

NON-INTELLECTUAL AND ATTITUDINAL VARIABLES  
INVOLVED IN THE HIGH ATTRITION RATE OF  
BLACK STUDENTS AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LACROSSE

A Seminar Paper

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

By

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE  
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I recommend acceptance of this seminar paper in  
partial fulfillment of this candidate's requirements  
for the degree Master of Science in Education:  
Student Personnel Services.

July 23, 1974  
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When I first get up in the morning I feel fresh and it seems like it would be a good day to me. But after I get in school, things change and they seem to turn into problems for me. And by the end of the day I don't even feel like I'm young, I feel tired.

Victor Y

Age 13

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine non-intellectual and attitudinal variables involved in the high attrition rate of black students at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. A questionnaire was mailed to all Black American undergraduate students and a random sample of 200 non-black undergraduates enrolled at the university fall semester, 1974, to collect biographical and attitudinal data. The total number included in the study was 34 black students and 28 non-black.

The subjects were divided into four groups: black returnees, black nonreturnees, non-black nonreturnees, non-black returnees. The data obtained were tabulated and a total tally and percentages were computed for the biographical information. T-test for independent means were computed to determine if significant attitudinal differences existed between the four groups.

The results indicated some significant biographical differences exist between black returnees and black nonreturnees. However, no significant attitudinal differences were found between the two groups. Statistically significant differences were noted for 13 of the 21 attitudinal items when comparing black students with non-black students.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Black students are being admitted to predominately white institutions in greater numbers than ever before. Black freshmen enrollment has increased in the large, predominately white institutions nationwide. However, even with this increase in black student enrollment, they still compose a very small percentage of the total enrollment. The median percentage of black freshmen in predominately white colleges and universities has increased from three percent in 1969 to four percent in 1970. The American Council on Education reported that the percentage of black freshmen in all institutions is 9.1 percent (1970). Granted then, that black students make up a small percentage of the total enrollment of colleges and universities, what variables are related to blacks staying in these schools.

It is often stated that traditional measures such as high school performance and scholastic aptitude frequently are not valid predictors of college success for minority and disadvantaged students (Di Cesare, Sedlacek, & Brooks, 1971). Also, considering the amount of research which has been done with the prediction of student persistence in correlation with scores on standardized tests (SAT, ACT) and high school rank, this study will concentrate on non-intellectual and attitudinal variables

that influence the attrition rate of black students at the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse.

Among the numerous reasons why a student might drop out of college are financial, personal, academic failure, etc. In the United States approximately 40% of the entering college students leave school before they receive a bachelor's degree. There has been a great deal of research on the subject of college attrition, but there is very little data available on variables associated with the success or failure of black students.

It is of major concern that those students who enroll be retained. To assure this, they need be given every opportunity and assistance possible so that they will be able to obtain baccularueate degrees and if possible, at the same time as the class with which they originally enrolled. Non-intellectual and attitudinal variables must not be overlooked because students with high scholastic ability also fail to graduate. (Ciampa, 1972).

If the student does drop out considerable cost is involved. It is a loss to the individual student because the student who attends college briefly and obtains little has lost the money used to support this period at school plus the income he might otherwise have made. It is a loss to the university not only in terms of money but also in terms of the creativity and mutual

growth shared by both.

Over the last five years there has been an increase in the number of black students enrolling at the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse, however, only a small percentage persist and complete course requirements for graduation. It is imperative then to investigate the reasons which give some students drive while at the same time it may have an adverse effect on others. There are definite needs for techniques for early identification of potential dropouts. The purpose of this study is to explore the ways, if any, in which black students who persist differ from those who do not, on non-intellectual and attitudinal variables.

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the non-intellectual and attitudinal variables involved in the high attrition rate of black students at the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse and how these same variables influence persistence of non-black students.

#### Related Literature

There is very little data available on variables associated with the success or failure of black students, the majority of the literature related to persistence in college deals with the general student populace. With the increase in the number of black enrolling in higher education attempts have been made to investigate minority

students involvement in higher education. In a study by Di Cesare, Sedlacek, and Brooks (1971) it was concluded that blacks who stay in school have a stronger self-concept and take a more realistic look at the university and adapt to it to achieve their own goals. Similar conclusions were drawn from studies by Pfeifer Sedlacek (1970) concerning the importance of these variables. Pfeifer and Sedlacek found that self-concept was an important variable in the success of black students at the University of Maryland. Epps and Gurin (1969) and Lao and Beattie (1969) in similar studies found that successful black students tended to have high aspirations and feel that they had control over their lives.

Many students have a distorted image of the college they prefer or an unrealistic view of themselves and needs, which may lead to their withdrawal. In separate studies, Summerskill (1962) and Stordahl (1970) found that the primary causal factors in attrition were non-academic in nature. Taking a look at one cause of student withdrawals, Sibley (1948) was able to demonstrate in New York State the high correlation between college attendance and the amount of family income.

"Although there has been a difference of opinion as to whether the principal factor has been lack of motivation or lack of money; there has been little doubt that money is an important factor. It seems highly probable that lack of motivation for many grows out of environmental conditions which in turn reflect low family incomes."

This is related to a study by Zaccaria and Creaser (1971) in which they found that students largely from lower middle and working class families living within the metropolitan area are more likely to withdraw from college before graduation than those from higher social status levels. Brown (1960) made some interesting observations concerning student withdrawals among talented but disadvantaged youth:

- variously estimated that from 100,000 - 200,000 talented high school graduates fail to continue their education each year for lack of money or motivation.
- individuals aspirations are too low because of lack of opportunity or challenge.
- the need for better understanding on the part of parents, teachers, and counselors of how career attitudes are formed.

Centra (1970) suggested in his research a two factor conceptualization of attrition: One factor, commitment, reflects motivation to persist in college and the second factor reflects ability to meet the academic requirements for survival in college. A third factor which surely should be investigated, has to do with the congruence of the needs and goals of the student with the demands and resources of the college environment.

Gibbs (1973) states that several factors affected black students ability to perform well at the University of Santa Clara, including lack of a family educational tradition, poor public school preparation, inadequate remedial and tutorial services, and poor study skills. Other non-traditional criteria that have been frequently used as predicting college success for disadvantaged students are a positive self-concept, leadership potential, goal oriented activities and personal maturity (Green, 1969; Williams, 1969).

### Hypothesis

The hypothesis tested in this study was that no significant differences in non-intellectual and attitudinal variables exist between persisting black and non-persisting students at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse.

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

Data for this study were obtained from four groups. A random sample of 200 students were selected from the undergraduate student body at the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse, this was the control group. The experimental group included all undergraduate Black American students enrolled at the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse, fall semester, 1974. The entire population was used rather than a sample, because of the small numbers involved.

The two groups (control and experimental) were broken down to form the four groups used in the study: Experimental Group I - black students who returned in good standing, Experimental Group II - Black students who either did not return or who returned on academic probation, Control Group I - non-black students who returned in good standing, and Control Group II - non-black students who either did not return or who returned on academic probation, spring semester, 1974.

The subjects were asked to respond to a questionnaire which was developed by the researcher (see Appendix). The questionnaire was mailed to the subjects on December 3, 1973. A cut-off date of December 17, 1973 was set for return of the completed questionnaire. Eighty-five of the 200 questionnaires mailed to the control group were returned. Of the 38 black under-

graduate students enrolled, 34 returned completed questionnaires. Since there was such a variance in the numbers between control group I (80) and experimental group I (19) every fourth subject was randomly selected from the control group, which reduced the number from 80 to 20.

The research instrument was divided into two parts. The questions were designed to elicit information which would provide (1) a profile of the students background and (2) a profile of the student's perception of the university environment. There were 18 items pertaining to the subjects' background. A total tally and percentages were computed for the four groups. Part II contained 21 items which asked the student to respond to statements concerning the university environment on a five-point continuum.

The statements in the questionnaire were worded so that half of them described the environment as being positive for the subjects and half as being negative.

A t-test for independent means was computed to determine if significant attitudinal differences existed between the four groups.

The last item on the questionnaire asked the subjects to indicate possible causes which would be influential if they should leave the university without receiving a degree.

### Definition of Terms

Attrition - the loss of a student from the university through voluntary withdrawal or academic failure.

Black - any student whose racial background is Black American.

Non-black - any student whose racial background is other than Black American.

Returnee - those students who were enrolled for both the fall, 1973 and spring, 1974 semesters and was in good academic standing.

Nonreturnee - those students who were enrolled for the fall, 1973 semester and did not return spring semester, 1974 or who returned on academic probation.

### Delimitations

Students included in the study were drawn from a single university and the results may not be applicable to other colleges and universities. Also, results concerning Black American students may not be applicable to other racial minorities.

## CHAPTER III

### Results and Discussion

The first table in this chapter is a total tally and percentage breakdown of biographical data of the four groups included in this study.

Table 2 - 5 lists the results of t-tests for independent means of the students attitudes toward the university environment.

TABLE 1  
Biographical Information

Item No.	Item	Response Distribution			
		B-R	B-NR	NB-R	NB-NR
1.	Sex				
	Male	15 (79%)	13 (87%)	8 (40%)	6 (75%)
	Female	4 (21%)	2 (13%)	12 (60%)	2 (25%)
3.	Age				
	17-19	11 (58%)	9 (60%)	9 (45%)	5 (63%)
	20-22	6 (32%)	4 (27%)	9 (45%)	2 (25%)
	23-25	2 (11%)	2 (13%)	1 (5%)	--
	25 or more	--	--	1 (5%)	1 (13%)
4.	Classification				
	Freshman	9 (47%)	8 (53%)	9 (45%)	6 (75%)
	Sophomore	2 (11%)	3 (20%)	6 (30%)	1 (13%)
	Junior	4 (21%)	3 (20%)	2 (10%)	1 (13%)
	Senior	4 (21%)	1 (7%)	3 (15%)	--
5.	Transfer Student				
	Yes	1 (5%)	3 (20%)	5 (25%)	1 (13%)
	No	18 (95%)	11 (73%)	15 (75%)	6 (75%)
6.	High School Graduating Class Size				
	Less than 25	--	--	--	--
	25-50	--	--	2 (10%)	--
	51-100	--	--	3 (15%)	1 (13%)

TABLE 1 (Cont.)

Item No.	Item	Response Distribution			
		B-R	B-NR	NB-R	NB-NR
	101-150	--	1 (7%)	2 (10%)	--
	151-200	1 (5%)	--	2 (10%)	--
	201-300	1 (5%)	1 (7%)	4 (20%)	2 (25%)
	301-500	4 (21%)	5 (33%)	3 (15%)	2 (25%)
	501-1,000	11 (58%)	7 (47%)	4 (20%)	1 (13%)
	over 1,000	2 (11%)	1 (7%)	--	1 (13%)
7.	Currently Living				
	University Residence				
	Hall	16 (84%)	9 (60%)	13 (65%)	6 (75%)
	Off Campus	3 (16%)	6 (40%)	6 (30%)	2 (25%)
8.	Maximum Education Attained				
	By Father				
	8th Grade or Less	5 (26%)	4 (27%)	4 (20%)	1 (13%)
	9th-12th	7 (37%)	8 (53%)	8 (40%)	3 (38%)
	Trade or Vocational				
	School	4 (21%)	2 (13%)	3 (15%)	1 (13%)
	Business School	1 (5%)	--	1 (5%)	--
	1-2 yrs. of College	1 (5%)	--	1 (5%)	3 (36%)
	3-4 yrs. of College	1 (5%)	--	2 (10%)	--
	Grad or Professional				
	School	--	1 (7%)	1 (5%)	--

TABLE 1 (Cont.)

Item No.	Item	Response Distribution			
		B-R	B-NR	NB-R	NB-NR
9.	Father's Occupation				
	Skilled	5 (26%)	5 (33%)	4 (20%)	1 (13%)
	Semi-Skilled	6 (32%)	5 (33%)	2 (10%)	3 (38%)
	Private Business	3 (16%)	1 (7%)	6 (30%)	2 (25%)
	Professional	3 (16%)	--	5 (25%)	2 (25%)
	Unemployed	1 (5%)	1 (7%)	1 (5%)	--
10.	Maximum Education Attained By Mother				
	8th Grade or Less	3 (16%)	3 (20%)	1 (5%)	1 (13%)
	9th-12th	10 (53%)	8 (53%)	12 (60%)	4 (50%)
	Trade or Vocational School	3 (16%)	1 (7%)	3 (15%)	--
	Business School	--	--	1 (5%)	--
	1-2 yrs. of College	1 (5%)	1 (7%)	2 (10%)	1 (13%)
	3-4 yrs. of College	2 (11%)	1 (7%)	--	--
	Grad or Professional School	--	1 (7%)	1 (5%)	1 (13%)
11.	Mother Work Outside of Home				
	Yes	13 (68%)	7 (47%)	10 (50%)	3 (36%)
	No	6 (32%)	8 (43%)	10 (50%)	5 (63%)

TABLE 1 (Cont.)

Item No.	Item	Response Distribution			
		B-R	B-NR	NB-R	NB-NR
12.	School Currently Enrolled				
	Health, Rec., Phy. Ed.	6 (32%)	3 (20%)	6 (30%)	3 (36%)
	Arts, Letters & Sci.	12 (63%)	10 (67%)	11 (55%)	4 (50%)
	Education	1 (5%)	1 (7%)	3 (15%)	1 (13%)
13.	Most Influential Source Consulted about College Plans				
	Friends	3 (16%)	3 (20%)	7 (35%)	2 (25%)
	Parents	3 (16%)	8 (53%)	5 (25%)	2 (25%)
	H.S. Counselor	5 (26%)	1 (7%)	3 (15%)	2 (25%)
	Others	7 (37%)	2 (13%)	4 (20%)	2 (25%)
14.	Held Academic or Social Position in High School				
	Yes	9 (47%)	7 (47%)	13 (65%)	5 (63%)
	No	10 (53%)	8 (53%)	7 (35%)	3 (38%)
15.	Did you visit the LaCrosse Campus prior to enrolling				
	Yes	8 (42%)	7 (47%)	13 (65%)	6 (75%)
	No	11 (58%)	8 (53%)	7 (35%)	2 (25%)

TABLE 1 (Cont.)

Item No.	Item	Response Distribution			
		B-R	B-NR	NB-R	NB-NR
16.	Most Influential Reason for enrolling				
	To Learn More	4 (21%)	2 (13%)	3 (15%)	1 (13%)
	Decision Became Clear during High School	2 (11%)	1 (7%)	5 (25%)	2 (25%)
	To get a better job	10 (53%)	11 (73%)	10 (50%)	3 (38%)
	Nothing better to do	3 (16%)	1 (7%)	1 (5%)	2 (25%)
17.	Do you have frequent contact with an academic advisor				
	Yes	10 (53%)	4 (27%)	4 (20%)	1 (13%)
	No	9 (47%)	10 (67%)	16 (80%)	7 (88%)
18.	Maximum Education Expected				
	College but less than B.A.	1 (5%)	4 (27%)	2 (10%)	1 (13%)
	B.A. or equivalent	10 (53%)	6 (40%)	12 (60%)	4 (50%)
	1-2 yrs. graduate or Professional School	7 (37%)	4 (27%)	6 (30%)	2 (25%)

when compared to black students. This may be a result of a greater number of black students having to work after school because of economic conditions.

When asked if the student visited the university campus before deciding to enroll, in each of the black groups, more than half did not. In comparison, the greater majority of non-black students did visit the campus prior to enrolling. This may be a result of geographical location, black students coming from hometowns that are further away from Ia Crosse than non-blacks.

The most notable response difference between black returnees and black non-returnees was on item number 17. Sixty-seven percent of black nonreturnees do not have frequent contact with an academic advisor, 47 percent of the black returnees indicated that they did.

Black students who returned expressed higher expectations than those who did not. Fifty-three percent of the returnees expected to get a B.A. degree and only 40 percent of the nonreturnees made this response. Five percent of the returnees did not expect to obtain a B.A. while 27 percent of the nonreturnees did not anticipate receiving their degree's. In addition, while 27 percent of the nonreturnees indicated that they expected to complete one or more years of graduate school, 37 percent of the returnees made this response.

TABLE 2

t-test for Independent Means  
of Black Returnees and Black Nonreturnees

Item No.	Item	MEANS		t
		Black Returnees	Black Nonreturnees	
19	Important to be involved in social activities in High School	1.94	2.40	1.19
20	Important to be involved in academic clubs and groups in High School	2.31	2.86	1.36
21	Interaction with people and community involvement gives a person enough experience and knowledge to achieve in life.	2.47	2.80	0.61
22	In order to get ahead and achieve the desired goals, teachers and books are the best resources	3.31	3.26	0.10
23	Courses challenge student thinking	3.31	3.26	0.12
24	Instructors did not provide an opportunity for classroom discussion, etc.	3.15	3.00	0.39
25	Instructors are usually available outside of class for additional help	2.52	2.80	0.50
26	Instructors are fair in evaluating student achievement	3.57	3.66	0.20

Table 2 (Continued)

Item No.	Item	MEANS		t
		Black Returnees	Black Nonreturnees	
27	Social activities offered are not relevant to student interest	2.36	2.66	0.57
28	Parents have the most influence in academic achievement	2.94	2.80	0.33
29	In order to succeed in college, one must work quite hard	2.26	2.46	0.42
30	While in college one must be willing to subordinate immediate actions to long-range goals	2.10	2.53	1.24
31	Classes are structured and formal	2.31	2.33	0.04
32	Channels for expressing complaints are readily available	4.10	3.53	1.57
33	Courses require too much work for the number of credits earned	2.78	2.26	1.18
34	Facilities and opportunities for individual creative activities exist on campus	3.21	3.13	0.16
35	Social experiences with persons of a different race or background are pleasant	3.31	3.53	0.46
36	Educational experiences with persons of a different race or background are pleasant	3.47	3.13	0.80

Table 2 (Continued)

Item No.	Item	Black Returnees	Black Nonreturnees	t
37.	Students associate with one another without regard to racial, ethnic or social background	4.00	3.93	0.15
38	The college environment is conducive for personal development and growth	2.89	3.53	-1.45
39	When confronted with a problem, one should seek advice and help from anyone regardless of race	2.63	3.20	-1.02
.05 level of sign		NDF - 32.		

The data analysis for Table 2 indicates none of the comparisons between black returnees and black nonreturnees on any of the 21 attitudinal items was significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 3

t-test for Independent Means  
of Black Returnees and Non-black Returnees

Item No.	Item	MEANS		t
		Black Returnees	Non-Black Returnees	
19	Important to be involved in social activities in High School	1.94	1.85	0.34
20	Important to be involved in academic clubs and groups in High School	2.31	2.45	-0.38

Table 3 (Continued)

Item No.	Item	Black Returnees	Non-Black Returnees	t
31	Classes are structured and formal	2.31	2.50	-0.52
32	Channels for expressing complaints are readily available	4.10	3.20	2.90
33	Courses require too much work for the number of credits earned	2.78	2.75	0.08
34	Facilities and opportunities for individual creative activities exist on campus	3.21	2.40	2.09
35	Social experiences with persons of a different race or background are pleasant	3.31	2.25	3.05
36	Educational experiences with persons of a different race or background are pleasant	3.47	2.35	3.24
37	Students associate with one another without regard to racial, ethnic or social background	4.00	2.45	4.84
38	The college environment is conducive for personal development and growth	2.89	2.25	1.99
39	When confronted with a problem, one should seek advice and help from anyone regardless of race	2.63	1.60	2.25
Significant at .05 levels		NDF - 37.		

Table 3 (Continued)

Item No.	Item	Black Returnees	Non-Black Returnees	t
21	Interaction with people and community involvement gives a person enough experience and knowledge to achieve in life.	2.47	2.60	-0.32
22	In order to get ahead and achieve the desired goals, teachers and books are the best resources	3.31	2.85	1.19
23	Courses challenge student thinking	3.31	3.30	0.04
24	Instructors did not provide an opportunity for classroom discussion, etc.	3.15	3.55	-1.05
25	Instructors are usually available outside of class for additional help	2.52	2.10	1.11
26	Instructors are fair in evaluating student achievement	3.57	2.25	3.70
27	Social activities offered are not relevant to student interest	2.36	3.30	-2.35
28	Parents have the most influence in academic achievement	2.94	3.35	-1.08
29	In order to succeed in college, one must work quite hard	2.26	2.00	0.70
30	While in college one must be willing to subordinate immediate actions to long-range goals	2.10	2.10	0.01

The data analysis for Table 3 indicate black students who returned, differed significantly on 8 items from non-black students who returned. The first item of significance was item number 26: instructors are fair in evaluating student achievement. Black returnees scored in the no opinion range while the non-black returnees evaluations were favorable. Black returnees felt that social activities offered are not relevant to student interest while the non-black students expressed no opinion (ITEM 27). In each of the remaining significant items (32, 34, 35, 37 and 39) non-black returnees gave a more favorable evaluation than the black returnees.

TABLE 4

t-test for Independent Means  
of Non-Black Returnees and Non-Black Nonreturnees

Item No.	MEANS		t
	Non-Black Returnees	Non-Black Nonreturnees	
19	1.85	1.62	0.67
20	2.45	2.00	0.87
21	2.60	2.75	-0.32
22	2.85	3.00	-0.28
23	3.30	3.25	0.09
24	3.55	3.62	-0.17
25	2.10	2.12	-0.05
26	2.25	2.62	-0.98
27	3.30	3.25	0.12

Table 4 (Continued)

Item No.	MEANS		t
	Non-Black Returnees	Non-Black Nonreturnees	
28	3.35	3.62	-0.52
29	2.00	1.87	0.29
30	2.10	2.00	0.27
31	2.50	2.62	-0.30
32	3.20	3.37	-0.40
33	2.75	2.50	0.45
34	2.40	1.87	1.31
35	2.25	2.50	-0.62
36	2.35	2.62	-0.70
37	2.45	2.62	-0.52
38	2.25	2.37	-0.38
39	1.60	1.50	0.21

Significant at .05 level      NDF - 26.

The data analysis for Table 4 indicate none of the comparisons between non-black returnees and non-black nonreturnees on any of the 21 attitudinal items was significant at the .05 level. Both groups indicate a positive attitude toward the university environment with the returnees slightly more favorable on some of the items.

TABLE 5

t-test for Independent Means  
of Black Nonreturnees and Non-Black Nonreturnees

Item No.	MEANS		t
	Black Nonreturnees	Non-black Nonreturnees	
19	2.40	1.62	1.60
20	2.86	2.00	1.43
21	2.80	2.75	0.07
22	3.26	3.00	0.42
23	3.26	3.25	0.03
24	3.00	3.62	-1.46
25	2.80	2.12	0.95
26	3.66	2.62	2.17
27	2.66	3.25	-0.95
28	2.80	3.62	-1.29
29	2.46	1.87	0.99
30	2.53	2.00	1.32
31	2.33	2.62	-0.69
32	3.53	3.37	0.31
33	2.26	2.50	-0.51
34	3.13	1.87	2.55
35	3.53	2.50	1.76
36	3.13	2.62	1.01
37	3.93	2.62	2.46
38	3.53	2.37	2.22
39	3.20	1.50	2.87

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Significant at .05 level                      NDF - 21.

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The data analysis for Table 5 indicate a significant difference in attitude between black nonreturnees and non-black nonreturnees on five of the attitudinal items. An examination of the black nonreturnees responses revealed a no opinion trend on all five of the significant items while the non-black nonreturnees gave relatively favorable ratings for each of the five significant items.

TABLE 6

"If you should leave the University without receiving a degree, which of the following do you think would be the most likely cause(s)?"

Responses	Black Returnees	Black Non-Returnees	Non-Black Returnees	Non-Black Non-Returnees
Absolutely certain I will obtain a degree	9	4	9	--
To accept a good job	4	6	6	2
To enter military service	--	--	--	1
It would cost more than my family and I can afford	2	--	8	4
Marriage	--	2	3	2
Disinterested in study	3	5	2	3
Lack of academic ability	1	1	1	3

Table 6 (Continued)

Responses	Black Returnees	Black Non-Returnees	Non-Black Returnees	Non-Black Non- Returnees
Insufficient reading or study skills	2	1	--	2

Note. - More than one response was possible from each subject

Table 6 is concerned with the most likely reason for the student's leaving before earning a degree. The most distinguishable difference was a greater number of returnees, both black and non-black replied that they were "absolutely certain I will obtain a degree". None of the non-black nonreturnees were certain of obtaining a degree.

#### Discussion

It was hypothesized that no significant differences would be found between returning and nonreturning black students on a number of biographical and attitudinal variables. From the analysis of the attitudinal data, the results may be summarized as follows:

No significant statistical difference was attained in attitude between returning and nonreturning black students at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. The only notable difference in how the black students responded, was that black returnees were more vocal than black nonreturnees in expressing their attitude toward the university environment.

Black nonreturnees marked responses in the no opinion range more than any other group studied. This nonchalant or "nothing here for me" attitude necessitates one to look closely at those items which black nonreturnees evaluated "no opinion".

There seems to exist two different attitudes toward certain aspects of the university community. Both non-black groups, regardless of academic scholarship perceived the environment at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse more favorable than either black group. Non-black students see the university providing students with greater opportunity and facilities for individual creative activities. In addition non-blacks also felt social and educational experiences with persons of a different race or background are pleasant.

Instructors evaluation of student achievement was viewed favorably by non-black students. It should be noted that black students did not express a negative attitude toward the items above but responded in the no opinion range. Additional research should be conducted to better understand black students attitudes concerning such factors.

Black returnees felt that students do not associate with one another without regard to racial, ethnic or social background. By way of contrast, both non-black groups perceived the social setting more congenial. Black returnees also expressed a strong view that channels for expressing complaints

are not readily available.

Perhaps the most negative black rating was the existence of relevant social activities. This rating could imply the need for a more diverse and cross-cultural blend of social activities.

The total results of the t-test for independent means indicates support for the hypothesis presented in this paper. However, the analysis of the biographical data does reflect some differences between black returnees and nonreturnees.

## CHAPTER IV

### Summary and Recommendations

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine what significant biographical or attitudinal variables are involved in the high attrition rate of black students at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. A comparison was also made with a random sample of non-black students to determine if any cross-cultural factors existed.

Analysis of the data led to the following conclusions: no significant statistical attitudinal differences exist between black returnees and black nonreturnees. The only notable difference was that black returnees were more vocal than black nonreturnees. However, there exist several statistically significant biographical or non-intellectual differences between the two groups. By comparison, non-black students, both returnees and nonreturnees differed significantly on certain attitudinal variables. Non-black students rated several environmental factors more favorably than either black group studied.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that new and useful dimensions should be sought that will assist the high school counselor, college admissions officer and black student recruiter in identifying the black student who will

succeed academically in college.

Additional research should be done to establish a preventive withdrawal program initiated to identify and assist those students who have problems common to those who have withdrawn from the university. Hopefully, the potential withdrawing student can be identified and perhaps more adequately counselled and advised to prevent actual exit from the university through early contact with advisors and counselors.

A follow-up study should be done to investigate how many of those students included in this study, that returned spring semester, 1974, will return in good academic standing fall semester, 1974.

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APPENDIX



The UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE

LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 54601

(608) 784-6050

December 3, 1973

Dear Student:

Presently as a part of a graduate research study in partial fulfillment of the Master's Degree requirements, I am gathering data on student backgrounds and their reactions to statements concerning their college experiences.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return in the self-addressed stamped envelope by Wednesday, December 12, 1973. The information you supply through this survey will be kept strictly confidential.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Everett Bellamy*

Everett Bellamy

Please indicate by a check mark (✓) your response for each question.

1. Sex  (1) Male  (2) Female
2. Race  (1) Black  (2) White  (3) Spanish surname  (4) Native American  
 (5) Other
3. Age  (1) 17-19  (2) 20-22  (3) 23-25  (4) 25-over
4. Classification  (1) Freshman  (2) Sophomore  
 (3) Junior  (4) Senior
5. Did you transfer from another college or university?  (1) Yes  (2) No
6. What was the size of your high school graduating class?  
 (1) Less than 25  (2) 25-50  (3) 51-100  
 (4) 101-150  (5) 151-200  (6) 201-300  
 (7) 301-500  (8) 501-1,000  (9) Over 1,000
7. Where are you currently living?  (1) University Residence Hall  (2) Off campus
8. What was the maximum formal education attained by your father?  
 (1) 8th grade or less  (2) 9th - 12th grade  
 (3) Trade or vocational school  (4) Business School  
 (5) 1-2 years of college  (6) 3-4 years of college  
 (7) Graduate or professional school
9. Father's occupation:  (1) Skilled  (2) Semi-skilled  
 (3) Private Business  (4) Professional  (5) Unemployed
10. What was the maximum formal education attained by your mother?  
 (1) 8th grade or less  (2) 9th - 12th grade  
 (3) Trade or vocational school  (4) Business School  
 (5) 1-2 years of college  (6) 3-4 years of college  
 (7) Graduate or professional school
11. Does your mother work outside of the home?  (1) Yes  (2) No
12. In what school are you currently enrolled?  
 (1) School of Health, Recreation and Physical Education  
 (2) School of Arts, Letters & Science  
 (3) School of Education
13. What was the most influential source consulted about your college plans?  
 (1) Friends  (2) Parents  (3) High School Counselor  
 (4) Others
14. Did you hold any academic or social office or position while in high school  
 (1) Yes  (2) No

PLEASE TURN PAGE AND CONTINUE



1-Strongly agree 2-Moderately agree 3-No opinion 4-Moderately disagree  
5-Strongly Disagree

31. \_\_\_ Classes at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse are structured and formal.
32. \_\_\_ Channels for expressing complaints are readily available.
33. \_\_\_ Courses at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse require too much work for the number of credits earned.
34. \_\_\_ Facilities and opportunities for individual creative activities exist on campus.
35. \_\_\_ Social experiences with persons of a different race or background at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse are pleasant.
36. \_\_\_ Educational experiences with persons of a different race or background at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse are pleasant.
37. \_\_\_ Students at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse associate with one another without regard to racial, ethnic or social background.
38. \_\_\_ The college environment at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is conducive for personal development and growth. .
39. \_\_\_ When confronted with a problem, one should seek advice and help from anyone regardless of race.
40. If you should leave the University without receiving a degree, which of the following do you think would be the most likely cause(s):
- \_\_\_ (1) Absolutely certain I will obtain a degree
  - \_\_\_ (2) To accept a good job
  - \_\_\_ (3) To enter military service
  - \_\_\_ (4) It would cost more than my family and I can afford
  - \_\_\_ (5) Marriage
  - \_\_\_ (6) Disinterested in study
  - \_\_\_ (7) Lack of academic ability
  - \_\_\_ (8) Insufficient reading or study skills

You have now completed the questionnaire. Please return in the enclosed stamped envelope. Thank you for your prompt completion of this.

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