University of Alabama at Birmingham
UAB Digital Commons

All ETDs from UAB | UAB Theses & Dissertations

2013

# Academic Advising Experiences and Retention of First-Generation Students at a Public Historically Black College and University in the Southeastern United States

Jarrod Ennis Patterson
*University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/etd-collection

## Recommended Citation

Patterson, Jarrod Ennis, "Academic Advising Experiences and Retention of First-Generation Students at a Public Historically Black College and University in the Southeastern United States" (2013). *All ETDs from UAB*. 2682.
https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/etd-collection/2682

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication.

# ACADEMIC ADVISING EXPERIENCES AND RETENTION OF FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS AT A PUBLIC, HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY IN THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

by

JARROD ENNIS PATTERSON

LOUCRECIA COLLINS, COMMITTEE CHAIR
D. KEITH GURLEY
EVELYN NETTLES
GARY PETERS
BOYD ROGAN

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the graduate faculty of The University of Alabama at Birmingham,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
2013

Copyright by
Jarrod Ennis Patterson
2013

ACADEMIC ADVISING EXPERIENCES AND RETENTION
OF FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS AT A PUBLIC,
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY
IN THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

JARROD ENNIS PATTERSON

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public, historically black college and university (HBCU) in the southeastern United States. A qualitative analysis using a phenomenological multiple case study approach was used to explore the students' academic advising experiences. The theoretical framework for this study consisted of: the Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure (Tinto, 1987, 2006), the Theory of Involvement (Astin, 1984, 1999), and the Psychological Model for Student Retention (Bean & Eaton, 2000).

In their interviews, participants were asked questions from an approved interview protocol. The questions were open-ended in structure to allow the researcher to follow with probing questions and to allow participants to freely express themselves about their academic advising experiences. Data from the interviews were transcribed, coded, and reviewed to ensure trustworthiness and credibility. The findings indicated that there were mitigating factors impacting the retention of first-generation students other than their academic advising experiences.

Through the candid reflections of these students, I hope to inform the fields of academic advising and retention about first-generation students' expectations and thoughts regarding their academic advising experiences.

# DEDICATION

A Russian proverb states, “You live as long as you are remembered.” In the spirit of this proverb, I dedicate this dissertation to the memories of my paternal and maternal grandparents: John & Dorothy Patterson (of Poughkeepsie, New York) and Governor & Dorothy McDonald (of Los Angeles, California).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank God for giving me the ability and the follow-through to complete this important project through all of the challenges that have played out over the last five years. I am reminded of Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you”, declares the Lord. “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

It is with much love that I thank my friend, my partner, my companion, my wife Keshia for her undying love and unyielding support as I culminate this five-year journey. If it were not for your constant encouragement, I would not have been able to meet the challenges of this arduous undertaking. Thank you for always believing in me and your never ending love, support, and understanding throughout this journey. I also want to express my love and appreciation for my twin sons, Carson and Carter. This dissertation could not have been possible without your love, inspiration, and many interruptions. The time I spent with you this summer, even with all of my writing demands, has meant so much to me. Seeing you born and watching you grow up as I endured this most challenging endeavor has been a most treasured experience. I want all of you to know that everything I do or accomplish in life has been, is, and will always be for you.

My family deserves special recognition. I want to thank my parents, James and Dorothy Patterson, for the sacrifices and commitment they have made throughout my life that have contributed to the planting of seeds that have helped me to grow into who I have become. Your sacrifices have not gone unappreciated. To my siblings: Jennifer and Justin, and sister-in-law Courtney, thanks for your support. I want to thank my father-in-

law and mother-in-law, Eddie and Annie Turner, for welcoming me into their family almost eleven and half years ago and being another pillar of support for both me and my family. I am also appreciative to all of my brothers- and sisters-in-law and other extended in-laws for their support.

I want to thank my friends and colleagues who have been pillars of support since the first day I began this journey. I know that I may have gone a little overboard with the dissertation updates on Facebook, but your words of encouragement, both on Facebook and in person, have meant so much.

I want to thank the members of my dissertation committee: Drs. Nettles, Peters, Gurley, and Rogan for their time. Even though making my presentations in front of you made me feel more than a little intimidated and extremely nervous, your comments, suggestions, encouragement, and desire for my academic and personal success have meant so much to me.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Dr. Loucrecia Collins for your service as not only my advisor but also as my dissertation chair. I am so appreciative for your knowledge and expertise in helping me to form my dissertation committee. Your sound but stern advice kept me motivated and moving forward. From the first course I took from you, I have gleaned so much about being a leader, and I have developed a greater sense of confidence in the leader that I am becoming. You have had such a great impact on my life that will not be soon forgotten.

I also want to thank my classmates from the 2008 and 2009 cohorts at the University of Alabama at Birmingham: Debbie Blackstone, Nancy Wingo, Josh Carter, Armentress Robinson, Clifford Kennon, and Kristi Garrett (even though she ended up

attending the University of Alabama) for supporting this out-of-towner and making me feel accepted in a new place. Driving back and forth from Huntsville to Birmingham one to two times a week for almost five years was difficult at times, but knowing that I had supportive classmates made the transition much better. Attending the University of Alabama at Birmingham has been one of the best decisions I have ever made.

Finally, I want to thank all those who have had some positive influence on my life. For that, I am eternally grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Page*

ABSTRACT ..... iii

DEDICATION ..... v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... vi

LIST OF TABLES ..... xiii

LIST OF FIGURES ..... xiv

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..... xv

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION ..... 1

Introduction ..... 1
Statement of the Problem ..... 4
Purpose Statement ..... 6
Theoretical Framework ..... 6
Research Questions ..... 7
Methodology ..... 7
Definition of Terms ..... 8
Significance of Study ..... 10
Delimitations of Study ..... 11
Limitations of Study ..... 11
Assumptions ..... 12
Organization of Study ..... 12

2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ..... 14

Introduction ..... 14
Theoretical Framework ..... 14
Interactional Theory of College Student Departure ..... 15
Theory of Involvement ..... 16
Psychological Model of Student Retention ..... 17
Overview of Retention ..... 18
Retention Factors ..... 20
Gender ..... 20
Social Interaction ..... 21
Family ..... 21
Socioeconomic Status ..... 22

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

*Page*


Race and Ethnicity ....22
Institutional Contact ....23
First-Generation College Students ....23
Millennial Students ....24
Predictors of Success ....25
Motivation ....26
Self-Efficacy ....27
Parental Support ....27
Grade Point Averages ....27
Academic Advising ....28
History of Academic Advising ....29
Perceptions of Academic Advising ....30
Student Perceptions ....30
Faculty Perceptions ....31
Types of Academic Advising ....32
Individual Advising ....32
Group Advising ....32
Developmental Advising ....32
Anticipatory Advising ....33
Appreciative Advising ....34
Web-Based Advising ....34
Academic Advisors ....35
Faculty Advisors ....35
Professional Advisors ....36
Para-Professional Advisors ....36
Peer Advisors ....36
Conclusion ....37

3 METHODOLOGY ....38

Introduction ....38
Research Design ....38
Qualitative Approach ....39
Case Study ....39
Interview Design ....40
Role of the Researcher ....41
Data Collection ....42
Setting ....43
Participants ....44
Instrument ....45
Access ....45
Procedure ....46

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

*Page*

Research Questions ..... 47
Data Analysis ..... 47
Coding ..... 48
Validity ..... 48
Peer Debriefing ..... 49
Member Checking ..... 49
Ethical Considerations ..... 49
Conclusion ..... 50

4 FINDINGS ..... 51

Introduction ..... 51
Research Site ..... 51
Description of Participants ..... 52
Participant A: Casey ..... 53
Participant B: Trish ..... 53
Participant C: LaTasha ..... 54
Participant D: Mike ..... 54
Participant E: Tre' ..... 54
Participant F: Sheri ..... 55
Participant G: Kelli ..... 55
Participant H: Greg ..... 56
Participant I: Johnnie ..... 56
Participant J: Michelle ..... 56
Themes ..... 57
Expectations ..... 58
Availability ..... 58
Proactive Advising ..... 61
Contact ..... 63
Initial Meeting ..... 63
Quality ..... 64
Relationships ..... 65
Support ..... 66
Advisor Interest ..... 66
Information-Driven Advising ..... 68
Information ..... 68
Details ..... 69
Balanced Advising ..... 70
Holistic Advising ..... 70
Relationships ..... 72
Advising Factors ..... 72
Interaction ..... 73

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

*Page*


Knowledge .....73
Preparation .....74
External Influence .....76
Motivation .....76
Environment .....77
Conclusion .....78

5 DISCUSSION .....79

Introduction .....79
Findings and Related Research Questions .....79
Research Question #1 .....79
Research Question #2 .....81
Research Question #3 .....82
Findings and Theoretical Framework .....83
Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure .....83
Theory of Involvement .....84
Psychological Model of Student Retention .....85
Recommendations .....87
Practice .....87
Research .....90
Conclusion .....92

LIST OF REFERENCES .....94

APPENDICES .....127

A INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM .....128

B INTERVIEW PROTOCOL .....130

C PARTICPANT QUESTIONNAIRE .....132

D RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET .....134

E TABLE REPRINT PERMISSIONS .....136

LIST OF TABLES

*Tables* *Page*

1 Freshmen Retention Rates, 2001-2012 .....44

2 Student Participant Demographics.....53

3 Summary of Themes and Sub-themes .....57

LIST OF FIGURES

*Figure* *Page*

1 Model of Tinto's Interactional Theory of College Student Departure .....16

2 Bean and Eaton's *Psychological Model of Student Retention*.....18

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| ACT | American College Testing Services |
| GPA | Grade point average |
| HBCU | Historically Black College and University |
| NACADA | National Academic Advising Association |
| PWI | Predominantly white institution |
| SAMU | Southeastern Agricultural & Mechanical University |
| UAB | University of Alabama at Birmingham |

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

Student retention has become an issue of great concern in higher education (Barefoot, 2004; Herbert, 2006; Tinto, 2006). As a result, it is receiving greater and much needed attention. In a thought-provoking article, Sanner and Deis (2009) quoted an administrator in higher education who maintained, "Retention is the lifeblood of an institution" (p. 21). Student enrollment statistics at colleges and universities nationwide highlight the stark reality that students entering college for the first time and later dropping out without earning a degree is becoming an all-too-common trend among college students (Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008). Researchers report that retention at most colleges and universities hovers around 67% (American College Testing [ACT], 2010; Jamelske, 2008).

As a result, the emphasis on retention, especially at colleges and universities in the United States, is determined by many factors. Education is important to the current vitality and future success of students (Seidman, 2012). Students' economic and social success in the U.S. increasingly requires a college degree (Goldrick-Rab, Harris, & Trostel, 2009). The influence of retention is not only national but also global. A changing global economy has dramatically shifted from demanding a traditional, unskilled workforce to that of a more skilled workforce populated by college attendees and graduates (Caselli, 1999).

Colleges and universities also have an interest in retention because retention rates impact both state and federal funding. Large numbers of students failing to complete a degree can potentially damage the reputation of an institution of higher education. Crosling, Thomas, and Heagney (2008) asserted that the quality of programs and graduates is greatly impacted by poor rates of retention. Retention has become a major indicator of institutions' ability to recruit the best academically performing students. As a result, recruitment efforts have become more difficult (Dixon, 2003; Seidman, 1989).

Since the establishment of the first institution in 1837, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have had the primary responsibility for educating African Americans (Nettles et al., 1999). The majority of African Americans enrolled in higher education are educated at HBCUs (Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005). In fact, 70% of all African Americans graduating with a bachelor's degree within the next six years will do so from an HBCU (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2012). HBCUs only comprise 3% of all institutions of higher education in the U.S. (Harmon, 2012); however, 28-30% of all African Americans who graduate from college will earn a degree from an HBCU (NCES, 2012). As a result, HBCUs remain the primary colleges and universities of choice by large numbers of African American students (Evans, A. L., Evans, V., & Evans, A. M., 2002).

HBCUs have had the unique and historical distinction of educating and graduating large numbers of African American students for over 176 years. Despite these educational successes, Hutto and Fenwick (2002) reported that HBCUs have also begun to face significant retention challenges. Over the last three decades, the number of African American students enrolled at HBCUs has declined, and HBCUs have struggled

to retain their students, specifically between the first and second years (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). These growing retention challenges at HBCUs counter the prevailing view by many in higher education that because the majority of the students at HBCUs are African American, HBCUs have an advantage over predominantly white institutions (PWIs) related to the retention of African American students (Fleming, 2012). The issue of retention is no longer a phenomenon primarily observed at PWIs in the United States.

Higher education retention statistics are troubling and a national cause of concern (Lee, 2012). For HBCUs with limited financial resources, this issue is especially acute. The national retention rate at HBCUs is 64% as compared to 75% at PWIs (Richards & Awokoya, 2012). Ultimately, retention at HBCUs is closely linked to graduation rates, which are viewed as major indicators of the academic successes of these institutions (Beeghley, 1989). As such, the value and quality of education at HBCUs has been called into question by public policymakers, African American students and their parents, and other interested constituents (Kim & Conrad, 2006).

The noticeable difference in the retention rates of HBCUs and PWIs has also fueled an ongoing but critical conversation regarding the relevance of HBCUs in the 21st century. According to Nealy (2009), "Questions of relevance have reached a fever pitch as today's Black colleges work to address declining enrollment, low graduation rates and financial instability" ("Pride and Peril," para. 1). In the *Wall Street Journal*, Riley (2010) argued that HBCUs, in light of current retention reporting (and subsequent graduation rates), prove their academic inferiority to their PWI counterparts. This leaves many asking the question, "Are HBCUs worth it?" Those opposed to the idea of HBCUs in the 21st century, in fairness, acknowledge their successes and highlight their contributions to

a distinct history of educating thousands of African Americans. However, critics strongly suggest that HBCUs have outlived their historical mandate and are in need of a new mission.

Supporters of HBCUs have noted that the only evidence used to substantiate the proposal for HBCUs to change their missions is based on arguments made 30 to 40 years ago. According to Gasman (2010), many of these critics have failed to use empirical research to validate their perspectives but have instead relied on anecdotal or personal experiences. Richards and Awokoya (2009) demonstrated that lower retention (and graduation) rates at HBCUs were not due to underperformance but to the lack of preparation by the students they serve. According to Ashley (2007), HBCUs cannot look to history as a means of maintaining their historical missions. Instead, HBCUs must take every opportunity to better equip their students with the necessary academic skills to succeed.

**Statement of the Problem**

Academic advising is one of the most important and most neglected aspects of higher education (Howell, 2010). A survey of college officials conducted by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and ACT determined that many institutions of higher education are underutilizing their current academic advising programs (Habley, 2004). Many stakeholders at institutions of higher education fail to recognize that academic advising is more important and relevant than ever (Hunter & White, 2004). Numerous researchers have established a clear correlation between academic advising and retention (Backhus, 1989; Bean, 2005; Ender, Winston, Jr, & Miller, 1982; Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Habley, 1981; Habley & McClanahan, 2004; Kadar, 2001). To a

lesser extent, researchers have also underscored the role of academic advising in improving retention (Habley & McClanahan, 2004; Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004; Tinto, 1987, 2000). According to Metzner (1989), academic advising is "the single best strategy for improving retention" (p. 434). Research findings have also confirmed that academic advising involves the connection between advisors and students (Frost, 1991; Schlosser & Gelsco, 2001). This connection can impact students' decisions to stay in college. According to Tuttle (2000), retention is the primary goal of academic advising.

Currently, less than half of college and university campuses have established clear strategies for retaining students from the first to the second year (Habley, 2004). Instead of playing a more prominent role in institutional retention practices and being the center of student support services, academic advising is primarily conducted in isolation and without collaboration with other student services. Even though researchers have established clear connections between academic advising and retention, many colleges and universities, including many HBCUs, have yet to make the transition to a more proactive academic advising process that takes a leading role in the retention of students.

Within the body of literature on HBCUs, there are few studies that focus on academic advising; there are even fewer that closely examine how academic advising impacts the retention rates of first-generation students at these same institutions. In this current, unstable global economic climate, stakeholders at HBCUs are more keenly focused on how their institutions can increase student retention rates, and ultimately improve graduation rates.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public, historically black college and university (HBCU) in the southeastern United States.

## Theoretical Framework

I relied on three distinct theoretical frameworks to guide this study. These theoretical frameworks included the following college impact models: the Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure (Tinto, 1987, 2006), the Theory of Involvement (Astin, 1970, 1984, 1999), and the Psychological Model for Student Retention (Bean & Eaton, 2000).

The Interactional Theory of College Student Departure (Tinto, 1987, 2006) established that students' decisions to withdraw from college are influenced by their interactions with other members of their academic and social environments. The Theory of Involvement (Astin, 1970, 1984, 1999) describes student change (i.e., decision to depart) as the relationship between students' level of involvement at their institutions and their decisions to withdraw. The Psychological Model for Student Retention (Bean & Eaton, 2000) suggests that there are four main psychological theories related to students' reasons for withdrawing from college. These four psychological theories include: (a) Attitude-Behavior Theory, (b) Coping Behavioral Theory, (c) Self-Efficacy Theory, and (d) Attribution Theory.

## Research Questions

I conducted this qualitative multiple case study, grounded in phenomenology, in order to address the following questions:

1. What are the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
2. What are the categories of academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
3. Do academic advising experiences influence the retention of first-generation college students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?

## Methodology

Through this phenomenological multiple case study, I explored the academic advising experiences of first-generation, African American students who were first-time students in good standing at an HBCU in the southeastern United States. These students were in their first year of college during the fall of 2011 and returned for their second year in the fall of 2012. Students for the study were chosen using purposeful sampling. According to Creswell (2010), purposeful sampling involves the intentional selection of research participants and sites for the purpose of better understanding the phenomenon.

I was the primary investigator and conducted all related interviews. Personal communications in the form of face-to-face interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded in order to identify emergent themes. Open-ended interview questions allowed students to share their academic advising experiences and their subsequent decisions to return to college. All research was conducted with the approval of the Institutional

Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A). Additionally, interview questions were reviewed by the committee prior to the face-to-face interviews (see Appendix B).

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms were used in this study:

1. Academic Advising—The formal and informal interaction between students and their academic advisors in order to assist students in maximizing their academic, career, social, and personal opportunities (National Academic Advising Association, 2003); a situation in which a representative of the institution provides direction to college students (Kuhn, 2008).
2. Academic Advisor—An employee of the institution, usually a member of the faculty, who provides students with academic assistance throughout their undergraduate education (McMahan, 2008).
3. Appreciative Advising—A collaborative activity between advisor and advisee that involves the practice of asking open-ended questions to encourage students to reach academic goals (Bloom, 2008).
4. Attrition—The percentage of freshmen who withdraw from college before degree completion (Nettles, Thoery, & Gosman, 1987).
5. Departure—The act of students leaving an institution before earning a degree or completing a degree program (Braxton, Brier, & Steele, 2007).
6. Developmental Advising—Advising that is mainly concerned with helping students develop holistically through interactions with their peers (Crookston, 1972).
7. Faculty Advisor—"Faculty at the institution that provide students direction with discipline-specific issues and course content" (Reinarz, 2000, p. 214).

8. First-generation College Students—Students who are the first in their families to attend college (Nunez & Alamin, 1998). Students with parents with little or no college experience after high school (Gibbons & Borders, 2010).
9. Four-year Institution—Institutions where full-time enrollment leads to a degree in at least four years.
10. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)—A system of education that was established to provide postsecondary education to African Americans (Harmon, 2012). Public and private institutions founded to educate freed slaves after the Civil War (Brooks & Starks, 2010; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Pike & Kuh, 2005)
11. Institution of Higher Education—An accredited profit or non-profit institution that provides programs of education beyond the secondary level.
12. Millennials—Individuals born between 1980 and 2000 (Ferguson Publishing, 2009; Hughley et al., 2012; Raines, 2003).
13. Minority-serving Institution (MSIs)—Institutions of higher education that were founded to provide educational opportunities to minority students who have been historically underserved by more traditional institutions (Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005). MSIs include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-serving (AANAPISI) (Harmon, 2012).
14. Non-traditional Students—Students aged 22 and older who attend school part-time/full-time and maintain other roles simultaneously (e.g., parent, spouse, caregiver, worker, and student).

15. Peer Advisor—Undergraduate students in various roles who support academic advising efforts (Habley, 2004).
16. Persistence—A student's pursuit of a degree program leading to graduation.
17. Predominantly-white Institutions (PWIs)—Institutions where the majority of the student body is white (Burroughs, 2008).
18. Professional Academic Advisor—An employee of the institution whose job it is to provide students with opportunities to become more familiar with general academic policies of the institution, the requirements of their intended majors, and preparation for transfer to the departments and colleges of their major discipline (Self, 2008).
19. Retention—The number of students that enter a postsecondary institution and complete degrees (Ashby, 2004; Seidman, 2005).
20. Southeastern United States—Area also known as the Southeast (U.S. Department of Education: Institute of Educational Statistics, 2010).

**Significance of Study**

The results of this study may add critical knowledge to existing literature on academic advising and the retention of first-generation students at public HBCUs in the southeastern United States. According to initial research by Beal and Noel (1980), academic advising is one of the top three strategies colleges and university personnel can use to promote retention. Retention improves when academic advising serves students by connecting students to their colleges and universities and by addressing their academic and social needs (Astin, 1977; Frost, 1991; Tinto, 1987).

In addition, the findings of this study may lead to the development of a new conceptual understanding about academic advising and its role as a vital retention

strategy. According to Habley (2011), academic advising should be the focus of institutions' educational missions and not merely a standard service. Increased understanding of students' experiences with academic advising may lead to a greater and more focused emphasis on academic advising by institutions of higher education and could play a greater role in addressing the social, personal, financial, and academic factors that impact retention. Finally, the results of this study may guide university stakeholders, who are currently focused on retention, to modify existing academic advising programs. Results may provide insights regarding the development of new academic advising practices specifically focused on addressing the many factors that greatly influence retention.

**Delimitations of Study**

This research study was subject to specific delimitations. The study was conducted during the spring semester of 2013. Only first-generation students enrolled at Southeastern A&M University (SAMU) were solicited to participate in this study. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews of students who were enrolled as freshmen during the fall of 2011 and who returned as sophomores in the fall of 2012.

**Limitations of Study**

The focus of this study was to explore how academic advising experiences influenced the retention of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. This study was limited in scope. In this section, I identified qualitative limitations that may impact this study (Patton, 2002).

Students may have struggled or been limited in their ability to accurately describe their advising experiences. Student bias or personal feelings could have affected their accounts during the initial interview.

The possibility of inaccurate interview transcription is also a limitation. As noted by King and Horrock (2010), transcripts that are inaccurate can negatively impact the analysis of data.

Finally, it is not possible to generalize the results of students' interviews to all public HBCUs. Even though HBCUs are concerned with educating students who are not historically served by PWIs, it cannot be assumed that HBCUs are enrolling identical types of students (Richards & Awokoya, 2012).

**Assumptions**

I made the following four assumptions prior to conducting this research. First, I assumed that all students who participated in this study were first-generation students whose s as such had been verified at SAMU, a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. Second, I assumed that participants would be able to openly share their experiences. Finally, I assumed that participants' interviews would be accurate.

**Organization of Study**

This research study is organized into five chapters. In Chapter 1, the introduction for the study included: problem, purpose, theoretical framework, research question, methodology, definition of terms, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and the organization of the study. In Chapter 2, a detailed review of literature pertaining to the research study topics is included. In Chapter 3, the research study design, role of the researcher, method of data collection and data analysis, and

ethical considerations are described. In Chapter 4, findings of the students' experiences are presented. Finally, in Chapter 5, conclusions and recommendations for future practice and research are described.

# CHAPTER TWO

# REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

## Introduction

Previous research has addressed the link between academic advising and student retention. This chapter (1) explores major retention theories; (2) provides an overview of student retention; (3) discusses factors that influence student departure; (4) describes the students most likely to drop out of college; (5) describes factors that predict student success in college, and (6) defines the process of advising, perceptions of advisors and advisees, functions of academic advisors, and available advising delivery systems.

## Theoretical Framework

Student departure is a complex behavior, and it is a topic in which practice can be impacted by theory. Because student retention is a process that occurs over a period of time, theoretical models generally focus on variables that reflect both student and institutional characteristics (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Theories and models of student change (or theories of student departure) provide explanations for students' decisions to leave college early. Theories of student change specifically focus on why students leave college. Models of student change, on the hand, identify the factors related to retention but without the explanations. Theories of student change are considered major contributors to new levels of models of change (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

This phenomenological multiple case study was grounded in the following student change theories and models of student change: Interactionalist Theory of College Student

Departure (Tinto, 1987, 2006), Theory of Involvement (Astin, 1984, 1999), and Psychological Model for Student Retention (Bean & Eaton, 2000, 2002; Seidman, 2005).

**Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure.** Studies on retention in the modern era are rooted in the early research of William Spady (Bean & Eaton, 2001). Spady is credited with introducing Durkheim's Theory of Suicide to the student retention discussion (Tinto, 1975). Durkheim contended that suicide was more likely to occur when an individual had not made efforts to make social connections to society (Durkheim, 1961). Spady applied Durkheim's theory to students' lack of social integration into the social systems of college and university campuses. According to Spady (1971), students that persisted generally were academically and socially integrated at their institutions.

Tinto's (1987) Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure applied Spady's sociological model to the theoretical explanation for why students voluntarily left college. In Tinto's theory, colleges and universities are microcosms of the larger society. These institutions can be considered academic and social communities that place demands on students and greatly influence their decisions to stay or leave (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1987). Student departure is further impacted by the interaction of students with other members of the academic and social systems and environments in which they are active members (Tinto, 1987). According to Tinto (1987), intentions to remain enrolled at colleges and universities are associated with student engagement. A student who is engaged in some way or has achieved some level of academic and social integration is more likely to remain. Tinto's theory is depicted in Figure 1.

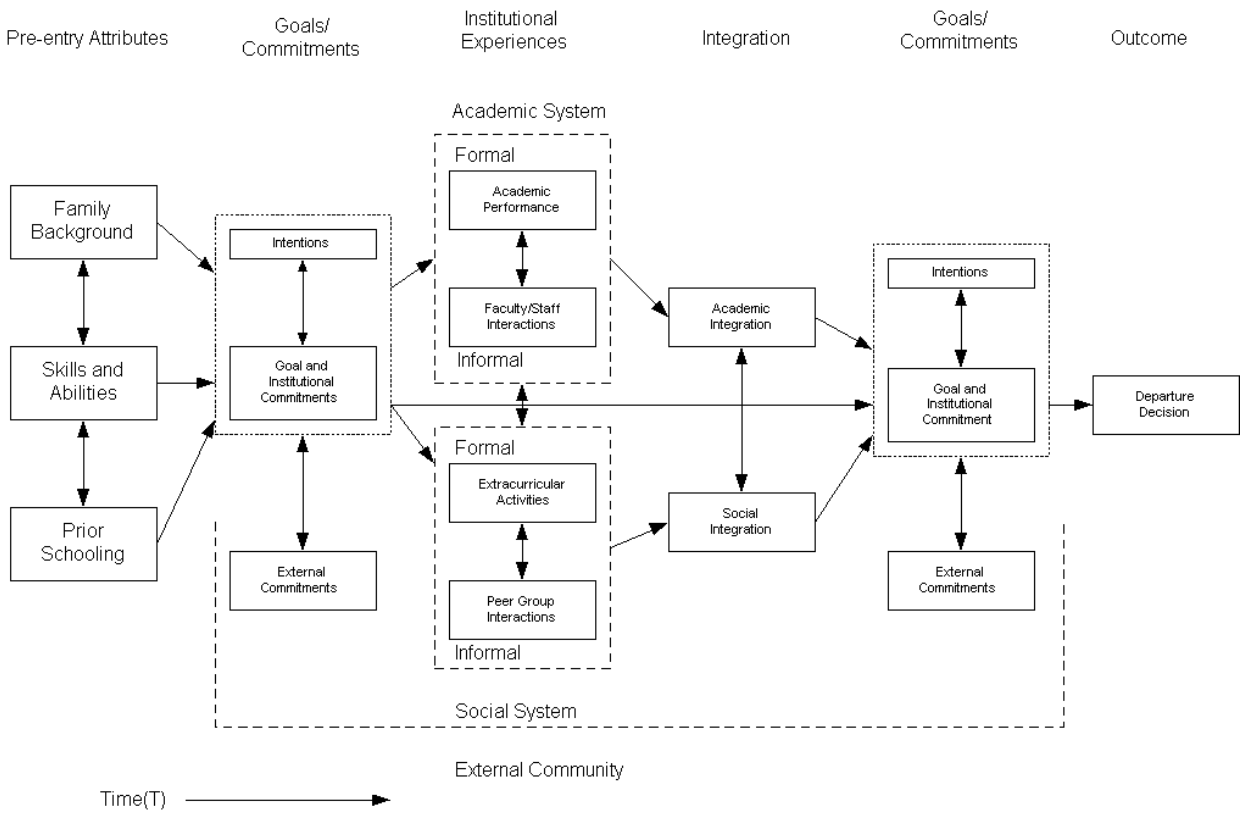


*Figure 1*. Model of Tinto's Interactional Theory of College Student Departure. From *Leaving College:Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition* (p. 114), by V. Tinto, 1993, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Reprinted with permission.

**Theory of Involvement.** Astin's Theory of Involvement is one of the earliest theoretical models that describe student development (Astin, 1970; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Astin (1970) and others explained that students learn by becoming involved (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Astin's Theory of Involvement is comprised by five major components: (1) involvement requires psychological and physical energy, (2) involvement is a continuous action, (3) involvement is both quantitative and qualitative, (4) amount of learning is equal to the amount or level of involvement, and (5) policy and practice is related to their ability to stimulate greater student involvement (Astin 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005).

Astin's Theory of Involvement can be classified as both a sociological and psychological explanation of student change (Astin, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). Students play a significant role in this change to the extent that they take advantage of opportunities presented to them (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). The change is not based on an institution's impact on the student but the level of involvement of the student in activities offered by the institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

**Psychological Model of Student Retention.** Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) suggested that impact change theories overlook important factors that can impact student departure if only viewed from a sociological perspective. According to Bean and Eaton (2001), psychological theories are additional approaches for explaining student departure. Research by these authors combined many of the previous psychological approaches for determining student departure.

Bean and Eaton's (2001) Psychological Model of Student Retention incorporated four psychological theories related to retention research. Attitude-Behavior Theory (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) links student attitudes, beliefs, intentions, and behaviors. Coping Behavioral Theory (Bean & Eaton, 2001) highlights student adaptation to new environments. In Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1998), perception of one's abilities is based on past experiences. Finally, Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1986) examines academic performance and integration. This interaction influences students' choices on how to adapt to the new environment and affects their actions academically (Bean & Eaton, 2000). These four theories depict institutional fit and institutional loyalty, which, in turn, influence students' intent to persist (Bean & Eaton, 2000). Figure 2 illustrates Bean and Eaton's student retention model.

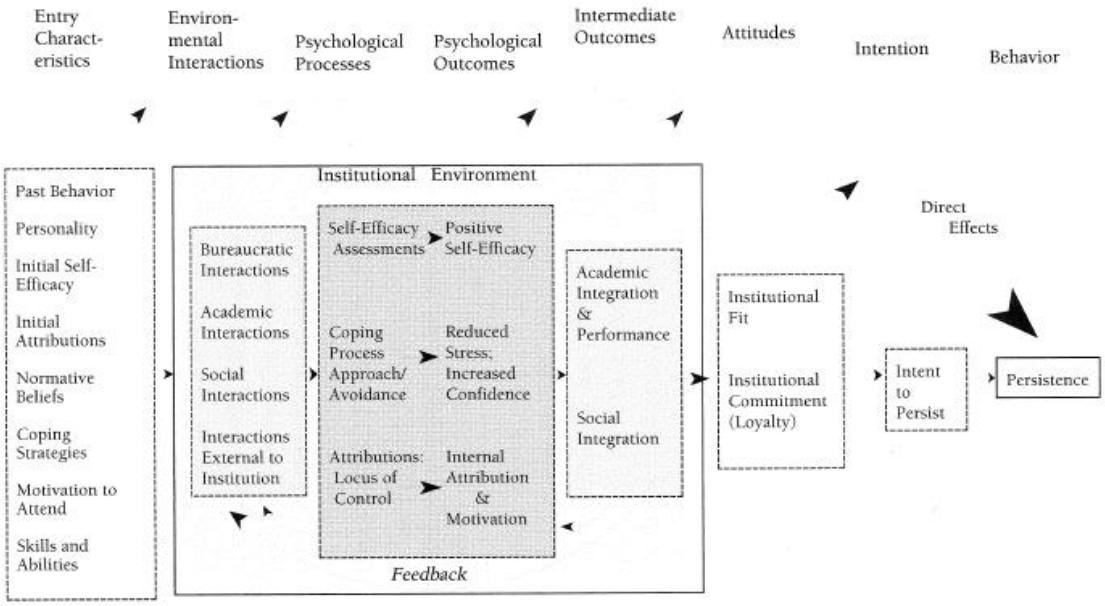


*Figure 2*. Bean and Eaton's Psychological Model of Student Retention. From "The Psychology Underlying Successful Retention Practices," by J. Bean and S. G. Eaton, 2006, *Journal of College Student Retention*, p. 76. Reprinted with permission.

## Overview of Retention

It is becoming a common occurrence for students entering college for the first time, including large numbers of first-generation students, to begin and then drop out (Braxton, 2000; Kuh et al., 2008). Tinto (2006) suggested that refocused attention on student retention is due to changes in higher education. Institutions of higher education have consistently used retention and graduation rates as the traditional measurement of institutional success. The growing trend of high rates of student departure significantly hampers an institution's ability to recruit, acquire state and federal funding, and maintain a previously established academic reputation (Delen 2012; Jones-White, Radcliffe, Huesman, & Kellogg, 2010). Prior research studies have consistently underscored the importance of student retention. In fact, retention is currently one of the most studied

areas in higher education (Tinto, 2006). Hall, Graham, and Johnson (2009) claimed, "Student retention and graduation should be a priority goal for colleges and universities" (p. 313). Increased student retention leads to increased college completion or graduation rates. As stated by Addleman (1999), "Degree completion is the true bottom line for college administrators, state legislators, parents, and, most importantly, students (p. 1).

A review of the literature demonstrates the difficulty in clearly and concisely defining retention. As a result, there has been a gradual shift in the definition of retention. According to Hagedorn (2005), there is not a general consensus associated with how retention is defined. Traditionally, retention has been used to describe the percentage of students that enroll at a college or university and remain until the completion of a degree program (Ashby, 2004; Seidman, 2005). The federal government, on the other hand, measures retention by the enrollment of students in the fall of year one to the fall of the following year (NCES, 2011). Additional definitions of retention include student persistence rates. Community colleges, junior colleges, and other similar two-year institutions view retention from yet another perspective because degree completion is not the only goal of these institutions (Wild & Ebbers, 2002). According to Walleri (1981), the best measurement of community college retention is program completion. Crawford (1999) defined retention at the community college as the ratio of the number of academic hours completed to the number of hours attempted.

## Retention Factors

The factors that influence student departure from higher education are varied. Researchers have also shown that students leave college for various reasons, both personal and institutional (Kuh et al., 2008; Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2007; Longden, 2006). These factors can be classified into categories: social, academic, environmental, institutional, and background (Madgett & Belanger, 2008). The following descriptive factors may also play a role: gender, peer groups, family dynamics, socio-economic status, race and ethnicity, and faculty/staff contact.

**Gender.** According to DeBerand, Spielmans, and Julka (2004), gender is a primary predictor in students' decisions to remain in college. This observation is further affirmed by increases in undergraduate diversity at colleges and universities across the United States, including gender diversity (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1998; Reason, 2003). Women comprise more than half of current student enrollment nationwide (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2003; NCES, 2001; Wilson, 2007). A growing body of research has found that demographic variables, such as gender, have also indirectly influenced student persistence (Pascarella & Chapman, 1983). Christensen (1990) noted that female students persisted at higher rates than male students, with a ratio of nearly two to one.

Coakley (2001) also examined the relationship between gender and academic motivation. From data collected primarily from female students at two HBCUs, Coakley determined that female students were more engaged in their academic activities than their male counterparts. As a result, female students persisted in much greater numbers.

However, other researchers have not found a clear and consistent relationship between gender and retention (Ryland, Broaden, & Breck, 1994). Male students

maintained lower grade point averages (GPAs) and were at greater risk of being identified by academic warning systems (Bridgeman & Wendela, 1991).

**Social interaction.** A greater number of students are having difficulty making the transition from high school to college, and many of these students have reported low self-confidence in this academic transition (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Peer groups and other social affiliations may also impact students. According to Astin (1993), students' peer groups are the most influential consideration in students' social development in college. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found that the frequency and quality of students' engagement with their peers impacted their persistence.

Hirsch (1980) also noted that social interaction was critical to college adjustment. Students' inability or lack of desire to connect socially with other students tends to lead to their departure (Tinto, 1987). Students who were more socially engaged were better able to adjust to their new social communities. These relationships not only influenced students' sense of self, but they also provided much needed social support (Paul & Brier, 2001).

**Family.** Changing family dynamics have had a direct impact on student retention, especially among first-generation students. According to Ishler and Upcraft (2005), parents (and other family members) play an important role in student persistence. The higher the parents' educational levels (and incomes), the higher the persistence of students (i.e., their children) (Stage & Hossler, 2000). Bean and Vesper (1992) established that parental support was a factor in the persistence of first-generation students. Parents (or other family members) who have specific levels of educational

experience were able to provide advice and encouragement to their children based on the family members' own experiences in school.

**Socioeconomic status.** Socioeconomic status was another substantial factor related to retention. As noted by Astin (1993), first-year students were more likely to persist and later graduate if they were from families with higher socioeconomic levels (Astin, 1993). The parents and families of students at higher socioeconomic levels were able to contribute more to the financing of their children's education. Conversely, students from families with lower socioeconomic levels tended to rely more on financial aid, primarily in the form of loans, to pay for college. St. John, Cabera, Nora, and Asker (2000) identified a relationship between financial aid and persistence. Students from families with higher incomes persisted at greater levels than students from families with much lower incomes (Cabrera, Stamper, & Hensen, 1990; St. John, 1989, 1990; St. John, Kirshstein, & Noell, 1991). On the other hand, Braunstein, McGrath, and Des Latrice (2000-2001) and Somers (1995) did not find any relationship between financial aid and student persistence.

**Race and ethnicity.** Other researchers, including Fleming (2012), argued that race and ethnicity were factors that impacted retention. Minority students tended to have higher rates of withdrawal and consequently lower rates of graduation (Astin, 1975). In their study on the graduation rates of African Americans in college, Cross and Slater (2001) reported that the graduation rates for African Americans was about 37% as compared to 59%for their Caucasian counterparts. Other researchers have reported that low graduation rates among African American students are due to a lack of parental

support (Allen, Jayakumar, Griffin, Korn, & Hurtado, 2005; Seidman, 2005b), and lack of academic preparation (McNairy, 1996; Seidman, 2005, 2012).

Researchers have also established that retention is as much of a concern at HBCUs as PWIs (Hudson, Henderson, D., & Henderson, J., 2002; Nettles et al., 1999). Berger and Lyon (2005) reported that retention rates for African American students at HBCUs were much higher than those of African American students who attended PWIs. According to Fleming (2012), factors affecting student retention at HBCUs are different from factors affecting student retention of African American students enrolled at traditional PWIs. These factors mainly included academic preparedness and socioeconomic status.

**Institutional contact.** The contact that students have with faculty and staff members is a vital component of student retention (Tinto, 1987). Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) identified a relationship between faculty-student contact and persistence. According to Tinto (1987), faculty behavior, both inside and outside of the classroom, affects student retention. Lindquist, Spalding, and Landrum (2002-2003) concluded that specific faculty behaviors (e.g., availability, response time, and level of support) contributed to student persistence.

**First-generation College Students**

Enrollment in higher education is increasingly trending towards non-traditional students (Choy, 2002; Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008), and first-generation students are more likely to be classified as non-traditional. Based on a recent report, approximately 40% of all incoming freshmen students are first-generation students (Davis, 2012). First-

generation students are more likely than their non first-generation peers to drop out of college and less likely to complete a degree program (Davis, 2010; Ishitani, 2006).

First-generation students (Bui, 2002; Gibbons & Borders, 2010) have been defined in various manners appropriate to this current research. Definitions range from the following: (a) students whose parents have no formal education beyond high school, (b) students whose parents have not completed a college degree program, and (c) students whose parents have not completed a college degree program by the time of students' enrollment in college (Collier & Morgan, 2007; Gibbons & Borders, 2010; Ishitani, 2006; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Pike & Kuh, 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 1996). This study used the definition of first-generation students as students whose parents had little or no college experience after high school or beyond.

First-generation students pose critical retention (and later college degree completion) concerns. The retention of first-generation students is impacted by several factors, including: (a) financial reasons or burdens (Bergerson, 2007; Paulisen & St. John, 1997, 2002; Stieha, 2010); (b) family background (Choy, 2001; DesJardins et al., 2002; Tinto, 1993); (c) academic and social integration (Bui, 2002; St. John, 1999; Strage, 1999; Terenzini et al., 1996); and (e) academic preparedness (Riehl, 1994; Warburton, Bugarin, & Nunez, 2001).

**Millennial students.** First-generation students can also be classified as Millennial students. Millennials, as they are most commonly known, are students born between 1980 and 2000 (Hughey et al., 2012; Raines, 2002). Researchers describe Millennials as the most diverse generation of college students (Coomes & DeBard, 2004; DeBard, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2003).

Millennials are routinely described as positive (Tulgin, as cited in Jayson, 2009). They are "increasingly optimistic about their chances for success in college" (Sax, 2003, p. 17). They tend to be more inclined toward more group activity in social situations (Dungy, 2011). Millennials are more service-oriented and believe in taking action through their service (Stone, 2009). As a result, many of these students easily over commit themselves to various activities.

Millennials are very technologically advanced (Turkle, 2011). Numbers of them spend large spans of time on social media, networking, and connecting with their peers (Jones, 2002; Newton, 2000; Oblinger, D., & Oblinger, J., 2005). Lenhart, Simon, and Graziano (2001) reported that Millennials consistently use the Internet for personal research, academic projects, educational activities, and communication. Millennials also carry mobile communication devices that allow them to be connected to the world around them (Jones, 2002; Oblinger, 2003).

Millennials are also characterized as multitaskers (Garcia, 2007). Because of their access to technology, they are used to "jumping from one…activity to another" (Tapscott, 1998, p. 108). This is often times misinterpreted as a demonstration of short attention spans by older generations. Millennials thrive on instant gratification, taking advantage of every available moment (Oblinger, 2005).

**Predictors of success.** The transition to college is stressful for many first-time students (Lu, 1994). Researchers have demonstrated that first-generation students pose serious retention (and future degree completion) concerns. Several factors that predict the success of first-generation students have been consistently highlighted in the literature, including: motivation, self-efficacy, parental support, and grade point averages.

***Motivation***. Student commitment is expressed as motivation and is central to student retention (Tinto, 1987). Deri and Ryan (1985) defined motivation as the engagement of students in tasks for value and not merely for enjoyment. Bean and Eaton (2001) described motivation as an important retention predictor. Campus climate, familiarity with course offerings, finances, and other academic factors all contribute to student motivation (Kuh, 2001). Research findings also indicate that motivation is not only an individual experience but a collective one as well (Dennis, Pluminey, & Chuatero, 2005). Bandura (1997) noted that groups do not experience emotions, but their collective (or group) motivation emerges and evolves the more individuals work or spend time together.

Researchers have long expressed interest in the motivation of African American students (Banks, McQuarter, & Hubbard, 1977; Kaplan & Machr, 2000). Scott (1995) found that motivation was a key factor of academic success of African American students, and Graham (1994) reported that African American students did not suffer from low motivation. This could be attributed to optimism and positive self-regard that students exhibited naturally. Clark (2002) posited that African American students underperformed due to factors other than motivation. For African American students attending more traditional PWIs, motivation can be related to the following: (a) environmental stress (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) (b) faculty-student contact (Jussim & Harber, 2005; Love, 1993; McNown & Weinstein, 2002, 2008; Pringle, Lyons, & Booker, 2010), (c) prejudice and racism (Brown, Morning, & Watkins, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Smith & Moore, 2002), and (d) financial pressures (Green, 2004; Hurtado et al., Johnson, 2007; Kim, 2007). For students attending HBCUs,

motivation was affected by different factors, such as: poorly funded educations (Fleming, 2012) and academic performance (Rendon, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000; Schwartz & Washington, 2002).

***Self-efficacy.*** Buh (2002) discovered that many first-generation students experience adjustment problems both before and after enrolling in college. According to McMurray and Sorrells (2008), first-generation students are more likely to enter collegiate life with low self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) maintained that self-efficacy impacts behaviors which may impact retention. Lent, Brown, and Larkin (1986) showed that academic achievement and self-efficacy were closely associated, however, prior research involving self-efficacy coping strategies is limited (Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007).

***Parental support.*** In many cases, there is a lack of parental support for first-generation students. Studies show that first-generation students with parents who did not attend college did not have the required skills needed to consider themselves prepared for college nor the basic knowledge of the college experience (Warburton et al., 2001).

***Grade point averages.*** The grade point average (GPAs) of entering students is used as one of the traditional criterion for college admission due to its ability to predict future success. Students with lower GPAs tend to drop out of college (Mangold, Bean, Adams, Schwab, & Lynch, 2008). Students who apply and are accepted to institutions with more liberal (or open) admissions standards begin at a disadvantage (Kracher 2009). Once enrolled, many students are placed into remedial (or developmental) courses, which are closely tied to academic preparedness.

## Academic Advising

Academic advising has been well documented as a problematic activity at many colleges and universities; this has resulted in academic advising being described as an ineffective activity due to inconsistent and insufficient implementation and coordination (Lowe & Toney, 2000). At the most basic level, academic advising has been regarded as simply a method or activity that involves advisors assisting students in the selection of courses (Frost, 1991; Habley, 2011; Pardee, 2000). This rudimentary perspective has resulted in high student dissatisfaction with the advising process which can contribute to student withdrawal (Grites, 1979; Tinto, 1987). On the other hand, effective academic advising can play an important role in student persistence (Astin, 1977; Frost, 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1987).

In a more contemporary context, academic advising has been "redefined" (Hester, 2000). Advising has transitioned from a process of merely choosing courses to the facilitation of students' academic and career (or future) planning (Hester, 2000). Kuhn (2008) further described academic advising as providing direction to college students about academic, social, or personal matters.

The practice of academic advising is a common activity at most colleges and universities across the United States. According to Habley (2011), academic advising is the only structured activity on college and university campuses in which all matriculating students have one-on-one contact with a representative of the institution. Researchers have concluded that there is a positive advantage to academic advising for college students (Astin, 1975; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1987).

## History of Academic Advising

In the initial period, before the "First Advising Era," the process of academic advising did not facilitate or designate specific roles for faculty or other individuals (Kuhn, 2008). When the "First Advising Era" commenced, around 1636, students interacted with a small instructional staff, including the president and two faculty members, with any supplemental instruction performed by tutors (Kuhn, 2008). With no organized student services staff, administrators and faculty assumed primary responsibility for the academic lives of students.

In the "Second Advising Era," 1870 through 1970, the academic advising process was further advanced in response to critics who suggested that students with too much freedom would choose elective courses that would be more detrimental than beneficial academically (Kuhn, 2008). Johns Hopkins University initiated an expansion of academic advising that not only increased the use of the word "advisor" but also the use of full-time faculty members as advisors (Gordon, 1992; Kuhn, 2008).

Frost (2000) described the "Third Advising Era" as the period from 1970 to the present day. The process of academic advising in this contemporary era has been more scrutinized and included advisors assisting students with registration, course selection, and scheduling (Frost, 2000). Individuals who were assigned the responsibility of facilitating academic advising began to compare their advising practices with advisors at other colleges and universities across the U.S. These interactions resulted in varying perceptions of academic advising, types of academic advising, and types of academic advisors.

**Perceptions of academic advising.** Regardless of the specific approach, academic advising is meant to further integrate students, both academically and socially, with their respective colleges and universities (Braxton & McClendon, 2001; Myers & Dyer, 2005). Researchers focusing on academic advising have argued that there are differing perspectives of not only what academic advising is but also what it is intended to accomplish. Habley (2003, 2004) contended that understanding the perceptions of advising recipients and advisors is vitally important to the overall process since perceptions of advisors and students are often much different (Vowell, 1995). Upcraft and Schuh (1996) noted that specific assessments to clearly and effectively measure advising outcomes are rare. Most assessments measure indirect effects. Those that are available do not allow for the accurate description of student (and possibly advisor) perceptions (Alexitch, 1997; Broadbridge, 1996).

***Student perceptions***. Reinarz (2000) suggested that one goal of student retention literature has been to show the connectedness of students to their institutions. Student connectedness can be related to student satisfaction with academic advising. Hale, Graham, and Johnson (2009) suggested that student satisfaction and perceptions of academic advising should be further studied. As noted in the literature, satisfaction with academic advising is one measure of successful college experiences for students (Bailey, Bauman, & Lata, 1998; Lau, 2003; Light, 2001; Low, 2000; Myers & Dyer, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1993). Student satisfaction of academic advising can most often determine how effectively the advising is delivered to students (Hale et al., 2009). A case study by Noel-Levtiz (2006) sought to measure student satisfaction of academic advising at the national level. Investigators concluded that the quality of

academic advising was consistent among institutions. In a separate case study, Mottarella, Fritzsche, and Cerabino (2004) investigated factors that students valued in the academic advising process. The researchers documented that students' beliefs regarding the specific approach of the advisor was more important than the advising approach used. Additionally, students' personalities did not impact their advising preferences. Findings from this study strongly emphasized the importance of relationships between advisors and advisees.

***Faculty perceptions***. Faculty advising is a valuable asset in the academic success and retention of students. According to Kramer and Kerr (1994), faculty advising is an important component to student satisfaction and retention in higher education. Habley (2003, 2004) reported that faculty members are responsible for 75%-90% of all academic advising conducted at colleges and universities in the United States. Faculty members are expected to fulfill their academic advising roles, but due to multiple responsibilities, academic advising frequently assumes a secondary role. According to Allen and Smith (2008), faculty members reported that they should only take responsibility for specific advising functions that they deemed to be important.

Dillon and Fisher (2000) collected faculty perceptions of faculty-student advising from 50 faculty respondents at a mid-sized university. Faculty members suggested that the top factor in successful academic advising was preparation and knowledge of advising. In their roles as advisors, however, some faculty members were more interested in providing correct information to students than in developing relationships with student advisees (Dillon & Fisher, 2000; Tien & Blackburn, 1996).

**Types of academic advising.** Researchers continue to demonstrate that the quality of relationships between students and advisors affects the quality of students' academic experiences (Zhao, Golde, & McCormick, 2007). Questions remain, however, regarding what comprises good academic advising and how are these attributes reflected in the following types of academic advising: individual, group, developmental, anticipatory, appreciative, and web-based.

***Individual advising.*** Individual advising is an approach to advising that involves an advisor, generally a specific representative of the institution, and a student (or students) and issues related to academic progress (Gordon, 1992). Nutt (2000) further described individual advising as an interactive relationship between advisors and student advisees. In defining individual advising, Frost (1991) emphasized that advisor-advisee contact was vitally important.

***Group advising***. Group advising is an advising model that supplements traditional one-on-one advising meetings (Davis, 2009). From a practical standpoint, group advising is the best option for advising when one-on-one, advisor-advisee sessions are not feasible (King, 2000). As noted by Habley (2011), academic advisors are faced with the challenge and responsibility of advising large numbers of students. In group advising sessions, both the advisors and students or advisees share responsibility for the process (King, 2000). Students are able to develop relationships with other students who share similar academic interests. These group-advising sessions provide students with opportunities to discuss courses, study tips, and other academic concerns (Davis, 2009). Advisors are able to effectively and efficiently convey important information to a large number of students at the same time (King, 2000).

***Developmental advising***. Developmental advising focuses on the overall development of students (Thompson, 2008). Upcraft, Gardner, and Barefoot (2005) suggested that developmental advising provides a more holistic approach to the advising environment.

Crookston (1972) described the activity of developmental advising as an ongoing relationship between advisors and students in which both parties share the responsibility of participating in academic planning. Students are encouraged to become more self-sufficient in their decision-making and problem solving (Crookston, 1972; Frost, 1995; Thompson, 2008). Instead of supplying students with the answers to their advising questions, advisors engage student learning through more active participation of students in their own academic and career planning (Frost, 1995).

***Anticipatory advising***. Anticipatory advising (Davis, 2009) is a more contemporary term for intrusive advising (Glennen & Baxley, 1985). Anticipatory advising is described as a more direct and prescriptive advising approach that seeks to motivate students who may be experiencing academic difficulties (Heiseller & Parette, 2002). According to Frost (2000), anticipatory advising is an important and useful tool for retaining underprepared students in college. Anticipatory advising requires a more structural focus and "hands-on" approach. Monitoring students' progress becomes an integral aspect of the advising process, which allows problems to be identified before they become more serious (Gordon, 1992). As a result, anticipatory advising requires the scheduling of regular advising sessions or appointments by and with advisors throughout the academic calendar (Davis, 2009; Varney, 2007).

***Appreciative advising***. Bloom, Hutson, and He (2008) described appreciative advising as an approach that creates a positive environment between students and advisors. According to Truschel (2008), appreciative advising blends students' academic and social environments on campus by linking them with an advisor, who is a member of the college or university community. Advisors help to facilitate academic and social integration of students by involving them in the college or university educational experience through dialogue that enhances self-esteem, modifies locus of control, and motivates student performance (Truschel, 2008). The appreciative advising process creates a positive learning environment where students are at ease and allowed to openly discuss a range of academic, social, and personal subjects that are important to them (Bloom, 2008).

***Web-based advising***. Technology has greatly revolutionized the academic environment, specifically in the classroom. It also has impacted the academic advising environment. Web-based advising is described as the active and prolific use of technology to facilitate academic advising services (McCauley, 2000). The academic advising process is enhanced through the use of technology because students are able to access academic advising information, such as: schedule of classes, institution policies, contact information, registration information, forms, electronic audits, GPA calculators, etc., from computers, tablets, cellular phones, and other electronic devices (Feghali, Zbib, & Hallel, 2011; McCauley, 2000). Advisors are able to dispense vital information pertaining to academic advising via the Internet (McCauley, 2000). According to Rao (1987), web-based advising saves time while creating greater accountability. While the use of technology may contribute to students making better-informed decisions,

researchers caution that it should not completely replace individual (one-on-one) academic advising contact (Yarbrough, 2002). Technology cannot establish the rapport needed to ensure student success.

**Academic advisors.** Academic advisors are increasingly considered a major contributing factor in the academic, personal, social, and career development of students (Harding, 2008). The role of the academic advisor has rapidly evolved due to the changing needs of a more diverse student population at colleges and universities (Reinarz, 2000). Many institutions are now tasked with addressing the advising needs of these diverse students. According to Gordon (1992), academic advisors continue to share advising responsibilities with other personnel at these institutions, including: faculty, professionals, para-professionals, and peers.

***Faculty advisors*.** Faculty advisors are described as full-time, departmental faculty who provide advising services to undergraduate students (McMahan, 2008). Faculty advisors have always fulfilled an important role in the academic advising of students. Habley (2003) stated, "Trends notwithstanding, however, faculty advising services remain a constant in American higher education" (p. 25). Faculty advisors are expected to assist students with planning and scheduling courses, keep students abreast of academic requirements and policies, and facilitate student progress towards graduation. Many colleges and universities depend solely on faculty advisors to promote and deliver these and other advising services. However, Habley and Morales (1998) noted that many institutions are moving toward a more centralized advising model with full-time advisors bearing more of the advising responsibilities. In this centralized model, all student academic advising services are facilitated by one office.

***Professional advisors***. Professional advisors are typically non-faculty (Gordon, 1992). Over the past several decades, the number of full-time professional advisors has dramatically increased as a result of the growing recognition of the importance of academic advising (Reinarz, 2000). The increased use of professional advisors is likely the result of increased student enrollment and a lack of interest and availability on the part of faculty members in providing advising functions (Gordon, 1992). Faculty advisors are increasingly challenged with the demands of full-time teaching, service to the institution, and research. Because professional advisors are full-time, they are more able to commit time and resources to the student advising process. Reinarz (2000) stated that full-time professional advisors are starting to be recognized by colleges and universities for the valuable advising services they provide.

***Para-professional advisors*.** Para-professional advisors provide advising services to students on a part-time basis (Kerr, 1983; Reinarz, 2000). Typically used at four-year public institutions, para-professional advisors allow institutions to maximize flexibility in the advising process. Para-professional advisors minimize overhead costs associated with academic advising without reducing the quality of services provided (Gordon, 1992; Teitelbaum, 2000).

***Peer advisors*.** Peer advisors are a less costly method of delivering advising services to students (Reinarz, 2000). Researchers have increasingly demonstrated that peer advising is a clearly established practice at many institutions of higher education (Conray, 1978; Davis & Ballard, 1985; Gordon, 1992; Habley, 1979). The role of peer advisors can be facilitated by graduate students, practicum students, and in some cases, student residence hall counselors (Reinarz, 2000). After adequate training, peer advisors

can provide basic procedural information and help connect students with other campus resources.

## Conclusion

The literature review supported the claims that student retention is vitally important to student success and quality academic advising could be an important consideration for colleges and universities to improve retention. Theories by Tinto (1987), Astin (1984, 1999), and Bean and Eaton (2000) were identified to develop a theoretical framework for the increased use of academic advising. The literature review also defined student retention and factors that impact student departure. Additionally, first-generation students were described and predictors of success were outlined. The literature review defined academic advising, discussed faculty and staff perceptions of academic advising, and types of academic advising delivery systems. In the next chapter, the research methodology and design of the research study is presented.

# CHAPTER THREE

# METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

For this research investigation, a qualitative research methodology was used to study how the academic advising experiences of first-generation students influenced their retention at a public, historically black college and university (HBCU) in the southeastern United States. A qualitative approach was used to further understand the academic advising experiences of first-generation students. Creswell (2010) provided the rationale for using this qualitative design by stating, "Qualitative research is an inquiry approach that is useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon" (p. 626). Patton (2002) further noted that qualitative inquiry is the best choice for researchers interested in understanding some phenomenon or problem. This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the methodological framework for this study.

## Research Design

The research design for this qualitative study specifically focused on data collected through interviews with first-generation students. I conducted a single site study at Southeastern A&M University (SAMU), a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. Research participants included 10 first-generation, African American students who were first-year students and in good standing at SAMU in the fall of 2011. At the time of the study, these students had returned to the institution for their second year in the fall of 2012. The findings of this study may help to increase institutional understanding of

student perceptions of their own academic advising experiences and ultimately help to make academic advising a more effective retention strategy at HBCUs.

**Qualitative approach.** This qualitative multiple case study was grounded in phenomenology. Phenomenology is defined as a research approach that studies the experiences of individuals (Creswell, 2012; Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012; Merriam, 2009). Much of the qualitative tradition is based on phenomenology because it emphasizes experiences and the interpretation of those experiences and assumes that shared experiences are important (Merriam, 2009). Phenomenology was first used by German philosopher Husserl to develop a rigorous science. Since the early 1900s, phenomenology has become an established and respectable methodological approach for conducting educational research (Patton, 2002). Ellis (2011) stated, "The manner humans experience phenomenon allows them to make meaning of the occurrences" (p. 52). Research studies grounded in phenomenology give participants the opportunity to describe their individual experiences. How people interpret their experiences is important because it is related to how they view the world (Patton, 2002). A phenomenological multiple case study was the best qualitative approach to use to address the specific research questions designed for this study because it provided student participants the opportunity to describe their academic advising experiences. Additionally, it helped me interpret students' academic advising experiences as related to their decision to return to SAMU in the second year.

**Case study.** A case study is a research approach that explores programs, events, activities, or processes (Creswell, 2009). Case studies are used when researchers are interested in activities that involve individuals rather than groups (Stake, 1995), and case

studies are commonly used in educational research (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2006; Yin & Davis, 2006). Researchers use case studies to better understand situations from the perspectives of others. Scholz and Tietje (2002) claimed that a case study "investigates a contemporary problem within a real-life context" (p. 7). Because the purpose of this research study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students and whether these experiences, in turn, influenced their retention at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States, I determined that a case study was the best research method to use.

Schramm (1971) noted that case studies explain a decision or set of decisions and why they were made. My intent in this study was to contribute to the knowledge in the field of academic advising and retention by applying research findings to practice. Creswell (2010) and Stake (2000) both described three types of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. According to Creswell (2010) and Stake (2000), the collective case study is used to provide insight into an issue in order to investigate a phenomenon. The purpose of exploring the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at SAMU was to discover an "explanation that fits each case, even though the cases will vary in their details" (Yin, 1994, p. 112).

**Interview design.** Data for this study were gathered through face-to-face student interviews. According to Seidman (2006), the purpose of phenomenological interviews is to understand the experiences of others and to make sense of their experiences. I used an interview protocol that consisted of open-ended questions that guided the interview process. These open-ended questions also provided me with in-depth, first-hand accounts of student participant experiences (Patton, 2002). For the purpose of this study, I asked a

range of open-ended questions that allowed participants to focus on topics that would provide more detailed information about their academic advising experiences.

Open-ended interview questions focused on students' initial academic advising experiences, perceptions of academic advisor(s), expectations of past academic advising experiences, length of academic advising sessions, issues or subjects discussed in academic advising sessions, impact of academic advising experiences on decision to return to the university in year two, and identification of the type(s) of academic advising experience. Seidman (2006) supported this approach to data collection by stating, "An open-ended question…establishes the territory to be explored while allowing the participant to take any direction he or she wants" (p. 84). I recorded all interview sessions with a voice recorder.

Using this phenomenological approach, I conducted one face-to-face interview with each participant. Interviews focused on participants' past academic advising experiences and their personal understanding of those experiences. Interviews also allowed participants to make connections between their academic advising experiences and their decision to return to SAMU. When further clarification of any of the participant responses was needed, I conducted follow-up interviews. All interviews were held at the research site and lasted between 45-60 minutes.

**Role of the Researcher**

I have been teaching in higher education for over 15 years, at SAMU, a public HBCU. For the past three years, I have also been functioning as a faculty academic advisor, working directly with student majors in the department. I am a member of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). My current position as a member

of the teaching faculty allows me numerous opportunities to come in contact with first-generation students who are considered “at-risk” for departure from college, and retention has become a major activity of importance at my institution. From personal experience and observation, I have deduced that academic advising could make the difference in retaining these students. I believe that this research exploring the academic advising experiences of first-generation students will assist in understanding whether or not academic advising has contributed to students’ decision to return to the institution after their first year. As a result, this study is designed to focus on returning first-generation students and their academic advising experiences.

As a faculty academic advisor, I realize that my experiences with academic advising and resulting personal bias could have affected the collection and analysis of data from student participant interviews. Throughout the course of this study, I attempted to remain unbiased and maintain objectivity. Additionally, I used specific validation methods to assist me in identifying my own personal biases.

**Data Collection**

Data collection for this study consisted of data that were gained through face-to-face interviews with student participants. Wengraf (2004) indicated that interviews in qualitative research are specifically designed to improve knowledge. Setting, participants, instruments used, research access, and research procedures are further described in this chapter.

Collected data assisted me in answering the three research questions that guided this study:

1. What are the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
2. What are the categories of academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
3. How do academic advising experiences influence the retention of first-generation college students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?

Data for this study were collected during the spring of 2013. All of the interviews were conducted during the first three weeks of the spring semester. Interviews were spread over two months to facilitate collection and analysis of data.

**Setting**. This study was conducted at a Southeastern A&M University (SAMU). A public HBCU, SAMU has the distinction of being a traditional 1890 land-grant institution. For educational and research purposes, the university is identified as a Master's Colleges and Universities Carnegie Classification institution. The university is organized into undergraduate colleges and Graduate Studies, which awards 41 Baccalaureate, 23 Master's, one Educational Specialist, and four doctoral degree programs. The university serves students from 44 states and 11 foreign countries.

SAMU recorded an undergraduate student enrollment of 4,220 students in the fall of 2011. In the fall of 2012, the university recorded an undergraduate enrollment of 4,169 students.

**Participants**. The sample for this study was collected from first-generation students in the fall 2011 freshmen class at SAMU. First-time freshmen enrollment at SAMU has fluctuated over the past five years, and the average fall retention rate for entering first-time students at SAMU was 70.65% between the years 2001 and 2012 (see Table 1).

Table 1
*Freshman Retention Rates (as of Fall 2012)*

| Year | Initial Cohort of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen | Number Retained at the Beginning of Year 2 | Retention Rates % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2001 | 1,038 | 785 | 75.63 |
| 2002 | 1,043 | 840 | 80.54 |
| 2003 | 1,287 | 827 | 64.26 |
| 2004 | 1,198 | 833 | 69.53 |
| 2005 | 1,091 | 762 | 69.84 |
| 2006 | 1,133 | 775 | 68.40 |
| 2007 | 882 | 598 | 67.80 |
| 2008 | 1,044 | 719 | 68.87 |
| 2009 | 1,046 | 784 | 74.95 |
| 2010 | 1,075 | 715 | 66.51 |
| 2011 | 856 | 578 | 67.52 |
| Average Retention Rate (%) | | | 70.35 |

Ten second-year students were chosen for this study using purposeful sampling. Patton (2002) described purposeful sampling as one of the distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research. Purposeful sampling involves the intentional selection of individuals or sites in order to understand a phenomenon (Creswell, 2010; Merriam, 1998). As stated by Patton (2002), “Purposeful sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (p. 230). Because the purpose of this research study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU, I learned more from studying

a small number of carefully selected student participants than a larger cohort of students (Patton, 2002). I selected 10 student participants to ensure that I would have a sufficient number of participants to produce an adequate pool of data (Seidman, 2006) and to avoid repeating data that had already been presented (Douglas, 1976; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rubin H., & Rubin, I, 1995, 2012; Weiss, 1994). I supplied 10, $15.00 gift cards as incentives for students participating in this study after the completion of each interview.

**Instrument.** In qualitative research, the primary instrument is the researcher (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2000; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). This research study used open-ended questions (see Appendix B) to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students. I employed the use of probing questions to follow up participant responses for the purpose of further clarifying or gaining more details. I used flexibility in asking probing questions in order to gain a better understanding of participant experiences.

**Access**. The appropriate approval to begin the research study was sought and obtained from my dissertation committee prior to conducting the interviews. I completed training at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Institutional Review Board (IRB) through the IRB Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). I sought approval from the IRB (see Appendix A) at UAB to conduct research and approval from the Chair of the Department of English & Foreign Languages in order to solicit student volunteers for the research study. Potential student participants who met the research study criteria took courses in the department as part of their general education requirements. Once approvals from the IRB and dissertation committee were received, I solicited volunteers for the study.

**Procedure.** I sought participants from first-generation students through direct contact in order to establish rapport with potential study respondents and to begin to build an interviewing relationship (Seidman, 2006). With the assistance of other faculty colleagues, I identified classes of potential, sophomore-level students. I then visited each class in person to solicit student volunteers. At each classroom visit, I explained the purpose of the research study and distributed a short questionnaire (see Appendix C) which helped me to identify students who met the study criteria and could be added to the pool of potential participants. The questionnaire asked students to state their classification, age, enrollment status in fall 2011 and 2012, and parents' or guardians' highest level of education. I selected 10 student participants from this group of questionnaire respondents and met with them within a week after their selection. Before interviews began, I contacted each study participant to explain the focus of the study in greater detail and to review the interview process. Interviews were scheduled with participants for the week following this contact.

Participants were provided a copy of the interview protocol prior to the interview to allow them to become more familiar with the questions and to help them prepare for the interview. At the beginning of each interview, I reviewed the purpose and design of the study. Most importantly, I addressed any concerns about participant confidentiality. I asked open-ended interview questions that focused on participants' past experiences with academic advising, current experiences with academic advising, and understanding of these academic advising experiences. Additional interviews were only conducted if further clarification was needed. I also asked open-ended follow-up interview questions that would further focus on participants' past experiences with academic advising.

At the conclusion of these interviews, I reiterated the purpose and design of the study. I thanked each participant for his or her contribution to the study and provided a $15.00 gift card to each participant in appreciation for his or her participation in the study.

**Research Questions**

I used a phenomenological multiple case study methodology to address the following research questions:

1. What are the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
2. What are the categories of academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
3. Do academic advising experiences influence the retention of first-generation college students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?

**Data Analysis**

Creswell (2010) stated, "Analyzing data requires understanding how to make sense of text and images" (p. 236). As a result, data analysis was a key component in understanding this qualitative case study. Boeije (2010) described qualitative data analysis as a process of breaking down and reassembling data with the main purpose of transforming data into findings. Data analysis for this case study was guided by a six-step process for analyzing qualitative data as outlined by Creswell (2010): collecting, preparing, and organizing data for analysis; transcribing the data; coding the data; using the codes to develop emerging themes; developing narratives to present the findings; and

interpreting the data. Data analysis began after the first phase of interviews was completed.

**Coding**. Hatch (2002) stated, “Data analysis is a systematic search for meaning” (p. 148). In the search for meaning, after all of the interviews were completed, I separated the data so that it could be analyzed; this involved the development of codes. According to Creswell (2010), “Codes are labels used to describe a segment of text” (p. 244). As it is described, coding is one of the best methods that can be for separating data (Creswell, 2010). The process of developing codes allowed me to more easily capture the experiences of student participants in an organized manner (Patton, 2002).

I followed coding procedures as described by Tesch (1990) and Creswell (2007) for the analysis of the data. After carefully reviewing each individual transcript, I sorted the text into smaller segments of data that conveyed similar meaning and assigned codes accordingly. I then grouped similar codes together and eliminated redundant codes. Following Creswell’s guidelines (2009), I reviewed the remaining codes and categorized them into themes. As noted by Creswell (2010), themes are codes combined to form a major idea.

**Validity.** Checking for the validity of findings was an important step in the analysis process. Creswell (2010) claimed, “Validating findings means that the researcher determines the accuracy or credibility of the findings” (p. 259). Qualitative researchers have suggested that the researcher incorporate validity strategies into the research design (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Validity helped to establish the trustworthiness of the data. As recommended by Creswell (2009), I utilized

multiple validation strategies to assess the validity of findings. These processes included peer debriefing and member checking.

***Peer debriefing.*** As noted, peer debriefing was used as a technique for data validation and an important part of the data analysis process for this study. In peer debriefing, individuals who are not involved in the research study provide the researcher with objective perspectives to explore ideas that the researcher may not have considered or overlooked (Boeije, 2010; Creswell, 2007). According to Ellis, peer reviewers allow the researcher opportunities to gain input from unbiased individuals. Members of my doctoral cohort served as peer reviewers.

***Member checking***. Member checking helped me check for the accuracy of the data from interviews. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described member checking as one of the most important methods of increasing the credibility of research. According to Creswell, (2010), the researcher asks the participants to review the data they provided to ensure its accuracy. I asked participants to review their interview transcripts to verify that their narratives were correct. Polit and Beck (2009) cautioned that member checking could lead to "misleading conclusions" (p. 499). Participants could agree with my interpretations in order to satisfy me as the researcher (Thorne & Darbyshire, 2005).

**Ethical Considerations**

Protection of research participants was a major concern for me. According to Creswell (2008), the researcher has an obligation to ensure the safety of those participating in a study and providing valuable information. Because of my obligation to address ethical guidelines, this research study was guided by strict ethical considerations. Clearly established ethical research principles were employed throughout the duration of

this study. Ethical considerations began with IRB approval from UAB. In order to minimize the potential risk(s) to participants, students were assigned pseudonyms in all research documentation. Pseudonyms concealed participants' identities and maintained a strict code of confidentiality. All notes, audio recordings, and interview transcripts were filed and stored under labels that referred only to assigned pseudonyms.

**Conclusion**

I used a phenomenological multiple case study to conduct an exploration of the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at SAMU, a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. In this chapter, I described the methodology and rationale for using a qualitative research approach to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. Ten participants were selected for this study. All participants were interviewed in-person by me at the research site. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded. Coding was used to develop themes. Member checking and peer review were utilized as validation strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Additionally, my role as the researcher and ethical considerations were described. In the next chapter, I will present the findings of this research study.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# FINDINGS

## Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. This study further explored these experiences in relation to students' retention in the second year. The research questions that guided this study included the following:

1. What are the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
2. What are the categories of academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States ?
3. Do academic advising experiences influence the retention of first-generation college students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?

This chapter includes a description of the research site and rich descriptions of the 10 participants in this research study follow. Additionally, findings related to each of the research questions are presented.

## Research Site

This study was conducted at a single site at SAMU, a public, historically black college and university (HBCU), land grant, and Master's Colleges and Universities Carnegie Classification institution in the southeastern United States. The university is located in a growing, high-tech community in north Alabama. The university awards 41

Baccalaureate, 23 Master's, one Educational Specialist, and four doctoral degree programs.

The site for the research study was primarily selected because of my access to SAMU and its fairly large pool of first-generation students. Undergraduate student enrollment at SAMU in the fall of 2011 was 4,169, including 1,762 freshmen. Of these students, 1,029 were classified as first-time freshmen and included first-generation students.

**Description of Participants**

Ten participants for the research study were chosen using purposeful sampling. Once identified, all 10 students ultimately participated in the interviews. The sampling criteria stipulated that each participant be a currently-enrolled and full-time sophomore (or second-year student) in the fall 2012 semester and enrolled at SAMU as a full-time freshman (or first-year student) in the fall 2011 semester. Interviews for this research study were conducted and recorded in one-on-one sessions of 45-60 minutes at SAMU, where participant were currently enrolled.

Participants could be described as many of the following: "African American," "academically unprepared," "low socio-economic standing," "first-generation," "at-risk," "needing financial aid," "needing developmental courses," and "newly-graduated from high school." Participants included six female and four male students. All students were assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality and to protect their identities. Each student brought both unique and insightful perspectives of his or her first-year academic advising experiences to the interviews. The following descriptions in Table 2 provide additional information about participant demographics.

Table 2
*Student Demographics*

| Participant (Pseudonyms) | Gender | Race/Ethnicity | Age | Major |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Casey | Female | African American | 19 | Biology |
| Trish | Female | African American | 19 | Telecommunications |
| LaTasha | Female | African American | 19 | Logistics |
| Mike | Male | African American | 20 | Community Planning |
| Tre’ | Male | African American | 19 | Telecommunications |
| Sheri | Female | African American | 19 | Education |
| Kelli | Female | African American | 19 | Music |
| Greg | Male | African American | 20 | Business Management |
| Johnnie | Male | African American | 19 | Social Work |
| Michelle | Female | African American | 20 | Business Administration |

**Participant A: Casey.** Casey is a 19-year-old African American female. She was unusually quiet student and showed signs of apparent nervousness. Casey has a personality that has to be actively engaged. She described herself as being undecided about what field to major in and what career path she wanted to pursue, even from her senior year in high school. Casey talked about opting to complete a college interest survey, mainly at the insistence of her high school counselor, to help her narrow her options. In her words, the results of the survey were not able to help her settle on a major or career. Casey attributed her indecision to her upbringing. The younger of two children, she recalls not having to make too many major decisions for herself.

**Participant B: Trish.** Trish is a 19-year-old African American female. She described herself as “all about business.” A demure young lady, Trish seemed reserved

but very focused and conscientious about her education, which she attributed to parents who provided whatever she needed to be successful in high school and beyond. She talked about setting and achieving goals, especially ones related to her future plans to work for a news program at a major television news corporation after college. Trish said, “Things go somewhat as expected because I took the time to plan.”

**Participant C: LaTasha.** LaTasha is a 19-year-old African American female. She seems uncertain and dependent on others. LaTasha described herself as “cautious.” She too is the youngest child in her family. As a result, she acknowledges being “babied” from time to time by her parents and siblings. LaTasha explained that her sense of uncertainty was based on some of her previous experiences in high school. According to her, shyness is also something that also affects how she interacts with those in authority. LaTasha purposely avoids eye contact, instead focusing on objects directly in front of her her as a defense mechanism. Conversation with her becomes a challenge.

**Participant D: Mike.** Mike is a 20-year-old African American male. An only child and the product of a single-parent home, he described himself as a “Momma’s boy.” Growing up, much of Mike’s life was primarily spent around his mother and other close family. In his own words, they looked out for him. As a result, Mike honestly admits that he is very dependent on the attention of others. When this need is not met, he seems deeply unsatisfied with the experience. He spoke about his plans to move back home to work in local city government but to primarily be back with his family.

**Participant E: Tre’.** Tre’ is a 19-year-old African American male. He is a student-athlete on scholarship with the football team. A product of a two parent home and the first of his immediate family to attend college, Tre’ seriously recognizes his family’s

daunting expectations of him. With a big grin on his face, he talked about his childhood dream of one day playing professional football in the National Football League after college. Now that he is in college, Tre' talked about refocusing and having more realistic goals for the future. A serious student-athlete, Tre' spoke passionately about seeing himself in front of the camera as a sportscaster, covering not only his favorite sport but all sports. Tall with an athletic build, he displayed a calming personality and an easy-going demeanor that surprisingly contrasted with his physical presence.

**Participant F: Sheri.** Sheri is a 19-year-old African American female. She thoughtfully described herself as "fiercely independent." Sheri grew up in a home with three other siblings, all males. In her words, she had to "fight for herself." Sheri's independent nature developed during her "me time." A fiercely independent individual, she said that she likes to take charge of situations in order to ensure success of the endeavors she undertakes. It was during times like these that she cultivated her passion for reading, especially on topics related to politics. She talked about going to law school and specializing in immigration law so that she could affect the lives of people who are seemingly forgotten.

**Participant G: Kelli.** Kelli is a 19-year-old African American female. A music major, she had strongly considered a career in Education so that she could teach music. After her first year in college, she decided to forgo a teaching career and pursue her music full-time, only after completing her college degree. Kelli stated, "Music. I love music. Music is my life." She described herself as a "free spirit." Kelli is very outgoing and the ink on her freshly-tattooed arm further highlights her artistic nature. Kelli freely admitted that her "in your face" style of communication might seem overwhelming," but

it was also evident that she was quick to win over those with whom she associated with a charming personality that is just as complementary as her talents.

**Participant H: Greg.** Greg is a 20-year-old African American male. He was very formal and polite. Greg's talkative nature was on full display. And when asked to describe himself, he said that he had an "in your face" personality. When faced with situations that are less than ideal, Greg shows a strong inner patience that was clearly evident in discussion. He talked about being popular in high school and how that helped to influence his social development now that he was in college. "It came in handy," he stated.

**Participant I: Johnnie.** Johnnie is a 19-year-old African American male. He was primarily raised by his grandmother, after being abandoned by his birth mother. It was clearly evident that this childhood experience has greatly affected his life. Johnnie described himself as independent. And though he admitted to feeling accepted by classmates, instructors, and other peers, he said that he feels that it's "me against the world." As a result, Johnnie said that he continues to feel that college was the main option he had to prepare him for a career that would allow him to display his deep passion for people. When it comes to meeting the challenges of new experiences, this passion is the powerful force in his life that serves as his motivation.

**Participant J: Michelle.** Michelle is a 20-year-old African American female. She very confidently stated that she had the traits necessary to be successful in college. Michelle is very driven and her quick responses underscored a very low tolerance for incompetence. She acknowledged that her "no nonsense" attitude could be viewed as a negative quality to those who did not know her. Michelle matter-of-factly stated, "I don't

apologize for who I am." An only child, she attributed this to her parents who instilled a strong eye for detail and a very conscientious nature in her.

**Themes**

In this section, data gathered from the 10 participant interviews are presented. As a result of my analysis of the collected data, seven themes emerged: Expectations, Contact, Relationships, Information-Driven Advising, Balanced Advising, Advising Factors, and External Influence. Themes and sub-themes are organized and explored further as displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
*Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes*

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|---|---|
| Expectations | Availability<br>Proactive Advising |
| Relationships | Support<br>Advisor Interest |
| Balanced Advising | Holistic Advising<br>Relationships |
| Contact | Initial Meeting<br>Quality |
| Information-Driven Advising | Information<br>Details |
| Advising Factors | Interaction<br>Knowledge<br>Preparation |
| External Influence | Motivation<br>Environment |

**Expectations.** The first theme to emerge from participant responses was student expectations of academic advising experiences. Seven of the ten students had had previous academic advising experiences prior to their enrollment at SAMU, both officially and unofficially. High school guidance counselors, high school athletic coaches, high school faculty, extended family members and other family acquaintances who were also alumni of SAMU, and even select representatives of SAMU facilitated the academic advising. As a result, students had varied understandings of academic advising now that they were making the difficult and somewhat confusing transition from high school to college.

Previous academic advising experiences appeared to have had a significant impact on students' views and expectations of their academic advising experiences as they entered their first year at SAMU. Students indicated, through their frank but honest responses, that they had some basic ideas of what to expect from the college advising process. Students generally understood that the purpose of academic advising was to assist them in the navigation and management of their academic experiences at SAMU. Students' expectations focused on their completion of a degree program and graduation at the end of four or more years of study.

***Availability.*** Advisor availability was the most prominent category expressed by students. Face-to-face academic advising sessions, as previously discussed, were the most desired avenue for academic advising by students. Students described their academic advising experiences in the first year as being facilitated by either professional or faculty advisors.

Four of the 10 students viewed the availability of their academic advisors as positive. Students who had previously indicated that their academic advisors' availability was important seemed to make a connection between availability and the nature of professional advising. Because of the nature of their academic advisors' positions, availability was not a major factor. Professional advisors' schedules were such that students should have been able to see them at any time. Students seeing professional advisors reported a general satisfaction with the availability of their academic advisors. Casey's perspective accurately captured these students' perceptions:

> Every time I ever went [to see my advisor], they've been there. Maybe [a few times they were away from their offices because] they were away at lunch, but they were gone [no] longer than 15, 20 minutes.

Trish provided further validation of students' expectations of their advisors' availability by asserting:

> There were only a couple times that my advisor was not available. But other than those few times, I haven't had any problems with her availability. My advisor was pretty easy to access. Her office was in ---------- Hall, a central area where …students could get to it when they needed.

Many students who saw professional advisors also reported having the opportunity to visit them for advising at their own discretion. Michelle remarked, "I knew if I needed, if I had any questions, or I needed someone to hold a conversation about school with, I knew I could just come by [my advisor's] office." Some students had more than sufficient opportunities to formally schedule their academic advising sessions, but many others utilized a more spontaneous approach to scheduling their academic advising

sessions. Many students just showed up to see their academic advisors without advance notice. One such student, LaTasha, matter-of-factly stated, “No appointment needed. I could just drop in.” Many of these types of academic advising opportunities were more dependent on the availability of the students than that of the advisors.

Students advised by faculty advisors also indicated the importance of availability of their academic advisors. In contrast to their peers who had been advised by professional advisors and had more positive perceptions, these students reflected negatively on the availability of their academic advisors. Tre’ sarcastically remarked, “Sometimes he was available and sometimes he wasn’t.” It was obvious that he did not have high expectations of his academic advisor’s availability. Kelli’s disappointment was clearly evident in her response: “He’s not as available as he could be. Sometimes he had to go to other engagements…or there might have been other things that he had to do.”

Students acknowledged having much greater difficulty with the more preferred, spontaneous academic advising sessions. As Mike described, “It would be difficult just showing up at her office. I would have to call in advance and make a reservation.” Many of these students’ negative reflections were rooted in their prior academic advising experiences in high school. Most were used to being able to meet with their counselors as needed. Now that they had begun making the transition to SAMU, many students expected the same advisor availability that they were used to from high school.

Students also perceived that a difficulty existed because of the conflicting schedules of both faculty advisors and students. Students with faculty advisors noted their varying academic and employment schedules. Faculty advisors’ schedules also varied due to their course assignments and mandated participation in other activities throughout

the day and week. The unpredictability of conflicting schedules was reflected in the short amount of time spent in some sessions with faculty advisors. Tre' recounted, "How long did my academic advising meeting typically last? Mmm, maybe 10 minutes at the most."

Availability of academic advisors was also made difficult due to the large volume of students that most faculty academic advisors were assigned. In many cases, as Greg recounted, "There were so many people [students] waiting to see any one advisor." Sheri recalled, "[My advisor] could already have someone else in there." Some students viewed their opportunities for adequate academic advising sessions as being hampered by other peers needing that same type of attention.

As a result, many students felt vulnerable and overwhelmed by the challenges they faced as new students in a new and unfamiliar environment. They may not have been aware of what courses to take or even what order the courses should be taken, for example. Because of their apparent lack of experience, students talked about relying on the knowledge and experience of their academic advisors. They each entered their initial academic advising experiences expecting their advisors to be more proactive in sharing information and providing direction they would need.

***Proactive advising*.** Students clearly indicated, from earlier responses about their prior academic advising experiences, that they had strong preferences for a more proactive academic advising experience. In their opinion, this more assertive advising style would help them gain some level of security and increase their confidence, which would assist in the successful progression of their college experiences.

Many students' academic advising expectations contrasted with their actual academic advising experiences. The majority of students acknowledged a lack of

assertiveness on the part of their academic advisors in many of these cases. Sheri specifically recalled one such experience with seemingly pinpoint accuracy:

> I was the one saying, "I need to take this." He had the curriculum in front of him but he was like, "Are you sure you need to take this [course] at this time?" He didn't say, "Because of your grades, you should take this class…."

Instead, students regularly encountered academic advisors that acquiesced to the students, allowing them to take the primary role in the advising sessions. Students eagerly referenced their own experiences with less-than-proactive advisors. LaTasha corroborated these experiences by describing one of her own:

> I wanted her to tell me what classes I need to take. I wanted her to [inform me about the] curriculum I had to take. I wanted to know about the networking thing with the social clubs and whatnot, which I didn't get.

Casey used her own academic advising experiences as evidence to further justify students' preferences for more intrusive advising experiences:

> I basically did all the work. …He pointed me in the right direction, but basically, I chose what [classes] I wanted to take…. He just said, "Look at this curriculum. Do you want to take this?"

Some of these students suggested that academic advisors may not have always volunteered the information to them. Some students experienced increased pressure from their advisors' inaction to take more responsibility for their own academic advising. As a result, a number of students were put in awkward positions and forced to make some choices or decisions about their academic plans of study that they were not adequately

prepared to make. In some cases, students made mistakes that they had to overcome. This added to the challenges they were already experiencing as new students.

**Contact.** Another important part of the academic advising experience, as related to students' expectations, involved contact between students and advisors. At a time when current studies have reported that email, phone calls, text messaging, instant messaging, and video conferencing are the more popular communication methods for this generation of students, students at SAMU largely identified face-to-face contact as the preferred means of academic advising. These students were much more demanding of attention from their academic advisors. These types of sessions provided them opportunities to have their need for contact with their academic advisors met in a timelier manner.

***Initial contact.*** Scheduling an advising session and meeting with one's academic advisor was of utmost importance to these students. Many of them recalled experiencing both an eagerness and nervousness to begin their academic advising experiences as early as they could, preferably at the beginning of the semester. After some thought, Greg declared, "I wish that I had met him sooner because I feel like I wouldn't have wasted time taking [some] classes I didn't need if I had talked to him first." Greg's deliberate response gave voice to his disappointment of not being able to meet with his academic advisor much sooner than he had.

Some students had a more difficult time making the initial contact with their academic advisors. In some cases, advisors' response to the student initiation of academic advising contact was delayed. Once contact was finally made, students were able to

successfully schedule their initial academic advising sessions at the earliest convenience of their academic advisors.

For the majority of students, however, initial contact with their academic advisors took longer than they had expected. Many of the initial advising sessions occurred weeks and even months after the beginning of each semester. Students expressed dissatisfaction with this inability to meet with their academic advisors for the first time. Trish's disappointment with the initial delay of meeting with her advisor was relayed through the following statement:

> I didn't know where to go and I had to track down my advisor and she didn't reply for the longest. I kept calling her. I would leave my name and number on her…voicemail. So she would contact me, like two or three weeks later.

Some students in this group said that they strongly believed they had time sensitive concerns that could have been addressed early in the semester. For these students, time was an important factor in dealing with important concerns such as academic deadlines, scholarship applications, letters of recommendations, internships, etc. They also noted that hesitation or perceived delays involving their academic advisors in addressing certain issues could drastically affect their (students') motivation and academic progress.

***Quality*.** The quality of the academic advising sessions highlighted the needs students had for greater contact with academic advisors. Students acknowledged that they were not satisfied with just seeing their academic advisors. They also seemed to recognize and understand the importance of what actually transpired in their academic advising sessions. Michelle clarified this position by stating, "[The sessions didn't] last very long necessarily." These students indicated that their advisors assumed there were

some things that students should have already known. As a result, there was no need for the advisors to spend time discussing “no-brainers” that students were believed to know. Tre’s discontent with short advising sessions was evident from his quick response, “Without having the time to ask questions and get understanding, there’s no way I could have gotten any knowledge. I cannot get advised like that. I mean, it’s just that simple.”

Students also described a growing frustration with short advising sessions that limited them in getting their advising needs met. An equally frustrated Sheri confirmed these sentiments:

> My advising sessions lasted maybe 10 minutes at the most. I felt like I was being rushed sometimes because there was [sic] people in the halls to see the advisor also. I mean, he or she wasn’t rushing you, but it’s just that there was [sic] so many people waiting. You didn’t want to take up too much [of his or her] time.

As a result, some students felt obligated not to pressure their academic advisors for more time for advising sessions. Others were often constrained by the actual time available with academic advisors. Students acknowledged that the short academic advising sessions they had experienced during the first year were not beneficial to them. In many cases, students’ academic advising needs required additional advising sessions, which for some were a challenge to schedule. Some of these same students reported that they ultimately neglected the issues that needed attention or they attempted to address the issues themselves, with varying results.

**Relationships.** Students’ desire to develop relationships with their academic advisors also emerged among participants. Students viewed their academic advisors as the primary individuals responsible for helping them progress successfully through their

first year of college. Making connections with their academic advisors became a primary goal of students.

***Support.*** The support of academic advisors was prominent in my dialogue with students. From their responses it was apparent that students wanted support from their academic advisors. Students not only talked about their expectations for support, but they also trusted that they would be supported academically, professionally, and even socially by their academic advisors. Students overwhelmingly viewed their academic advisors as valuable resources that they should be able to utilize when needed throughout their matriculation at SAMU.

When they were in need of help, students wanted to know that they had someone to go to receive assistance. Tre' expressed this notion adamantly, "My first year, I had one lady [advisor] and now I got a different one…. I can go back and ask both of them questions that I need to be answered and get those answers." Greg simply wanted "to be able to go to them [advisors] and get help when…faced with a difficult choice."

Both Michelle and Mike emphatically expressed the position that academic advisors should keep up with students for the purpose of inquiring about and monitoring their progress during the semester. Michelle "expected him [the advisor]…to make sure that [she] was in the right classes." Mike echoed similar sentiments when he stated, "She actually cared about my grades and stuff [during] the semester." Students also associated support with the specific amount of contact they had with their academic advisors.

***Advisor interest.*** Students alluded to having a strong need for academic advisors to show genuine interest in them and their experiences in college. Trish thoughtfully endorsed these sentiments, "I liked that she was…she seemed interested in what I wanted

to do. And she was actually concerned about my grades, even if it was midterm. She wanted 'A's. She wanted me to stay on the [right] path." Tre's comments validated his peers' comments about academic advisor interest: "Like every time I see him, he asks, 'How are your grades?' He actually asks me how I'm doing and stuff whenever I see him or when I go up there to his office."

In fact, many students desired a high level of interest from their academic advisors. In order for relationships to be developed between students and academic advisors, students acknowledged that there was a definite need for trust. Students indicated that trust was established in their academic advisors when interest was the foundation of the academic advising relationships. Michelle said that she was trusting of her advisor and recounted the following, "At my first meeting with my advisor, we spent some time talking about me as a person." She went on to further substantiate how this seemingly small gesture became the first step in a somewhat-satisfying academic advising experience for her. Kelli drew from her own high school experiences in order to validate her point:

> Coming from high school, I wasn't used to someone coming and talking to us who actually was interested in who we are and what we thought. Whatever happened, it kinda happened. But now that I am in college, we [the advisor and student] talk and the conversation was mainly about me and my interests.

Trish offered a response that also reinforced other students' sentiments about building trust with advisors, "She [my advisor] was easy to talk to. She seemed interested in my well-being as a student here at the University." Mike's statement also corroborated many of the perceptions of other students concerning academic advisor interest: "The very first

[advising session], it was pretty much like a questionnaire about who I was." Mike seemed pleased that his academic advisor had taken a greater interest in him. Students seemed adamant about not being solely viewed by their academic advisors as advising quotas.

**Information-driven advising.** Information-driven advising also emerged in students' discussions. Students' perspectives of their first-year academic advising experiences served as the foundation for how they categorized these academic advising experiences. Insight of academic advising provided by students clearly described these academic advising experiences.

***Information.*** The majority of the time, students went to their academic advisors to inquire about and to gain information. Topics of discussion with academic advisors, professional or faculty, varied as much as the students themselves. Students routinely looked to their academic advisors for information, which ranged from their courses, courses of study, degree completion, course locations, instructor recommendations, course recommendations, to institutional policies and procedures. As a result, six of 10 students perceived their discussions with academic advisors in the advising sessions as more information-driven. Casey's description of her advising sessions supported this line of reasoning:

> Yes, I would say that most of the meetings with my advisor was [sic] information-driven. Most were straight academic. We talked about my major, the classes I would have to take in that major, what order I had to take those classes, talked about…stuff like that.

Greg's response was quick to capture the essence of what most students seemed to be thinking about their academic advising sessions: "He [the advisor] gave me information about my major curriculum. And we went over what my class schedule would look like for the year." Still other students further supported the view that academic advising was primarily about information. According to Mike, "It went well…We basically talked about my curriculum for the first semester and first year." Casey and her advisor "didn't discuss anything but strictly academic subjects." LaTasha described her academic advising session in simple terms: "Me and my advisor talked about my major, mainly the classes I had to take in it." Mike added, "As far as topics went, it was pretty much about class and…scheduling, for the most part."

***Details.*** It was obvious from their responses that students generally understood that a number of their academic advising sessions would involve the discussion of specific types of academic information. Students preferred more detail-oriented information from their academic advisors. In many cases, students either solicited the information or the academic advisors voluntarily shared it with them.

For example, students underscored their need to know more specific information about their classes and where they were located. Casey expressed a sense of optimism, "Because I'm new to the college thing, I want to make sure that I'm prepared for my classes by knowing exactly where they are on-campus." Students also reported that there were situations where they "needed to know" specific procedures and processes; for example, what classes were recommended to take together or how long it would take them to get from one class to the next. Being new to SAMU and to the college setting, students readily admitted that they lacked specific knowledge needed to accomplish the

simplest of tasks, knowledge that others might expect them to already have. Therefore, students relied heavily on their academic advisors to articulate this detailed information.

Other students understood that their academic advisors were under considerable pressure to advise a large number of students, not only their first-year peers but also students in their second, third, or fourth years. Students also realized that there were situations that required themselves to be responsible for becoming more knowledgeable about specific details. Mike's view was quite similar to the others: "He [academic advisor] gave me good advice, but if there was something I was interested in knowing or some information I needed cleared up, I had to be the one to ask the questions." Students seemed to understand that the detailed information they had received from academic advisors served an important purpose. For many, this information ultimately could enhance their academic experiences at SAMU. Many students also suggested that this information would directly affect their matriculation and ultimately their degree completion.

**Balanced advising.** Students identified an interest in academic advising that balanced academic information with extra-curricular information. Kelli stated, "I need to know about my classes but I also want to know about what's going on…around campus." Students looked to their academic advisors to assist them in finding that balance. Students asserted that the information they received from their academic advising sessions should further enhance their current and future academic and professional experiences.

***Holistic advising.*** Holistic advising could be considered a more balanced approach to advising. Students expected their advisors to expand the advising discussions to include more topics than those traditionally discussed in advising sessions. Though

only first semester freshmen at the time, many students favored more "big picture advising." According to these students, this type of advising allowed them to make vital connections between classes and/or courses of study and any other relevant personal, academic, and professional experiences that they considered to be important. Across students' advising experiences, most advising sessions were closely associated with the regularly scheduled registration periods at SAMU. This was best illustrated by Greg's response: "It was almost like coming in and just getting a pin number [for registration]." In many advising situations, sessions lasted just long enough for students to obtain a signature on a form or get a registration code from the advisor's computer. Many students expressed their dissatisfaction in meeting with advisors solely for the purpose of completing steps in the registration process. Students also expressed interest in advising sessions that focused on topics of interest to them.

Other students, though in the minority, had views that differed from a number of their peers. They described more positive experiences as related to what was discussed or covered in their academic advising sessions. Sheri boldly stated, "[We talked] about what school I [went] to. Talked about my grade point average (GPA), how I should move forward [academically], what I should do to keep focused, and stuff like that." Tre' also reflected positively, "[Advising sessions] went good. Everything stayed on topic. We even talked about whatever topics I needed to." For these students, more balanced advising sessions made for more productive and positive experiences.

It was quite evident that students wanted their academic advisors to discuss traditional advising topics with them. Advisors were viewed as the primary resources for the dissemination and discussion of this type of information. Students ultimately noted

that this type of guidance would not only enhance their academic experiences at SAMU but also contribute to their social and professional development.

***Relationships.*** Students indicated that their academic advising experiences greatly involved their relationships with their academic advisors. Students' views of these relationships resembled the relationships with their academic advisors prior to their enrollment at SAMU.

Johnnie's response inferred that communication served as the foundation for his relationship with his academic advisor:

> My first advising meeting was… It was helpful to me. We talked…. Kinda gotta conversation going so I could feel more comfortable with my advisor. After so long…after…several meetings, I got to know my advisor. It was good.

Trish also coupled communication with a positive relationship with an advisor:

> At first, I was nervous, scared because this was my first time [being advised]. It was conversation back and forth, me asking questions and he was also asking questions. This made me feel more comfortable with him. By us just talking, I learned so many new things. Even though I have a different advisor now, we still keep in contact and he still checks up on me and how I'm doing.

Students stated that the more balanced advising approach was more of a reassuring force. Students implied that the academic advisors who took inventory of their advisees' needs generally provided helpful information to students.

**Advising factors.** Students had varied academic advising experiences during their first year at SAMU. As evidenced by their candid responses, students received academic advising from professional advisors, faculty advisors, or a combination of both. The

kinds of academic advising experiences provided by these individuals greatly influenced students' decisions to return.

***Interactions.*** Only two of the 10 students openly attributed their return to SAMU in the second year to their first-year academic advising experiences. These two students characterized their interactions with academic advisors as a major contributing factor in their decision that to return to SAMU. LaTasha's response served as confirmation of her own decision to return: "I did like the way I felt when I did meet with my advisor. I really like how she treated me. And that was nice. Kinda like a member of the family thing."

Trish reported considering a transfer to another institution. She too recognized that the interaction between her and her advisor had made a drastic difference in her decision:

> I looked into other programs at other schools. After doing my research, I realized that they didn't have what this school had as far as the type of relationship I had with my advisor… I figured that she was the best [advisor] that I was going to get that would help me finish here.

These students concluded that their advisors had created a positive advising environment, whether that involved holding simple conversations with them; creating a comfortable, friendly atmosphere; or simply making them feel like important (or valued) members of the SAMU community.

***Knowledge.*** Another important factor influencing these students to return was their academic advisors' knowledge of the advising process and individual subject matter. Students acknowledged relying on their academic advisors for various types of information that they believed would enhance their educational experiences.

Advisors with the greatest impact on these students were able to effectively disseminate information using positive methods to guide students. Advisors who impacted these students had more than just an understanding of the subject matter and advising process. Both LaTasha and Trish confidently expressed their thoughts about their advisors' knowledge. According to LaTasha, "She not only spoke like she knew what she was talking about, you know, from our meetings, I [learned] that she in fact did know." Trish further corroborated students' perceptions of advisors' knowledge: "If I had any questions about my major, she was the one I could depend on to provide me the answers I need in the department."

Students noted being put at ease by the demonstration of their advisors' knowledge of the subject matter. Trish described her own perceptions of her advisor:

> [My advisor] seems to know quite a lot. She seems like she's been in the field or that particular field and she knows a lot about it…The information she was giving me made sense. I felt she knew what she was talking about.

This, in turn, fostered a sense of trust between students and advisors. Students reported feeling empowered to continue their academic pursuits with a greater sense of personal confidence.

***Preparation.*** A final contributing factor involving the impact of academic advising on the return of some students was the preparation of academic advisors. Students admitted that they did not know all there was to know to progress successfully at SAMU. They needed to be able to trust their academic advisors who they believed had their best interests at heart. LaTasha attested to her confidence in her advisor's

knowledge of the process: “I felt like he knew what he was talking about because he had majored in the same area as me. So he knew what curriculum I was going to need.”

Students also suggested that because of their busy academic and employment schedules, they were frequently limited in the number of opportunities and the lengths of time they could meet with their academic advisors. Therefore, time became a critical factor. Whether it was a spontaneous session where students just dropped by or a session that had been scheduled in advance, preparation of academic advisors was oftentimes the key to a successful session. Trish recalled:

> When I met with my advisor, even if I just dropped in, he had his stuff laid out. Like, he also had the curriculum, you know, laid out. And he had his information pulled up on the computer too, you know, to pull up registration pin numbers and all that stuff. He could also pull up my grades really quick.

Students expected preparation on the part of academic advisors because of the amount of trust they placed in them. Trust in academic advisors’ preparation mirrored the trust that students placed in their own parents. The relationships between students and academic advisors were presented as parental in nature, where academic advisors’ preparation helped to overcome the routine unpreparedness of students themselves. LaTasha hesitantly acknowledged her own unpreparedness for her advising session:

> I think she was pretty prepared. She had the … all the paperwork and materials…the checklist…all the things needed. I didn’t know that I had to bring my own…What do they call it? Transcript. Yes, I didn’t know I had to bring my own transcript. I know I wasn’t really ready, but she was prepared for that. She had made a copy for our meeting.

Students noted that the preparation of their advisors was instrumental to their academic success. For several students, academic advisors' preparation served as the foundation upon which their relationships with students were built.

**External influence.** The final theme that emerged from participant interviews was external influence. A majority, seven of 10 students, indicated that their first-year academic advising experiences had not influenced their decision to return to SAMU in the second year. These students' experiences contrasted with their peers who acknowledged academic advising as a factor in returning to SAMU.

***Motivation.*** Students clearly indicated that internal and external motivation were factors in their return to SAMU in the second year. For some students in the group, the pressure of being the first member of their families to attend (and hopefully complete) college was all the motivation they needed to make the decision to return.

For other students, it was the relationships they had forged with roommates, friends, classmates, teammates, and other peers that played a major role in their return. Without hesitation, Kelli responded, "Because most of my friends were also coming back, my final decision wasn't that hard to make" This revelation clearly highlighted the value students placed on the social relationships they had developed.

Students also acknowledged the impact of self-motivation on their return to SAMU. Michelle, in particular, was emphatic in her response: "Had I planned to come back? No… I planned on not returning but changed my mind on my own." In this case, Michelle initially decided not to return to SAMU, but after further reflection, she decided that it would be in her best interest to return and complete what she had started at the

same place she had started. Michelle continued, “I know that there were other people pulling for me, but I wanted it more for myself.”

Students were also motivated to return to SAMU by many of their instructors. This motivation was based on students’ familiarity with those instructors whose classes they attended on a regular basis. Casey expressed her thoughts about her instructors and her return to SAMU this way:

> Well, basically, I liked my teachers. Many of them motivated me to want to do well in their classes and be successful overall. So that’s…that’s how I feel about my decision to return.

In many cases, students returned to SAMU because of the indirect motivation of their instructors.

Instructors motivated other students to return to SAMU in more direct ways. Most of the interactions involved instructors who showed genuine interest and concern in the academic performance of students. Many instructors also showed interest in students’ general well-being. These instructors, by students’ accounts, performed “de facto” academic advising. Many times, instructors were privy to information concerning students’ future plans related to SAMU that many academic advisors were not. Some students recalled talking to their instructors in classes, before or after classes, or during office hours and being directly lobbied to return to SAMU especially if it were known that there was a possibility that a student was considering leaving SAMU.

***Environment.*** Students also identified the environment of SAMU as a factor for returning. After spending almost an entire year at SAMU, which for many of them was a significant amount of time away from home, students acknowledged becoming more

acclimated to college life, and they desired to continue their studies at the university. Many students credited the environment for wanting to come back. Johnnie confirmed the most evident reason behind his return: “What influenced me to come back? The environment. I liked the environment here on campus.”

Students also referred to the academic aspect of the environment. For some students, the fact that SAMU offered their specific majors was a factor. Tre’ concluded, “I liked the University. To me, it’s a great school. They have my major. That was why I made my decision [to return].”

Students also attributed their academic performance to the environment. Sheri stated, “My instructors kept me in the real world.” Greg remarked, “I was doing good here. And my grades were good. That’s about it.” Many felt supported by their instructors to perform well academically.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU. The findings of this study illustrate students’ recognition of and strong desire for their academic advising experiences to not only address academic processes and procedures but also to address their needs for current and future academic, social, and professional development. Analysis of these experiences yielded several emerging themes. Chapter 5 will address highlighted gaps between academic advising and retention. Suggestions for further study of academic advising and retention of first-generation students at similar HBCUs will also be made.

# CHAPTER 5

# DISCUSSION

## Introduction

In this chapter, findings of this research study are discussed related to the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States. The resulting discussion presents findings related to the research questions that guided the research. Findings are also presented in relation to the theoretical framework. Finally, recommendations are presented for practice and research intended to guide university stakeholders concerning academic advising and retention.

## Findings and Related Research Questions

The research questions guiding this research study included:

1. What are the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
2. What are the categories of academic advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?
3. Do academic advising experiences influence the retention of first-generation college students at a public HBCU in the southeastern United States?

**What are the academic advising experiences of first-generation students?** The themes that emerged suggested that students had specific expectations of their new academic advising. According to these students, prior academic advising experiences were crucial to the development of their new academic advising experiences at SAMU.

Students viewed the availability of their academic advisors as vitally important to their academic advising experiences. Those with more positive views of their advisors' availability had met with one or more of the university's professional academic advisors who were generally more available to students due to more traditional schedules. Students with more negative views of their academic advisors' availability had primarily met with faculty academic advisors who were not as available, generally due to teaching schedules and other responsibilities. Many of these students were frustrated because their preference for more spontaneous academic advising situations, where they could just drop in, could not always be facilitated at their convenience. Students also expected a more proactive academic advising experience. Many students actually experienced less-than-ideal academic advising experiences that required them to assume the primary responsibility for their own academic advising. These students were also the ones who took the lead in these types of advising sessions.

Students indicated that contact with academic advisors was also important. As a result, students saw the value in making early contact with academic advisors and made attempts to establish contact with their academic advisor, many at the beginning of the semester. Some reported experiencing difficulty simply trying to initiate contact with academic advisors. Students emphasized their desire to develop meaningful relationships with their academic advisors and perceived regular contact with their academic advisors as a way to establish and maintain these relationships. As a result of these relationships, academic advisors were expected to actively support students by monitoring their academic, social, and personal progress on a regular basis.

Student responses all had something in common connecting them—time. According to the majority of students, time was an important factor in their academic advising experiences. There was clearly a great expectation for greater availability; students communicated that greater availability would allow for more quality contact between academic advisors and students and consequently foster significant advisor-student relationships.

**What are the categories of academic advising experiences?** Students reported the need for detailed information due to a lack of familiarity with the new academic environment. As a result, they were dependent on their academic advisors to provide the information they needed to be successful in college. Some students reported that short academic advising sessions did not allow for adequate information to be provided. As a result students had to be more responsible for researching and processing information themselves. For many, this was unsolicited pressure. Students described their preference for more holistic academic advising experiences. This involved an expanded academic advising discussion where students could focus on the traditional advising topics such as courses of study, registration, and grades, but also on topics like social and community involvement, graduate study, financial stability, career planning, family life, and more.

Based on interviews, the dependent nature of students was quite evident. Students seemed to welcome the involvement of parents and/or guardians in their navigation through life. Many of them had the same expectations of parental relationships now that they were in college. The parental relationships that students maintained at home had been transferred to their instructors but more importantly to their academic advisors. This transference could build a foundation for students who looked to their advisors for all of

the detailed information they would need for future success. Students who did not have holistic academic advising experiences, however, were disappointed; they felt let down by their academic advisors who did not model the parental relationships with which they were accustomed and desiring in the college setting.

**Do the academic advising experiences influence the retention of first-generation students?** The majority of students indicated that their academic advising experiences had no influence on their return to SAMU in the second year. A number of students in this group attributed their return to SAMU based on motivation from daily contact with peers, family, instructors, and other university representatives. Other students in this group attributed their return to an academic and social environment that provided meaningful direction to their lives, both personally and academically. Finally, a number of students attributed their return to academic performance. For this last group of students, the better their academic performance, the more their self-confidence was affirmed and the more likely they were to make a decision to return to SAMU. The remaining students positively indicated that their academic advising experiences had directly influenced their decisions to return to SAMU in the second year. These students clearly associated interactions with their advisors as being central to their academic advising experiences and major factors in their decisions to return to SAMU.

The fact that a majority of students indicated that their academic advising experiences had no influence on their return to the university was disappointing to some and should be a major concern for others. Critics will question the need for SAMU to spend additional time or funding on an academic service that does not seem to yield any positive outcomes. Those responsible for supporting, supervising, or providing academic

advising services should be pay close attention to what students are actually saying about their academic advising experiences and their relationship to the amount of time spent. Students have clearly identified time as a major factor in their academic advising sessions. The quality time they spend with their academic advisors makes all the difference.

**Findings and Theoretical Framework**

Student retention is a complex process that occurs over a period of time. Theories and models of student departure serve to describe students' decisions for departing college by focusing on specific reasons and factors related to student retention. The findings of this research study validated the following theories and models of student change: the Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure (Tinto, 1987, 2006), the Theory of Involvement (Astin, 1970, 1984, 1999), and the Psychological Model for Student Retention (Bean & Eaton, 2000).

**Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure.** The Interactionalist Theory of College Student Departure (Tinto, 1987, 2006) is sociological in nature. It identifies social factors influencing the decisions students make to leave their institutions of their own volition. In Tinto's theory model, colleges and universities are viewed as smaller microcosms of the larger society, academic and social communities of which students are active participants. These smaller but diverse academic and social communities exert considerable influence on students and, as a result, their subsequent decisions to stay or leave their institutions. Students are also impacted by their interactions with peers, instructors, and other staff members at SAMU.

In this research study, SAMU was considered a small community. Students' classes, organizations, clubs, athletic teams, campus housing communities, and other organizations served as the smaller but diverse academic and social communities on campus. Students reported having considerable interactions within their academic and social systems. Students who provided accounts of their decisions to return to SAMU were motivated by peers to do so. They also described their interactions with their academic advisors. Students considered these interactions to be critically important to their college experiences. Academic advising sessions involving students and their academic advisors were also considered examples of institutional experiences. As a result, academic advising could be categorized as an institutional experience involving students and institutional representatives that was crucial to student retention.

**Theory of Involvement.** The Theory of Involvement (Astin, 1984, 1999) is one of the earliest theoretical models, and it has been described as both a sociological and psychological framework that describes the development of students (Astin, 1970). Astin's Theory surmises that students learn by being involved (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). The more students are actively involved in their social and academic communities, the more likely they are to make decisions to return to their institutions.

In this research study, findings describing and detailing students' academic advising experiences demonstrated the sociological nature of this theory. Time spent by students with their advisors in advising sessions did constitute social involvement. Students' academic advising experiences clearly highlighted their beliefs in the importance of academic advisors' availability. Advisor availability was associated with the amount of physical contact between students and their academic advisors. Students

also described being actively involved with peers and other university representatives in academic and social situations.

**Psychological Model for Student Retention.** The Psychological Model of Student Retention (Bean & Eaton, 2000) explains student departure from a psychological perspective. According to the experts, important factors impacting student departure could be overlooked if only viewed from a sociological perspective (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Seidman, 2008). Bean and Eaton's (2001) research combined many psychological approaches for explaining student departure, including: Attitude-Behavior, Coping Behavioral, Self-Efficacy, and Attribution.

Attitude-Behavior Theory assumes that students' beliefs and attitudes motivate them to make choices that lead to specific behaviors. Over a period of time, students' past attitudes, which are based on past experiences, influence their current intentions and later become clear indicators of future behaviors. The behaviors, in this case, involve students acting on their decisions to remain at or leave their institutions. In this research study, results confirmed that students relied on past beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors from their high school experiences to assist them in navigating and adapting to the new college environment. Academic advising is a specific activity that could be utilized by academic advisors to assist students in formulating new attitudes and beliefs to foster positive future behaviors that could lead to students making decisions to stay at SAMU.

A Coping Behavioral Theory addresses the ability of students to adapt to new environments. Once they become a part of the new environment, students then naturally adjust to these new situations. In adjusting to new environments, there is a specific level of stress that students encounter. Students who are able to cope with the stress associated

with the adjustment to new environments gain positive perspective of themselves. As a result, coping allows them to become more integrated in the academic and social environments of the institution. Therefore, students who have proven their abilities to adjust and adapt to new situations are in better positions to persist. In this research study, students demonstrated an ability to utilize the coping behaviors needed to adapt to the environment and culture of SAMU. Many students showed resilience by developing the ability to cope with these new experiences in the new environment on their own. In other situations, students' academic advisors played key roles in the development of the requisite coping behaviors.

A Self-Efficacy Theory highlights students' ability to perform various tasks based on past experiences. Past experiences shape their ability to accomplish the actions needed to achieve specific or desired outcomes. Students recognize their own competence and, as a result, increase their own self-confidence. This new self-confidence then facilitates the ability to achieve personal goals or important tasks. In this research study, most students reported having academic advising experiences prior to their enrollment and matriculation at SAMU. These past experiences helped to form the basis on which students developed their current views, not only of their academic advising experiences but also of themselves and the roles they played in their own success. The academic advising experiences could be the catalyst for the continued development of students' abilities and their belief that these abilities could assist in making them successful in college.

Attribution Theory examines factors pertaining to students' academic performance and integration. How well students perform academically and integrate

socially could lead to positive academic experiences. In this research study, findings showed that some students exhibited an apparent loyalty to SAMU. This was further illustrated by their involvement in campus organizations and social, academic, and professional activities. Successful academic performance and social integration influenced their intent to persist.

**Recommendations**

The findings of this research study are meant to inform and guide university stakeholders (e.g., administrators, academic department chairs, faculty advisors, academic support services, professional advisors, retention services, student services and activities, financial aid, and counseling services) in the enhancement of academic advising practices that could address the many factors impacting retention rates at SAMU. The results of this research study were limited to just one setting—a public HBCU. Based on these findings, several recommendations for practice and research are made for improving academic advising as a major tool in the retention of first-year/ first-generation students not only at SAMU but also at similar HBCUs.

**Practice.** This research study revealed several recommendations describing how academic advising could be strengthened and further utilized to improve retention at SAMU and other similar public HBCUs.

One recommendation for practice would be to provide faculty who have the responsibility for advising first-generation students sufficient release time from other obligations including teaching, service, and research activities. In the past at SAMU, professional academic advisors were responsible for advising all students, including first-generation students, until students declared a major and were classified as a junior.

Students with more positive views of their academic advisors availability frequently met with professional academic advisors more consistently. Because of the nature of their advising, professional advisors typically had schedules that were more conducive to greater availability. Students were then released from the professional advisors in the University College and officially transferred to faculty advisors in the various disciplines who assumed the primary responsibility for advising all students, including first and second-year students. A recent change in advising policy and practice at SAMU has shifted the primary responsibility for advising first-year students from professional advisors to faculty advisors in every discipline.

Students with negative views of their academic advisors' availability generally met with faculty advisors. Faculty advisors would have the ability to spend sufficient time with their advisees. "…Students exhibit dissatisfaction with … [the] availability of professors for advice and guidance" (Atkinson, as quoted in Montag et al., 2012). With mandated release time, faculty advisors would be able to adequately address students' concerns with advisor availability, which students reported as a major issue. This additional time would greatly impact the academic advising environment by allowing academic advisors, primarily faculty advisors, to be able to spend more time addressing various student issues, thus easing students' frustrations with not having their advising needs addressed due to lack of availability.

A second recommendation for practice would be to provide faculty academic advisors, now primarily responsible for the advising of first-year/first-generation students, professional development and training related to these academic advising responsibilities. Habley and Morales (1998) reported, "Most institutions are providing

only a minimum of training to those involved in advising" (p. 4). Institutions are either limited by financial constraints or have not placed much value in academic advising as a major retention activity to offer professional development and training. As a result, faculty advisors are placed in academic advising situations without adequate preparation or proper training.

Serry and Corrigal (2009) stated that professional development, especially related to academic advising, is an important resource for academic advisors. Because academic advising has been shown to significantly impact the retention of students, including first-generation students, SAMU should make it a priority to provide all faculty advisors with some form of professional development and/or training in the area of academic advising. Many faculty members are advising students for the first time. Professional development would provide these faculty advisors the necessary tools to be able to facilitate successful academic advising sessions. Development would help faculty learn, many for the first time, both the value of good advising and how to provide effective academic advising.

A third recommendation for practice would be for academic advisors at SAMU to consider the social and learning traits of millennial students, primarily considering their preference for more parental relationships with academic advisors, when providing academic advising services. According to Ciocco and Holtzman (2008), using a generational approach helps to improve student engagement and motivation. The goal would be to not only enhance academic advising practices but also to use this knowledge to better understand first-generation students with the express purpose of meeting their needs.

Millennials are noted to have starkly different needs than their peers in other generations. According to Montag et al. (2012), “Noting these unique traits, advisors may be best able to address the needs of [Millennial] students” (p. 26). Because of their fondness for parental involvement, Millennials have strongly indicated that the primary responsibility for their academic advising relationship should be their academic advisors. This preference corroborates students’ expectations that academic advising experiences be more proactive in nature. Researchers have also suggested that a proactive advising style would be best suited for working with Millennials (Glennan, 1975; VanderSchee, 2007).

A fourth and final recommendation for practice would be to expand the current academic advising discussion that primarily focuses on students’ academic progression, performance, and success to also include non-academic factors that are major influences on the return of first-year/first-generation students. It is expected that academic advisors at SAMU, specifically faculty advisors, would focus on factors related to students’ academic performance—registration, course offerings, major curriculum, grades, etc. In many cases, this is the only discussion that academic advisors can have in the short amount of time designated for advising students. Retention theorists like Tinto (1975) have long linked student performance to retention. Researchers have also demonstrated that non-academic factors, such as social interaction, financial stability, physical health, motivation, and psychological stability, significantly impact student retention. Advisors should be able address students’ needs in a more holistic approach by making clearer suggestions for student engagement.

**Research.** This research study examined the academic advising experiences and retention of first-generation students at SAMU. The research conducted was limited to this one setting.

This research study only examined the advising experiences of first-generation students at a public HBCU. While there are sufficient research studies that examine the perceptions of students, there are limited qualitative research studies examining the perceptions of academic advisors at public HBCUs similar to SAMU. A recommendation for further research would be to explore the academic advising experiences of academic advisors. Habley (2003/2004) proposed that to better understand advising and its relationship to retention, it is important to explore the perceptions of both students and their advisors. Future research in this area could compare the perceptions of both students and academic advisors to determine the best practices for delivering academic advising services. It is also recommended that research studies examining the perceptions of academic advisors be conducted at similar institutions to determine if the same perceptions exist among academic advisors.

A second recommendation for research would be to conduct a qualitative study at SAMU that focuses on first-year/first-generation students to determine the reasons they did not return to SAMU. Faculty and professional academic advisors, student academic success staff, retention staff, and other relevant university stakeholders could contact these students to gain key insights regarding students' overall college experiences and more specifically their academic advising experiences. The study could also explore how these experiences influenced students' decisions to leave. Results could be employed to further enhance and modify current academic advising and retention activities at SAMU.

A final recommendation for research would be to conduct a similar qualitative research study exploring the academic advising experiences of first-generation students at several HBCUs similar to SAMU. The research study at SAMU was limited in scope and involved a small sample size. Broadening the research study to include several public HBCUs would increase the student participant sample size. Importantly, the findings of the research would provide a clearer perspective of academic advising practices at public HBCUs in general. Results could also highlight the academic advising practices of a larger sample of the HBCUs. HBCUs with more positive student perceptions of academic advising which result in more positive retention practices could then serve as a model for HBCUs with students with less favorable student academic advising perspectives in need of improvement.

**Conclusion**

In a rapidly changing global economic climate, the allocation of funds to public colleges and universities by the federal government has come under closer scrutiny than ever before. The federal government is no longer in a strong financial position to provide institutions of higher education unlimited funds for education without the assurance that these institutions are making achievements in retention and successfully graduating students, many of whom are beneficiaries of these funds. As a result, retention continues to be a major concern of institutions of higher education and their constituents. HBCUs, like many PWIs, also struggle with declining student enrollments and major retention challenges. At a time when their relevance is being questioned and their reputations are at stake, HBCUs are in a unique position to modify current practices related to academic advising and retention to meet the challenges of the new century while also remaining

true to their historical mandates. The purpose of this study was to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students and determine if these experiences influenced the retention of these students. Based on the findings of this investigation, educational leaders at SAMU and other similar HBCUs can begin to address retention challenges by developing a more supportive academic advising culture that seeks to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students.

## References


Addlemann, C. (1999). Answers in the toolbox: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and bachelor's degree attainment. Washington DC: National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries and Lifelong Learning.

Alexitch, L. R. (1997). Students' educational orientation and preferences for advising from university professors. *Journal of College Student Development, 38,* 333-42.

Allen, W. R., Jayakumar, V. M., Griffin, K. A., Korn, W. S., & Hurtado, S. (2005). Black undergraduates from *Bakke* to *Gutter*. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies.

Allen, J. M., & Smith, C. L. (2008). Faculty and student perceptions on advising: Implications for student dissatisfaction. *Journal of College Student Development, 49*(6), 604-624. DOI: 10.1353/csd.0.0042

American College Testing [ACT]. (2009). Retention/completion summary tables (Report No. 13759). Retrieved from www.act.org/research/policymakers/reports/graduatiom.html

American College Testing [ACT]. (2010). Retention/completion summary tables (Report No. 13759). Retrieved from www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/10retain_trends.pdf

Ashby, A. (2004). Monitoring student retention in the open university: Definition, measurement, interpretation and action. *Open Learning*, *19*(1), 65-77.

Ashley, D. (2007). Are historically black colleges worth it? Retrieved from http://diverseeducation.com/article/9375/

Astin, A. W. (1970). The methodology of research on college impact. *Sociology of Education*, *43*, 223-254.

Astin, A. W. (1975). *Preventing students from dropping out.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Astin, A. W. (1977). What matters in college? *Liberal Education, 79*(4), 4-7.

Astin, A. W. (1985). *Assessment for excellence: A critical assessment of priorities and practices in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Astin, A. W. (1984, 1999). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Development*, *40*(5), 518-529.

Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college? Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Astin, A. W. (1997). *Four critical years.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Avery, S. (2009). Taking the pulse of historically black colleges. *Academic Questions, 22*(3), 327-339.

Baker, V. L., & Griffin, K. A. (2010). Beyond mentoring and advising: Toward understanding the role of faculty "developers" in student success. *About Campus* (January-February). Wiley InterScience (www.interscience.wiley.com): American College Personnel Association. DOI: 10.1002/abc.20002

Backhus, D. (1989). Centralized intrusive advising and undergraduate retention. *NACADA Journal*, *9*(1), 39-45.

Bailey, B. L., Bauman, C., & Lata, K. A. (1998, May). Student retention and satisfaction: The evolution of a predictive model. In *38th Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research, 17-20 May, Minneapolis*.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* New York, NY: Freeman.

Bandura, A. (1998). Personal and collective efficacy in human adaptation and change. In J. G. Adair, D. Belanger, & K. L. Dion (Eds.), *Advances in psychological science: Vol. 1. Personal, social and cultural aspects* (pp. 51-71). Hove, UK: Psychology Press.

Beal, P. E., & Noel, L. (1980). *What works in student retention*. Iowa City, IA: American College Testing Program; Boulder City, CO: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

Bean, J. P. (2000). A psychological model of college student retention. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 48-61). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Bean, J. P. (2005). Nine themes of college student retention. *College student retention: Formula for student success*, 215-244.

Bean, J. P., & Eaton, S. B. (2000). The psychological underlying successful retention practices. *Journal of College Student Retention*, *3*(1), 73-89.

Bean, J. P., & Vesper, N. (1992). Student dependency theory: An explanation of student retention in college. *Association for the Study of Higher Education*.

Beeghley, L. (1989). *The structure of social stratification in the United States*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Berger, J. B., Lyon, S. C. (2005). Past to present: A historical look at retention. In A. Seidman (Ed.), *College student retention: Formula for success* (pp. 1-29). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Bergerson, A. A. (2007). Exploring the impact of social class on adjustment to college: Anna's story. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 20*, 99-119.

Bloom, J. (2008). Moving on from college. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, T. J. Grites & Associates (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook* (2nd ed.). (pp. 178-188). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bloom, J. L., Hutson, B. L., & He, Y. (2008). *The appreciative advising revolution*. Champaign, IL: Stipes.

Boeije, H. (2010). *Analysis in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Braxton, J. M. (2000). Introduction: Reworking the student departure puzzle. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp.1-8). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Braxton, J. M., Brier, E. M., & Steele, S. L. (2007). Shaping retention from research to practice. *Journal of College Student Retention, 3*(1), 57-71. DOI: 609488761

Braxton, J. M., & McClendon, S. A. (2001). The fostering of social integration and retention through institutional practice. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 3*(1), 57-71.

Broadbridge, A. (1996). Academic advising—traditional or developmental approaches? Student perspectives. *British Journal of Guidance and Counseling, 24i,* 97-111.

Broido, E. M. (2004). Understanding diversity in millennial students. *New Directions for Student Services, 2004*(106), 73-85.

Brooks, F. E., & Starks, G. L. (2010). *Historically black colleges and universities: An encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Brown, A. R., Morning, C., & Watkins, C. (2005). Influence of African American engineering student perceptions of campus climate on graduation rates. *Journal of Engineering Education, 94*(4), 263-271.

Bui, K. V. T. (2002). First-generation college students at a four-year university: Background characteristics, reasons for pursuing higher education, and first-year experiences. *College Student Journal, 36*, 3-11.

Burroughs, R. (2008). *The intersection of athletic and racial identify of black student-athletes at predominantly-white institutions*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest.

Cabrera, A., Stampen, J., & Hansen, W. (1990). Exploring the effects of ability to pay on persistence in college. *Review of Higher Education, 13*, 303-336.

Caselli, F. (1999). Technological revolutions. *American Economic Review, 89*, 327-348.

Choy, S. (2001). *Students whose parents did not go to college: Postsecondary access, persistence and attainment* (NCES, 2011-126). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Choy, S. (2002). *Nontraditional undergraduates* (NCES, 2002-12). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002012.pdf

Christensen, P. M. (1990). *A companion of adult baccalaureate graduates and nonpersisters.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Minnesota. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 51*, 0130A.

*Chronicle of Higher Education: Almanac 2003-2004*. (2003). Washington, DC: Retrieved July 21, 2012, from http://chronicle.com/free/almanac/2003/nation/nation.htm.

Ciocco, M. D., & Holtzman, D. (2008). E-Portfolios and the millennial students. *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education, 56*(3), 69-71.

Clark, R. (2002). Ten hypotheses about what predicts student achievement for African American students and all other students: What the research shows. In W. R. Allen, M. B. Spencer, & C. O'Connor (Eds.), *African American education: Race community, inequality and achievement* (pp. 155-177). Burlington, MA: Elsevier Science.

Coakley, K. (2001). Gender differences among African American students and the impact of racial identity on academic psychosocial development. *Journal of College Student Development, 42*, 480-487.

Collier, P. J., & Morgan, D. L. (2004). Is that paper really due today?" Differences in first-generation and traditional college students' understandings of faculty expectations. *Higher Education, 55*, 425-446.

Conroy, J. K. (1978). Paid student paraprofessionals. *NASPA Journal, 15,* 18-24.

Coomes, M. and DeBard, R.. "A Generational Approach to Understanding Students". *New Directions for Student Services: Serving the Millennial Generation*, Summer 2004, Issue 106, 5-16.

Crawford, L. (1999, March). *Extended opportunity programs and services for community college retention.* Paper presented at the Annual California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Statewide Conference, Monterey, CA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 429 642.

Creswell, J. W. (2008*). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2010). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, *39*(3), 124-130.

Croissant, J., & Restivo, S. P. (2001). *Degrees of compromise: industrial interests and academic values*. New York, NY: SUNY Press.

Crookston, B. (1972). A developmental view of academic advising as teaching. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 13,* 12-17.

Crosling, G., Thomas, E., & Heagney, M. (Eds.). (2008). *Improving student retention in higher education*. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Cross, T., & Slater, R. B. (2001). The troublesome decline in African-American college student graduation rates. *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, *33*, 102-109.

Cuseo, J. (2003). Academic advisement and student retention: Empirical connections and systemic interventions. *National Academic Advising Association. (linked from http://www.nacada. ksu. edu/clearinghouse/advisingissues/retain. htm, retrieved 10-15-08).*

Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Davis, J. (2008). *The first-generation student experience: Implications for campus practice, and strategies for improving persistence and success.* Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Davis, B., & Ballard, M. R. (1985). Peer advisors: Agents of change for high-risk students. *NACADA Journal, 5*, 9-15.

DeBard, R. "Millennials Coming to College". *New Directions for Student Services: Serving the Millennial Generation*, Summer 2004, Issue 106, 33-45.

DeBerard, M., Spielman, G. I., & Julka, D. L. (2004). Predictors of academic achievement and retention among college freshmen: A longitudinal study. *College Student Journal, 38*(1), 66.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior.* New York: Plenum.

Delen, D. (2012). Predicting student attrition with data mining methods. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 13*(1), 17-35.

Dennis, J. M., Phinney, J. S., & Chuateco, L. I. (2005). The role of motivation, parental support, and peer support in the academic success of ethnic minority first-generation college students. *Journal of College Development, 46*(3), 223-236.

Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

DesJardins, S. L., McCall, B. P., Ahlburg, D. A., & Moye, M. J. (2002). Adding a timing light to the "tool box." *Research in Higher Education, 43*(1), 83-114.

Dillon, R. K., & Fisher, B. J. (2000). Faculty as part of the advising equation: An inquiry into faculty viewpoints on advising. *NACADA Journal, 20*(1), 16-23.

Dilworth, P. P., & Carter, S. M. (2007). Millennial versus hip hop: Exploring black undergraduate students perspective on socially constructed labels. *NASAP Journal*, *10*(1), 70-84.

Dungy, G. J. (2011). A national perspective: Testing our assumptions about generational cohorts. In F. A. Bonner, A. E. Marbley, & M. F. Howard-Hamilton (Eds.), *Diverse Millennial Students in College: Implications for Faculty and Student Affairs*, (pp. 5-24). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Ellis, K. C. (2011). *Academic advising experiences of first-year undecided students at a public southeastern high research activity institution* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI No. 3493952)

Ender, S. C., Winston, R. B., Jr., & Miller, T. K. (1982). Academic advising as student development. In R. B. Winston, Jr., S. C. Ender, & T. K. Miller (Eds.), *New directions for student services: Developmental approaches to academic advising*, No. 17. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Erlandson, D. A. et al. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Evans, A. L., Evans, V., & Evans, A. M. (2002). Historically black colleges and universities. *Education*, *123*(1), 3-16.

Feghali, T., Zbib, I., & Hallal, S. (2011). A web-based decision support tool for academic advising. *Educational Technology & Society*, *14*(1), 82-94.

Feldman, K. A., Smart, J. C., & Ethington, C. A. (2008). Using Holland's theory to study patterns of college student success: The impact of major fields on students. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research* (pp. 329-380). Memphis, TN: Springer Publishers.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Fleming, J. (2012). *Enhancing minority student retention and academic performance: What we can learn from program evaluation.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Frost, S. H. (1991). Academic advising for student success: A system of shared responsibility. ASHE-ERIC. Higher Education Report No. 3 Washington, D. C.: The George Washington University.

Frost, S. H. (1995). Designing and implementing a faculty-based advising program. *NACADA Journal, 1*, 27-32.

Frost, S. H. (2000). Historical and philosophical foundations for academic advising. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* (pp. 3-17). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Garcia, L. L. (2007). *Millennial students' and faculty's perceptions of a new generation of learning classrooms.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest.

Gerdes, H., & Mallinckrodt, B. (1994). Emotional, social, and academic adjustment of college students: A longitudinal study of retention. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 72, 281-288.

Giancola, J. K., Munz, D. C., & Trares, S. (2008). First-versus continuing-generation adult students on college perceptions: Are differences actually because of demographic variance? *Adult Education Quarterly, 58*(3), 214-228.

Gibbons, M. M., & Borders, L. D. (2010). Prospective first-generation college students: A social-cognitive perspective. *The Career Development Quarterly, 48,* 194-208.

Glennen, R. E. (1975). Intrusive college counseling. *College Student Journal, 9*(1), 2-4.

Glennen, R. E., & Baxley, D. M. (1985). Reduction of attrition through intrusive advising. *NASPA Journal, 22*(3), 10-14.

Goldrick-Rab, S., Harris, D. N., & Trostel, P. A. (2009). Why financial aid matters (or does not) for college success: Towards a new interdisciplinary perspective. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research*. Memphis, TN: Springer.

Gordon, V. N. (1992). *Handbook of academic advising.* Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Graham, S. (1994). Motivation in African Americans. *Review of Educational Research, 64* (1), 55-117.

Gray, W. H. (1998). Leader lauds role of black colleges. *Boston Globe,* Section B, p. 6, col. 6.

Green, P. (2004). Other things being equal: Federal aid and the politics of equal opportunity for historically black colleges and universities. In M. C. Brown II & K. Freeman (Eds.), *Black colleges: New perspectives on policy and practice* (pp. 65-85). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Grites, T. (1979). Academic advising: Getting us through the eighties. ASHE-ERIC/Higher Education Report No.7. Washington, D.C.: The American Association for Higher Education.

Habley, W. R. (1979). The advantages and disadvantages of using students as academic advisors. *NASPA Journal, 17*, 46-51.

Habley, W. R. (1981). Academic advisement: The critical link in student retention. *National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Journal, 18*(4), 45-50.

Habley, W. R. (2003). Faculty advising: Practice and promise. In G. I. Kramer (Ed.), *Faculty advising examined: Enhancing the potential of college faculty as advisors* (pp. 23-39). Boston, MA: Anker.

Habley, W. R. (2004). *The status of academic advising: Findings from the ACT sixth annual survey*. National Academic Advising Association Monograph Series Number 10. Manhattan, KS: NACADA.

Habley, W. R., & Grites, T. J. (2008). *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Habley, W. R., & McClanahan, R. (2004). What works in student retention. *Iowa City, IA: American College Testing Service.*

Habley, W. R., & Morales, R. H. (1998). *Current practices in academic advising: Final report on ACT's fifth national survey of academic advising*. National Academic Advising Association Monograph Series, no. 6. Manhattan, KS: National Academic Advising Association.

Habley, W. R. (2011). *Maximizing the impact of advising on student success* [Webinar].

Hagedorn, L. S. (2005). A new look at an old problem. In A. Seidman (Ed.), *College Student Retention: Formula for Student Success*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Hale, M. D., Graham, P. L., & Johnson, D. M. (2009). Are students more satisfied with academic advising when there is congruence between current and preferred advising styles? *College Student Journal*, *43*(2), 313-324.

Harding, B. (2008). Students with specific advising needs. In V. Gordon, W. Habley, & T. Grites, T. (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook*, 2nd edition (pp.189-203). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley and Sons.

Harmon, N. (2012). The role of minority-serving institutions in national college completion goals. *Institute for Higher Education Policy*.

Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in educational settings*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Heissrer, D. L., & Parette, P. (2002). Advising at risk students in college and university settings. *College Student Journal*, *36*(1), 69-83.

Hester, E. J. (2000). Student evaluations of advising: Moving beyond the mean. *College Teaching*, *56*(1), 35-37.

Howe, N. and Strauss, W.. *Millennials Go to College.* American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers and LifeCourse Associates, 2003.

Hirsch, B. J. (1980). Natural support systems and coping with major life changes. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *8*, 159-172.

Hudson, W. E., Henderson, D., & Henderson, J. (2002). The retention of entering and returning freshmen enrolled at Florida A&M University's School of General Studies during the fall semester 1997-2001. *EDUCATION-INDIANAPOLIS THEN CHULA VISTA-*, *123*(1), 210-212.

Hughey, J. K. (2011). Strategies to enhance interpersonal relations in academic advising. *NACADA Journal*, *31*(2), 22-32.

Hughley, K. F., et al. (2012). *The Handbook of Career Advising*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hunter, M. S., & White, E. R. (2004). Could fixing academic advising fix higher education? *About College*, *9*(1), 20-25.

Hurtado, S. (2007). Study of college impact. In P. J. Gumport (Ed.), *Sociology of higher education: Contributions and their contexts*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hurtado, S., Han, J., Saenz, V. B., Espinosa, L. L., Cabrera, N. L., & Cerna, O. S. (2007). Predicting transitions and adjustment to college: Biomedical and behavioral science aspirants' and minority students' first year of college. *Research in Higher Education*, *48*(7), 841-887.

Hurtado, S., & Ponjuan, L. (2005). Latino educational outcomes and the campus climate. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *4*(3), 235–251.

Hutto, C. P., & Fenwich, L. T. (2002). *Staying in college: Student services and freshman retention at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs*). ERIC. Clearinghouse on Higher Education (ED 648397).

Institute for Higher Education Policy. (2012). *The role of minority-serving institutions in national college completion goals*. Washington, DC: Noel Harmon.

Ishitani, T. T. (2006). Studying attrition and degree completion behavior among first-generation college students in the United States. *The Journal of Higher Education, 77*(5), 861-900.

Ishler, J., & Upcraft, M. L. (2005). The keys to first-year student persistence. In M.C. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner, & B. O. Barefoot (Eds.), *Challenging and supporting the first-year student: A handbook for improving the first year of college*, (pp. 27-46). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Jackson, D. H. (2002). Attracting and retaining African Americans faculty at HBCUs. *Education, 12*(31), 181-185.

Jamelske, E. (2009). Measuring the impact of a university first-year program on student GPA and retention. *Higher Education: The International Journal of Higher Education and Educational Planning, 57*(3), 373-391. DOI 10.1007/s10734-008-9161-1.

Jayson, S. (2009). Parents, kids today more in harmony than prior generations. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/ 2009-08-12-generation-gap-pew_N.htm.

Jeffreys, M. R. (1998). Predicting nontraditional student retention and academic achievement. *Nurse Educator, 23*(1), 42-48.

Johnson, A. C. (2007). Graduating underrepresented African American, Latino, and American Indian students in science. *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering, 13*(1), 1-22.

Johnson, E. J., & Morgan, B. L. (2005). Advice on advising: Improving a comprehensive university's program. *Teaching of Psychology*, *32*(1), 15-18.

Jones, G. (1998). Faculty academic advising: An examination of students' and faculty members' perception of first year experience. Paper presented at National Conference on Student Retention (New Orleans, LA). Retrieved from ERIC database.

Jones-White, D. R., Radcliffe, P. M., Huesman, R. L., & Kellogg, J. P. (2010). Redefining student success: Applying different multinomial regression techniques for the study of student graduation across institutions of higher education. *Research in Higher Education¸51*(2), 154-74.

Jussim, L., & Harber, K. D. (2005). Teacher expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies: Knowns and unknowns, resolved and unresolved controversies. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *9*(2), 131-155.

Kadar, R. S. (2001). A counseling liaison model of academic advising. *Journal of College Counseling*, *4*(2), 174-178.

Kerr, B. (1983). Alumni as peer advisors in a community college. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, *24*, 366-367.

Kim, D. (2007). The effect of loans on students' degree attainment: Differences by student and institutional characteristics. *Harvard Educational Review*, *77*(1), 64-100.

Kim, M. M., & Conrad, C. F. (2006). The impact of historically black colleges and universities on the academic success of African-American students. *Research in Higher Education*, *47*(4), 399-427.

King, N. S. (2000). Advising students in groups. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* (pp. 192-209). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

King, N., & Horrock, C. (2010). *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kracher, C. M. (2009). Academic and non-academic factors associated with retention of undergraduate college students. (Doctoral dissertation.) Retrieved from ProQuest.

Kuh, G. D. (2001). Organizational culture and student persistence: Prospects from puzzles. *Journal of College Student Retention, 3*, 23-29.

Kuh, G. D., Cruce, T. M., Shoup, R., Kinzie, J., & Gonyea, R. M. (2008). Unmasking the effects of student engagement on first-year college grades and persistence. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *79*(5), 540-561.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2007). Piecing together the student success puzzle: Research, propositions, and recommendations (ASHE Higher Education Rep. No. 32-5). San Francisco, CA: Wiley.

Kuhn, T. L. (2008). Historical foundation of academic advising. In W. R. Gordon, Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* (pp. 192-209). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lacy, W. (1978). Interpersonal relationships as mediators of structural effects: College student socialization in a traditional and an experimental university environment. *Sociology of Education, 51*, 201-211.

Lapan, S. D., Quataroli, M. T., & Riemer, F. J. (2012). Introduction to qualitative research. In S. D. Lapan, M. T. Quataroli, & F. J. Riemer, F. J. (Eds), *Qualitative research: An introduction to methods and designs*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.

Laskey, M. L., & Hetzel, C. J. (2011). Investigating factors related to retention of at-risk college students. *Learning Assistance Review*, *16*(1), 31-43.

Lau, L. K. (2003). Institutional factors affecting student retention. *Education*, *24*(1), 24-30.

Lee, K. (2012). *An analysis of the institutional factors that influence retention and 6-year graduation rates at historically black colleges and universities* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from ProQuest.

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Larkin, K. C. (1986). Self-efficacy in prediction of academic performance and perceived career options. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *31*, 265-269.

Light, R. J. (2001). *Making the most of college: Students speak their minds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lincoln, R. J., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences revisited. In N. Denzini & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). (pp. 97-128). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Longden, B. (2006). An institutional response to changing student expectations and their impact on retention rates. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, *28*(2), 173-187. DOI: 10.1080/13600800600751044

Lotkowski, V. A., Robbins, S. B., & Noeth, R. J. (2004). Non-academic factors in improving college retention. *ACT Policy Report,* 20-24.

Love, B. J. (1993). Issues and problems in the retention of black students in predominantly white institution of higher education. *Equity an Excellence in Education, 26*(1), 27-36.

Low, L. (2000). *Are college students satisfied? A national analysis of changing expectations.* Indianapolis, IN: USA Group, Inc.

Lowe, A., & Toney, M. (2000). Academic advising: Views of the givers and takers. *Journal of Student Retention, 12*(2), 93-108.

Maggett, P. J., & Belanger, C. H. (2008). First university experience and student retention factors. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 38*(3), 77-96.

Mangold, W. D., Bean, L. G., Adams, D. J., Schwab, W. A., & Lynch, S. M. (2003). Who goes who stays: An assessment of the effect of a freshman mentoring program on college persistence. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, & Practice, 4*(2), 95-102.

McCauley, M. E. (2000). Teaching delivery services. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

McCown, C., & Weinstein, R. S. (2002). Modeling the role of child ethnicity and gender in children's differential response to teacher expectations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 3*(2), 159-184.

McCown, C., & Weinstein, R. S. (2008). Teacher expectations, classroom context, and the achievement gap. *Journal of Social Psychology, 46*(3), 235-261.

McGillin, V., Ortgies-Young, T. S., & Kem, L. (2010). Faculty advisor assessment and reward: A hot topic for our institutions. *Academic Advising Today, 33*(2), 5 & 19.

McMahan A. B. (2008). How to become an academic advisor. Retrieved from *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources* Web site: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/Become-Advisor.htm

McMurray, A. J., & Sorrells, D. (2008). Bridging the gap: Reaching first-generation students in the classroom. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 36*(3), 210-214.

McNairy, F. G. (1996). The challenge for higher education: Retaining students of color. *New Directions for Student Services, 74*, 3-14.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.

Meristotis, J. P., & McCarthy, K. (2005). Retention and student success at minority-serving institutions. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 125*, 45-58.

Meristotis, J. P., & O'Brien, C. T. (1998). *Minority-serving institutions: Distinct purposes, common goals*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Metzner, B. S. (1989). Perceived quality of academic advising: The effect on freshman attrition. *American Educational Research Journal, 26*(3), 422-442.

Montag, T., Campo, J., Weissman, J., Walmsley, A., & Snell, A. (2012). In their own words: Best practices for advising Millennial students about majors. *NACADA Journal, 32*(2), 26-33.

Mottarella, K. E., Fritzsche, B. A., & Cerabino, K. C. (2004). What do students want in advising? A policy capturing study. *NACADA Journal, 24*(1 & 2),: 48-61.

Myers, B. E., & Dyer, J. E. (2005). A comparison of the attitudes and perceptions of university faculty and administrators toward advising undergraduate and graduate students and student organizations. *NACTA Journal, 49*(4), 34-40.

National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). (2003). Paper presented to the *Task force on defining academic advising*. Retrieved from *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources* Web site: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/Research_Related/definitions.htm.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (1996). *Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 1976-1994,* U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2003). *Digest of Education Statistics, NCES 2003-060,* U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2011). *The Condition of Education 2011* NCES 2011-033, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

Nealy, M. J. (2009). Pride and peril: Historically black colleges and universities. *Diverse Education*. Retrieved from http://www.diverseeducation.com/ article/12914/

Nettles, M. T., Thoery, A. R., & Gosman, E. J. (1987). Racial differences in college student achievement. In A. S. Pruitt (Ed.), *In pursuit of equality in higher education.* Dix Hills, NY: General Hall, Inc.

Nettles, M. T., Wagner, U., Millett, C. M., & Killenbeck, A. M. (1999). Student retention and progression: A special challenge for private historically black colleges and universities. *New Directions for Higher Education, 108,* 51-67.

Newton, F. B. (2000). The new student. *About Campus, 5(5),* 8-15.

Noel-Levitz, Inc. (2006). *Five-year trend study: National student satisfaction report.* Iowa City, IA: Author.

Nunez, A. M. (2005). Modeling college transitions of Latino students. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest.

Nunez, A., & Alamin, S. (1998). *First-generation students: Undergraduates whose parents never enrolled in postsecondary education* (NCES 98-082). Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Nutt, C. L. (2000). One-on-one advising. In V. N. Gordon & W. R. Habley (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook.* (pp. 220-227). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Oblinger, D. G. (2003). Boomers, gen-xers, & millennials: Understanding the new students. *EDUCAUSE Review*, 38, 37-47.

Oblinger, D. G., & Oblinger J. L. (Eds.). (2005). Educating the net generation. *EDUCAUSE*. Retrieved on October 28, 2013, from www.educause.edu/educatingthenetgen/

Orozco, G. L., Alvarez, A. N., & Gutkin, T. (2010). Effective advising of diverse students in community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *34*, 717-737.

Pace, C. (1979). *Measuring outcomes of college: Fifty years of findings and recommendations for the future*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pardee, C. F. (2000). Organizational models for academic advising. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook* (pp. 192-209). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E. T. (1985). College environmental influences on learning and cognitive development: A critical review and synthesis. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-64). New York City, NY: Agathon.

Pascarella, E. T., & Chapman, D. W. (1983). A multiinstitutional, path analytic validation of Tinto's model of college withdrawal. *American Educational Research Journal*, *20*(1), 87-102.

Pascarella, E. T., Pierson, C. T., Wolniak, G. C., & Terenzini, P. T. (2004). First-generation college students: Additional evidence on college experiences and outcomes. *Journal of Higher Education*, *75*, 249-284.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991, 2005). *How college affects students*. San Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1998,Winter). Studying college students in the 21st century: Meeting new challenges. *The Review of Higher Education*, *21*(2), 151–165.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Paul, E. L., & Brier, S. (2001). Friendsickness in the transition to college: Precollege predictors and college adjustment correlates. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *79*(1), 77-89.

Paulsen, M. B., & St. John, E. P. (1997). The financial nexus between college choice and persistence. In R. A. Voorhees (Ed.), *Researching student aid: Creating an action agenda.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing.

Paulsen, M. B., & St. John, E. P. (2002). Social class and college costs. *The Journal of Higher Education, 73*(2), 189-236.

Perozzi, B. (2009). Enhancing student learning through college employment. Retrieved from http://books.google.com/books?id=lRn2t6UaGMC&dq=General+model+for+assessing +change&source=gbs_navlinks_s

Pike, G. R., & Kuh, G. D. (2005). First- and second-generation college students: A comparison of their engagement and intellectual development. *The Journal of Higher Education, 76*, 276-300.

Planty, M., Hussar, W. J., & Snyder, T. D. (2009). The condition of education 2009. U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Polite, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2009). *Essentials of nursing research: Appraising evidence for nursing practice*. Philadelphia, PA: Wolters.

Pringle, B. E., Lyons, J. E., & Booker, K. C. (2010). Perceptions of teacher expectations by African American high school students. *Journal of Negro Education, 79*(1), 33-40.

Ramos-Sanchez, L., & Nichols, L. (2007). Self-efficacy of first-generation and non-first-generation college students: The relationship with academic performance and college adjustment. *Journal of College Counseling, 10*(1), 6-19.

Rao, T. M., Coleman, S., & Hollenbeck, C. (1987). Advisor: An expert system for student advisement. *Proceedings of the 15th annual conference on computer science*, New York: ACM, 32-35.

Reason, R. D. (2003). Student variables that predict retention: Recent research and new developments. *NASPA Journal*, *40*(4), 482-501.

Reinarz, A. G. (2000). Delivering academic advising: Advisor types. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook* (pp. 210-219). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Rendon, L. I., Jalomo, R. E., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention in higher education. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 29-47). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Richards, D. A. R., & Awokoya, J. T. (2012). *Understanding HBCU retention and completion.* Fairfax, VA: Frederick

Riehl, R. J. (1994). The academic preparation, aspirations and first-year performance of first-generation students. *College and University*, *70*(1), 14-19.

Rossman, G., & Rallis, S. F. (1998). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage,

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ryland, E. B., Riodan, R. J., & Brack, G. (1994). Selected characteristics of high-risk students and their enrollment persistence. *Journal of College Student Development, 35*(1), 54-58.

St. John, E. P. (1999). Evaluating state grant programs: A study of the Washington state grant programs. *Research in Higher Education, 40*(2), 149-170.

St. John, E. P., Cabera, A. F., Nora, A., & Asker, E. H. (2000). Economic influences on persistence reconsidered. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 29-47). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

St. John, E. P., Kirshstein, R., & Noell, J. (1991). The effects of student aid on persistence: A sequential analysis of the high school and beyond senior cohort. *Review of Higher Education, 14*(3), 383-406.

Sanner, S., & Deis, M. (2009). How can interdisciplinary collaboration between schools promote culturally diverse students' success. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal, 13*(4), 19-34.

Sax, L. J. (2003). Our incoming students: What are they like? *About Campus, 8*(3), 15–20.

Schlosser, L. Z., & Gelso, C. J. (2001). Measuring the working alliance in advisor–advisee relationships in graduate school. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 48*(2), 157.

Scholz, K. W., & Tietje, O. (2002). *Embedded case study methods: Integrating quantitative and qualitative knowledge.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schramm, W. (1971, December). Notes on case studies of instructional media projects. Working paper for the Academy for Educational Development, Washington, DC.

Schwartz, R. A., & Washington, C. M. (2002). Predicting academic performance and retention among African American freshmen males. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 39*(4), 351-367. DOI: 10.2202/1949-6605

Scott, D. W. (1995). *Conditions related to the academic performance of African American students at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Seidman, A. (1989). *Recruitment begins with retention: Retention begins with recruitment*. Retrieved from http://www.collegeways.com/article_recruitment_begins.htm

Seidman, A. (2005a). *College student retention: Formula for student success*. Westport, CT: Praegar.

Seidman, A. (2005b). Minority student retention: Resources for practitioners. In G. H. Gather (Ed.), Minority retention: What works? *New Directions for Institutional Research, 125*, 7-24.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Seidman, I. (2012). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Self, C. (2008). Advising delivery: Professional advisors, counselors, and other staff. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, T. J. Grites, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook* (2nd ed.). (pp. 267-278). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Seery, B. L., & Corrigall, E. A. (2009). Emotional labor: Links to work attitudes and emotional exhaustion. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 24*(8), 797-813.

Sissoko, M., & Shiau, L. R. (2005). Minority enrollment demand for higher education at historically black colleges and universities from 1976 to 1998: An empirical analysis. *The Journal of Higher Education, 76*(2), 181-208.

Smith, D. W. (2005). Phenomenology. Retrieved from http://plato.stanford.edu.entries/phenomenology#1

Smith, S. S., & Moore, M. R. (2002). Expectations of campus racial climate and social adjustment among African American college students. In W. R. Allen, M. B. Spencer, & C. O'Connor (Eds.), *African American education: Race community, inequality and achievement* (pp. 93-118). Burlington, MA: Elsevier Science.

Solorzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. *Journal of Negro Education, 69*(1/2), 60-73.

Spady, W. G. (1971a). Dropouts from higher education: Toward and empirical model. *Interchange, 2*(3), 38-62.

Spady, W. G. (1971b). Dropouts from higher education: An interdisciplinary review and synthesis. *Interchange, 1*(1), 64-85. DOI: 10.1007/BF02214313

Stage, F. K., & Hossler, D. (2000). Where is the student? Linking student behaviors, college choice, and college persistence. In J. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 170-195). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stake, R. E. (2000). Case studies. In N. Denzini & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 435-454). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stieha, V. (2010). Expectations and experiences: The voice of a first-generation first-year college student and the question of student persistence. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 23*(2), 237-249.

Strage, A. A. (1999). Social and academic integration and college success: Similarities and differences as a function of ethnicity and family educational background. *College Student Journal, 33*(2), 198-205.

Stone, A. (2009). 'Civic generation' rolls up sleeves in record numbers. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/news/sharing/ 2009-04-13-millennial_N.htm.

Stupnisky, R. H., Renaud, R. D., Daniels, L. M., Haynes, T. L., & Perry, R. P. (2008). The interrelation of first-year college students' critical thinking disposition, perceived academic control, and academic achievement. *Research of Higher Education, 49*(8), 513-530.

Terenzini, P. T., Springer, L., Yaeger, P., Pascarella, E. T., & Nora, A. (1996). First-generation college students: Characteristics, experiences, and cognitive development. *Research in Higher Education, 37*(1), 1-22.

Thelin, J. R. (2004). *A history of American higher education.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Thompson, A. A. (2008). *Perception of African American male college students' satisfaction with academic advising services and their intent to remain enrolled in school.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest.

Thorne, S., & Darby, P. (2005). Land mines in the field: A modest proposal for improving the craft of qualitative health research. *Qualitative Health Research, 15*(8), 1105-1113. DOI:10.1177/1049732305278502

Tien, F. F., & Blackburn, R. T. (1996). Faculty rank system, research motivation, and faculty research productivity: Measure refinement and theory testing. *The Journal of Higher Education, 67*(1), 2-22

Tinto, V. (1975, Winter). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research, 45*(1), 89-125.

Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (1991). Taking student retention seriously: Rethinking the first year of college. *National Academic Advising Association Journal, 19*(2), 5-9.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures for student attrition* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (2006). Research and practice of student retention: What next? *Journal of College Student Retention, 8*(1), 1-19.

Titley, R. W., & Titley, B. S. (1982). Academic advising: The neglected dimension in designs for undergraduate education. *Teaching of Psychology, 9*, 45-49.

Truschel, J. (2008). Does the use of appreciative advising work? *TLAR, 13*(2), 7-16.

Tulgan, B., & Martin, C. A. (2001). *Managine generation Y: Global citizens born in the late seventies and early eighties*. Amherst, MA: HRD Press.

Tuttle, K. N. (2000). Academic advising. *New Directions for Higher Education, 11*, 15-24.

Twenge, J. M. (2006). *Generation me*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Upcraft, M. L., Gardner, J. N., & Barefoot, B. O. (2005). *Challenging and supporting the first-year student: A handbook for improving the first year of college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Upcraft, M. L., & Schuh, J. H. (1996). *Assessment in student affairs: A guide for practitioners*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Educational Statistics. (2010). Ranking report for 2009 graduation rates for Alabama four-year public institutions. Retrieved from http:// nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/SelectVariables.aspx

Vander Schee, B. A. (2007). Adding insight to intrusive advising and its effectiveness with students on probation. *NACADA Journal, 27*(2), 50-59.

Varney, J. (2007). Intrusive advising. *Academic Advising Today, 30*(3). Retrieved from http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/AAT/NW30_3.htm#10

Vowell, F. (1995). Developing faculty potential as excellent advisors. In G. L. Kramer (Ed.), *Reaffirming the role of faculty in academic advising*. (NACADA) Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press.

Warburton, E., Bugarin, R., & Nunez, A. (2001). *Bridging the gap: Academic preparation and post-secondary success of first-generation students* (NCES, 2001-153). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Walleri, D. B. (1981). *Student retention and attrition in the community college: A review and research design.* Gresham, OR: Oregon Community College Deans of Students Consortium, Oregon State Department of Education (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 210 064).

Weidman, J. (1989). Undergraduate socialization: A conceptual approach. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 5 289-322). New York: Agathon.

Weiner, B. (1986). *An attributional theory of motivation and emotion.* New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Wild, L., & Ebbers, L. (2002). Rethinking student retention in community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 26*, 503-519. DOI: 10.1080/02776770290041864

Willie, C. V., & Edmonds, R. R. (1978). *Black colleges in America: Challenge, development, survival*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Wolfe-Wendel, L. E., Baker, B. D., & Morphew, C. C. (2000). Dollars and sense: Institutional resources and the baccalaureate origins of women doctorates. *The Journal of Higher Education, 71*(2), 165-186.

Yarbrough, D. (2002). The engagement model for effective academic advising with undergraduate college students and student organizations. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development, 4*(1), 61-68.

Yin, R. K. (1994). Case *study research: Design and methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K., & Davis, D. (2007). Adding new dimensions to case study evaluations: The case of evaluating comprehensive reforms. *New Directions for Evaluation*, *113*, 75-93.

Yorke, M. (1998). Non-completion of undergraduate studies: Some implications for policy in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, *20*, 189-201.

Zhao, C., Golde, C. M., & McCormick, A. C. (2007). More than a signature: How advisor choice and advisor behavior affect doctoral student satisfaction. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *31*(30), 263-281.

APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

# INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

*Institutional Review Board for Human Use*

Form 4: IRB Approval Form
Identification and Certification of Research
Projects Involving Human Subjects

UAB's Institutional Review Boards for Human Use (IRBs) have an approved Federalwide Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). The Assurance number is FWA00005960 and it expires on January 24, 2017. The UAB IRBs are also in compliance with 21 CFR Parts 50 and 56.

| | |
|---|---|
| Principal Investigator: | PATTERSON, JARROD E |
| Co-Investigator(s): | |
| Protocol Number: | **E121116008** |
| Protocol Title: | *Academic Advising Experiences and Retention of First–Generation Students at a Public, Historically Black College and University in the Southeastern U.S.* |

The above project was reviewed on 11/20/12. The review was conducted in accordance with UAB's Assurance of Compliance approved by the Department of Health and Human Services. This project qualifies as an exemption as defined in 45CF46.101, paragraph 2.

This project received EXEMPT review.

IRB Approval Date: 11/20/12

Date IRB Approval Issued: 11/20/12

Cari Oliver
Assistant Director, Office of the
Institutional Review Board for Human
Use (IRB)

Investigators please note:

IRB approval is given for one year unless otherwise noted. For projects subject to annual review research activities may not continue past the one year anniversary of the IRB approval date.

Any modifications in the study methodology, protocol and/or consent form must be submitted for review and approval to the IRB prior to implementation.

Adverse Events and/or unanticipated risks to subjects or others at UAB or other participating institutions must be reported promptly to the IRB.

470 Administration Building
701 20th Street South
205.934.3789
Fax 205.934.1301
irb@uab.edu

The University of
Alabama at Birmingham
Mailing Address:
AB 470
1530 3RD AVE S
BIRMINGHAM AL 35294-0104

# APPENDIX B

# INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

## Interview Protocol

Name:

Date:

Location:

**Introduction:**

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I am grateful for your willingness to share your thoughts on this important subject. I will be asking you questions and recording your responses. After completion of our conversations, I will transcribe them and ask you to review them so that my notes are true to your thoughts and feelings.

I am interested in finding out in this study what the academic advising experiences of first-generation students is like and if those experiences influenced you to return to the University for your second year. The questions were made available to you prior to our conversation for your review. Please feel free to express your thoughts and feelings freely. I want to know what you think. If I need further clarification of something you have shared, I may ask some additional follow up questions that you may not have been made aware of. Do you consent to our conversations being audio taped? Are you ready to begin?

**Interview Questions**

1. Who were the primary individuals responsible for advising you prior to you enrolling at the University?
2. Think back about your first experience with academic advising at SAMU. What were some of your initial feelings?
3. Were you advised by a professional advisor in the University College or a faculty advisor in your department? Or both?
4. Describe your first advising meeting.
5. How would you rate your first advising meeting?
6. How often did you meet with your advisor during your first year?
7. How would you describe your academic advising experiences during your first year of college?
8. How would you also describe your expectations of your academic advising meetings with your advisor?
9. Did your academic advising experiences play a part in your decision to return to SAMU for a second year?
10. How could the academic advising process be improved?

# APPENDIX C

# PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Participant Data Sheet & Questionnaire**

**Participant Information**

1. Name_____

2. Email_____

3. Phone_____

---

Are you classified as a Sophomore ___ Yes ___ No

Are you at least 19? ____ Yes ____ No

Were you enrolled full-time during the Fall 2011 Semester? ___ Yes ___No

Were you enrolled full-time for the entire school term? ____ Yes ____ No

Did you return full-time during the Fall 2012 Semester? ____ Yes ____ No

What is your parent or guardian's highest level of education?

_____ grade school (elementary and middle)

_____ some high school

_____ high school or equivalent

_____ some college

_____ college

# APPENDIX D

# RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

**Research Information Sheet**

Academic Advising Experiences and Retention of First-Generation Students at a Public, Historically Black College and University in the Southeastern United States.

IRB Protocol #__E121116008__

Dear Potential Participants:

I am a professor in the Department of English & Foreign Languages here at Alabama A&M University and a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Loucrecia Collins in the Department of Educational Leadership/School of Education at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I am conducting a research study to explore the academic advising experiences of first-generation students to determine the impact of the academic advising on student retention.

I am requesting your voluntary participation, which will involve two recorded interviews—one initial interview of 45-60 minutes and one follow-up interview of 30-45 minutes—that will be audio taped. Prior to the interview, I will provide you a copy of the interview questions that I will ask in order to give you time to think about your responses. Throughout the interview, you may be asked additional questions to clarify your responses and to elicit additional details and/or examples. After all interviews have been completed, the interviews will be transcribed. You may be contacted for the purpose of reviewing your interview transcripts. Transcripts will then be analyzed. The results of the analysis will be made a part of the research findings.

All precautions will be taken to protect your identity and ensure your confidentiality. For the purpose of the study, you will be given a pseudonym. Your name will not be used. Your participation in this study is voluntary; you have the option to withdraw at any time. As an AAMU student, taking part in this research is not a part of your AAMU class work. You can refuse to enroll or withdraw after enrolling at any time before the study is over. Your class standing, grades, or standing in any program at AAMU will not be affected. You will not be offered or receive any special consideration if you take part in this research. As compensation for participating in my research study, you will be given a $10 gift card to Target. You will receive the gift card one week after the interview. I greatly appreciate you participating in this research study and assisting me with my professional endeavors.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if there are any questions concerning the research study or if there is any additional information that I can provide you. I can be contacted at (256) 372-5396 or by email at jarrod.patterson@aamu.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the Office of the Institutional Review Board for Human Use (OIRB) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) at (205) 934-3789 or 1-800-822-8816. If calling the toll -free number, press the option for “all other calls” or for an operator/attendant and ask for extension 4-3789. Regular hours for the Office of the IRB are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT, Monday through Friday. You may also call this number in the event the research staff cannot be reached or you wish to talk to someone else.

Sincerely,

Jarrod E. Patterson

# APPENDIX E

# TABLE REPRINT PERMISSIONS

sign out Jarrod E Patterson

Mail Inbox 7 results in entire mailbox

Find Someone Options

Favorites

Jarrod E Patterson

**Inbox** (486)
**Drafts** [18]
Sent Items
Deleted Items

Junk E-mail
Notes

New Delete Move Filter View

Vincent Tinto

Conversations by Date Newest on Top

Three Weeks Ago

Updated Doc
Loucrecia Collins; Jarrod E Pa... 10/21/2013

Older

Use of Theory Reprint
Vincent Tinto 11/18/2012

Courtesy Notice
Mervyn H. Sterne Library 11/7/2012

Comps
Jarrod E Patterson 10/4/2012

Courtesy Notice
Mervyn H. Sterne Library 9/4/2012

revisions
Loucrecia Collins 3/30/2012

# Use of Theory Reprint

Vincent Tinto [vtinto...

*Inbox* Sunday, November 18, 2012 11:53 AM

Dear Jarrod:

Please feel free to reprint the figure describing my model of student dissertation. I hope your dissertation goes well.

Sincerely

vincent tinto

Actions

*Jarrod E Patterson*

**To:** vtinto@syr.edu

*Sent Items* Thursday, November 15, 2012 3:58 PM

I am doctoral student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in the Department of Educational Leadership.

I am currently preparing to do a qualitative research study next semester that will explore the academic advising experiences and retention of first-generation students at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in the Southeast. The theoretical framework for my research includes your "Interactional Theory of College Study Departure."

When I first was introduced to your "Interactional Theory of College Study Departure," I literally buried myself in your book *Leaving College* in order better familiarize with the theory and your rationale in apply it to student retention. This is one of the main reasons it is a major part of my theoretical framework.

I am seeking your permission to reprint the figure model of your theory in my dissertation.

Thank you so very much for your consideration.

Jarrod E. Patterson, M.Ed.

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Mail
Calendar
Contacts
Tasks
Public Folders

sign out Jarrod E Patterson

Find Someone Options

Mail Inbox 1167 Items

Favorites

Jarrod E Patterson

**Inbox** (486)
**Drafts** [18]
Sent Items
Deleted Items

Junk E-mail
Notes

New Delete Move Filter View

Search Entire Mailbox

Conversations by Date Newest on Top

**Today**

**Concourse Dedication - ...**
Kathryn A Lowe Tubbs 2:19 PM

Love Where You Live - Uni...
University Heights 10:39 AM

**11/13/2013 Edition of U...**
UAB GreenMail 4:37 AM

**Yesterday**

Email Maintenance Alert - ...
Jeffrey A Jessee Tue 11:45 AM

**Sunday**

Financial Aid Requirements
UAB Financial Aid Sun 7:36 PM

Chapter 4 and References
Matthew M. Fifolt; Matt Fifolt Sun 6:43 PM

**Last Week**

The University of Alabama ...
Golden Key Member Services Thu 11/7

Thank you
Enrollment Management Op... Wed 11/6

**11/6/2013 Edition of UA...**
UAB GreenMail Wed 11/6

Ron Bayles Public Defense ...
Loucrecia Collins Tue 11/5

Lister Hill Library LibQUAL...
T. Scott Plutchak Tue 11/5

THANK YOU!
Evelyn Tue 11/5

**Two Weeks Ago**

Dr. Robinson
Armentress D Robinson 11/1/2013

**Homecoming Event**
UAB Graduate School 10/31/2013

Financial Aid Requirements
UAB Financial Aid 10/30/2013

The big week...
Loucrecia Collins 10/30/2013

ARMENTRESS
Loucrecia Collins 10/30/2013

Doctoral Hooding Ceremo...
Kellie Rene' Carter 10/30/2013

Final Public Defense for Jar...
Loucrecia Collins 10/30/2013

PowerPoint
Loucrecia Collins 10/30/2013

Reminder: 2014 Graduate ...
UAB Graduate School 10/30/2013

10/30/2013 Edition of UAB...
UAB GreenMail 10/30/2013

Homecoming Events

Mail
Calendar
Contacts
Tasks
Public Folders

# Use of

Actions

**Bean, John P. [bean@i...**
**To:** Jarrod E Patterson

Monday, October 21, 2013 3:02 PM

Jarrod,
You have my permission to used the material of interest related to the
figure and/or modelof my theory in your dissertation. Please use the full
citation in your references. Best of luck with your work.
Sincerely,
John Bean
Assoc Prof Emeritus
Indiana University

------ Forwarded Message
From: <ets@indiana.edu>
Date: Mon, 21 Oct 2013 13:36:44 -0400
To: John Bean <bean@indiana.edu>
Subject: Use of

***Please note***

This email was sent by an online form and the identity of the sender cannot
be verified because this is a public anonymous form. The sender indicated
the following contact information:

Email Address: jpatt74@uab.edu
First Name: Jarrod
Last Name: Patterson

The comment/inquiry follows:

I am doctoral student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in the
Department of Educational Leadership.

I am currently preparing to do a qualitative research study next semester
that will explore the academic advising experiences and retention of
first-generation students at a Historically Black College and University
(HBCU) in the Southeast. The theoretical framework for my research includes
your "Interactional Theory of College Study Departure."

When I first was introduced to your "Psychological Model for Student
Retention," I studied it in order better familiarize myself with the theory
and your rationale in applying it to student retention. This is one of the
main reasons it is a major part of my theoretical framework for my own