirling/attending multiple

institutions of higher education prior to degree completion (Clemetsen et al., 2013).

13. Transfer Shock: Any drop in academic success as measured by grade point average (GPA) post-transfer to a new institution (Hills, 2965).
14. Transfer Student: A student who has previously been enrolled at a different institution of higher education but is currently matriculated and participating as a student at Rowan University.

Research Questions

This study explored the following questions:

1. How academically and socially involved are selected transfer students at Rowan University, and what activities are the transfer students involved in?
2. What are the attitudes regarding the reported importance and satisfaction of the personal goals and decisions of selected transfer students at Rowan University?
3. What are the transfer student attitudes on the reported importance of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University?
4. What are the transfer student attitudes on the reported satisfaction of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University?
5. Does a relationship exist between involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students, and the demographics residential status, employment status, and academic success (GPA), as reported by selected transfer students?

Overview of the Study

Chapter II discusses the current literature on the topics of the history of transfer and community college, native student involvement, involvement theory, transfer students, transitional challenges, transition theory, and examines why students transfer. While the literature reviewed for this study is a broad overview, the chosen studies reflect the importance of research on the topics being studied in this thesis research.

Chapter III describes the procedures and methodology used for this research study. Sample size, sample selection, subject demographics, data collection tool, data collection processes, and an analysis of the data is described.

Chapter IV provides a quantitative data analysis of this study. The data were analyzed by comparison with the research questions and in accordance of the operational definitions of this study. Factor grouping was used to determine themes in survey data.

Chapter V describes the overall findings of the study. Themes found from factor groupings identified in chapter IV were reviewed. The data from this study were analyzed in comparison to similar past studies to best answer the research questions found in Chapter I. Additional research options and recommendations to further study this topic are also identified in this chapter.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

The American higher education system has become a large empire with considerable funding used and research conducted aimed at gaining a greater understanding of college students. Topics such as college student success, goals, barriers and limitations, and the societal outcomes of higher education in general are studied regularly to gain a deeper understanding of the vast population of college students.

The modern American college student population is comprised of a fluid, diverse, and intricate network of individuals. Such complexity within a group of people has the ability to create pockets of underrepresented subgroups. The creation of such underrepresented subgroups may limit the resources available or designated for the study of minority individuals. While many forms of diversity within the American higher education system are studied, some aspects of diversity in higher education receive less attention than others. The transfer student population is an often forgotten and overlooked population, despite encompassing a large portion of the current American college student population (Kodama, 2002; Porter, 2017).

With so many varying types of higher education institutions currently enrolling students, undergraduate college transfer students often do not follow one set path regarding college completion, drop out, or transfer (Shapiro et al., 2015). With such diversity found among students and the higher education institutions themselves, patterns of attending college and accessing courses of interest are also diverse and deserving of further research.

History of Transfer & Community Colleges

Conceptualization of the history of transfer students requires a deeper understanding of the history of community colleges, which arguably led way to the birth of the transfer student movement (Dougherty, 1994). Whether regarded as fair or unfair, community colleges today are often viewed as a second-string option for students who will not, or cannot attend a four-year institution at the point of their college enrollment (Dougherty, 1994). While this may be true for some students, or some community colleges, Dougherty (1994) notes that community colleges are a key building block to the current higher education system. Community colleges are open to nontraditional students, house active vocational training departments with a commitment to occupational education, offer open-door admissions policies, enroll a vast number of at-risk, minority, and part-time students, as well as account for over one-fourth of all higher education institutions in America (Dougherty, 1994). The idea of educational opportunity equality is at the heart of community colleges in America (Dougherty, 1994).

Though there is some debate on the purpose and timeframe of the birth of community colleges in America, Dougherty (1994) notes that predominantly, scholars recognize the birth of the community college to have taken place in 1901 in Joliet, Illinois, following an 1852 idea by Henry P. Tappan of University of Michigan, to direct high school graduates to a college-like institution for general education courses, before enrolling at a college or university (Handel, 2013). Additionally, the debate as to why the era of the community college began leads way to a large and political discussion. While many believe community colleges were created as a type of in-between for students who

wanted or needed such, initial critics of the community college foundation, believed there were political, mainly democratic backgrounds to the institutions (Dougherty, 1994).

Whether one agrees with the advocates or critics of the early foundation of community colleges, the importance of such colleges in shaping the current higher education system in American must not be undermined. Handle (2013) notes that as many as 50-75% of community college entrants notate transfer as their educational goal, despite the increase in vocational and workforce programs found at community colleges. With the goal of eventual transfer being so predominant with college students through beginning their college education at a community college and transferring to a four-year institution, mixed with other methods of transfer, the transfer-to institutions must be ready to properly support and aid in the success of the incoming transfer students.

Patterns of College Attendance

Many terms have been coined regarding modern transfer student attendance and course seeking patterns in higher education. Two examples of such terms are the *reverse transfer student* and the *swirling transfer student* (Clemetsen, Furbeck, & Moore, 2013). *Reverse transfer* is a term coined to categorize students who begin their college career at a four-year institution and ultimately transfer to a two-year institution (Clemetsen et al., 2013). Additionally, *student swirl* is noted to be an effect of student needs and attention to the quickest and most economical path toward degree or certificate completion (Clemetsen et al., 2013). Students who fall into this subtitle often swirl through different higher education institutions before finding the path to education which best suits their needs and life circumstances (Clemetsen et al., 2013). McCormick (2003) notes many additional patterns of transfer student post-secondary education, such as one-way

transfer, trial enrollment, special program enrollment, supplemental enrollment, rebounding enrollment, concurrent enrollment, consolidated enrollment, serial transfer, and independent enrollment.

Why Do Students Transfer?

Students transfer between higher education institutions for many reasons. With each enrolled student comes additional levels of diversity and life circumstances, which impact the way each student attends college courses and completes degree or certificate seeking work. Potential reasons behind transferring are noted to include seeking enrollment in special programs or supplemental courses which were not offered at the transfer-from institution, which may lead a student to swirl back and return to graduate from the transfer-from institution (McCormick, 2003). Additionally, life choices and special circumstances such as personal preference, social circumstances, financial hardships, academic challenges, familial obligations, course offerings, athletic associations and teams, and military or job placements may offer reasons for transfer (Moldoff, 2017).

Challenges of Transferring

As with any sizeable change, transferring to a different college can hold significant challenges and barriers for students on many levels (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995). To truly understand and address the challenges transfer students face in American higher education institutions, additional research regarding specific themes and variables may be necessary.

A research study conducted at the University of Nevada, Reno attempted to identify differences between transfer students and non-transfer students, if any

(Choroszy, 2004). This study looked at many variables including ethnicity, citizenship, transfer-from institution, number of transfer credits, grade point averages, age of transfer, age of graduation, and additional demographic information (Choroszy, 2004). The study concluded that while little to no difference was identified regarding student performance between transfer students and non-transfer students upon graduation from University of Nevada, Reno, there were still some differences discovered between the two groups of students (Choroszy, 2004).

This study noted that transfer student graduates from University of Nevada, Reno took longer to earn a degree, obtained less credits, and were older than non-transfer students at both admission to and graduation from the institution (Choroszy, 2004). Additionally, the study noted that transfer student graduates enrolled in an equivalent amount of summer courses as the non-transfer student graduates, and both transfer student and non-transfer student graduates were noted to be equivalent in academic performance measured through the evaluation of grade point averages (Choroszy, 2004).

While this study did not find any specific correlation between the variables studied and transfer student challenges or performance, it can be understood that with such a diverse group of students identifying as transfer students, the challenges to transferring also may be incredibly diverse and individualized based on student experiences (Choroszy, 2004). This study again suggests that further research into the transfer student population is necessary to determine how to enable transfer students toward academic and social success, while still understanding and appreciating the identity of a transfer student.

Credit loss. Technical barriers to a smooth transfer and transition process include but are not limited to course credit loss, extended time frame for degree completion, and financial aid issues (Monaghan & Attewell, 2015). Seemingly one of the most applicable struggles a transfer student may encounter is credit loss upon transfer to a new institution. Monaghan and Attewell (2015) note in a study on transfer student routes from community college to bachelor degrees, that many transfer students end up losing a significant portion of the credits they have taken prior to the transfer. This study found that 14% of the transfer students studied noted that the transfer-to institution accepted less than 10% of the credits they had taken at the transfer-from institution (Monaghan & Attewell, 2015). It is suggested from these findings that students who lose a significant amount of credits post transfer are less likely to graduate than those who did not lose credits or did not transfer (Monaghan & Attewell, 2015).

Transfer shock and academics. As mentioned in a previous study at Rowan University, *transfer shock* was first coined by Hills (1965) as a phenomenon which resulted in the drop in academic success as measured by grade point average (GPA) post-transfer to a new institution (Porter, 2017). With this notion, attention to the transfer student population and research designed to enable transfer students toward academic success is necessary. Similarly, a 2015 study done by the College of Science at Texas A&M University found that students who participated in a new program known as the Transfer Learning Community, which included an academic boot camp program were more successful than their non-participating counterparts (Scott, Thigpin, & Bentz, 2015). It was noted that 80% of the students who were studied as transfer students but did not participate in the learning community or academic boot camp held grades of C or less

(Scott et al., 2015). This study suggests that collegiate sponsored opportunities designated specifically to encourage and support transfer student academic success may pose useful for the academic future of transfer students.

Transition Theory and Social Engagement

A deeper understanding of transition theories may offer essential information regarding transfer student transitions from and to institutions. Schlossberg's Transition Theory identifies steps individuals go through while transitioning and adjusting (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995). Schlossberg et al. (1995) note that a transition results in a changing of relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles, which may be applied to transfer students, as transfer students undergo the changes noted in the theory when transferring to another institution. Each of these changes may be different for each transfer student, requiring a college or university to understand as much about transfer students to best assist them in the transition to and from schools.

According to Schlossberg's theory, there are three types of transitions: anticipated transitions, unanticipated transitions, and non-event transitions, and each transition is relative to the individual making the transition (Schlossberg et al., 1995). A transfer from one college to another may be categorized as an anticipated transition if the student began coursework at one institution with the plan to transfer in two years to another institution. Alternatively, a transfer from one college to another may be categorized as an unanticipated transition if the student did not plan to transfer, but simply had a problem with financial aid and could no longer afford the original or home institution.

Utilizing Schlossberg's Transition Theory as explained by Killam and Degges-White (2017), each student transferring from one college to another goes through the

motions of *moving in*, *moving through*, and *moving out*. The transition process, whether positive, negative, or both, requires an adjustment process (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995). Each transition is different depending on the context and individual adaptation skills each student holds (Schlossberg et al., 1995).

Similar to the issues of academic success and transfer shock, social adjustments regarding social engagement take place upon transfer to a new college. When transferring from one college to another, the transfer student is not only transferring to a completely new environment, but also leaving the comfort of a past environment. This transition requires social and emotional adjustment. As mentioned previously in a 2017 study out of Rowan University, a 2013 study done by Lester, Leonard, and Mathias at George Mason University found that transfer student engagement differs from native student engagement (Porter, 2017). This study found that when surveyed, transfer students noted that important areas of engagement for transfer students are within the classroom, but also within community and family organizations (Lester, Leonard, & Mathias, 2013; Porter, 2017). The students surveyed perceived and identified the extra-curricular activities through participation in community based organizations as student engagement and learning experiences (Lester et al., 2013; Porter, 2017). With this understanding, further research on social engagement specifically regarding transfer students may be necessary to best enable transfer student social success.

Student Involvement Theory

Student involvement, as defined by Astin (1999) is known as the “quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience” (p. 528). Student involvement theory is based around five postulates (Astin,

1999). The first of the five postulates is involvement, which by definition, refers to the investment of energies (physical or psychological) in the college experience (Astin, 1999). The second postulate is the notion that involvement occurs along a continuum (Astin, 1999). The third postulate notes that involvement can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the fourth postulate notes that the outcome (how much a student learns or develops) is directly proportional to the student involvement (Astin, 1999). The fifth and final postulate of Astin's 1999 Student Involvement Theory notes that the effectiveness of an educational policy is directly related to that policy's ability to enable student involvement.

Native and transfer student involvement patterns. Students native to a university are both similar and different than transfer students in a variety of ways. That said, student involvement for a transfer student may be different than student involvement for native students. Astin's *student involvement theory* (originally published in 1984 and revised in 1999) notes that there are many forms of involvement and that quality versus quantity is an important factor in how a student responds to involvement (Astin, 1999). In general, it has been suggested that student involvement is one factor in increasing student success (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006).

One study out of University of Southern Mississippi researched student involvement and engagement based specifically on educational origin by sampling 190 students who had graduated from a university in the southern United States between 2006 and 2007 (Roberts & McNeese, 2009). This study found that the involvement at the university was statistically different for students based on educational origin: students native to the university were found to be most involved, followed by transfer students

from two-year colleges, while transfer students from other four-year colleges and universities were found to be the least involved and engaged (Roberts & McNeese, 2009). The results of this study suggest that transfer students participate in student involvement activities at a lower rate than their native student counterparts (Roberts & McNeese, 2009). Based on the results of this study, the researchers recommended that institutions should create and offer tailored programs to assist in the transition of transfer students to the transfer-to institution (Roberts & McNeese, 2009).

Another study on transfer student involvement investigated the relationship between community college student involvement and transfer readiness in California (Johnson, 2006). This study consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data collection. The quantitative data were collected from 1941 students regarding demographics, involvement patterns, bridge characteristics, and student experiences (Johnson, 2006). The qualitative data were collected through student participation in focus groups designed to measure student beliefs, motivations, interaction with peers and faculty, and types of involvement (Johnson, 2006). This study found that though peer-to-peer interactions were found to be important to community college students, students who work off-campus or have financial concerns reported that they were less likely to be involved (Johnson, 2006). Projecting this finding onto transfer students in general, transfer students employed off-campus may be less involved than other students at the college or university.

Student involvement at Rowan University. One study out of Rowan University looked at the involvement patterns of student athletes during the 2006-2007 academic year (Iacovone, 2007). The study surveyed 99 student athletes at Rowan University in

order to study the relationship between the academic performance and levels of involvement of student athletes, as well as the subjects' attitudes in regard to student involvement (Iacovone, 2007). While the study found that the student athletes did not feel strongly about the importance of student involvement, the study did find a relationship between academic performance and some specific involvement activities (Iacovone, 2007).

Another study out of Rowan University looked at the involvement patterns of commuter students based on levels of involvement, attitudes regarding the holistic college experience, proximity to campus, and frequency of participation in campus life events (Woodley, 2017). This study surveyed 75 commuter students from Rowan University during the 2013-2014 academic year and found moderate satisfaction with academic and social involvement, as well as campus environment (Woodley, 2017). Additionally, the subjects of this study placed greater importance on the scholastic areas than other areas of measurement (Woodley, 2017).

One additional study out of Rowan University regarding student involvement studied the relationship between student employment and student involvement (Anderson, 2009). This study surveyed 223 students at Rowan University during the 2008-2009 academic year and not only investigated the relationship between student employment and student involvement, but also investigated the differences, if any, between the involvement patterns of students who worked on-campus versus off-campus (Anderson, 2009). This study found a neutral relationship between student employment and student involvement, but also found that location of employment influenced the level of involvement in certain activities (Anderson, 2009).

While each of these studies note generally neutral relationships between involvement and factors such as non-residential students, student employment, and athletic participation, these examples offer comparative viewpoints for the present study. With the present study focusing solely on the involvement patterns of transfer students, future studies may offer interesting insights on student involvement, such as a combination of the present study and a study on student athletes, or commuter students.

Summary of the Literature Review

As the transfer student population continues to grow into a significant undergraduate college student subpopulation in American higher education, further research is necessary (Shapiro et al., 2015). With great emphasis placed on studying the involvement patterns of college students in general, a lack of specificity regarding the needs of transfer students is formed. Programs designed to enable transfer student success both in and out-of-the classroom, and increase transfer student involvement can only be created by conducting additional research of the transfer student population. A larger focus on student involvement both in and out-of-the classroom, as well as on and off-campus may prove important in order to determine how to best support transfer student academic achievement and feelings of mattering within the college community (Astin, 1999; Kodama, 2002; Porter, 2017).

The current knowledgebase lacks research investigating the post-transfer involvement patterns of transfer students. Combined with the lack of research of transfer student success versus non-transfer student success, there is a great need for additional research to identify ways colleges and universities may enable transfer students toward individualization and academic success (Choroszy, 2004).

Chapter III

Methodology

Context of the Study

This research study was conducted at the main campus of Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. Rowan University, accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, is a medium sized, public research institution of higher education (Fast Facts, 2017; Porter, 2017). The university is comprised of three campuses in southern New Jersey, has two medical schools, 74 bachelor degree level programs, 51 master degree level programs, 5 doctoral degree level programs, and offers additional undergraduate and post-baccalaureate certification programs (Fast Facts, 2017; Porter, 2017). Rowan University has 18,500 students, 3,633 faculty and staff, and offers average classroom sizes of 22 students with a 17:1 student-faculty ratio (Fast Facts, 2017; Porter, 2017). The main university campus in Glassboro, New Jersey houses 5,702 residential students in residence halls, apartment complexes, and an International House, with additional university affiliated housing options located off-campus (Fast Facts, 2017). The university is home to 146 clubs and organizations including 115 student run campus organizations and clubs, as well as 31 Greek Life affiliated organizations (Fast Facts, 2017). Rowan University has 10 women's and eight men's Division III NCAA athletic teams, has a 30% minority enrollment amount, and enrolls students from 38 states and 34 countries (Fast Facts, 2017).

The latest results from the 2016-2017 academic calendar Common Data Set (2016) state a total fall 2016 semester new transfer student population of 1811. Compared to the first-time, first-year student population of 2199, roughly 45% of the total new

student population for the fall 2017 semester was comprised of transfer students (Common Data Set, 2016).

Following an upward transfer student enrollment pattern, the University Transfer Services department, within the Office of Academic Transition and Support Programs noted that the fall 2017 new student cohort had 1932 transfer students. The University Transfer Services department at Rowan University houses many programs and activities designated specifically for the support of transfer students, such as Transfer 101 (an introductory 2 credit course), Transfer Tuesdays (transfer information sessions), Transfer Mentor Program (a transfer-to-transfer peer mentor organization), and Tau Sigma (transfer student honor society) (Rowan University website, 2017).

Population and Sampling

Subjects and target population of this study consisted of the 1932 undergraduate transfer students currently matriculated at Rowan University who had transferred to Rowan University during the fall 2017 semester. The available population was found through convenience sampling with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 3. Using the total population, confidence level, and confidence interval, a sample size of 688 subjects was identified. A goal response rate of 50%, or 344 survey responses was determined in order to maintain an appropriate generalization of results to the greater Rowan University transfer student population. I electronically distributed 688 surveys, of which, 261 were returned. In an attempt to reach the goal of 344 survey responses, surveys were also hand distributed. Following both data collection methods, the total participating subject pool consisted of 302 transfer students, which set the response rate at 44%.

Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected by use of a survey titled *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Appendix H). The survey used in this study is an adapted version of the Ohio University *First-Year Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Williford & Moden, 1995). Prior to adaptation of the original *Frist-Year Student Involvement Questionnaire*, permission was granted from Ohio University's Office of Institutional Research (Appendix C) for the adaptation and reproduction of the survey for use in this study on transfer student involvement patterns insofar as this researcher agrees to share the results of this study with Ohio University.

Taking the subject population of this study into consideration, both an online and paper version of the amended survey were created. The online version of the survey was created using the Rowan University online survey tool called Qualtrics. The *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Appendix H) was used to measure the self-reported levels of involvement among transfer students at the post-transfer institution, Rowan University (Williford & Moden, 1995). Additionally, the *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* was used to measure the self-reported levels of satisfaction with personal involvement at Rowan University (Williford & Moden, 1995).

The *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* is a 56 question survey consisting of predominantly fill-in the blank, multiple choice, and Likert scale style questions. The survey is an adaption of the original Ohio University *Frist-Year Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Williford & Moden, 1995). The original use of this survey was to measure levels of involvement of first-year residential students at Ohio University. In combination with Residence Life and the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Office

of Institutional Research at Ohio University created the survey to measure such levels of involvement (Matthews, 2017).

The Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire (Appendix H) used in this study is broken down into five sections and asked students to answer each question based on their fall 2017 semester. The first section asked subjects to notate how many hours per week they participated in various collegiate sponsored student involvement activities, such as Greek Life, departmental clubs, leadership programs, academic organizations, and social clubs (Williford & Moden, 1995). Following the weekly section, the second section of the questionnaire asked students to notate how many of the listed types of activities they participated in monthly during the fall 2017 semester. The third section of the questionnaire asked students to notate how many of the listed types of activities they participated in during the fall 2017 semester. The fourth section of the questionnaire asked students to select a response which best describes their feelings on Rowan University, the importance of graduating, and the quality of instruction at Rowan University. The fifth and final section of the questionnaire has 36 Likert style, two-part questions and asked students to notate the importance and their satisfaction with their social involvement, academic involvement, the campus atmosphere, and their personal goals (Williford & Moden, 1995).

A short, preceding multiple choice and fill-in the blank style survey was adapted from a previous study at Rowan University to gather demographic variables such as the academic year/grade of the subject, the type of transfer-from institution they attended (two-year, four-year), residential status (on, off-campus), employment status, last GPA from previous college or university, GPA from 2017 fall semester at Rowan University,

and how many higher education institutions the subject has attended (Porter, 2017). This survey was used to gather variables in addition to variables measured through the *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Appendix H), making a cross-analysis of demographic and involvement themed variables available.

Pilot Testing

Though this survey tool has been deemed valid and reliable due to the history of the survey, pilot testing was utilized to fully ensure validity and reliability. The survey instrument was electronically sent by use of Qualtrics to three Rowan University transfer students from the fall 2016 semester. The pilot test subjects were asked to answer all survey questions to the best of their ability, to be honest, and to report any problems with the survey instrument to me. All three pilot test subjects reported no problems with the online survey instrument.

Data Gathering Procedures

Following approval from the Institutional Review Board of Rowan University (Appendixes A & B), the email addresses of all 1932 new transfer students from the fall 2017 semester were entered into a random sampling database, where 688 were chosen to participate in the study. Each of the 688 randomly selected participants from the fall 2017 new transfer student population were then electronically sent and online recruitment email (Appendix D), attached electronic informed alternate consent letter (Appendix F), and the survey instrument (Appendix H).

Within the attached electronic informed consent letter (Appendix F), all subjects were informed of the nature and purpose of the study, notated as a master's student thesis research study on the student involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan

University. The electronic system utilized to gather data for this study was Rowan University's Qualtrics system. Use of this system allows for complete anonymity of the subjects, as well as additional tactics to aid in the response rate, such as a set number of reminders for selected subjects who had not yet completed the survey.

It was known within the research community that low response rates are often a limitation to online survey tools. In the case of this study, the targeted response rate of 50% was not achieved by use of the electronic survey tool. To combat this, and increase the response rate, I sought out study subjects in-person at Rowan University's main campus in Glassboro, NJ. I went to Rowan University's main campus, approached students, and asked if they were transfer students. If they responded that they were transfer students, I asked if they transferred to Rowan University during the fall 2017 semester. If the answer was again yes, I handed the potential subjects a recruitment letter explaining the study. I then asked if they would like to participate in the voluntary study. If the answer was yes, I gave the subject the alternate consent (Appendix G), followed by the paper version of both the demographic and involvement survey (Appendix H). Once completed, I provided the subject with a blank envelope. The subject placed their completed survey within the envelope and returned it to me. As with the online survey, no personally identifying information was collected, and all data were anonymous.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software program based on subjects' responses to the set of demographic questions, and the five sets of student involvement and satisfaction in student involvement questions. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, means,

frequencies, and standard deviations were determined through use of SPSS. The statistics found in this research were used to answer the five research questions posed in this study. In response to research question 5, a Kendall's tau-b (τ_b) correlational coefficient was run to identify any relationships between levels of involvement at Rowan University and the demographics of previous institution type, residential status, number of institutions attended, employment status, and academic success (GPA). Factor groupings determined by the five sections of the *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* were used to analyze data on micro and macro levels. The factor groupings consisted of data collected on the weekly, monthly, and semesterly involvement patterns of transfer students, as well as attitude questions, and importance/significance questions. Data were analyzed within each section, as well as used in cross-section analysis.

Chapter IV

Findings

Profile of the Sample

This study consisted of 302 Rowan University transfer student subjects who had transferred to Rowan University during the fall 2017 semester, and were matriculated as of the spring 2018 semester. This study utilized convenience sampling, which relies on the willingness and availability of the potential subjects to participate in the research study (Iacovone, 2007).

This study utilized both online and in-person renditions of the *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire*. For this study, of the 688 students who electronically received the survey, as well as the students who received the in-person survey, 302 survey responses were collected, resulting in a 44% response rate.

Table 4.1 represents the demographic breakdown of the study subjects. Demographic variables of grade/year, transfer-from institutional type, number of colleges/universities attended, residential status, employment status, and grade point average (GPA) prior to and following the transfer to Rowan University were measured.

Table 4.1

Demographics of Sample (N=302)

| <i>Variables</i> | | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Grade/Year | Freshman/1 st year | 3 | 1 |
| | Sophomore | 53 | 17 |
| | Junior | 196 | 65 |
| | Senior | 50 | 17 |
| Transfer-From Institutional Type | 2-year institution | 225 | 74 |
| | 4-year institution | 66 | 22 |
| | Other | 11 | 4 |
| Number of Additional Institutions Attended | 1 | 234 | 77 |
| | 2 | 54 | 18 |
| | 3+ | 14 | 5 |
| Residential Status | On-campus | 74 | 24 |
| | Off-campus | 228 | 76 |
| Employment Status | On-campus work | 21 | 7 |
| | Off-campus work | 201 | 67 |
| | Do not work | 80 | 26 |
| Grade Point Average Prior to Transferring | 4.00 to 3.80 | 55 | 18 |
| | 3.79 to 3.50 | 50 | 16 |
| | 3.49 to 3.20 | 57 | 19 |
| | 3.19 to 2.90 | 59 | 20 |
| | 2.89 to 2.60 | 34 | 11 |
| | 2.59 to 2.30 | 20 | 7 |
| | 2.29 to 2.00 | 17 | 6 |
| | 1.99 & under | 10 | 3 |
| Grade Point Average First semester at Rowan | 4.00 to 3.80 | 64 | 21 |
| | 3.79 to 3.50 | 55 | 18 |
| | 3.49 to 3.20 | 45 | 15 |
| | 3.19 to 2.90 | 55 | 18 |
| | 2.89 to 2.60 | 31 | 10 |
| | 2.59 to 2.30 | 29 | 9 |
| | 2.29 to 2.00 | 15 | 5 |
| | 1.99 & under | 10 | 4 |

Analysis of the Data

Research question 1. How academically and socially involved are selected transfer students at Rowan University, and what activities are transfer student involved in?

Tables 4.2 through 4.5 represent a depiction of involvement activities, frequency of involvement, and location of involvement activities the select transfer student population participated in at Rowan University.

Table 4.2 represents hours per week participating in involvement activities, such as study for class, intercollegiate sports, campus recreation, college publications, college productions, Greek life, professional/departmental clubs, social/hobby clubs, religious activities, and residence life activities. The majority of the subjects reported spending between one and five hours per week studying for class (32%), and campus recreation was reportedly utilized between one and five hours per week by 20% of the subjects. The majority of the subjects reported not participating in any of the variables listed.

Table 4.2

Hours per Week Participating in Involvement Activities

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>hrs</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|------------|----------|----------|
| Studying for class | 0 | 66 | 22 |
| | 1-5 | 96 | 32 |
| | 6-10 | 82 | 27 |
| | 11-15 | 36 | 12 |
| | 16-20+ | 22 | 7 |
| Participating in: Intercollegiate Sports | 0 | 290 | 97 |
| | 1-5 | 5 | 1 |
| | 6-10+ | 7 | 2 |
| Campus Recreation | 0 | 221 | 73 |
| | 1-5 | 60 | 20 |
| | 6-10+ | 19 | 6 |
| | Missing | 2 | <1 |
| College Publications | 0 | 301 | 99 |
| | 3 | 1 | <1 |
| College Productions | 0 | 302 | 100 |
| Fraternities/Sororities | 0 | 289 | 96 |
| | 1-10 | 8 | 3 |
| | 11+ | 4 | 1 |
| | Missing | 1 | <1 |
| Professional/Departmental Clubs | 0 | 272 | 90 |
| | 1-5 | 27 | 9 |
| | 6-10 | 3 | 1 |
| Hobbies/Social Clubs | 0 | 246 | 81 |
| | 1-5 | 41 | 14 |
| | 6-10 | 10 | 3 |
| | 11+ | 4 | 1 |
| | Missing | 1 | <1 |
| Religious Organizations | 0 | 290 | 96 |
| | 1-5 | 11 | 3 |
| | 6+ | 1 | <1 |
| Residence Hall Activities | 0 | 285 | 94 |
| | 1+ | 16 | 6 |
| | 6+ | 1 | <1 |

Table 4.3 represents the weekly frequency of use of the recreational facilities and programs offered by Rowan University. Facilities and programs measured included the Rowan University Rec Center, tennis, Fitness Center, Aquatic Center/Pool, outdoor pursuits organized by Rowan University, and intramural/club sports. As notated the Table 4.3, the majority of the select transfer student subjects for this study did not utilize the recreational facilities at Rowan University on a weekly basis. The most used recreational facility as described by the subjects of this study was the Rowan University Rec Center and Fitness Center (80 and 79 subjects noted “yes” respectively).

Table 4.3

| <i>Weekly Use of Campus Recreation Facilities/Programs</i> | | | |
|--|------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Variables</i> | <i>use</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Recreation Center | yes | 80 | 26 |
| | no | 222 | 74 |
| Tennis | yes | 1 | <1 |
| | no | 301 | 99 |
| Fitness Center | yes | 79 | 26 |
| | no | 223 | 74 |
| Aquatic Center/Pool | yes | 5 | 2 |
| | no | 297 | 98 |
| Outdoor Pursuits | yes | 23 | 8 |
| | no | 279 | 92 |
| Intramural/Club Sports | yes | 16 | 5 |
| | no | 286 | 95 |

Table 4.4 represents the number of times per month subjects participated in involvement activities such as weekends on campus, times out with friends, on-campus party attendance, alcohol consumption at on-campus parties, and conversations had with international students. The majority of the transfer student subjects reported that each month, they spent no weekends on campus (64%), attended no on-campus parties (68%), and noted that they went out with friends between one and five times (44%).

Table 4.4

Times per Month Participating in Involvement Activities

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>#</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| Weekends spent on campus | 0 | 196 | 64 |
| | 1 | 27 | 9 |
| | 2 | 20 | 7 |
| | 3 | 25 | 8 |
| | 4+ | 37 | 12 |
| Times out with friends | 0 | 89 | 30 |
| | 1-5 | 134 | 44 |
| | 6-10 | 54 | 18 |
| | 11-20 | 22 | 7 |
| | 21+ | 3 | 1 |
| On-campus party attendance | 0 | 206 | 68 |
| | 1-5 | 76 | 25 |
| | 6-10 | 15 | 5 |
| | 11+ | 5 | 2 |
| Number of the campus parties where the subject drank alcohol | 0 | 225 | 75 |
| | 1-5 | 61 | 19 |
| | 6-10 | 11 | 4 |
| | 11+ | 4 | 1 |
| | Missing | 1 | <1 |
| Conversations with international students | 0 | 259 | 86 |
| | 1-5 | 40 | 13 |
| | 6+ | 3 | 1 |

Table 4.5 represents times per semester the study's subjects participated in involvement activities such as books read for pleasure, attendance at cultural events, conversations with academic advisors, faculty members, residence life staff members, other university staff members, and interactions with faculty members outside of the classroom. Table 4.5 notes that the majority of the interactions between students and faculty went only as far as e-mail conversations, and very few subjects noted attending one or more cultural events per semester (19%). Table 4.5 also represents technology use for academic and social interactions, as well as the number of the subjects' closest friends at Rowan University.

Table 4.5

Times per Semester Participating in Involvement Activities

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>#</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| Books read for pleasure or non-academic information | 0 | 186 | 62 |
| | 1-5 | 101 | 33 |
| | 6-10 | 11 | 4 |
| | 11+ | 4 | 1 |
| Cultural events attended | 0 | 242 | 80 |
| | 1-5 | 57 | 19 |
| | 6+ | 3 | 1 |
| Conversations about education with: Academic Advisor | 0 | 65 | 21 |
| | 1-5 | 220 | 73 |
| | 6-10 | 14 | 5 |
| | 11+ | 3 | 1 |
| Faculty Member | 0 | 164 | 54 |
| | 1-5 | 107 | 35 |
| | 6-10 | 17 | 6 |
| | 11+ | 12 | 4 |
| | Missing | 2 | <1 |
| Residence Life Staff Member | 0 | 286 | 95 |
| | 1-5 | 14 | 4 |
| | 6-10 | 2 | <1 |
| Other Staff Member | 0 | 291 | 96 |
| | 1-5 | 9 | 3 |
| | 6+ | 2 | <1 |
| Hours of computer use for: Academics | 0 | 19 | 6 |
| | 1-5 | 212 | 70 |
| | 6-10 | 57 | 19 |
| | 11+ | 14 | 5 |
| Social Interactions | 0 | 36 | 12 |
| | 1-5 | 203 | 67 |
| | 6-10 | 51 | 17 |
| | 11+ | 12 | 4 |

Table 4.5 (continued)

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>#</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| Conversations about faculty research/scholarship | 0 | 261 | 87 |
| | 1-5 | 37 | 12 |
| | 6-10 | 4 | 1 |
| Have dinner at a faculty member's home | 0 | 302 | 100 |
| Have refreshments with faculty member | 0 | 301 | 99 |
| | 1 | 1 | <1 |
| Have dinner on campus with a faculty member | 0 | 296 | 98 |
| | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| | 2+ | 2 | <1 |
| Communicate with a faculty member via email | 0 | 105 | 35 |
| | 1-5 | 101 | 33 |
| | 6-10 | 46 | 16 |
| | 11-20 | 28 | 9 |
| | 21+ | 22 | 7 |
| Talk to a career advisor | 0 | 190 | 63 |
| | 1-5 | 107 | 35 |
| | 6+ | 5 | 2 |
| Go to the library | 0 | 106 | 35 |
| | 1-5 | 123 | 41 |
| | 6-10 | 37 | 12 |
| | 11-20 | 22 | 7 |
| | 21+ | 14 | 5 |
| Closest friends at Rowan | 0 | 56 | 19 |
| | 1 | 141 | 48 |
| | 2 | 47 | 15 |
| | 3 | 32 | 10 |
| | 4 | 17 | 6 |
| | 5 | 7 | 2 |

Research question 2. What are the attitudes regarding the reported importance and satisfaction of the personal goals and decisions of selected transfer students at Rowan University?

Tables 4.6 through 4.8 represent the transfer student subjects' levels of satisfaction of decision making regarding involvement at Rowan University, importance of personal goals, and satisfaction of personal goals. Items are presented from most to least positive using mean scores.

Table 4.6 specifically depicts the subjects' levels of satisfaction regarding their decisions about the path they have taken as undergraduate students. Seventy seven percent of the transfer student subjects reported feeling either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their decision to transfer to Rowan University, and 69% reported that they definitely plan to return to Rowan University next fall. Additionally, 74% of the transfer student subjects reported feeling either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quality of instruction at Rowan University.

Table 4.6

Satisfaction of Undergraduate Decision Making (N=302)
(Very Satisfied/Definitely=1, Somewhat Satisfied/Probably=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unsatisfied/Probably Not=4, Very Unsatisfied/No=5)

| Variable | Very Satisfied (Definitely) | | Somewhat Satisfied (Probably) | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied (Probably Not) | | Very Unsatisfied (No) | |
|---|-----------------------------|----|-------------------------------|----|----------|----|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Will the subject return to Rowan next fall? <i>M</i> =1.56 <i>SD</i> =1.04 | 208 | 69 | 55 | 18 | 16 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 14 | 5 |
| Satisfaction of decision to transfer to Rowan University <i>M</i> =2.10 <i>SD</i> =1.11 | 96 | 32 | 137 | 45 | 33 | 11 | 16 | 5 | 20 | 7 |
| Satisfaction with quality of instruction at Rowan University <i>M</i> =2.12 <i>SD</i> =1.11 | 97 | 32 | 128 | 42 | 38 | 13 | 22 | 7 | 17 | 6 |

Table 4.7 represents the subject responses regarding the perceived importance of personal goals set by the subjects. Variables such as importance of graduating from Rowan University, importance of graduating from any college, setting personal goals, making progress toward personal goals, adjusting academically and socially to Rowan University, managing personal stress, developing personal values and beliefs, and being interested in their studies were measured. Eighty one percent of the transfer student subjects reported feeling that graduating from Rowan University was either very important or somewhat important, and 88% reported feeling that graduating from any university is either very important or somewhat important.

Table 4.7

Importance of Personal Goals (N=302)

(Very Important=1, Somewhat Important=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unimportant=4, Not Important=5)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|---|----------------------|----|---------------|---|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Graduating from any university <i>M</i> =1.50 <i>SD</i> =.96 | 207 | 69 | 58 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 6 | 18 | 6 |
| Importance of: Graduating from Rowan University <i>M</i> =1.73 <i>SD</i> =0.90 | 155 | 51 | 90 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 40 | 13 | 17 | 6 |

Table 4.7 (continued)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Motivation for academic success M=2.87 SD=1.58 Missing=31 | 86 | 28 | 32 | 11 | 47 | 16 | 41 | 14 | 65 | 22 |
| Interest in my studies M=2.89 SD=1.64 Missing=30 | 90 | 30 | 31 | 10 | 47 | 16 | 26 | 9 | 78 | 26 |
| Achievement of academic success M=2.90 SD=1.63 Missing=30 | 89 | 30 | 30 | 10 | 49 | 16 | 26 | 9 | 78 | 26 |
| Managing personal stress M=2.92 SD=1.56 Missing=30 | 80 | 27 | 34 | 11 | 54 | 18 | 37 | 12 | 67 | 22 |
| Adjusting to Rowan University academically M=2.92 SD=1.56 Missing=30 | 74 | 25 | 45 | 15 | 54 | 18 | 26 | 9 | 73 | 24 |
| Making progress toward academic goals M=2.92 SD=1.67 Missing=30 | 94 | 31 | 25 | 8 | 47 | 16 | 22 | 7 | 84 | 28 |

Table 4.7 (continued)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Making progress toward career goals <i>M</i> =2.93 <i>SD</i> =1.65 Missing=30 | 90 | 30 | 27 | 9 | 48 | 16 | 25 | 8 | 82 | 27 |
| Making progress toward personal goals <i>M</i> =2.94 <i>SD</i> =1.62 | 85 | 28 | 29 | 10 | 54 | 18 | 25 | 8 | 79 | 26 |
| Developing self-esteem and confidence <i>M</i> =2.95 <i>SD</i> =1.50 Missing=31 | 71 | 24 | 38 | 13 | 56 | 19 | 45 | 15 | 61 | 20 |
| Developing personal values and beliefs <i>M</i> =2.97 <i>SD</i> =1.48 Missing=31 | 66 | 22 | 39 | 13 | 65 | 22 | 39 | 13 | 62 | 20 |
| Adjusting to Rowan University emotionally <i>M</i> =3.01 <i>SD</i> =1.46 | 59 | 20 | 39 | 13 | 73 | 24 | 38 | 13 | 63 | 21 |
| Developing a philosophy of life <i>M</i> =3.02 <i>SD</i> =1.34 Missing=30 | 53 | 18 | 40 | 13 | 84 | 28 | 39 | 13 | 56 | 18 |

Table 4.7 (continued)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|--|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| | Developing spirituality M=3.07 SD=1.42 Missing=30 | 52 | 18 | 40 | 13 | 77 | 26 | 42 | 14 | 61 |
| Adjusting to Rowan University socially M=3.10 SD=1.38 Missing=30 | 48 | 16 | 42 | 14 | 78 | 26 | 43 | 14 | 61 | 20 |

Table 4.8 represents the subject responses regarding the satisfaction of personal goals set by the subjects. Variables such as satisfaction of setting personal goals, making progress toward personal goals, adjusting academically and socially to Rowan University, managing personal stress, developing personal values and beliefs, and being interested in their studies were measured. Relatively neutral findings are noted in Table 4.8, as 26%, 31%, and 30% selected neutral in their levels of satisfaction regarding adjusting to Rowan University academically, socially, and emotionally, respectively. Additionally, 25% reported neutral satisfaction regarding their motivation for academic success.

Table 4.8

Satisfaction of Personal Goals (N=302)

(Very Satisfied=1, Somewhat Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unsatisfied=4, Not Satisfied=5)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|--|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Interest in my studies M=2.80 SD=1.40 Missing=31 | 62 | 20 | 47 | 16 | 76 | 25 | 50 | 17 | 36 | 12 |
| Satisfaction of: Making progress toward personal goals M=2.82 SD=1.26 Missing=31 | 51 | 17 | 56 | 19 | 84 | 28 | 49 | 16 | 31 | 10 |

Table 4.8 (continued)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Making progress toward career goals M=2.82 SD=1.24 Missing=32 | 52 | 17 | 50 | 17 | 91 | 30 | 48 | 16 | 29 | 10 |
| Motivation for academic success M=2.83 SD=1.33 Missing=33 | 53 | 18 | 57 | 19 | 75 | 25 | 47 | 16 | 37 | 12 |
| Achievement of academic success M=2.84 SD=1.32 Missing=31 | 55 | 18 | 54 | 18 | 76 | 25 | 50 | 17 | 36 | 12 |
| Making progress toward academic goals M=2.86 SD=1.27 Missing=31 | 51 | 17 | 53 | 18 | 82 | 27 | 52 | 17 | 33 | 11 |
| Developing self-esteem and confidence M=2.86 SD=1.28 Missing=32 | 50 | 16 | 55 | 18 | 85 | 28 | 43 | 14 | 37 | 12 |
| Developing personal values and beliefs M=2.91 SD=1.33 Missing=31 | 54 | 18 | 46 | 15 | 88 | 30 | 37 | 12 | 46 | 15 |

Table 4.8 (continued)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Managing personal stress M=2.91 SD=1.23 Missing=32 | 47 | 15 | 43 | 14 | 94 | 31 | 57 | 19 | 29 | 10 |
| Adjusting to Rowan University emotionally M=2.93 SD=1.35 Missing=31 | 51 | 17 | 43 | 14 | 90 | 30 | 43 | 14 | 44 | 15 |
| Developing a philosophy of life M=2.93 SD=1.24 Missing=31 | 44 | 15 | 45 | 15 | 110 | 36 | 30 | 10 | 42 | 14 |
| Developing spirituality M=2.94 SD=1.29 Missing=31 | 45 | 15 | 43 | 14 | 103 | 34 | 38 | 12 | 42 | 14 |
| Adjusting to Rowan University academically M=2.94 SD=1.34 Missing=31 | 51 | 17 | 51 | 17 | 79 | 26 | 43 | 14 | 47 | 15 |
| Adjusting to Rowan University socially M=2.96 SD=1.35 Missing=32 | 50 | 16 | 37 | 12 | 93 | 31 | 47 | 16 | 43 | 14 |

Research question 3. What are the transfer student attitudes on the importance of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University?

Tables 4.9 and 4.10 depict the reported importance of social involvement and academic involvement of the transfer student subjects at Rowan University. Variables show in these tables include but are not limited to personal relationships with peers, having close friends at Rowan University, attending cultural events, interacting with International students, faculty contact, academic advising, personal security, social atmosphere, intellectual atmosphere, and campus community. Items are presented from most to least positive using mean scores.

Table 4.9 specifically focuses on the importance of social involvement as reported by the transfer student subjects of this study. As in the previous table, Table 4.9 depicts relatively neutral feelings regarding the importance of social involvement as reported by the transfer student subjects. Thirty one percent of the transfer student subjects reported that they have neutral feelings in regard to the importance of getting involved in campus activities. Alternatively, 13% reported that getting involved in campus activities is very important, and 16% reported that it is not important.

Table 4.9

*Importance of Social Involvement (N=302)**(Very Important=1, Somewhat Important=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unimportant=4, Not Important=5)*

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Adequate social atmosphere <i>M</i> =2.94 <i>SD</i> =1.30 Missing=31 | 47 | 16 | 55 | 18 | 77 | 26 | 52 | 17 | 40 | 13 |
| Importance of: Establishing personal relationships with peers <i>M</i> =2.97 <i>SD</i> =1.39 Missing=30 | 53 | 18 | 53 | 18 | 70 | 23 | 41 | 13 | 55 | 18 |
| Interacting with people of different races <i>M</i> =2.97 <i>SD</i> =1.34 Missing=30 | 50 | 17 | 44 | 15 | 93 | 31 | 33 | 11 | 52 | 17 |
| Having close friends at Rowan University <i>M</i> =3.00 <i>SD</i> =1.37 Missing=30 | 51 | 17 | 46 | 15 | 79 | 26 | 43 | 14 | 53 | 18 |
| Having a job while enrolled <i>M</i> =3.01 <i>SD</i> =1.27 Missing=31 | 62 | 20 | 46 | 15 | 56 | 19 | 41 | 14 | 67 | 22 |

Table 4.9 (continued)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|--|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Getting involved in campus activities M=3.02 SD=1.28 Missing=30 | 39 | 13 | 53 | 18 | 92 | 31 | 40 | 13 | 48 | 16 |
| Interacting with International students M=3.02 SD=1.29 Missing=31 | 43 | 14 | 44 | 15 | 98 | 33 | 37 | 12 | 49 | 16 |
| Fitting into the campus community M=3.03 SD=1.40 Missing=30 | 48 | 16 | 53 | 18 | 72 | 24 | 41 | 14 | 58 | 19 |
| Getting involved in student organizations M=3.10 SD=1.32 Missing=30 | 39 | 13 | 53 | 18 | 77 | 25 | 48 | 16 | 55 | 18 |
| Attending cultural events on campus M=3.16 SD=1.36 Missing=30 | 44 | 15 | 36 | 12 | 88 | 29 | 41 | 14 | 63 | 21 |
| Getting involved in religious activities M=3.21 SD=1.40 | 47 | 16 | 31 | 10 | 83 | 28 | 39 | 13 | 72 | 24 |

Table 4.10 specifically focuses on the importance of academic involvement as reported by the transfer student subjects of this study. In regard to the importance of instruction in major courses, 32% of the transfer student subjects reported they felt it was very important; however, only 18% reported that it was very important to have faculty available outside of class. Additionally, 25% of the transfer student subjects reported that having access to adequate personal security was important, and 21% reported that it was not important. A relatively even spread of views regarding the importance of having an adequate intellectual/academic atmosphere on campus was reported, with 21% reporting that it is very important, 16% reported it is somewhat important, 19% reported neutral feelings, 16% reported feeling adequate intellectual atmosphere is somewhat unimportant, and 18% reported it is not important.

Table 4.10

Importance of Academic Involvement (N=302)
(Very Important=1, Somewhat Important=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unimportant=4, Not Important=5)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|--|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| | Academic Advising M=2.90 SD=1.56 Missing=30 | 79 | 26 | 40 | 13 | 51 | 17 | 34 | 11 | 68 |
| Adequate personal security M=2.92 SD=1.52 Missing=30 | 74 | 25 | 35 | 12 | 64 | 21 | 36 | 12 | 63 | 21 |

Table 4.10 (continued)

| Variable | Very Important | | Somewhat Important | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unimportant | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Adequate academic/ intellectual atmosphere <i>M</i> =2.94 <i>SD</i> =1.30 Missing=31 | 65 | 21 | 48 | 16 | 56 | 19 | 48 | 16 | 54 | 18 |
| Adequate physical environment on campus <i>M</i> =2.95 <i>SD</i> =1.40 Missing=30 | 59 | 20 | 44 | 15 | 69 | 23 | 52 | 17 | 48 | 16 |
| Importance of: Instruction in my major courses <i>M</i> =2.95 <i>SD</i> =1.70 Missing=30 | 96 | 32 | 22 | 7 | 41 | 14 | 26 | 9 | 87 | 29 |
| Instruction in my non-major courses <i>M</i> =2.96 <i>SD</i> =1.43 Missing=30 | 57 | 19 | 54 | 18 | 63 | 21 | 39 | 13 | 59 | 20 |
| Faculty availability outside of class <i>M</i> =2.99 <i>SD</i> =1.40 Missing=30 | 54 | 18 | 49 | 16 | 69 | 23 | 45 | 15 | 55 | 18 |

Research question 4. What are the transfer student attitudes on the reported satisfaction of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University?

Tables 4.11 and 4.12 depict the reported satisfaction of social involvement and academic involvement of the transfer student subjects at Rowan University. Variables show in these tables include but are not limited to personal relationships with peers, having close friends at Rowan University, attending cultural events, interacting with International students, faculty contact, academic advising, personal security, social atmosphere, intellectual atmosphere, and campus community.

Table 4.11 focuses specifically on the satisfaction of social involvement as reported by the transfer student subjects of this study. Similar to the reported feelings of importance, relatively neutral feelings were reported regarding the satisfaction of social involvement, as 36% reported neutral feelings in regarding the satisfaction of getting involved in student organizations, as well as in campus activities. Additionally, 41% reported neutral feelings in regard to their satisfaction with interacting with international students.

Table 4.11

Satisfaction of Social Involvement (N=302)
(Very Satisfied=1, Somewhat Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unsatisfied=4, Not Satisfied=5)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Adequate social atmosphere <i>M</i> =2.83 <i>SD</i> =1.19 Missing=32 | 44 | 15 | 52 | 17 | 103 | 34 | 42 | 14 | 28 | 9 |
| Satisfaction of: Establishing personal relationships with peers <i>M</i> =2.85 <i>SD</i> =1.22 Missing=31 | 46 | 15 | 52 | 17 | 107 | 35 | 30 | 10 | 36 | 12 |
| Having close friends at Rowan University <i>M</i> =2.86 <i>SD</i> =1.29 Missing=31 | 53 | 18 | 49 | 16 | 89 | 30 | 42 | 14 | 38 | 13 |
| Interacting with International students <i>M</i> =2.87 <i>SD</i> =1.19 Missing=31 | 45 | 15 | 42 | 14 | 123 | 41 | 26 | 9 | 35 | 12 |
| Getting involved in campus activities <i>M</i> =2.88 <i>SD</i> =1.22 Missing=31 | 48 | 16 | 42 | 14 | 108 | 36 | 40 | 13 | 33 | 11 |

Table 4.11 (continued)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|---|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Fitting into the campus community <i>M</i> =2.90 <i>SD</i> =1.22 Missing=32 | 43 | 14 | 48 | 16 | 105 | 35 | 40 | 13 | 34 | 11 |
| Interacting with people of different races <i>M</i> =2.92 <i>SD</i> =1.29 Missing=31 | 49 | 16 | 45 | 15 | 101 | 33 | 31 | 10 | 45 | 15 |
| Having a job while enrolled <i>M</i> =2.93 <i>SD</i> =1.39 Missing=31 | 55 | 17 | 44 | 15 | 87 | 29 | 33 | 11 | 52 | 17 |
| Getting involved in student organizations <i>M</i> =2.95 <i>SD</i> =1.23 Missing=31 | 45 | 15 | 39 | 13 | 109 | 36 | 40 | 13 | 38 | 13 |
| Getting involved in religious activities <i>M</i> =2.97 <i>SD</i> =1.33 Missing=31 | 50 | 17 | 42 | 14 | 96 | 32 | 32 | 11 | 51 | 17 |
| Attending cultural events on campus <i>M</i> =3.02 <i>SD</i> =1.25 Missing=31 | 41 | 14 | 36 | 13 | 114 | 38 | 31 | 10 | 47 | 16 |

Table 4.12 focuses specifically on the satisfaction of academic involvement as reported by the transfer student subjects of this study. Similar to the previous table, the majority of the variables in Table 4.12 depict a widespread view of levels of satisfaction regarding academic involvement. The variables' means ranged from 2.82 to 2.94, with neutral being 3.00. None of the variables had means greater than neutral, meaning that each of the variables held means between neutral and somewhat unsatisfied.

Table 4.12

Satisfaction of Academic Involvement (N=302)

(Very Satisfied=1, Somewhat Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Somewhat Unsatisfied=4, Not Satisfied=5)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|--|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Faculty availability outside of class <i>M</i> =2.82 <i>SD</i> =1.30 Missing=31 | 54 | 18 | 59 | 20 | 75 | 25 | 47 | 16 | 36 | 12 |
| Satisfaction of: Instruction in my major courses <i>M</i> =2.84 <i>SD</i> =1.35 Missing=31 | 60 | 20 | 52 | 17 | 67 | 22 | 55 | 18 | 37 | 12 |
| Academic Advising <i>M</i> =2.85 <i>SD</i> =1.39 Missing=31 | 62 | 21 | 49 | 16 | 78 | 26 | 33 | 11 | 49 | 16 |

Table 4.12 (continued)

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Neutral | | Somewhat Unsatisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|--|----------------|----|--------------------|----|----------|----|----------------------|----|---------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Adequate physical environment on campus M=2.86 SD=1.26 Missing=31 | 50 | 17 | 50 | 17 | 92 | 31 | 46 | 15 | 33 | 11 |
| Adequate academic/intellectual atmosphere M=2.87 SD=1.25 Missing=31 | 44 | 14 | 60 | 20 | 87 | 29 | 45 | 15 | 35 | 12 |
| Adequate personal security M=2.88 SD=1.38 Missing=31 | 56 | 19 | 51 | 17 | 77 | 26 | 43 | 14 | 44 | 10 |
| Instruction in my non-major courses M=2.94 SD=1.28 Missing=31 | 45 | 15 | 57 | 19 | 78 | 26 | 52 | 17 | 39 | 13 |

Research question 5. Does a relationship exist between involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students, and the demographics of residential status, employment status, and academic success, as reported by selected transfer students?

Tables 4.13 through 4.15 depict any relationships between the involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students, and the transfer student subjects' demographics of residential status, employment status, and academic success (as measured through self-reported GPA).

Table 4.13 highlights the relationship between the transfer student subjects' residential status and patterns of involvement at Rowan University. There is a moderately strong inverse correlation between weekends per month spent on campus and residential status ($r = -.565, p = .000$). There is a moderate inverse correlation between weekly hours participating in residence hall activities and transfer student residential status ($r = -.356, p = .000$) at a $p < .01$ level. There is a moderate inverse correlation between weekly hours participating in campus recreation and residential status ($r = -.312, p = 0.00$) at a $p < .01$ level. There is no significant correlation between residential status and the remainder of the student involvement variables surveyed in this study.

Table 4.13

| <i>Significant Correlations Between Residential Status and Transfer Student Involvement</i> | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>r</i> coefficient | <i>p</i> -level |
| Weekends per month spent on campus | -.565 | .000 |
| Weekly hours participating in residence hall activities | -.356** | .000 |
| Weekly hours participating in campus recreation | -.312** | 0.00 |

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4.14 highlights the relationship between the transfer student subjects' employment status and patterns of involvement at Rowan University. There is a weak positive correlation between number of weekends per month spent on campus and employment status ($r = .157, p = .003$) at a $p < .01$ level. Additionally, there is a weak positive correlation between weekly hours participating in residence hall activities and transfer student employment status ($r = .095, p = .045$) at a $p < .05$ level. There is no significant correlation between employment status and the remainder of the student involvement variables surveyed in this study.

Table 4.14

| <i>Significant Correlations Between Employment Status and Transfer Student Involvement</i> | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| | <i>r coefficient</i> | <i>p-level</i> |
| Weekly hours participating in residence hall activities | .098* | .045 |
| Weekends per month spent on campus | .157** | .003 |

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4.15 highlights the relationship between the transfer student subjects' academic success (GPA) and patterns of involvement at Rowan University. There is a weak positive correlation between cultural events attended by subjects and the self-reported rates of academic success ($r = .115, p = .012$) at a $p < .05$ level. Additionally, there is a weak positive correlation between subject utilization of the library and academic success last semester ($r = .144, p = .001$) at a $p < .01$ level. There is no significant correlation between employment status and the remainder of the student involvement variables surveyed in this study.

Table 4.15

Significant Correlations Between Academic Success and Transfer Student Involvement

| | <i>r</i> coefficient | <i>p</i> -level |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|
| Cultural events attended last semester | .115* | .012 |
| Times at to the library last semester | .144** | .001 |

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Chapter V

Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary of the Study

This study investigated the involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students, post-transfer during the fall 2017 academic semester. By use of a sample size calculator, it was determined that of the 1932 target population, 688 students chosen at random would receive the online survey. Of the 688 students who received the online survey, 261 responded. In order to gather enough data to properly generalize results, I dispersed a paper copy of the survey, and received a total of 302 responses. Of the study subjects, 65% identified as holding a junior academic status, 74% transferred from a 2-year institution, 77% attended one college or university prior to Rowan University, 76% live off-campus, 67% work off-campus, the average grade point average (GPA) prior to transferring was 3.16, and the average GPA post-transfer (first semester at Rowan University) was 3.17.

The survey tool utilized in this study was a modified version of the *First-Year Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Williford & Moden, 1995). Following permission from Ohio University, I created a modified version of the survey, titled *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Appendix H). The survey was dispersed both through an online survey tool (Qualtrics), and in-person on the main campus of Rowan University. This survey was used to measure the involvement patterns of transfer students, post-transfer, during their first semester at Rowan University. The survey was broken down into five sections which questioned transfer students on their types of involvement,

importance of involvement, and satisfaction of involvement on weekly, monthly, and semester levels.

Following data collection, I analyzed data by use of the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) computer software program. This allowed me to identify themes in subject responses, involvement levels, involvement patterns, levels of satisfaction regarding academic and social involvement, levels of satisfaction of the subjects' decision making specifically in regard to higher education and college transfer, as well as any correlation between subjects' reported levels of involvement and demographics.

Discussion of the Findings

Research question 1. How academically and socially involved are selected transfer students at Rowan University, and what activities are transfer student involved in?

The focus of this research question was to gather information on the academic and social involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University. The *Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire* (Appendix H) utilized in this research study asked students to notate how many hours per week they studied for class, participated in intercollegiate sports, campus recreation, college publications, college productions, Greek life, professional/departmental clubs, hobbies/social clubs, religious organizations, and residence hall activities.

Academic involvement. The data from this study suggest limited academic involvement by transfer students at Rowan University. While the average number of hours spent studying for class each week was found to be 6.92 hours, 22% of the subjects noted that they spend zero hours studying per week, and a mere 4% spent more than 20

hours per week studying for class. When asked about their fall 2017 semester participation in involvement activities, such as books read for pleasure, cultural event attendance, educational conversations with an academic advisor, faculty member, residence life staff member, other staff member, hours of computer use, interactions with faculty members, library use, and number of close friends at Rowan University, the majority of subjects again reported limited involvement. Of the 302 subjects, 62% did not read any books for pleasure during the fall 2017 semester, 80% did not attend any cultural events, 54% did not have any educational conversations with a faculty member, 95% did not have any educational conversations with a residence life staff member, and 63% did not talk to a career advisor.

Social involvement. Similar to academic involvement, the majority of selected transfer students notated limited social involvement. Of the transfer student subjects, 97% did not participate in intercollegiate sports, 73% spent zero hours participating in campus recreation, 99% spent zero hours participating in college publications. Similarly, none of the subjects participated in college productions, 3% spent 1-10 hours per week participating in Greek life, 9% spent 1-5 hours per week participating in professional or departmental clubs, 14% spent 1-5 hours per week participating in hobbies/social clubs, and 5% spent 1-5 hours per week participating in residence hall activities.

A pattern of limited use of campus recreation facilities and programs is suggested from the findings of this study. When asked about weekly use of various campus recreation programs and facilities at Rowan University, the majority of the subjects responded that they did not utilize many of the programs and facilities. According to the results, the most utilized programs/facilities were suggested to be the Fitness Center and

the Recreation Center, both with 26% of the subjects noting they used the facilities on a weekly basis. Tennis and the pool were notated as the least utilized, with 1% and 2% of the subjects noting weekly use, respectively. In addition to reporting limited social involvement with use of campus facilities, when asked about monthly participation in social involvement activities, the majority of the subjects reported that they spent no weekends on campus, attended no on-campus parties, and had no conversations with international students.

These data suggest that the transfer student subjects of this research study have limited levels of academic and social involvement at Rowan University. While the theme of limited involvement is present in the data, a potential theme of less limited social involvement, as opposed to the seemingly very limited academic involvement, may be present. To support this potential theme, 48% of the transfer student subjects reported that one of their closest friends attended Rowan University, and 44% reported going out with friends 1-5 times per month.

These findings are supported by some of the existing literature on student involvement in higher education. Current research suggests that the involvement patterns of transfer students differ from the involvement patterns of native college students (Lester et al., 2013; Roberts & McNeese, 2009). While few studies have been done specifically on transfer student involvement, comparison of the present study, and a previous study on the involvement patterns of student leaders at Rowan University, suggest that the involvement patterns of transfer students do indeed differ from the involvement patterns of native college students (Reiley, 2015). While this study did not focus any research on

the study of native transfer student involvement patterns, the limited involvement patterns suggested by this study fall in line with previous studies.

Research question 2. What are the attitudes regarding the reported importance and satisfaction of the personal goals and decisions of selected transfer students at Rowan University?

The focus of this research question was to gather information on the transfer student subjects' attitudes regarding the importance and satisfaction of the personal goals and decisions they set and made. Variables such as satisfaction of the decision to transfer to Rowan University, whether the subject would return to Rowan University, and satisfaction with the quality of instruction at Rowan University were measured. Additionally, variables such as the importance of graduating from Rowan University, graduating from any university, and making progress toward personal goals were measured.

Importance of personal goals and decisions. It is suggested from the findings that subjects reported that their personal goals and decisions are important. A positive theme regarding the importance of graduating from either Rowan University or any university is suggested from the findings. Of the 302 subjects, 81% noted that they found it very important or somewhat important to graduate from Rowan University, and 88% reported that they found it very important or somewhat important to graduate from any university.

Mixed positive and negative themes are suggested from the findings in regard to the variables of making progress toward academic goals, making progress toward career goals, adjusting to Rowan University academically. Of the 302 subjects, 31% and 30%

reported that it is very important to make progress toward personal goals, and toward career goals, respectively. That said, 28% and 27% respectively, reported that the same variables are not important at all. Relatively mixed views surfaced in the findings regarding the reported importance of adjusting academically, socially, and emotionally to Rowan University, all of which had means right around 3.00, which is neutral. Following the potentially positive social involvement theme identified in research question one, the average importance reported regarding adjusting socially to Rowan University was 3.10, falling between neutral and somewhat important.

Satisfaction of personal goals and decisions. It is suggested from the findings that subjects are generally satisfied with their decision to transfer to Rowan University is held by the transfer student subjects, as 77% of the subjects were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their decision. Similarly, 87% reported that they intend to probably or definitely return to Rowan University, and 42% reported being somewhat satisfied with the quality of instruction at Rowan University.

The findings also suggest a neutral theme in regard to the satisfaction of academic and career progress, personal goal setting, adjusting to Rowan University, interest in studies, developing personal values and beliefs, and achievement of academic success. Of the variables measured for this research question, specifically regarding satisfaction, there were no variables reported with means higher than 3.00 (neutral). The lowest mean score for this section of the survey was interest in studies, which was reported with a mean of 2.80, between neutral and somewhat unsatisfied.

Overall, the data for this research question suggest subjects had higher levels of importance regarding personal goals and decisions, than they reported for levels of

satisfaction for the same variables. Future studies may find it important to research the potential reasons behind this difference in reported ratings of importance and satisfaction of personal goals and decisions. Additional research may give insight into any potential differences between native students and transfer students in regard to the same variables.

Research question 3. What are the transfer student attitudes on the importance of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University?

The focus of this research question was to gather information on the transfer student subjects' attitudes on the importance of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University. Variables such as the importance of establishing personal relationships with peers, having close friends at Rowan University, getting involved in student organizations and campus activities, attending cultural events, fitting into the campus community, level of instruction, academic advising, and having access to an adequate intellectual atmosphere were measured. The means for the variables measured for this research question varied between 2.90 (between neutral and unimportant), and 3.21 (between somewhat important and neutral). These findings suggest that the transfer student subjects had relatively neutral feelings regarding the importance of their social and academic involvement at Rowan University.

The lowest mean scores were for the variables of the importance of academic advising (2.90), the importance of adequate personal security (2.92), and the importance of having access to adequate academic/intellectual atmosphere (2.94). While these three variables seem as though they would hold higher levels of importance for college students, the findings may suggest that transfer students do not feel for these variables. This suggestion is potentially due to the finding that the majority of the transfer student

subjects of this study do not live on campus. Being that the majority of the subjects reported living off-campus, personal security (potentially thought of as prolonged security, such as residential security), and having access to an intellectual atmosphere may be seen as extracurricular to this study's subjects.

Alternatively, the variables with the highest reported means in regard to this research question were the importance of getting involved in religious activities (3.21), the importance of attending cultural events on campus (3.16), and the importance of getting involved in student organizations (3.10).

While Woodley (2017) conducted a study specifically focused on commuter students, the study is relevant to the current study on transfer students, as the majority of the transfer student subjects reported being commuter students also. As the average for the variables measured for this research question fell around the neutral zone, these findings are relatively supported by the findings of Woodley (2017), which found that commuter students reported moderate satisfaction with academic and social involvement. These findings; however, refute the findings of Woodley (2017), which found that commuter students placed a greater emphasis on academics over social aspects of their college experience. The present study suggests the opposite: that that transfer students reported feeling higher levels of importance on the social aspects of involvement, than they reported feeling for the academic aspects of involvement.

Additionally, future research focusing on the importance of specific transfer student involvement activities may be relevant. Similarly, future research on any disconnect between academic and social involvement of transfer students may yield important information for the field of higher education.

Research question 4. What are the transfer student attitudes on the reported satisfaction of their social and academic involvement, and campus environment at Rowan University?

The focus of this research question was to gather information on the transfer student subjects' attitudes on the satisfaction of their social and academic involvement. In contrast to the previous research question, transfer student subjects were asked to report their attitudes on their participation in social and academic involvement activities, rather than their feelings on the importance of such involvement. Together with research question three, this question gives a better understanding of any similarities or disconnects between transfer students' feelings of importance, versus their feelings of satisfaction on various variables.

Mirrored with research question three, the variables measured for this research question focused on topics such as the importance of establishing personal relationships with peers, having close friends at Rowan University, getting involved in student organizations and campus activities, attending cultural events, fitting into the campus community, level of instruction, academic advising, and having access to an adequate intellectual atmosphere.

The means for the variables measured for this research question varied between 2.82 (between neutral and unimportant), and 3.02 (between somewhat important and neutral). These findings suggest that the transfer student subjects had relatively neutral, or slightly less than neutral ratings in regard to their satisfaction of their academic and social involvement at Rowan University. In comparison to the levels of importance reported by the transfer student subjects, the overall levels of satisfaction reported were slightly

lower. The lowest mean scores were for the variables of satisfaction of faculty availability outside of class (2.82), satisfaction with having access to adequate social atmosphere (2.83), and satisfaction of instruction in major courses (2.84).

Through cross-section analysis, it is important to note that while the transfer student subjects reported having access to an adequate intellectual/academic atmosphere was between neutral and unimportant, they reported that their satisfaction with having access to adequate social atmosphere was also between neutral and unimportant. When looking at the average responses, the subjects reported a mean of 2.94 regarding the importance of having an adequate social atmosphere, with a mean of 2.83 regarding the satisfaction of the same. Additionally, the subjects reported a mean of 2.94 regarding the importance of having an adequate academic atmosphere, with a mean of 2.87 regarding the satisfaction for the same variable. These findings suggest that for having access to both social and academic atmosphere, the transfer student subjects reported higher levels of importance than satisfaction for both variables.

Alternatively, the highest mean scores were for the variables of satisfaction of attending cultural events on campus (3.02), satisfaction of getting involved in religious activities (2.97), and satisfaction of getting involvement in student organizations (2.95). Interestingly, through a cross-section analysis, it was found that the above variables with the highest means for satisfaction levels were the same as the variables for the highest means for the levels of importance reported by the transfer student subjects. That said, additional programming on behalf of the university may enable transfer students to increase their levels of social and academic involvement. Additionally, further research may be important in determining why the variables of faculty availability, access to social

and academic atmospheres, instruction of major courses, academic advising, and adequate personal security were reported as less important, and gave less satisfaction than the above variables.

Research question 5. Does a relationship exist between involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students, and the demographics of residential status, employment status, and academic success, as reported by selected transfer students?

The focus of this research question was to gather information on any significant relationships between transfer student subjects' involvement patterns, residential status, employment status, and academic success. For each of the variables measured for this research question, significant correlations were found. These correlations suggest that levels of involvement are tied to variables such as residential status, employment status, and academic success.

Moderately strong to moderate inverse correlations were found between residential status and transfer student involvement patterns, through the variables of weekends spent on campus per month, hours participating in residence hall activities, and hours participating in campus recreation. These findings are related to an analysis of a report by Kuh, Gonyea, and Palmer (2001), which found that commuter student who live at a distance from campus, hold jobs, and may attend classes part-time may have less time to devote to campus activities (as cited in Woodley, 2017).

Significant correlations were found between employment status and transfer student involvement patterns, through the variables of hours participating in residence hall activities, and weekends spent on campus per month. These findings suggest that transfer student involvement was directly impacted by the employment status of the

transfer student. Looking at these realistically, this finding makes sense, as the amount of hours a student works, either increases or decreases the amount of hours available for academic and social involvement activities.

Additionally, significant correlations were found between academic success (GPA) and transfer student involvement patterns, through the variables of communication with a career advisor, cultural event attendance, and library utilization. These findings are supported by a study out of Rowan College Gloucester County, which found a statistical correlation between the academic success of the student athletes and involvement patterns (Matthews, 2017). The correlations found between academic success and transfer student involvement suggest that involvement either directly impacts academic success, or academic success directly impacts involvement patterns. Astin's (1999) finding supported my finding by suggesting that higher levels of student involvement correlate with greater student success outcomes (as cited in Iacovone, 2007).

Conclusions

The findings from this study on the involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students suggest four conclusions. The first conclusion gathered from this study suggests that Rowan University transfer students have limited levels of academic and social involvement within the university. The second conclusion gathered from this study suggests that Rowan university transfer students are relatively satisfied with their decision to transfer to the university. The third conclusion gathered from this study suggests that Rowan University transfer students place a higher level of importance on the social aspects of involvement, than they place on the academic aspects of involvement. The fourth and final conclusion gathered from this study suggests that there

are moderate and weak correlations between transfer student involvement at Rowan University and the demographics of residential status, employment status, and academic success.

Recommendations for Practice and Further Research

Recommendations for practice. The findings and conclusions of this research study lead me to recommend the following:

1. One recommendation is for Rowan University to create a combined commuter student and transfer student lounge, in a commonly accessed location, such as the student center. Since the majority of the transfer student subjects of this study reported that they live off-campus, a combined lounge may promote community between commuter students and transfer students. This lounge would also give both populations of students access to a space where they may feel comfortable, plan events, and hold academic meetings.
2. Another recommendation is for Rowan University to offer off-campus excursions related to the topics of importance to the transfer students. Important topics may be determined by use of surveys and focus groups.
3. An additional recommendation is for Rowan University to make the Rowan 101 course mandatory, as it may enable higher feelings of the importance and satisfaction of academic involvement at the university.

Recommendations for further research. The findings and conclusions of this research study lead me to recommend the following:

1. Further research should be conducted to identify the types of involvement that transfer students find important, as the type of involvement transfer students

find important may be different than the type of involvement native students find important.

2. Further research should be conducted to identify programs, policies, or procedures to aid transfer students in becoming more satisfied with their personal goals and decisions regarding their transfer.
3. Future research on any disconnect between academic and social involvement of transfer students may yield additional important information for the field of higher education.
4. Further research on how to better accommodate commuter transfer students may yield additional information which may be utilized to enable higher levels of student involvement.

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Disposition Form

eIRB@rowan.edu <eIRB@rowan.edu>
Reply-To: eIRB@rowan.edu
To: porterm6@students.rowan.edu

Mon, Feb 26, 2018 at 4:10 PM



** This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.
The originating e-mail account is not monitored.
If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office **

DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier: FWA00007111
IRB Chair Person: Harriet Hartman
IRB Director: Sreekant Murthy
Effective Date:

eIRB Notice of Approval

STUDY PROFILE

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Study ID: | Pro2017002005 | | |
| Title: | Transfer student involvement: Patterns of involvement at Rowan University | | |
| Principal Investigator: | Burton Sisco | Study Coordinator: | None |
| Co-Investigator(s): | Marissa Porter | Other Study Staff: | There are no items to display |
| Sponsor: | Department of Education | Approval Cycle: | Not Applicable |
| Risk Determination: | Minimal Risk | Device Determination: | Not Applicable |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------|-------------------------|---|
| Review Type: | Exempt | Exempt Category: | 2 |
| Subjects: | 688 | | |

CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Submission Type: | Research Protocol/Study | Submission Status: | Approved | | |
| Approval Date: | 2/26/2018 | Expiration Date: | | | |
| Pregnancy Code: | No Pregnant Women as Subjects | Pediatric Code: | No Children As Subjects | Prisoner Code: | No Prisoners As Subjects |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Protocol: | Permission for Use, Modification, and Reproduction of Survey Instrument Alternate Consent Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire Protocol Recruitment Email 2.0 | Consent: | There are no items to display | Recruitment Materials: | There are no items to display |
|------------------|---|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|

* Study Performance Sites:

Glassboro Campus
201 Mullica Hill Road Glassboro, NJ 08028
There are no items to display

Appendix B

Institutional Review Board Disposition Form (Amended)

eIRB@rowan.edu <eIRB@rowan.edu>
 Reply-To: eIRB@rowan.edu
 To: porterm6@students.rowan.edu

Thu, Mar 8, 2018 at 3:30 PM



** This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.
 The originating e-mail account is not monitored.
 If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office **

DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier: FWA00007111
 IRB Chair Person: Harriet Hartman
 IRB Director: Sreekant Murthy

Effective Date:
 Study Expiration Date:

eIRB Notice of Approval

STUDY PROFILE

Study ID: Pro2017002005
 Title: Transfer student involvement: Patterns of involvement at Rowan University
 Principal Investigator: [Burton Sisco](#) Study Coordinator: None
 Co-Investigator(s): Marissa Porter Other Study Staff: There are no items to display

Sponsor: Department of Education Internal / Institutional Funding Approval Cycle: Not Applicable
 Risk Determination: Minimal Risk Device Determination: Not Applicable
 Review Type: Exempt Exempt Category: 2
 Subjects: 688

CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

Submission Type: Modification (Mod201800000065) Submission Status: Approved
 Approval Date: 3/8/2018 Review Type: Exempt
 Pregnancy Code: No Pregnant Women as Subjects Pediatric Code: No Children As Subjects Prisoner Code: No Prisoners As Subjects

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|------|----------|--|------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Protocol: | Online Alternate Consent | 0.03 | Consent: | Alternate Consent.pdf | 0.01 | Recruitment Materials: | There are no items to display |
| | Paper Alternate Consent | 0.01 | | Paper Consent (if needed).pdf | 0.01 | | |
| | Permission for Use, Modification, and Reproduction of Survey Instrument | 0.01 | | Protocol.pdf | 0.01 | | |
| | Protocol | 0.05 | | Recruitment Email 2.0.pdf | 0.01 | | |
| | Recruitment Email 2.0 | 0.01 | | Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire.pdf | 0.01 | | |
| | Recruitment Letter | 0.01 | | | | | |
| | Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire | 0.01 | | | | | |

Modifications: Changes to Consent Form(s)
 Changes to Protocol Document(s)
 Changes in Research Site(s)

* Study Performance Sites:
 Glassboro Campus

201 Mullica Hill Road Glassboro, NJ 08028

Appendix C

Permission to use Survey Instrument

Porter, Marissa <porterm6@students.rowan.edu>
To: wolfeb1@ohio.edu

Tue, Dec 5, 2017 at 1:27 PM

Dear Mr. Wolfe,

My name is Marissa Porter and I am a current graduate student at Rowan University within the Educational Services and Leadership Department, with a concentration on Higher Education Administration. I am writing to seek permission to reproduce and use the Ohio University Student Involvement Questionnaire for my thesis on the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University. I was unsure who in your office I should seek permission of reproduction and use from, so if I should reach out to someone else, please advise.

Sincerely,
Marissa Porter

--

Marissa A. Porter
Graduate Intern: University Transfer Services
Masters in Higher Education
Educational Services and Leadership Department
Rowan University

Wolfe, Brandon <wolfeb1@ohio.edu>
To: "Porter, Marissa" <porterm6@students.rowan.edu>

Wed, Dec 6, 2017 at 9:31 AM

Hi Marissa,

Thank you for reaching out for permission before using the instrument. You may use the instrument and I have provided the citation below. We do ask that you provide us with the results when your project is completed so please respond letting us know you agree to share the results.

Williford, A.M. & Moden, G.O. (1995). Assessing student involvement. In Banta, T.W., Lund, J.P., Black, K.E., & Oblander, F.W. (Eds.), Assessment in practice: Putting principles to work on college campuses. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.

Also, we had another recent request from your university from a student named Carly Samuels. I would advise contacting them to make sure you are not sending out the same survey to the same population.

Please don't hesitate if you have any further questions.

Best,

Brandon

Brandon Wolfe

Assistant Director of Institutional Research

Ohio University

740.593.1057

wolfeb1@ohio.edu

From: Porter, Marissa [mailto:porterm6@students.rowan.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 1:28 PM
To: Wolfe, Brandon <wolfeb1@ohio.edu>
Subject: Permission for use of Student Involvement Questionnaire

[Quoted text hidden]

Porter, Marissa <porterm6@students.rowan.edu>
To: "Wolfe, Brandon" <wolfeb1@ohio.edu>

Wed, Dec 6, 2017 at 9:56 AM

Mr. Wolfe,

Thank you for allowing me to use the survey for my thesis, and I do agree to share the results with you once completed. I spoke to Carly Samuels to ensure that we are dispersing the survey to different student populations.

Best,
Marissa Porter

Appendix D

Recruitment E-mail



Dear Student,

My name is Marissa Porter, and I am a Master's student here at Rowan University. For my Master's thesis, I am studying the involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students. As a transfer student from the fall 2017 cohort, you have been selected at random to participate in this study.

While online surveys oftentimes are placed on the back burner for many students, due to time constraints and obligations, I invite you to participate, as your participation may potentially benefit future or current Rowan University transfer students. Studying the involvement patterns of transfer students, post-transfer, at Rowan University, may enable to university to identify less known challenges and needs of transfer students after they arrive at Rowan University. That said, additional protocols, procedures, or initiatives may occur for future transfer students, potentially allowing them access to an even more inclusive and supportive environment at Rowan University.

This study is completely voluntary and anonymous. No personally identifying information will be collected, and your responses will not be tied to your e-mail address. This study utilizes Rowan University's Qualtrics system (an online survey system), which allows for complete anonymity.

If you wish to participate in this study, please select the link below for the online consent form. Once completed, you will have access to a brief survey regarding your involvement experiences at Rowan University.

If you choose to not participate in this study, please simply close this e-mail and do not follow the link below, as the link will take you to the online consent form and survey.

If you have any further questions, you may reach me at porterm6@students.rowan.edu, or Dr. Burton Sisco at sisco@rowan.edu.

We thank you in advance,

Marissa Porter

Appendix E

Recruitment Letter



Dear Student,

My name is Marissa Porter, and I am a Master's student here at Rowan University. For my Master's thesis, I am studying the involvement patterns of Rowan University transfer students. As a transfer student from the fall 2017 cohort, you have been selected to participate in this study.

I invite you to participate, as your participation may potentially benefit future or current Rowan University transfer students. The survey utilized in this study will take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete. Studying the involvement patterns of transfer students, post-transfer, at Rowan University, may enable the university to identify less known challenges and needs of transfer students after they arrive at Rowan University. That said, additional protocols, procedures, or initiatives may occur for future transfer students, potentially allowing them access to an even more inclusive and supportive environment at Rowan University.

This study is completely voluntary and anonymous. No personally identifying information will be collected.

If you wish to participate in this study, please turn the page to read the alternate consent. If you consent to participate, you will find the survey regarding your involvement patterns at Rowan University located on the page behind the consent. Once you complete the survey, you will be asked to place the completed survey in a blank envelope and hand the envelope back to me.

If you choose to not participate in this study, please simply hand the consent and survey back to me, not completed.

If you have any further questions, you may reach me at porterm6@students.rowan.edu, or Dr. Burton Sisco at sisco@rowan.edu.

We thank you in advance,

Marissa Porter

Appendix F

Online Survey (Alternate Consent)



You are invited to participate in this online research study entitled Transfer Student Involvement: Patterns of Involvement at Rowan University. You are included in this survey because you transferred to Rowan University from another higher education institution during the fall 2017 academic semester. The number of subjects enrolled in this study will be 344.

The survey may take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this survey, do not respond to this online survey. Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey. We expect the study to last one semester, and will only consist of one survey.

The purpose of this research is to better understand the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University. Conducting research on this topic may allow higher education practitioners to better develop programs directed at increasing the rate of student involvement of Rowan University transfer students. The total number of subjects involved will be 344.

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There may be no direct benefit to you; however, by participating in this study, you may help us understand the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University, and the general feelings of involvement by transfer students.

Your response will be kept confidential. We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will be destroyed once the data has been published. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact me at the address provided below, but you do not have to give your personal identification.

Please complete the question below. To participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older, and a current Rowan University student who transferred to Rowan University during the fall 2017 semester.

- I consent to participate in this study.
- I do not consent to participate in this study.

Appendix G

Paper Survey (Alternate Consent)



You are invited to participate in the research study entitled Transfer Student Involvement: Patterns of Involvement at Rowan University. You are included in this study because you transferred to Rowan University from another higher education institution during the fall 2017 academic semester. In order to participate, you must be 18 years or older.

The survey may take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this survey, do not respond to this paper survey. Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey. The total number of subjects involved will be 344. We expect the study to last one semester, and will only consist of one survey.

The purpose of this research is to better understand the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University. Conducting research on this topic may allow higher education practitioners to better develop programs directed at increasing the rate of student involvement of Rowan University transfer students.

Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey.

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There may be no direct benefit to you; however, by participating in this study, you may help us understand the involvement patterns of transfer students at Rowan University, and the general feelings of involvement by transfer students.

Your response will be kept confidential. We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will be destroyed once the data has been published. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact me at the address provided below, but you do not have to give your personal identification.

Appendix H

Transfer Student Involvement Questionnaire



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Directions: Please answer all questions to the best of your ability by selecting the most accurate answer or filling in the blank where needed.

What grade/year are you?

- Freshman/1st year
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Which type of institution did you transfer from?

- 2-year institution
- 4-year institution
- Other

Other than Rowan, how many other colleges/universities have you attended?

- 1
- 2
- 3+

Where do you currently live?

- On-campus
- Off-campus

What is your employment status?

- On-campus work
- Off-campus work
- Do not work

What was your GPA prior to transferring to Rowan? _____

What was your GPA for the fall 2017 semester at Rowan? _____

ROWAN UNIVERSITY
TRANSFER STUDENT INVOLVEMENT STUDY

Directions: Please answer every question below regarding how often you do certain activities – weekly, monthly, or yearly. To answer the question, place your response on the blank line beside each question.

WEEKLY: The following three questions ask you about how much time you spent per week doing certain activities.

- _____ 1. How many hours did you spend **each week** studying for your classes last semester (fall 2017)?
- _____ 2. How many of the following activities did you participate in? (For activities you participated in, place an **X** on the first line, followed by the number of hours you participated each week in that activity.)

| X | # HOURS | |
|-------|---------|--|
| _____ | _____ | Intercollegiate Athletics |
| _____ | _____ | Campus Recreation (e.g., Club & Intramural Sports, Fitness Center) |
| _____ | _____ | College Publications (e.g., newspaper, yearbook) |
| _____ | _____ | College Productions or Performances (e.g., theater, band) |
| _____ | _____ | Fraternities, Sororities |
| _____ | _____ | Professional or Departmental Clubs (e.g., Math Club, Art Club) |
| _____ | _____ | Hobbies or Social Clubs |
| _____ | _____ | Religious Organizations |
| _____ | _____ | Residence Hall Activities |

- _____ 3. Which of the following Campus Recreation facilities/programs do you use weekly? (check all that apply)

| | | | | | |
|-------|---------------------|-------|------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| _____ | Rec Center | _____ | Tennis | _____ | Fitness Center |
| _____ | Aquatic Center/Pool | _____ | Outdoor Pursuits | _____ | Intramural/ Club Sports |

MONTHLY: Questions 4 - 8 ask you about how much time you spent per month doing certain activities.

- _____ 4. How many weekends each month do you spend on campus?
- _____ 5. How many times do you go out with friends (pizza, movie, etc.) each month?
- _____ 6. How many on-campus parties did you attend each month during last semester?
- _____ 7. At how many of these parties did you drink alcoholic beverages?
- _____ 8. How many conversations with International students have you had in an average month?

SEMESTERLY: Questions 9 - 16 ask you about how much time you spend per semester doing certain activities.

_____ 9. How many books other than those assigned for class did you read for your own pleasure or information last semester (fall 2017)?

_____ 10. How many cultural events did you attend during last semester? (e.g. performance, lecture, concert, play)

How many events at each location? (Put the number of events in each blank.)

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| _____ Wilson Hall | _____ Tohill Theater |
| _____ High Street Art Gallery | _____ Westby Hall |
| _____ Pfleeger Concert Hall | _____ Other _____ |

_____ 11. How many conversations about educational plans, problems, or progress did you have with the following people last semester?

_____ Academic Advisor
_____ Faculty Member
_____ Residence Life Staff Member
_____ Other Staff Member

_____ 12. How many conversations about faculty research/scholarship did you have last semester?

_____ 13. Last semester, how many times did you do the following:

_____ Have dinner or refreshments at a faculty member's home?
_____ Go out for refreshments with a faculty member?
_____ Have a meal on campus with a faculty member?
_____ Communicate with a faculty member via e-mail?

_____ 14. How many times did you talk with a career advisor or attended a program concerning your career last semester?

_____ 15. How many times did you go to the library last semester?

_____ 16. Did you have either an off-campus or on-campus part-time job last semester?
(work study, student employment, non-college related)

_____ (1) off-campus
_____ (2) on-campus
_____ (3) off-campus and on-campus
_____ (4) neither off-campus or on-campus

_____ 17. On average, how many hours each day do you spend on a computer?

_____ For academic and course work (research, writing papers, programming, etc.)
_____ For personal use (e-mail to family/friends, games, internet surfing, etc.)

_____ 18. How many of your five best (closest) friends currently attend Rowan University?

Questions 19 - 23 ask you to respond by placing the letter corresponding to the response that best describes your feelings in the blank provided.

_____ 19. How sure are you that you made the right choice in transferring to Rowan University?

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. Definitely right choice | D. Probably wrong choice |
| B. Probably right choice | E. Definitely wrong choice |
| C. Not sure | |

_____ 20. How important is it to you that you graduate from Rowan University?

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| A. Extremely important | C. Somewhat important |
| B. Very important | D. Not at all important |

_____ 21. How important is it to you that you graduate from any college or university?

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| A. Extremely important | C. Somewhat important |
| B. Very important | D. Not at all important |

_____ 22. Will you return to Rowan University next fall?

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Definitely will return | D. Probably will not return |
| B. Probably will return | E. Definitely will not return |
| C. Not sure | |

_____ 23. How would you rate the quality of instruction at Rowan University?

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. Very satisfactory | D. Somewhat unsatisfactory |
| B. Somewhat satisfactory | E. Very unsatisfactory |
| C. Neutral | |

Questions 24 - 56 have two parts. First, please rate how important each item is to you here at Rowan University by circling the best response. Second, rate how satisfied you are with each item here at Rowan University by circling the best response. Use the following scales:

- Key: 1= very important/very satisfied
2= somewhat important/somewhat satisfied
3= neutral/don't know
4= somewhat unimportant/somewhat unsatisfied
5= very unimportant/very unsatisfied

| | <u>Importance</u> | <u>Satisfaction</u> |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Social Involvement</u> | | |
| 24. Establishing personal relationships with peers | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 25. Having close friends at Rowan Univ. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 26. Getting involved in student organizations | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 27. Getting involved in campus activities | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 28. Attending cultural events on campus | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 29. Interacting with International students | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 30. Interacting with people of different races | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 31. Getting involved with religious activities | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 32. Having a job while enrolled | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <u>Academic Involvement</u> | | |
| 33. Instruction in my major courses | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 34. Instruction in my non-major courses | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 35. Faculty availability outside of class | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 36. Social contacts with faculty | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 37. Academic advising | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <u>Campus Atmosphere</u> | | |
| 38. Adequate personal security | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 39. Adequate physical environment on campus | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 40. Adequate social atmosphere | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 41. Adequate academic/intellectual atmosphere | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 42. Fitting into the campus community | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <u>Personal Goals</u> | | |
| 43. Making progress toward personal goals | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 44. Making progress toward academic goals | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 45. Making progress toward career goals | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 46. Adjusting academically to Rowan Univ. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 47. Adjusting social to Rowan Univ. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 48. Adjusting emotionally to Rowan Univ. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 49. Managing personal stress | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 50. Developing self-esteem and confidence | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 51. Developing personal values & beliefs | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 52. Developing a philosophy of life | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 53. Developing spirituality | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 54. My personal motivation for academic success | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 55. My personal achievement of academic success | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 56. Being interested in my studies | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |