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BRIDGE OR BARRIER?

by
Andrea Denise Piercy

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
For the degree of
Master of Arts in Higher Education
at
Rowan University
March 25, 2020

Thesis Chair: Andrew S. Tinnin, Ed.D.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to all of the students who I have been able to interact with and assist throughout my time of working in higher education at Delaware State University and Rowan University. Thank you, to each and every one of you, for being my why. You are the reason I love what I do. By being able to be there for you, you have helped me grow in various ways. It is such a privilege to watch you all grow and be a part of your college experience.

Acknowledgments

To My Parents. Thank you for your continued support for what I have done throughout my 24 years of life. Thank you for raising me to be the woman I am today and never giving up on me. The life lessons you have taught me have ultimately molded me into the resilient, devoted individual I am today.

To Nikita, Sereta, and Brittini. To say that I am blessed to have you three as my sisters would not be enough. Thank you for being role models to me my entire life. I would never be able to thank you all enough for being there for me through both of my degrees.

To The College of Business Advisors at Delaware State University. Giving me the opportunity to work in your office during my undergraduate career has brought me right to this moment. Thank you for helping and supporting me in finding my path.

To My Family at Rowan University. A very genuine thank you to my supervisor Gary, my mentor Penny, and the family of friends that I have gained throughout this process. Thank you for contributing to my Masters in Higher Education Administration experience. I will be eternally grateful for all of your laughs, hugs, and words of encouragement.

Abstract

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BRIDGE OR BARRIER?
2019-2020

Drew Tinnin, Ed.D.
Master of Arts in Higher Education

The goal of this study was to determine how participation in a summer bridge program prior to beginning an undergraduate collegiate career positively or negatively affects student success throughout their time at a college or university. Additionally, the study took a look at the positive and negative transitional experiences of the students who participated. This qualitative study was completed by student participants who are currently enrolled at Rowan University and have participated in the ASCEND/EOF program. As a result of the study, the research will suggest recommendations based off of the feedback and experiences she received from the students who completed the online questionnaire or completed an in-person interview.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Overview of Problem

Colleges and Universities play a major role in education and employment across the world. In 1636, Harvard University was founded. Harvard is America's oldest college (McAnear, 1952). The original nine institutions were called the colonial colleges (Geiger, 2015). These colleges were chartered in the thirteen colonies (Geiger, 2015). The colonial colleges were New College, now known as Harvard University, College of William & Mary, Collegiate School, now known as Yale University, College of New Jersey now Princeton, King's College, now known as Columbia, College of Philadelphia, now known as University of Pennsylvania, College of Rhode Island, now known as Brown University, and Queen's College, now known as Rutgers University (Geiger, 2015).

Dating back to 1636, the prime reason for Harvard's inception was to educate clergy, which was also the reason for the colleges' creations moving forward (Wechsler, Goodchild, & Eisenmann, 2017). Harvard was founded due to colonists anticipating the need for training clergy within the new commonwealth (Wechsler et al., 2017). Three years after its founding, it was changed to Harvard University. The name change stemmed from clergyman John Harvard after he gave the school four-hundred books and \$1,000 dollars.

From the beginning, colleges were not built for anyone who was not privileged or wealthy. There has been a disadvantage for lower class individuals and individuals of color since the beginning of college and university time (Wechsler et al., 2017). Cheyney, the first Historically Black college, was founded in 1837 (Wechsler et al., 2017).

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are higher education institutions that were created with the intention of serving free Blacks (Floyd- Thomas, 2007).

Richard Humphreys, a Quaker philanthropist, established HBCUs to train free Blacks to become teachers (Floyd- Thomas, 2007). Today, there are over one-hundred historically Black College and Universities in the United states. These HBCUs are located in twenty-two out of the fifty states.

Socioeconomic Status in Education

Poverty, lack of support, lack of focus, and lack of resources in the kindergarten through twelfth grade school system can lead to disadvantages for students who go to a college or university. Students who are underprepared for college can struggle tremendously in college. To counteract that, students who are underprepared for college can participate in a summer bridge program and benefit from the academic courses, academic support, social growth, personal growth, professional growth, campus acclimation, and ease the transition from high school to college (Fox, Zakely, & Morris, 1993).

When you compare upper class towns verse lower class towns, you will acknowledge that the resources are not the same. The resources that I refer to are, but not limited to, nutrition, technology, SAT preparation courses, and AP classes (Taylor, 2003). Additionally, many students, who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, do not focus on school the way that they should because they are focused on helping provide for themselves and families. Many times, when parents are focused on keeping food on the table and a roof over their children's heads, older siblings are forced to take care of their younger siblings. The daily stress that comes along with the lack of

resources is an influence and layer that can lead to students not being able to focus on school. This can lead to lack of preparation for high school students who have hopes of going to college after graduation. The lack of preparation of high school students entering college can be aided by participation in a summer bridge program prior to beginning college.

Statement of Problem

Summer bridge programs are designed to close the gap for students. Students may complete a summer bridge program during the transition from middle school to high school, high school to college, undergraduate to graduate, or undergraduate to a professional school such as medical school. The purpose of this literature review is to shine light onto summer bridge programs and show how summer bridge programs impact the education system.

Summer bridge programs can focus solely on academia. However, it must be acknowledged summer bridge programs are not only available to serve the purpose of academics (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012). Summer bridge programs offer community and individual learning that can help students with both short- and long-term personal success. This literature will show common topics that have been discussed throughout research regarding summer bridge programs. It will mention underrepresented and underprepared students, undergraduate and graduate summer bridge programs, positive and negative outcomes.

Underprepared and underrepresented students often go to college without the same support or preparation as their peers (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017;

Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama, Han, Moss, Myers, & Farruggia, 2018; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008). Summer bridge programs are designed to assist students in getting a head start towards academic skills, learning college resources and expectations, and getting adjusted to the university (Maggio, White, Molstad, & Kher, 2005). Summer bridge programs are programs that assist in closing educational gaps (Maggio et al., 2005). Summer bridge programs are important to student success because the programs give opportunities that students may not typically have access to (Maggio et al., 2005). My research will explore the advantages, disadvantages, and transition effects within participating in a summer bridge program prior to entering college.

Significance of Research

The significance of this research is to determine if the success shown in numbers is success in the eye of the student. Since students are the ones participating in summer bridge programs, I am interested to know if what these students are experiencing matches what research is indicating. Summer bridge programs focus on the productivity in assisting students towards completing college. Students often go to college underprepared, which is an issue for the student and institutions. By determining what is impactful to the students and determining what students gain from the experiences, we can enhance the structure of program to ensure that all students are reaping the benefits. By analyzing student experiences, we will be able to improve on what the program is lacking to ensure that all success is instilled into all students.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore transition and other experiences of students who participate in summer bridge programs prior to college using a phenomenological design. Phenomenology will allow for rich participant descriptions of both positive and negative experiences. This methodology will also capture the holistic transitional experience of the student participants.

Limitations

This study should be planned with limitations and delimitations in mind. Some limitations that must be considered is the number of participants. It is not possible to know what the number of participants will be. Additionally, we must think about the participation of said participants. To gain accurate results, students must be willing to be unshielded with their responses. There may be some students who are more open and honest about throughout their participation in the study.

This study is designed to learn from students who have participated in a summer bridge program. With that, the delimitations for this would be students who did not participate in a summer bridge program. Additionally, since these programs are designed for low-income and/or academically challenged students, students who come from higher socioeconomic statuses and students who do not struggle academically will not be included in this study.

Specialized Vocabulary

Throughout this paper, consistent terminology will be used. It is important to define this vocabulary to ensure that sections are understood. Terminology is as followed:

- Summer Bridge Program: programs are that designed to ease transition to college and postsecondary success by providing academic skills and social resources needed to success in a college environment (Maggio et al., 2005).
- EOF: Educational Opportunity Fund- a New Jersey program that is available to financially disadvantaged students who are first-generation and second-generation college attendees (Clauss- Ehlers & Wilbrowski, 2007).

Research Questions

Research questions are important to ensure that the purpose of the study is being met. My research questions were created so that I could look further into the advantages and disadvantages of summer bridge programs and what specific populations that can benefit from the programs. The questions were also designed to take a look at the transition process for students who participate in a summer bridge program before beginning their education at a college or university. The research questions are:

1. In what ways does participation in a summer bridge program contribute to student success?
2. What are students' positive transitional experiences in a summer bridge program?
3. What are students' negative transitional experiences in a summer bridge program?

Remaining Chapters of Study

The conclusion of chapter one will be followed by four additional chapters. Chapter two will consist of a review of related literature. Chapter two will have an overview of scholarly peer reviewed research that is related to summer bridge programs. This chapter will have conceptual framework that is organized into meaningful categories.

Chapter three will be the methodology chapter. This chapter will reiterate the context of the study, purpose statement, and research questions. I will go over the methodological approach and design, as well as my data collection strategy. I will elaborate on the population and sample, and how that sample was collected. I will go over the procedures I used to gather data. I will go over my data analysis approach.

Chapter four will go over all of my findings. This will include text, tables, and figures. To conclude, chapter five will go over a summary, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations. I will discuss my findings with reference to what I gathered in my literature review in chapter two. I will go over conclusions from my findings. I will give suggestions to enhance practice moving forward, as well as recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

Overview of Scholarly Research

As I reviewed literature available on summer bridge programs, I came across various types of programs. Summer bridge programs across the states had similar goals (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008). The goals consisted of serving underrepresented students and/or preparing students for the next step in their education. In response to low first year pass rates for students and first year retention, universities across the nation have developed summer bridge programs (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008).

Summer bridge programs have historically allowed students to focus on specific subjects that they struggle with, and after completing the program, they will be stronger in that subject (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017). Program lengths vary amongst the different programs (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008). My research focused more closely on summer bridge programs involving incoming college freshman and their undergraduate experience following that.

Reasons to Participate

Reasons for students participating in summer bridge programs vary. For example, it could be a mandatory requirement that a student needs to complete the program before beginning his/her freshman year of college. Another reason could be voluntarily

participating due to wanting to make friends, earn college credits, and get a pre-college experience (Gonzalez & Garza, 2018; Vinson, 2008). Participating in a summer bridge program often comes with the feeling of already being a college student (Gonzalez & Garza, 2018; Vinson, 2008). With that, students begin their freshmen years already knowledgeable of the workload, knowledgeable of the campus, and having a group of friends that they can relate to throughout their undergraduate experience (Gonzalez & Garza, 2018; Vinson, 2008).

Underrepresented and Underprepared Students

Many participants of the programs that I have come across as I did my research were first generation college students. With that, there were many students who had no idea what college was, how to pay for it, or what to expect. Societal factors feed into educational disparities before students have the opportunity to decide on a college (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012). When students apply and are accepted or denied to a university, the school has already considered their chance of academic success, which is why whichever decision was made.

Many of the studies that I have researched looked at African American college students. A large number of summer bridge participants come from first generation college student families or come from African American families (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012). Blacks and Hispanics are the most underprepared groups of students when entering a community college (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012).

African American college students are more prepared for college when they are placed in an environment that shows support, is structured, has a sense of community, and where high expectations exist (Durant, 2014; Kallison & Stader, 2012).

Understandably so, that is something that all students need; however, it is more impactful for African American students due to the unique issues and challenges that are faced by them.

Being a part of a summer bridge program initiates another sense of family for students. A summer bridge family becomes a home away from home with students who are also experiencing the program, professors who are giving students the knowledge, and counselors who are there to serve as mentors to the students who are in the program. The relationships that are built into summer bridge programs, whether it is relationships with students or counselors, tend to play a pivotal role in college student success (Vinson, 2008).

STEM Summer Bridge Programs

As I completed my research, I acknowledged a pattern that showed that science, technology, engineering, and mathematics summer bridge programs are the most common kind of summer bridge programming (Frost & Dreher, 2017; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018). Mathematics placement scores for incoming college students are low, which has been the driving force towards summer bridge programs that are focused solely on mathematics (Forst & Dreher, 2017). Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics summer bridge programs are implemented to assist students in gaining credits (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; McGlynn, 2012).

Additionally, those programs are created to assist in helping students raise mathematics placement exam scores (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Vinson, 2008). Students who come from low-income backgrounds tend to have less access to advanced math and science courses, and with that, students have a greater chance of their test scores suffering. Mathematics placement exam scores for incoming freshman after participating in summer bridge programs significantly improved (Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012). Due to that, students are able to take higher mathematics courses than they were initially placed into, such as taking College Algebra or Statistics rather than Introduction to Algebra (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017).

Improvement on College Readiness

Being prepared for college goes beyond sitting in classrooms and academia; however, that is a major determining factor. Common findings of summer bridge programs show that the participants of summer bridge programs feel that it is important for students to have a support system at the school in order to help ensure that there is a smooth transition (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018). Students who completed a summer bridge program felt a sense of belonging (Durant, 2014; Kallison & Stader, 2012). After the program was completed, students felt a sense of continuity, and a sense of being connected to others (Durant, 2014; McGlynn, 2012).

Common themes that were found in summer bridge programs were college life resources, advising, academic coursework, academic support, and social support, and networking amongst students and faculty (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez

Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018; McGlynn, 2012). Additional themes that were found were information on college application, study skills, and professional development (Durant, 2014; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Murphy, Gaughan, Hume, & Moore, 2010). An example of professional development is the sense of self-responsibility.

Being involved in a summer bridge program, students are experiencing a semester in a short time frame. With that, students get to determine and experience what it is like to balance classes and personal life (Gonzalez & Garza, 2018; McGlynn, 2012). Being a part of a summer bridge program teaches and enforces time management, responsibility, and the reason for students to figure out what they want to learn most from the experience (Gonzalez & Garza, 2018; McGlynn, 2012).

Retention Rate

Retention rates at colleges and universities are determined by the number of students who return annually and continue to be enrolled in school. Some institutions have high retention rates but some also struggle and have low retention rates. Universities are often judged based on their percentages regarding retention and graduation rates. Compared with similar programs at four-year institutions, participants of summer bridge programs have a higher retention and higher graduation rates (Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kodama et al., 2018; Murphy, Gaughan, Hume, & Moore, 2010). Colleges and universities see a significant number of underprepared students who apply and are accepted. Though summer bridge programs are not the only method of increasing retention, summer bridge programs can be a bridge in preparing students prior to beginning their freshman years of college.

There is a greater chance of students not only returning, but completing college and earning a degree, if they have completed a summer bridge program. Program efforts improve preparation, commitment, and engagement of students, which in return increases retention rates and graduation rates (Kallison & Stader, 2012; Murphy, Gaughan, Hume, & Moore, 2010). Sincere commitment from faculty to students is a prime factor of improving student success (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008). By creating a climate of cultural awareness, diversity, and inclusiveness, colleges and universities have consistently created greater minority retention (Durant, 2014; McGlynn, 2012). Aware, diverse, and inclusive climates can be fostered through instruction, advising, mentoring, counseling, and programs.

Most students participate in a form of developmental education during their first year of college (Vinson, 2008). Developmental education could be, but not limited to, an elective that is custom to their major, a study skills course, professional development, or attending an organization's program that can vary on topics and themes. During a student's first year at college, it is a new setting with new people and with that, students may encounter social and academic difficulties (McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008). Having a good resume of social experiences and academic experiences link back to freshman year retention (McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008).

Summary of Literature Review

In conclusion, summer bridge programs have a positive influence on students who are freshmen in college (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez Quiroz & Garza, 2018; Kallison & Stader, 2012; Kodama et al., 2018; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008).

Specifically, summer bridge programs have a tremendous influence on first generation college students (Durant, 2014; Murphy, Gaughan, Hume, & Moore, 2010). Additionally, summer bridge programs have a positive influence on students of color (Durant, 2014; Murphy, Gaughan, Hume, & Moore, 2010). Summer bridge programs have granted opportunities to bring up general education test scores, earn college credits, and increase skills (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2008). Summer bridge programs do not just assist with academics. Summer bridge programs provide students opportunities to create friendships, network, create a sense of stability, and become comfortable at the school a student is interested in attending (Kallison & Stader, 2012; McGlynn, 2012; Vinson, 2012).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to determine the ways in which summer bridge programs benefit students when they enter college to begin their undergraduate careers. The benefits of summer bridge programs can vary depending on each student. Based on prior research, some students will see a performance increase in academics and intellect (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez & Garza, 2018). Also, some students will experience a deeper understanding of who they are or what they are passionate about and some students will create new friendships and learn from one another (Durant, 2014; Frost & Dreher, 2017; Gonzalez & Garza, 2018). And, if we are doing our jobs right, students will accomplish all of the above.

Summer bridge programs were designed to positively influence students' undergraduate careers across the nation. I, who was fortunate enough to be a part of a summer bridge program in high school, have been impacted by the benefits of a summer bridge program. Not only have I been a student in a summer bridge program, I have also worked as a counselor for a summer bridge program. Being a part of a summer bridge program brings a sense of family, and within that family, students are able to explore, learn, and evolve within themselves and amongst others.

Research Questions

The following research questions have guided my research:

- In what ways does participation in a summer bridge program contribute to student success?

- What are students' positive transitional experiences in a summer bridge program?
- What are students' negative transitional experiences in a summer bridge program?

Methodological Approach and Design

My methodological approach and design will, first, consist of qualitative data. Qualitative data will help me seek out consistencies within the outcomes of the summer bridge programs (McMillian, 2016). Qualitative data will give me an opportunity to look at what learning patterns have occurred within the students who were in the program (McMillian, 2016). Qualitative data will also help me see what different programs have in common, what the program do differently, and what can be combined to create a program that can be used nationally (McMillian, 2016).

It is important to mention phenomenology as I complete this research. Using phenomenology will allow me to study how students experience the program. With that, I will set aside my personal biases and my own experiences and feelings towards what I think are the benefits of summer bridge programs (McMillan, 2016). This will allow me to look at summer bridge programs without the influence of my personal experiences. I will look at other studies to see what outcomes and themes come from the students who participated in the programs.

Data Collection Strategies

My data collection strategies will consist of questionnaire data as well as interviewing students who participated in the program (McMillan, 2016). Students will be informed that there are no risks or discomforts associated with this research. There may be no direct benefit to them, however, by participating in this study, they may help us understand what impact participation in a summer bridge program prior to beginning

college has on students. Prior to participation, students will provide consent (see Appendix B & C).

Ethical Issues

I applied for approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Rowan University to ensure that this study remains ethical and full of integrity. There are no ethical issues associated with this study. There are no harm or risks associated with this study. Participants will provide consent to participate in this study for the survey and the interview. All participants will be aware of the purpose of study as well as the right to discontinue their participation at any given time.

For starters, the questionnaires will be completed via an online database so that students can complete the questionnaire at their convenience. The purpose of the questionnaire is for students to be able to open and honest regarding their experience and their personal opinion on the program. All answers will be anonymous to hopefully allow students to be as personal and as straightforward as he/she is comfortable. The questions in the survey will consists of the most impactful experience while being in the program as well as an experience that would like to change (see Appendix B).

The second form of data collection would be an interview process (McMillan, 2016). I would like to bring in a minimum of fifteen students to do in person interviews, but I would do more if participants volunteer to do so. I want to hear from the different cohorts because different cohorts could have different opinions and experiences. By doing the interviews in a semi-structured format, it will allow it to be more of a conversation that is geared by the student rather than me talking at the students

(McMillan, 2016). Based on student's answers, I will be able to guide the questions in a manner that I feel would help achieve a successful interview. There will be guided questions entering the interview, but the duration and quality of the interview will be dependent on the interviewee (McMillan, 2016). Questions will be similar to the questionnaire; however, the interviews will be open ended and contingent on the participants (see Appendix D). I have hope that by having a semi-structured interview, I will be able to gain additional information that was not gained through the questionnaire.

During the interview, I would like to have students draw a picture that represents their thoughts and experiences of the program. With that, I will be able to visually see what students perceive the program to be like. By visually seeing each student's perspective, I will be able to see the similarities and differences within each students' experience.

Population and Sample

It is important to have students complete the questionnaire so that the program can grow and be student oriented and student focused. I will ask for the contact email lists for the previous three years of the EOF program. Each cohort of the program has over one-hundred-fifty students; with that, hope to get at least ninety questionnaire responses completed via online. I will send an e-mail invitation to participate in the study to each student (see Appendix A). In addition to that, I have hopes of interviewing at least fifteen students in person to assist with the drawing of pictures describing their experience.

Instrumentation

Using Qualtrics, I have created a survey that I will send out electronically to participants. With this, students are able to complete the survey on their own time by a set date. The survey should take less than eight minutes to complete. Students should complete the survey on a computer; however, they can attempt to complete it on their cellphones or other form of electronics. I have created the survey based on what I am trying to accomplish with my research questions. There are a total of seven questions, with the first question referring to consent to complete the survey. There are three multiple choice questions. Within these questions, participants are expected to check all boxes that apply to their personal experience. For each multiple choice question, there is an option for participants to select “other” so that they can elaborate if there are things that they wanted to specify that were not included in the options. Following that, there are three open ended questions.

Validity. The validity of my study is strictly contingent on the participants willingness to be honest. There is no way to confirm that the answers I receive one hundred percent honest or accurate; however, I will do my due diligence by ensuring the participants understand the importance of this study. Participants will be informed that their most candid responses are needed to be able to attempt to acknowledge the benefits and improvements needed for this program. Their candid participation can help other students moving forward.

Data Collection

The procedures of gathering the data for my research will be broken down in this section. I plan to start the process with reaching out to Dr. Dawn Singleton, the Senior Director of Student Success and Inclusion Programs. Dr. Singleton should have access to all of the students who are currently at Rowan and have come through Rowan's EOF program. My intentions insist of reaching out to ask for names and emails of students who have come through EOF within the last three years. I am unsure how many students that will be.

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

Interview data collection. Each interview should be no longer than thirty minutes. I would predict that I could get all of the information that I need during that time frame. With that, I have hopes that I will have at least fifteen students will complete the in-person interview. Interviews will be used to go into a deeper depth of the results from the survey. I will be able to analyze individual experiences as I ask thought provoking questions that could assist in the process of observing benefits and needed improvements.

Data Analysis

Data analysis can be completed by various different approaches (McMillan, 2016). I will analyze the qualitative data based on common themes and patterns that are

seen throughout the interviews. The data analysis will focus on the ways students feel the program has contributed to their success. It will also look into what ways the program assisted the students, whether it be tied to academia, social, or personal growth. I would take the information I gained from the interviews and questionnaires to see if there are any common themes amongst the different participants. I would like to use a data visualization software so that I would be able to see that data in a way that I can identify trends and patterns (McMillan, 2016).

Data Interpretation

I will present my findings in chapter 4 by gathering all of the information that I received from the surveys and the interviews. Active participation, in both the survey and the interviews, are crucial for this study. It will be impossible for me to complete this study without the participation of students who have completed the program. All data will be turned into themes that occur to be consistent, as well as outcomes that may not be themes but still stand out as important. The data will be coded so that I am able to see what common occurrences are in the experiences of students who participate and complete the program.

Chapter 4

Findings

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to take a deeper look into the impact of summer bridge programs for students who begin their collegiate career directly after participating in the program. This qualitative research study is prepared to explore the experiences of students who participate in summer bridge programs prior to college. In a deeper lens, I will take a look at which ways participation in a summer bridge program, prior to beginning an undergraduate college career, helps with transitioning from high school to college. Using a phenomenological design approach, I will be able to see both positive and negative experiences. This approach will capture the holistic experience of the student participants. The findings came from an online questionnaire as well as in person interviews.

Research Questions

The research questions were created in order to examine and gain a deeper understanding of students who participate in a summer bridge program prior to beginning their collegiate career at a university. The research questions were created to assist me in finding the similarities and differences within the experiences of the students who participating in a summer bridge program. It was important for me to take a deeper look into how participation contributes to student success. I, additionally, took the approach of looking into the transitional process for students who participate in the program. The research questions are:

1. In what ways does participation in a summer bridge program contribute to student success?
2. What are students' positive transitional experiences in a summer bridge program?
3. What are students' negative transitional experiences in a summer bridge program?

Profile of the Population/Sample

For this study, it was important for me to focus solely on students who had participated in a summer bridge program directly prior to beginning their time at a university. There was no interest in anyone who did not participate in a summer bridge program. The survey was sent to over one-hundred and sixty students. I had a goal of having at least ninety questionnaires completed in total. Unfortunately, I did not reach that goal. However, I was fortunate to have clarity and understanding through the amount of surveys that were completed.

Participants who have completed the survey are currently enrolled students who have participated in the EOF program prior to the start of the undergraduate academic career. The survey was designed to be completely anonymous, which was in effort to assist in ensuring the responses were truthful, elaborate, and authentic.

Out of the one hundred and sixty students that were contacted, fifty-seven students completed the survey. Additionally, in that same sample population, I requested students to do in person interviews. Unfortunately, I only received a response from five students who stated they were willing to complete the in-person interview. It was three students who identified as female and two students who identified as male. Please see Appendix D to see what questions were asked during the interview.

Data Presentation

Purpose. One of the open-ended questions that I asked on the survey was, “How would you describe the purpose of the program?” It is important to note the importance of the ways that students describe the purpose of the program. Students are the ones going through the process, so it is important for us to take a look at what they see the purpose as in order to understand if their expectations were met. Some examples of response are as follows:

- “It shows you that you have time in the day to do everything you need to.”
- “To support students who don’t have support at home.”
- “The purpose of EOF is to prepare prospective college students, who have circumstances that might otherwise bar them from matriculating, for life at a university.
- “The EOF program is not only meant to be seen as financial help, but as another resource under your belt. EOF does help financially but you gain so much more.”
- “The purpose of the I attended was to help students adjust to the college life before actually starting college. It also helped us network and create friendships without relying on technology.”
- “I find it to be enriching to my overall college experience and that having this program really boots your motivation to pursue higher education. Starting from certain economic disadvantages is hard to do, and I am very grateful for EOF to help me.”

- “I would describe this program as a military styled education program. It served to keep us on a straight track to success and discipline us so that when we came into college, we already were conditioned with what to do.”
- “The purpose of the program was to help students who come from underprivileged areas and high schools, or student who have financial difficulties to transition from high school to college. You are exposed to resources that certain schools do not offer. You take the classes you would most likely be taking your first semester in order to get a taste of what is in store for you. Besides taking classes, you have access to the rest of campus, including dorming, library/studying facilities, athletic centers, and dining halls. You have time for your classes, studying, and free time with your new friends to do whatever on or near campus. It made my first semester go by very easily with a good standing GPA.

Student experience. Students consistently referred to their experience in the program. Students had very similar experiences, outside of the academic courses that they were assigned to. Students gave statements on their experience in the program. Responses of the students that described their experience are:

- “Life changing. Since the beginning of my EOF experience, I have felt blessed to be a part of this family. They push you when you need to be pushed, but they also are willing to hear you out and help you.”
- "The EOF program did bring up some good opportunities to network during workshops, the Leadership Conference, and even during orientation. We were

able to meet different people who have been in our shoes and understand us and don't judge us."

- "I am so thankful that the program pushed me out of my comfort zone."
- "One main thing it really helped me do was develop friendships and have to actually enjoy being around people without technology around."
- "It gave me lasting friendships. It pushed me. It made me feel like I made the right choice in being the first in my family to go to college."
- "Overall this program gave me a sense of belonging as it showed me that there are other Hispanics that want to accomplish more."
- "I was able to connect with new people and improve upon myself academically and socially in a college setting. The people I met and got to know are still the people I go to today."

Skill development. Participation in the program has given students the opportunity to grow many skills throughout their time in the program. Following their time in the program, students have the opportunity to use the skills that they have learned or improved throughout their time in the program.

An example of development that students experience throughout their time in the program is structure. Many students stated that they did not have much structure before participating in the program. Many of the students stated that they had control over their time while they were in high school. Since the program is rigorous and the schedule is created for them, that came as a shock to students. However, having a prepared schedule allowed students to focus on academics and the beginning of their collegiate experience. The schedule being planned for them, along with rules created and enforced for them,

created a foundation of structure and focus. The enforced structure gave students the chance to prioritize their time more effectively and support their enhancement of time management skills.

For the summer, students were assigned to academic classes. It is important to note that most students were taking college levels courses for the first time. In an interview, a student stated that he “was forced to find ways to understand new material and things that were not introduced before.” The academic courses pushed students to enhance study skills. It enforced students to find alternative ways to learn material, whether that was for a general education class, or a class such as dance or Africana studies. The placement of classes also pushed students to step out of their comfort zone. A male student, who identifies as a dancer, stated that the dance class he was assigned to was difficult for him because he had never danced that style of dance before. However, he informed me that he appreciated being pushed onto him because he was pushed out of his comfort zone and fell in love with a new form of dancing. He stated that he would not have taken the time to learn that style of dance if it were not for the program.

Additional students mentioned that their general education classes improved their mathematic and reading/writing test scores. By completing those courses, they were able to take a higher level of classes when they began the fall semester.

Campus comfortability. Many students referred to their time in the program as a prime reason as to why they were comfortable when they came to start the semester in the fall. They used the time in the summer to get to know the campus and get acclimated here at Rowan University. Students had access to resources in the summer that the average student would not have access to prior to beginning their first semester. Students

consistently referred to their time in dorms, Rowan Boulevard, study hall rooms, the Chamberlain Student Center, cafeteria, and athletic locations such as the Recreation Center and intramural fields. By having access to the campus and the opportunity to explore in the summer, they felt comfortable to jump right in when they came for the fall.

Though the acclimation was a positive experience for most, many students referred to their experience of facing culture shock. For many, this was their first time being away from home. For many, this was their first time not being around people who come from the same neighborhood or same part of the state. When you are used to a certain culture or atmosphere for about eighteen years, it can be an adjustment getting used to other cultures or a new atmosphere. This dialogue came up in multiple of the in-person interviews. The adjustment was felt deeper for some students in the beginning because they were not able to speak to their families or friends, which would be their initial reactions in uncomfortable situations.

Though students felt disconnected from their life at home, they were supported by their new family in the program. Every student that I interviewed mentioned that they were told that their time in the EOF program would be used to become a family. Each student stated that they felt the family atmosphere by either the middle or the end of the program. They looked at each other as brothers and sisters. That support that came from the family that they created was impactful to not only their time in the summer program, but their experience for their freshman and upperclassmen years.

Students stated that the support did not just come from fellow peers in the program. Students stated that they felt genuinely support from program counselors, professors, professional staff, and administration. The support from all aspects helped

students with their transition from high school to college. It created a space for students to be open to help. It created a foundation for students to want to be at Rowan University and use the resources that Rowan University has to offer.

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary of Study

This study investigated if the perception of success rates towards students who participate in summer bridge programs match up with student perceptions of the student experience in summer bridge programs. The research took a deeper look into the positive and negative experiences of students who participated in a summer bridge program prior to beginning their undergraduate collegiate career. Students who participate in summer bridge programs similar to the program that I researched, which was EOF, often go into college underprepared. Whether the lack of preparation is from a financial, academic, or personal standpoint, these students complete the program before the start of their collegiate career and often come out much stronger than they would if they did not participate.

A limitation of my study was the number of participants. Since participation was voluntary, there was no way for me to receive the input from all of the students. Because of that, I only received input from students who chose to participate. Fortunately, I was able to receive input from fifty-seven individuals. Additionally, I was able to dig deeper during interviews with five individuals. Another limitation was the uncertainty of the honesty I would receive from students. Though the survey was anonymous, there was no way to ensure that students were being truthful about their perceptions of their experience.

Since this study was designed solely for students who have participate in a summer bridge program, a delimitation would be any students who have not participated

in a summer bridge program. Additionally, students who come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds and students who do not struggle academically were not included in this study.

Research Question Answer Using Chapter IV Data

Research question 1. In what ways does participation in a summer bridge program contribute to student success? Participation in a summer bridge program contributes to student success in various ways. From an academic standpoint, the program has helped students gain and increase study skills. Twenty-seven percent of students reported that participation in the program helped improve their reading and/or writing test scores. Additionally, 19% of students reported that the program helped improve their mathematics test scores.

Participation in the program helped students have better time management skills. Since students were on a packed schedule from 6am to late evening hours, it was difficult for students to not gain structure. Though that may not be how the actual academic school year will be, it gave the opportunity for students to see what a hectic day in the life of a college student could be. The intense schedule taught students how to prioritize and take advantage of the time that they have each day.

During their time in the program, students are enrolled in college credited courses. The courses can range from classes that help students improve their reading/writing or mathematic placement scores to courses such as dance, Africana Studies, and various other courses. Though the classes are not chosen by the students, they are strategically picked so that students can get a jump start on their academic career here at the institution. Completing college level courses gave students opportunities to have different

professors. Throughout this experience, students were able to get to know the different teaching styles of the professors. According to one student, the program “made me realize that professors are not going to ‘hold your hand’ in college and everything is not going to be given or repeated to you.”

To gear away from ways that participation in a summer bridge program helps academically, additional ways that the program contributes to student success is the networking opportunities that are granted to students. An unidentified student stated that participation in the program, “helped me meet people with similar goals and backgrounds.” Being a part of the program students another way to socialize. Though the population of the program is known to be diverse, there are many experiences that students can relate on. It is good for students to know that they are not alone, especially in such a life altering experience.

Sixty-seven percent of students stated that participation in the program gave them the opportunity to network. Fifty-three percent of students stated that their participation in the program gave them a mentor or someone to look up to. Seventy-four percent of students shared that the program pushed them to be more social. Eighty-eight percent of students stated that participation in the program gave them the opportunity to create new friendships.

An unknown student stated the following about his participation in the program, “it kept me off the streets the summer before college.” This response stood out to me the most because I often hear about students that were kicked out of their homes the moment they graduated from high school. By having the opportunity to participate in the program, this student felt he/she was able to have a home and stay out of trouble during this

specific summer. This opportunity could have shaped his future in ways we could have never imagined.

Research question 2. What are students' positive transitional experiences in a summer bridge program? In regards to transitional experiences, most of the feedback was positive. For many students, college is their first time being away from home. Seventy percent of students stated that their participation helped them get comfortable with being away from home. Eighty-nine percent of students stated that their participation in the program helped them get acclimated to campus. Sixty-seven percent of students reported that the program gave them the opportunity to see the difference between high school and college. Eighty-four percent of students reported that the program gave them insight on what is to come once the semester starts. Sixty-eight percent reported that the program allowed them to have a jump start on classes in their academic curriculum. Fifty-eight percent of students stated that their participation helped them prepare for the classes that they would be taking in the fall. One student stated that the program "gave me my best friends who became family." Another student stated that the program "highlighted resources that are available on campus that I otherwise would have never taken advantage of."

Research question 3. What are students' negative transitional experiences in a summer bridge program? Based on the survey responses and in-person interviews, there was not much negative feedback received in regards to the student experience. However, unfortunately, there were a few things that were negative about student(s) experience(s).

In the anonymous survey, the following statement was made, "... the program to me felt like we was in pre-school." Reading that statement, I felt as if that could have

been received as a negative transitional experience. For a student to feel as if they are in pre-school during a pre-college institute is a concern. The goal of participation in the program is to give students a head start in their collegiate experience and prepare them for what the college experience will be like. It is to get students acclimated to what college could be like. With that being said, it does not appear as if that mission is being met if any student feels as if they are in pre-school.

Additionally, in response to the anonymous survey, five students stated that, “the program pushed me out my comfort zone in a negative way.” Since the survey is anonymous, I was unable to follow up to see what exactly was meant by that statement. On the contrary, forty-two students stated the following: the program pushed me out my comfort zone in a positive way. I would like to know the reasoning behind the five students feeling as if they were pushed out of their comfort zones negatively. Unfortunately, there is no way to find out.

Through the in-person interviews, students consistently mentioned that being disconnected from the world was both a negative and positive experience. For the negative perspective, it was very difficult to adjust to not speak to family members and friends throughout the day. Students were used to speaking to family and friends at any given time, but since being in the program, that was no longer an option. Students felt as if there was a lack of communication or a disconnect between their friends and families during their time in the program, which enhanced feelings of loneliness and homesickness.

Conclusion of Findings

Based on the findings, the overall impact of a summer bridge program is positive. Participation in a summer bridge program contributes to student success in a positive way. Participation in a summer bridge program prior to beginning a collegiate academic career assists from an academic standpoint and social standpoint.

From an academic perspective, the program helps student gain and increase study skills. Participation in the program assist in improve reading and writing test scores, as well as mathematic test scores. Participation in the program have helped students be more appreciative of all of the minutes within the day. Students stated that they have improved time management skills. After completing the program, students felt they were more structured than they were when they came in. Students reported increased prioritization in regard to how they used their time during each day.

By participating in the program, students were able to get a jump start on their academic career. During the program, students were registered to two three credited courses. Those classes counted towards each student's academic transcript. By taking this classes, students were given the opportunity to get adjusted with the transition between high school and college. They were able to get to know the different teaching styles of each professor and acknowledge that high school course work is different than college course work.

Students were also granted the opportunity to network throughout their time in the program. Along with getting accommodated with their professors, students were also able to get to know other professional staff and faculty members here at Rowan University.

Students reported that by the end of the program they had someone to look up to or have built professional relationships.

From a negative transitional experience standpoint, there was not much feedback. However, there were a few things that stood out to me. Students reported that they feel as if they were in pre-school when they were in the program. That stemmed from the strict schedule and lack of freedom throughout the program. I believe a solution for this could be giving students the opportunity to pick their academic classes or putting less control of every minute of their day.

Recommendations for Practice

Through this research process, there were a few things that stood out to me. For starters, there were a good amount of times where students mentioned the extracurricular opportunities. Students mentioned, on various occasions, that they would appreciate it if there were more opportunities for community service opportunities and leadership opportunities. Students stated that they would appreciate taking some time away from the tight schedules to do something outside of what their daily schedules normally consist of. In regards to leadership opportunities, a suggestion could be having leadership roles within each cohort during each summer. Though having leadership roles during the summer could bring more substance, another suggestion could be having the roles lead into the academic school year. With that, that could bring another layer of cohesion to each cohort. That could ensure that students are receiving the leadership opportunities that they are wishing for.

In response to the student academic changes, there were a few opinions that were voiced and with that, I have suggestions. First, students voiced that there was not enough

of a balance of academic needs and character building/ leisure activities. In the same breath, students stated that they would like additional ways to relieve stress, such as yoga, activities, or more recreation time. Though we know that the program is rigorous, based off of student responses, I think it is important to find ways to incorporate more activities of that nature.

Another recommendation for practice could be finding a way to incorporate mandatory counseling, whether that is in an individual setting or a group counseling. During this experience, students are going through a lot of changes. For many, this is their first time away from home. This is their first time living or being on a college campus. This could be their first time not being around people they know. This could be their first time experiencing a jam-packed schedule or college level classes. With all of this change, students experience a lot of emotions. It is important for students to be able to talk about this change, use each other as support, and understand that they are not going through this experience alone. Though students who are in the program may feel as if they are already a family, imagine the impact of having students relate to one another on a level different than what they would do on their own.

Multiple students mentioned that they wish that the counselors, staff, and professors in the program would “loosen the leash.” Throughout the program, the daily schedules for each student are strict and created for them. Students do not even have a choice in the class that they take. A student stated that they “wish there was less restriction on time because that is not what college is like.” Though I can understand why the program is so structured, that statement is true. Students in a college setting have control of what their day to day schedule looks like, which is not the case for the students

who are in the program. With the structure how it is now, this dynamic of the program could be very misleading. Another student mentioned that she “does not want to be babied.” I think this is an important dynamic to address during the planning of the program moving forward because once students get to college, they will not be babied or watched over as much.

Recommendation for Further Research

The first recommendation for further research would be digging deeper into the surface of the questions that could have been answered in more depth. For example, it would be beneficial to know more of effects of not having cell phones throughout their experiences. It appeared as if there were mixed opinions of the whether or not having cell phones were beneficial or negatively impactful. Additionally, I have learned that not all programs take phones away, so I would be interested to see the difference in result for the programs who do not allow their students to have cell phones verse programs who do allow their students to have cell phones. I would like to know the correlation of the two.

On a wider range, for research moving forward, I would suggest taking a look at the different EOF programs in the state of New Jersey and comparing all of the results. I would also recommend looking at the programs that other states offer, and see if the program here could learn from those programs outside of New Jersey. It would be beneficial to see what each program does, whether that is differently or similarly, and see which ways each program can improve. It may be beneficial to see if the differences of each program can help improve student experience and student satisfaction.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

You are invited to participate in this online research survey entitled Summer Bridge thesis!

We are interested in understanding student experiences during their time in summer bridge programs. You are included in this survey because you are a student who has participated in the EOF program. You will be presented with information relevant to summer bridge programs and asked to answer some questions about it. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential.

The study should take you less than 8 minutes to complete. Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on a mobile device.

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to take the survey.

If you would like to contact the Principal Investigator in the study to discuss this research, please e-mail Dr. Drew Tinnin at tinnin@rowan.edu

This study has been approved by Rowan University's IRB (#Pro2019000781)

Appendix B

Survey Consent and Instrument

You are invited to participate in this online research survey entitled Summer Bridge thesis. You are included in this survey because you are a student who has participated in the EOF program. The number of subjects to be enrolled in the study will be approximately ninety students.

The survey may take approximately 8 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 conclude by April 2020.

The purpose of this research study is to determine what the transition experiences are for students that participated in EOF prior to beginning their undergraduate career. Additionally, the purpose is to determine what effects does participating in EOF have on student success.

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 what impact participation in a summer bridge program prior to beginning college has on students.

Your response will be kept confidential. We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will 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/or the researcher at the address provided below, but you do not have to give your personal identification.

Andrea Piercy

Piercya6@students.rowan.edu

This study has been approved by Rowan University's IRB (#Pro2019000781)

Please complete the checkbox below:

To participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older and have participated in the EOF program here at Rowan University. Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey

Q2 Did participating in the program assist your transition from high school to college? If so, please elaborate on how.

- The program allowed me to get acclimated to the campus. (1)
 - The program taught me study skills. (2)
 - The program enhanced my time management skills. (3)
 - The program pushed me out of my comfort zone. (4)
 - The program helped me get comfortable being away from home. (5)
 - The program helped support me financially. (6)
 - The program gave me the opportunity to see the difference between high school and college. (7)
 - The program gave me insight of what is to come once the semester starts. (8)
 - Other- please explain or elaborate on any topics stated above. (9)
-

Q3 In what ways did your participation in the program assist you academically?

- The program enhanced my studying habits. (1)
- The program prepared me for the classes I would be taking in the fall. (2)

- The program allowed me to get acclimated with my professors. (3)
 - The program gave me clarity of the major that I chose. (4)
 - I changed my major after finishing the program because I learned the major I chose was not for me. (5)
 - My tests scores for reading/writing improved. (6)
 - My tests scores for mathematics improved. (7)
 - I enjoyed the classes that I took. (8)
 - The program allowed me to have a jump start on classes in my academic curriculum. (9)
 - Other- please explain or elaborate on any topics stated above. (10)
-

Q4 In what ways did your participation in the program assist you socially?

- The program pushed me to be social. (1)
- The program gave me the opportunity to create new friendships. (2)
- I have a mentor or someone I look up to since attending the program. (3)
- The program pushed me out my comfort zone in a positive way. (4)
- The program pushed me out my comfort zone in a negative way. (5)
- The program gave me the opportunity to network. (6)

The program helped me disconnect from technology and focus on/enjoy what was going on around me. (7)

Other- please explain or elaborate on any topics stated above. (8)

Q5 How would you describe the purpose of this program? Please be as descriptive as possible.

Q6 How would you describe your experience during your time in the program? Please be as descriptive and honest as possible.

Q7 What would you change about your experience during your time in the program? Please be as descriptive and honest as possible.

Appendix C

Interview Consent Form

KEY INFORMATION AND CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

ADULT CONSENT FORM FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

TITLE OF STUDY: Summer Bridge thesis

Principal Investigator: Drew Tinnin, Ed.D.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide key information that will help you decide whether you wish to volunteer for this research study.

Please carefully read the key information provided in the questions below. The purpose behind those questions is to provide clear information about the purpose of the study, study specific information about what will happen in the course of the study, what are the anticipated risks and benefits, and what alternatives are available to you if you do not wish to participate in this research study.

The study team will explain the study to you and they will answer any question you might have before volunteering to take part in this study. It is important that you take your time to make your decision. You may take this consent form with you to ask a family member or anyone else before agreeing to participate in the study.

If you have questions at any time during the research study, you should feel free to ask the study team and should expect to be given answers that you completely understand.

After all of your questions have been answered, if you still wish to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this informed consent form.

You are not giving up any of your legal rights by volunteering for this research study or by signing this consent form.

After all of your questions have been answered, if you still wish to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this informed consent form.

The Principal Investigator, Drew Tinnin, or another member of the study team will also be asked to sign this informed consent.

1. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore transition and other experiences of students who participate in summer bridge programs prior to college using a phenomenological design.

2. Why have you been asked to take part in this study?

You have been asked to take part in this study because you are a student at Rowan University who has participated in the EOF program.

3. What will you be asked to do if you take part in this research study?

You will be asked to complete the electronic survey. Following that, you will potentially be asked to participate in an in-person survey. Location for the in-person survey will be on Rowan University's Glassboro Campus.

4. Who may take part in this research study? And who may not?

The participants must be current Rowan University students who have successfully completed the EOF program. Anyone who does not fit both requirements is not eligible.

5. How long will the study take and where will the research study be conducted?

The study, in entirety, should not take longer than three months. The survey portion of the study should not take more than eight minutes of the participants time. If a participant is chosen to do a in-person interview, he/she will be done the interview in less than thirty minutes.

6. How many visits may take to complete the study?

It should only take one visit for the participant to complete the study.

7. What are the risks and/or discomforts you might experience if you take part in this study?

There are no risks within participating in this study. However, this study will have you reflect on your time in the EOF program.

8. Are there any benefits for you if you choose to take part in this research study?

There may not be any direct benefit.

9. What are the alternatives if you do not wish to participate in the study?

Your alternative is not to participate in the study.

10. How many subjects will be enrolled in the study?

There may be up to ninety participants enrolled in the study.

11. How will you know if new information is learned that may affect whether you are willing to stay in this research study?

During the course of the study, you will be updated about any new information that may affect whether you are willing to continue taking part in the study. If new information is learned that may affect you, you will be contacted.

12. Will there be any cost to you to take part in this study?

There will not be any cost associated with this study.

13. Will you be paid to take part in this study?

You will not be paid for your participation in this research study.

14. Are you providing any identifiable private information as part of this research study?

We are not collecting identifiable private information in this research study.

15. How will information about you be kept private or confidential?

All efforts will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Your personal information may be given out, if required by law. Presentations and publications to the public and at scientific conferences and meetings will not use your name and other personal information.

16. What will happen if you do not wish to take part in the study or if you later decide not to stay in the study?

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may change your mind at any time.

If you do not want to enter the study or decide to stop participating, your relationship with the study staff will not change, and you may do so without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may also withdraw your consent for the use of data already collected about you, but you must do this in writing to Drew Tinnin at tinnin@rowan.edu.

If you decide to withdraw from the study for any reason, you may be asked to participate in one meeting with the Principal Investigator.

17. Who can you call if you have any questions?

If you have any questions about taking part in this study or if you feel you may have suffered a research related injury, you can call the Principal Investigator:

Drew Tinnin
856-256-4909

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you can call:

Office of Research Compliance
(856) 256-4078– Glassboro/CMSRU

18. What are your rights if you decide to take part in this research study?

You have the right to ask questions about any part of the study at any time. You should not sign this form unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have been given answers to all of your questions.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

I have read the entire information about the research study, research risks, benefits and the alternatives, or it has been read to me, and I believe that I understand what has been discussed.

All of my questions about this form or this study have been answered and I agree to volunteer to participate in the study.

Subject Name: _____

Subject Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator/Individual Obtaining Consent:

To the best of my ability, I have explained and discussed the full contents of the study including all of the information contained in this consent form. All questions of the research subject and those of his/her parent or legal guardian have been accurately answered.

Investigator/Person Obtaining Consent: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Instrument: Interview

1. How did you learn about the EOF program?
2. How did participating in the program assist your transition from high school to college?
3. In what ways did the program help you get acclimated to campus?
4. If any, what soft skills did participation in the program teach you?
5. If any, what study skills did the program teach you?
6. What were your initial feelings towards the program before the program began?
7. What were your feelings during the first day/first week of the program?
8. What were your feelings at the end of the program?
9. What shocked you about the program? What was your biggest challenge during the program?
10. What classes did you take during your time in EOF? How were those classes chosen?
11. What was your experience with your professors during the summer of the program?
12. Did you feel more prepared for the upcoming semester after completing the summer program? If so, in what ways?
13. In what ways did the program impact you socially?
14. Did you form new relationships during your time in the program? If so, where do those relationships stand today?

15. What access did you have to technology during your time in the program? How did that impact your experience?
16. Were your expectations for the program met? Why or why not?
17. Using the material supplied, show me what your experience was like in the program to your best ability. Be prepared to discuss.