This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

FACTORS IN STUDENT RETENTION AMONG SELECTED MEMBER INSTITUTIONS OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BIBLE COLLEGES

presented by

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has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Educational Administration

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Date February, 1985

FACTORS IN STUDENT RETENTION AMONG SELECTED MEMBER INSTITUTIONS OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BIBLE COLLEGES

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Administration

1985

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In recent years, private and independent colleges, of which Bible colleges constitute a segment, have suffered a decline in enrollment. If Bible colleges could stop or reverse this trend through an investigation of critical retention factors and an application of appropriate recommendations, they might more easily maintain or increase their enrollments.

The study involved two analyses: the first analysis was an assessment across 12 member institutions of the American Association of Bible colleges. The purpose was to describe the demographic composition, personal objectives, college impressions, extra-curricular activities, and areas of special help provided by the colleges. The second analysis was an examination of selected factors relative to the retention rate of a particular college in order to determine if some factors were more critical than others.

The method for collecting data consisted of a questionnaire which was completed by students enrolled in 12 AABC institutions. The data were collected and tabulated with mean scores, percentages, and ranges recorded. Factors from a Likert type response were arranged in

rank order under the separate categories of the questionnaire. Colleges having a high percentage of retention were compared with colleges having a low percentage of retention. Factors which appeared to be correlated with high or low retention levels were analyzed.

The findings revealed that Bible college students were bright, academically oriented, had strong positive and negative impressions, and participated in a variety of extra-curricular activities. They came to a Bible college to learn more about the Bible and to increase in spiritual development. They felt they had achieved these objectives, but were negative about their college in several areas.

Correlates of retention appeared to be associated with a particular demographic profile such as female and Christian high school graduate, vocational determination, and relative ease in making good grades. Financial aid and scholarship availability did not appear to impact persistence significantly.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Patricia--for her loving support and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Ted Ward for his helpful counsel and critical expertise in writing this dissertation.

In addition, I would like the thank the following personnel and institutions for their participation in the study:

Franklin J. Hogg, Atlanta Christian College

Jesse Hensarling, Calvary Bible College

A. Wayne Lown, Central Christian College of the Bible

Robert Kallgren, Columbia Bible College

Gregord D. Cook, Faith Baptist Bible College

Evlyne Beyer, Grace Bible College

Larry D. Higgins, Gulf-Coast Bible College

Joyce L. Kehoe, Multnomah School of the Bible

Delores Scarbrough, Puget Sound College of the Bible

Earl R. Beaty, St. Louis Christian College

Robert McCluskey, St. Paul Bible College

John P. Ragsdale, United Wesleyan College.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities (NIICU), in their Fall, 1982, annual survey taken by 1,200 private and independent institutions from all regions of the country, a 4% national decline in enrollment occurred within the private/independent sector. Among its findings, the following were significant:

1. Overall enrollment declined in independent colleges and universities for the first time since 1971 when the Vietnam War draft deferments ended for college students.

2. The number of full-time entering freshmen declined by more than 4%. This loss of entering students exceeded the decline in the college-age population for the first time since the last of the baby-boom cohort reached eighteen.

3. Almost two-thirds of the institutions reported declines in their freshmen class, with one in three institutions reporting declines exceeding 10%, and almost one in six suffering losses of 20% or more.

4. Even if next fall's freshmen enrollments increase to regain current losses of more than 17,000 entering students, the nation's independent colleges will lose more than a quarter of a billion dollars in tuition revenues during the next four years (NIICU, 1982, p. 1).

Within the category of the private/independent sector is an even smaller group of colleges also facing the struggles of the financial and enrollment crunch. This category is a group known as the Bible

college movement, the accredited members recognized by the American Association of Bible Colleges (AABC). The study is about these colleges.

Statement of the Problem

The NIICU's reference to a decline in enrollment is a fundamental problem Bible colleges face in the 1980's, and likely through the rest of the 20th century. It naturally follows that a loss in enrollment produces a loss in operating revenues and eventually the entire life of the college is affected.

The dilemma in which higher education finds itself has been forcefully stated by Mayhew (1979):

> Four types of institutions will face the most serious problems during the 1980's, assuming the predicated drop of about a million students, and assuming the market for new students proves to be limited: (1) the small, little-known liberal arts college, (2) the private, single-sex two-year institutions, (3) the small, recently created private institution designed to serve a quite specific clientele, and (4) the middle-level, private, urban universities and perhaps a few of the more remote state colleges located in regions experiencing sharp population declines. Their problems are likely to extend from maintaining a precarious existence produced by enrollment declines, rising costs, and tuitions that have come to be regarded as too high for values received, to a final death struggle characterized by exhausted revenues, no line of credit with banks, and a flow of cash so limited that bills cannot be paid (p. 4).

While Mayhew was referring to the public sector, Bible colleges parallel his categories of institutions in several respects because they are small, not well known, private, and often located in remote areas.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the study was to identify the concomitants and correlates of high and low attrition in selected member institutions of the American Association of Bible Colleges.

The intention was to consider a number of demographic and student opinion variables and determine whether any of these appear to be related with retention (continuance) in the student body of the institution.

Central to this purpose were two separate analyses: the first analysis was an assessment across twelve member institutions of the AABC based on student responses to a series of questions. Included were demographic questions, sources of information about the decision to apply, personal objectives, impressions about the institution, extra-curricular activities, and any special help made available. These twelve institutions represented different theological traditions, different sizes, and different geographic locations.

The second analysis examined selected factors with reference to trends and patterns associated with the level of retention or attrition in a particular school. Factors which appeared to be associated with retention held either in common or in differentiation among AABC institutions were identified. Attrition statistics were compared against key indicators to determine general trends and directions. For example, it occurred that a college with a high percentage of retention also tended to have students with a positive response about the relative ease in making good grades.

The institutions were ranked from highest to lowest levels of retention and from this list the four colleges having the highest percentages of retention were compared with the four colleges having the lowest percentages of retention. These two groups were compared on particular factors, such as geographic location or job availability, to determine whether or not patterns of association existed.

Significance of the Study

For many years leaders in the Bible college movement have focused on the question, "Who is entering our colleges?" The thrust of the investigation was to seek out and enroll students who would be genuinely interested in securing a Bible college education, presumably to prepare for vocational Christian service. Today, however, along with higher education leaders everywhere, Bible college administrators are asking the question: "Who drops out and who graduates?"

The shift in questions represents a change in the educational scene. Back in the 1960s and 1970s, the era commonly referred to as the golden age of education, leaders were only vaguely interested in attrition and retention statistics. Admissions officers were able to recruit from a seemingly bottomless supply of applicant pools. This situation, for a number of different reasons, has now changed so that the question has become, "Why have all the students gone?" Retention is fast becoming the newest counterweight for sagging enrollments.

As one writer observes:

> The idea is simple enough: if schools can retain more students once they are admitted, then enrollment will hold steady or decrease at a lower rate. It is no easy task,

> however, to understand all the variables involved in retention; and it is even more difficult to influence retention rates, which may be affected by numerous conditions and circumstances beyond institutional control (Beal & Noel, 1980, p. 1).

All of this is not to deny recruitment efforts will still be necessary. It is to say the Bible college movement needs to concentrate, in a positive way, on what it could do in order to retain a higher percentage of its enrollment. There has already been too much lamenting over the woes of attrition. If the movement can shift part of its emphasis to retention, it will most likely also enhance its recruitment efforts. This is apparent because in order to improve the retention posture, the movement must improve its total educational delivery system. Such as assignment would benefit present and prospective students alike.

Limitations and Scope of the Study

Established in 1947, the American Association of Bible Colleges is an autonomous association of colleges which holds to an evangelical position. In other words, the colleges accredited by the AABC regard themselves to represent the historic, orthodox, Christian faith. The central purpose of the AABC is to engage in the accrediting process for interested colleges in order that these colleges might improve their overall educational program.

As of the 1982-83 school year, there were 83 accredited colleges in the AABC and 17 new candidates for accreditation for a grand total of 100 colleges. Of these 83 colleges, only one did not offer a four-year baccalaureate degree. Enrollment totaled 30,797 among all the

colleges in the accredited category and 5,251 in those of the candidate classification.

The study dealt only with those in the accredited category, located in the United States, having an enrollment of 100 or more, and offering a baccalaureate degree program as reported to the AABC. Of the accredited colleges, fourteen were outside the parameters of this criteria (AABC, 1982-83). Thus, initial contact was made with sixty-nine AABC schools to determine whether or not they would be interested in participating in a survey of retention among AABC students.

The approach of the study was to describe demographic features of the Bible colleges and to relate, in general terms, patterns of association with high or low retention. The intent was to identify trends of persistence or attrition and general characteristics of students in Bible colleges. Therefore, the statistical treatment consisted of tabulations and measures of central tendency such as mean and range, rather than more intricate and sophisticated procedures. Nevertheless, the data should prove useful to Bible colleges because it will help them to understand what sort of students they are attracting and what factors in their colleges seem to be associated with persistence and attrition.

The perspective of the study was to determine the factors which students, themselves, believed to be the most critical in their desire to remain in an AABC institution. Doubtless, it would be interesting to compare faculty member opinions with student opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of a given institution, but such a study would be beyond the scope of the present investigation.

Definition of Terms

The following nomenclature will serve as a standard in this investigation:

AABC. The American Association of Bible Colleges is presently classified among the professional or specialized agencies. It serves in the undergraduate professional or specialized field of Biblical and church-vocational education. The programs it accredits are offered chiefly in professional or special-purpose colleges commonly known as "Bible colleges." AABC assumes that the term "college," in distinction from "institute," is characteristic only of an institution granting the baccalaureate degree, normally the culmination of a four-year program. At the time of the study, there was only one accredited member institution which did not fulfill this definition. Since the Association deals almost exclusively with Bible colleges, its procedures, criteria, and evaluation program units relate to institutions as a whole, rather than to program units within multi-purpose structures. The U.S. Office of Education consequently regards AABC as an "institutional" accrediting agency (AABC Manual, 1973, p. 11).

Attrition. In general, a downward trend on drop off in enrollment, finances, or personal resources of an academic institution. The Center for the Study of Higher Education, the University of Michigan, puts this phenomenon in proper context:

> The fact remains that as a result of inadequate planning, colleges and universities across the country today are faced with expanded facilities, faculties, and expenditures, at a time of decreasing growth in enrollments and tuition revenues (Didham et al., 1976, p. 15).

Bible Colleges. AABC defines these institutions as: "Education of college level whose distinctive function is to prepare students for Christian ministries or church vocations through a program of Biblical, general, and professional studies" (AABC Manual, 1973, p. 9).

Dropouts. Astin (1975) limits persons in this category as "only those students who had originally planned to earn a bachelor's degree but who subsequently failed to do so" (p. 6). Cope and Hannah (1975) emphasize that "nonpersistence, of course, does not necessarily mean failure on the part of student or college. Many students simply terminate their enrollment when their objective is to take a few courses or they just wanted to start college without intending to finish" (p. 2).

Institutional Survival: Balerston (1974) defines this phenonomen as follows:

> By the survival of a university I mean its ability to maintain the essentials of its mission and charter in institutional, academic, and fiscal terms, without having to change its qualitative program character out of recognition and without having to accept a radical and involuntary change in its mode of governance (p. 248).

Management. Mayhew (1980) views this as the process of "bringing all relevant information together concerning an issue, reflecting on it in rational ways, and making judgments and plans about the issues" (pp. 74-75).

Marketing. The key word in defining marketing is the term "exchange." Kotler (1976), with this concept in mind, writes:

> Marketing [italics his] is defined as human activity undertaken to satisy some set of needs through exchange processes.

> In the college context, we recognize the existence of needs and wants in young adults and others for a higher education. We also recognize the existence of suppliers who provide higher education services at a cost to consumers. Marketing describes the activities of both buyers and sellers, in this case students and colleges, in searching for suitable ways to satisfy their respective requirements (pp. 55-56).

Persistence. A persister is a student who remains continuously enrolled in college. Astin (1975) divides these into three categories:

> (1) those enrolled full time in a graduate or professional school, (2) those who already hold a baccalaureate degree, and (3) those who've completed four years of college but are still pursuing at least a bachelor's degree (p. 9).

However, since AABC colleges are primarily undergraduate institutions, persisters, in this study, will include only those currently enrolled, either full or part time, in an undergraduate program.

Recruitment. The total effort an institution expends in order to attract and eventually enroll potential students. Included in this effort would be tools such as film, slides, and personal contacts.

Retention. The composite qualities and factors a college generates in order to encourage and motivate students to remain in that institution. Retention is from the institution's viewpoint, whereas persistence is from the student's perspective.

Retrenchment. The retreating and cutting back an institution engages in due to a decline in one or more of the following areas: enrollment, funding and financing from all sources, faculty and staff personnel, and job market opportunities for graduates.

Stop outs. Because the term is somewhat ambiguous, Astin (1975) believes it should "include students who interrupt their undergraduate

education for a relatively brief period and return to complete the degree" (p. 9).

Implications for Bible Colleges

A careful consideration of these terms will help the reader to appreciate more fully the dynamic challenges colleges are now facing. Undoubtedly, there will be more necessary changes from now to the end of the century than experienced for many, many years. As Didham (1976) has stated:

> Change, once again, as from 1870 to 1910, now seems likely to proceed at an accelerated rate--not so fundamental in its essence as in that earlier period, but still substantial. The period 1970 to 2000 may prove to be the second most active period of change in the history of American higher education (p. 47).

The reality of the times dictates that only those Bible colleges which meet the challenge of change will still be in the educational arena by the end of the 20th century. A crucial aspect of their task will be to retain a higher percentage of the students they enroll than was accomplished heretofore.

In order to correct patterns of the past, Bible colleges will need tools to help them cultivate and nurture their student population. An understanding of the demographic characteristics of Bible colleges, the first analysis in the study, and a knowledge of the components of retention, the second analysis of the study should give them some of these tools.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

In order to understand present-day enrollment patterns and strategies in church-related higher education in America, a brief historical record of religious education is needed. In general, religious or church-related higher education includes three models: church-sponsored colleges, Christian liberal arts colleges, and Bible colleges. These models will be discussed in that order.

Historical Development of Church-Sponsored Colleges

The church-sponsored college, the first educational model, has roots deep in the history of American colonial education, most of early educational history of American higher education was of this type, the colleges being strongly related, both organizationally and fiscally, to a religious denomination. Most of these were Protestant, although Roman Catholic influence was also felt, especially in the Middle Colonies.

Early colonial education was largely in the Reformation tradition of Martin Luther and John Calvin, both of these church leaders having strongly emphasized education. Since many of America's founders stressed the value of a Christianized citizenry, it seemed inevitable they also emphasize the need for an educated citizenry.

Cairns (1958), in his treatment of colonial higher education, discusses the role of religion in the earliest colleges:

> Harvard was founded in 1636 to "advance learning" and to secure a literate ministry who could pass on the cultural and religious tradition of the current generation to that which was to succed it. . . . William and Mary College in Williamsburg was founded in 1693 with the idea that one of its main functions should be "the breeding of good ministers." Shortly thereafter the Puritains of Connecticut opened Yale College in 1701 to give youth a "Liberal and Religious Education" so that leaders for the churches should not be lacking. In 1726 William Tennant Sr., an Irish minister, set up a "Lay College" near Philadelphia to educate his sons and other boys for the ministry. Jonathan Dickinson secured a charter in 1746 for a school to continue this effort. This school, known as the College of New Jersey, moved to Princeton, and was eventually known as Princeton University. King's College (Columbia) came into existence by royal charter in 1754. The Baptists set up Rhode Island College in 1764 as an institution that would teach religion and the sciences without regard to sectarian differences. In due course, it became Brown University. Dartmouth was founded in 1770; the present Rutgers came into being in 1825; and the Quaker school, Haverford, was founded in 1833. Each group sought to set up an institution of higher learning to provide godly teachers in the Church and state (Cairns, pp. 399-400).

Gangel and Benson (1983) also note the influences of religion in colonial America:

> There is no question that the earliest colleges in America were Christian institutions. The colonial Anglicans and Calvinists wanted a highly literate and college-trained clergy functioning in their churches and so established their colleges with that goal in mind (p. 359).

Furthermore, the role of religion was not confined to the New England colonies, but was pervasive in the Middle Colonies and the South as well. While there were differences in the educational style of the three regions, the curriculum everywhere was religious in content. Harvard's curriculum included six of the seven liberal arts of the cathedral schools of the middle ages. King's College,

later renamed Columbia, stated its purpose was to provide Christian education for men (there were no women students) in areas in which all Protestant denominations could agree. James Blair, in laying the groundwork for William and Mary in the South, organized the college into four departments: sacred theology, philosophy, classical languages, and a department to teach the three R's to Indian children (Gangel & Benson, pp. 238-251).

In addition to the growth of higher education of the Colonial Period, the Great Awakening of the 18th century produced colleges with strong religious convictions. However, by the end of the Civil War, most of the latter periods' schools had passed from the scene.

The era prior to the Civil War had witnessed a great surge of Protestant colleges in the United States. In 1800 there were only 24 colleges, an estimate of 100 teachers, and about 2,000 students. The 50-year period from 1820 to 1870 witnessed the addition of at least 300 colleges in the country (Witmer, 1962, p. 28). The influence of evangelical Christianity in the colleges of that period was significant, as Witmer observes:

> The great majority were Protestant and evangelical. Even the few state institutions established were often under Christian leadership and oriented toward the Christian faith. Many of their first presidents were ministers and many graduates became ministers. Of the first 94 graduates of Illinois, 45 entered the ministry (p. 28).

In time, denominationally sponsored colleges drifted from their Calvinist-Puritan mooring. One principal reason was the influence of American theological liberalism which was the result of German idealism, higher biblical criticism, and the doctrine of organic evolution.

There are about 3,000 post-secondary institutions in the United States today, with about 800 of these maintaining some form of religious orientation (Sandin, 1982, p. 3). But, for the most part, the religiously oriented institutions no longer serve as a stronghold for fundamentalist doctrines or evangelical fervor.

After the Civil War a new era of educational growth developed as the country began moving west. The Morrill Act of 1862 granted real estate for the establishment of land grant colleges. This encouraged the growth of the public sector, but at the same time, some educational leaders were eager to reaffirm the religious tenents of an earlier generation. An example would be Wheaton College in Illinois, founded in 1860. Under the dynamic leadership of Jonathan Blanchard, Wheaton's history was one of remarkable growth, both in enrollment and religious commitment. Another example was Iowa College, where Rev. T. M. Post, in a commencement address, stated a truth still at the heart of the Christian liberal arts college movement: "Religion and science belong together because all truth at base is one" (Gangel & Benson, 1983, p. 360).

Historical Development of Christian Liberal Arts Colleges

The mantle of conservative Christianity in education from the colonial period gradually passed to modern day Christian liberal arts colleges. This second model of church-related higher education became the new frontier in preparing students for the ministry and related vocations.

Historically, the Christian liberal arts college movement has had to overcome more obstacles than the older and larger church-related colleges. Among those limitations were a smaller financial base, smaller enrollments, fewer library holdings, and a lower percentage of doctorates on the teaching faculty. Interestingly, Sandin even criticizes their lower tuition charges since that writer believes a correlation exists between higher tuition charges and the educational quality necessary to command higher rates (Sandin, 1982, pp. 4-6).

In spite of these criticisms, the movement has slowly gained stature in the educational community. Part of the reason lies in the unique patterns of the Christian liberal arts college, which distinguishes them from the generally more liberally inclined church-related colleges. Authorities on the movement, such as Gangel and Benson (1983), delineate a threefold curriculum pattern in these institutions. First, the Bible was considered foundational for all areas of human knowledge. While they made no claim that the Bible was a textbook in the formal sense, they did assume God spoke to man in His written Word, and that Word should be studied and learned. It became the guidepost along the path of learning. Second, truth was to be intergrated with other truth. For example, the study of natural science was, in actuality, a study of God's natural revelation. The leaders in the movement felt there was hardly any area of human knowledge which could not legitimately be related to the historic Judeo-Christian faith. Third, the student was to develop a Christian world view. Whatever he did in life was to be done from the Christian

dimension. Similar to the second curriculum pattern, this tenet went beyond interpreting truth from the Christian perspective in seeking to apply that truth to daily life (Gangel & Benson, 1983, pp. 360-361).

Today, Christian liberal arts colleges in America appear to be educationally vibrant and confident about the future. Facing the constraints that are common to all institutions of higher learning, they nonetheless continue to provide a religiously-oriented alternative in most of the same areas of human knowledge taught in the larger public sector.

Historical Development of Bible Colleges

The Bible college movement represents the third model of church-related higher education and is the central focus of this investigation. While it shares much in common with Christian liberal arts colleges, it differs in three ways: its primary objective is professional or vocationally related to a church-centered career; its curriculum requires a major in Bible and theology, 30 credit hours established by the American Association of Bible Colleges; and there is more emphasis on practical training and experience which usually means some sort of "Christian service assignment" during the student's days in college (Gangel & Benson, 1983, p. 362).

Even though the Bible college movement is relatively new on the educational scene, its ideals trace back to a much older time period. Because of the pietistic influence of the Moravian Brethren of colonial days, and later in the 18th century, because of the Great

Awakening, the concept of training men for the minstry grew and developed. Although the concept of preparing leaders for the church was not an uniquely American concept, it had lain dormant for centuries until American church leaders spurred the growth of higher education.

As already presented, colonial higher education retained definite religious commitments. It is also a matter of record that the church-sponsored colleges of that day were similar, in many ways, with present-day Bible colleges. This is the argument Gangel and Benson (1983) make:

> One could argue that Harvard College was the first Bible college founded in America and then go on to point out the Anglican efforts to train ministers at William and Mary (1693), Congregational commitment to Yale (1701), Presbyterian efforts at Princeton (1746), and on through the denominational efforts (p. 310).

The similarity between America's earliest colleges and the present Bible college movement is in the areas of goals and mission statements. Obviously, methods and curricular programs have changed considerably over the centuries.

In addition to the influence of colonial education, the Bible college movement must also credit the influence of early missionary schools. The most noteworthy of these were the schools of the Moravian Brethren, namely, the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions and the Gossmer Mission. East London Institute was founded in 1872 by H. Grattan Guiness to accomplish the goals of missionary training, preparation, and placement on foreign mission fields. The Institute greatly influenced A. B. Simpson who later

urged the establishment of similar schools in the United States. In its first 16 years, East London received applications from 3,000 young men, of these 800 were accepted, and 500 completed their training to become workers at home and abroad (Witmer, 1962, p. 33).

By the end of the 19th century, higher education had become much more secularized than in colonial days. This condition was not limited to public institutions, but affected many church-related colleges as well. The history of evangelical higher education has been one of reaction to the drift toward theological liberalism and rationalism. While the late 19th century is considered the period when these trends made their greatest impact, theological arguments go back to the very beginning of higher education in America.

> When Harvard was suspected of Unitarian and rationalistic views, Yale was founded "to be a truer school of the prophets." When the Great Awakening shaped new churches desiring an evangelically trained ministry, both Harvard and Yale became suspect, and so Princeton was founded (Witmer, 1962, p. 30).

The conservative-liberal controversy of that period has continued, in one form or another, down to the present. It reached its peak during the 1920's and produced several results for conservatism such as the withdrawal of J. Gresham Machen from Princeton Seminary, numerous Bible conferences, literary works such as Christianity and Liberalism (1923), and The Virgin Birth of Christ (1930), and colleges such as Nyack and Moody Bible Institute. All of these movements, including the Bible college movement, were examples of theological absolutism. In reality, the Bible college movement was a reaction to American liberalism, which, in turn, had been heavily influenced by

German higher criticism and idealistic philosophy (Cairns, 1958, pp. 480-481).

Of course, the Bible college movement views its existence as more than a reactionary exercise against liberalism. Without strong leadership, no movement grows and the men and women who understood the issues of their day became the pioneers of this new development. One such early leader was A. B. Simpson, the man who had been greatly influenced by the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions. Eavey (1964) recognizes his contribution:

> Simpson's missionary zeal and ardor influenced young people of his congregation to offer themselves for missionary service. Most of these lacked a good education; to prepare for college and then to wait seven more years until they had completed seminary was too much. He had studied and had been impressed by the methods of the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missionaries. Since there was no school like it in America, he decided to start one to give his own people basic Bible training for Christian service at home and abroad (p. 338).

An important factor in Simpson's mind was that the requirement of a theological seminary degree, typically three years beyond the baccalaureate, was much too long for the average student. In addition, seminary training tended to emphasize the theoretical, rather than the practical, and thus lacked the real-life application so desperately needed. A three-year Bible institute diploma or four-year degree appeared to meet the need. The Bible college would be able to produce "gap" men--men between the theological seminary level and the average layman in the pew.

The two earliest Bible colleges in North America, Nyack Missionary College in Nyack, New York, and Moody Bible Institute in Chicago,

date from 1882 and 1886, respectively. Nyack, the older of the two, was the result of the influence and vision of A. B. Simpson, the man who had been motivated by what he had felt was impractical in the theological seminaries of the day. Simpson began his training institute in 1882 by occupying the rear platform of the old Twenty-Third Street Theatre in New York City. Facilities were typically crude, consisting of wooden benches and tables. Enrollment totaled twelve students taught by two teachers. The curriculum was made up of three departments built around theological, general, and practical courses. Through the years, Nyack has consistently followed that pattern and has received praise accordingly: "In curriculum, orientation to world evangelism, academic standards, and spiritual emphasis it has given exemplary leadership" (Witmer, 1962, p. 35).

Without doubt, the most respected and best known leader in the Bible college movement was Dwight L. Moody. Moody had been a successful Chicago businessman, active lay leader, and eventually one of the leading evangelists of the late 19th century. He also maintained an avid interest in youth work and in establishing an educational setting for training Christian workers. After the great Chicago fire, Moody persuaded Miss Emma E. Dryer to teach a women's Bible class in his Northside Tabernacle. The year was 1872 and by 1886 the institution bearing Moody's name was finally launched. Although it had taken all those intervening years to plan and organize the school, the results were spectacular. Its objectives were stated succinctly, ". . . to educate and direct and maintain Christian workers as Bible readers,

teachers, and evangelists, who shall teach the gospel in Chicago and its suburbs, especially in neglected fields" (Witmer, 1962, p. 37). In its first year of operation, Moody Bible Institute enrolled 80 students and within ten years nearly 3,000 had received training.

For the past century, Moody Bible Institute has had a profound impact in training missionaries and other Christian workers and remains a landmark institution in the Bible College movement.

> The outstanding success of the Moody Bible Institute has influenced greatly the Bible institute-college movement. Certain features of its program, such as practical Christian training, have been copied by numbers of other institutions. With 2,700 of its alumni in active foreign missionary service, it is the largest evangelical training center in the world (Witmer, 1962, p. 37).

Since those early days of Nyack and Moody, the Bible college movement has grown to become one of the most outstanding vehicles of Christian higher education. Today there are about 200 Bible colleges of which the American Association of Bible College has knowledge, although the actual figure may be as high as 350, within the United States and Canada. The period from 1931 to 1960 witnessed the most dramatic growth so that by 1960 there were about 25,000 students enrolled in Bible colleges in the United States and Canada, averaging about 110 students for the 217 institutions. Of the 25,000, about 11% were part-time students, male students were 55% of the total enrollment, and female students about 45% (Witmer, 1962, pp. 54-55). Table 1 provides enrollment figures from 1881 through 1960. The concluding date is appropriate since there have been viturally no new Bible colleges started since 1960.

Table 1. Founding of Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges by Decades

Decade	United States		Canada		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1881-90	3	1.3	0	0.0	3	1.3
1891-00	7	3.0	1	.4	8	3.4
1901-10	9	3.8	0	0.0	9	3.8
1911-20	13	5.6	2	.9	15	6.5
1921-30	17	7.3	9	3.8	26	11.1
1931-40	26	11.0	19	8.2	45	19.2
1941-50	66	28.2	16	6.8	82	35.0
1951-60	40	17.1	4	1.7	44	18.8
1961 on	2	.9	0	0.0	2	.9
Total	183	78.2	51	21.8	234	100.0

Source: Witmer, p. 40.

Some observations are in order concerning the growth and development of the Bible college movement. First of all, the rather large difference in percentage figures between males and females remains to the present. Obviously, enrollment statistics would be strengthened if the movement were able to attract more female students. Secondly, although Moody Bible Institute has maintained its three-year diploma plan, in addition to a baccalaureate degree, the schools as a whole have gone to a four-year degree model. Columbia Bible Institute in South Carolina was the first school to make this shift, changing its name to Columbia Bible College in 1931 (Bach, 1970, p. 8).

A third, and more serious matter, has been the difficulty the Bible college movement has had with lack of academic standards and professional association among constituent bodies. It gradually became apparent that an accrediting agency was needed in order to improve the quality and character of the movement, market education to prospective students, facilitate transfer of credits, and maintain orthodox doctrinal standards (Eavey, 1964, p. 345).

History of the American Association of Bible Colleges

In 1947 the Accrediting Association of Bible Institutes and Bible College was formed. The title was shortened to American Association of Bible Colleges in 1957, the new title also reflected the departure of most of the movement from the three-year diploma program. Since then, the AABC has strengthened its position:

> The Association has made commendable progress. Most of the larger and older Bible schools are members. Bible institute education has been definitely strengthened as administrators become aware of weaknesses. Stimulating self-study has made for improvement as schools endeavored to meet Association standards. The Association is recognized by the United States Office of Education and other federal agencies concerned with educational matters. It is a constituent member of the American Council on Education and of the Council on Cooperation in Teacher Education. It is recognized by the National Education Association, by various state boards of education, and by other associations (Eavey, 1964, p. 346).

Along with other colleges in the private college sector, the Bible college movement faces new challenges for the remainder of the 20th century. Current literature is replete with comparison figures between the public, private, and independent sectors of higher education. Typically, most of the data show the private and independent share of student enrollment as shrinking.

Admissions Literature--An Overview

In recent years, a great deal of literature has become available in subjects such as management and marketing in college admissions, as well as an enormous quantity of material about retention and attrition. Although the study was chiefly an investigation into the subjects of retention and persistence, these are in reality a subdivision of the larger topics of management and marketing in admissions --they are pieces of the total puzzle. Therefore, a survey of selected literature in the larger divisions of management and marketing is in order to provide the reader a fuller understanding of the distinctive characteristics of retention and persistence. Furthermore, most of the writers speak from the viewpoint of the public institution sector, but the principles they articulate are equally applicable to church-related institutions and to Bible colleges.

Some writers in the field of higher education predicted a downturn in enrollment several years ago and gave their recommendations accordingly. For example, Balderston (1974) predicted a decline in both the public and private sectors due to a shirnking pool of conventional college-age youth.

> The number of eighteeen-year-olds will reach its peak in 1978 and then will decline well into the 1980's. The most selective private institutions, and those that draw from a truly national market, will be very little affected. But private universities that have a much more localized demand, and state universities that draw undergradute students who are a significant proportion of the total number of college goers from a state's population, will either have to drop minimum eligibility standards or settle for stagnating or declining undergraduate enrollments (p. 125).

Because of this forecast, Hughes (1980) issued a challenge: "The big winners in the marketing scramble are going to be those schools that move quickly, aim high, and invent a way to bring in the high-priced talent they need without causing organizational apoplexy" (p. 94).

Hughes (1980) also deals with the administrative changes colleges will undergo, accompanied by the difficulty of new organizational patterns. He outlines several options, each with its own set of difficulties: (1) hire a vice president for marketing; the difficulty would be how development and admissions would relate to this new position; (2) leave admissions and development in its current place; the problem would be that the staff position gives marketing too low a profile and authority; (3) consolidate public relations, fund raising, and alumni affairs into one office; this could generate more organizational anxiety than any college president would care to handle; (4) the least disruptive option would be to maintain the current structure and add a marketing component to both admissions and development; this could also lower considerably the range of skills a college might expect from its marketing personnel. Perhaps his most creative suggestion is to move the admissions office away from the academic arena and place it in line authority under a marketing vice president. But he admits this move would open up an old can of worms, namely "can academic integrity survive on Madison Avenue?" (p. 93).

Less radical suggestions were made by the Carnegie Commission (1977) which felt that both public and private institutions should seek out new constituencies, such as high school juniors, adult learners,

and community college transfers. The Commission does make two somewhat controversial proposals in suggesting state systems should offer the Doctor of Arts degree as a teaching alternative to the research Doctor of Philosophy degree and that there should be redefinition of institutional quality focused on the value of the college experience itself (pp. 39-40).

Admissions Management

There is also no lack of precedent literature in the field of admissions management. The larger topic of management should be considered under the smaller categories of administration qualifications, organizational principles, the task and role of admissions officers, leadership skills, and management by objectives.

Concerning administrative qualifications, Lahti (1973) gives one of the most comprehensive descriptions of the successful administrator. To be effective, such a person must have

> . . . power with people, intelligence, flexibility, guts, integrity, confidence, and inner drive. He must be able to learn, think, and understand quickly; make sound judgments and decisions; communicate effectively, act vigorously and react quickly; and get along with, understand, and get things done through others. He must be able to lead, plan, organize, delegate, and control and must possess a knowlege of finance, empathy, and a certain amount of charisma or personal charm. He must be a generalist rather than a specialist; he must be innovative, creative, able to benefit from experience, and able to shoot for the long-range target. The administrator must not only manage better and differently and skillfully delegate the day-to-day functions to subordinates, but he must also remain informed, shifting gears as demanded by the changing of the organization (p. 39).

Perry (1970) researched administrative qualities considered most important in hiring an admissions assistant. By rank order, these

qualities were friendliness, poise, educational beliefs, familiarity, with high schools, experience in guidance, teaching experience, training in psychology, statistical training, and an alumnus of the institution (p. 106).

Regarding organizational principles, Walker (1979) discusses tasks such as discovering and developing administrative talent, knowing whom to consult regarding problems, shortening administrative lines when necessary, understanding and employing persuasion and diplomacy, persevering under pressure, and realizing that problem solving is better than police duty (pp. 194-195). Marshall (1958) discusses five analytical skills, namely analyses of expertise, coalitions, ambiguity, time, and information (p. 139). Corson (1975) outlines methodology for developing an academic information system that links the Director of Admissions to his superiors. Hungate (1964) discusses techniques of delegating, organizing, directing, operating, and evaluating. Astin and Scherrei (1980) review five different administrative styles, name, the hierarchical, humanistic, entrepreneurial, insecure, and task-oriented manager.

Concerning the task and role of admissions officers, Kastner (1962) lists and discusses the thirteen knowledge areas or criteria stated by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. According to this organization, a Registrar or Director of Admissions should have a working knowledge in the following areas: history of education, higher education administration, curriculum development, secondary education, personnel management, office management, educational measurements, statistics, educational administration,

public relations, counseling procedures, student personnel work, and techniques of communications (pp. 201-203). In relating the Director of Admissions to the overall educational organization, the literature generally views the office as a middle management position. Such decentralization is felt essential for autonomy and decision making (Richman & Farmer, 1974, p. 247). Perry (1970) notes the two channels of authority open to the office of admissions, i.e., the faculty and the formal administrative structure of the institution (p. 102). Admissions personnel should appreciate his insistence that the office should report directly to the President. He believes this because "no other office of the university or college has the opportunity to create the total impact of change in an institution that is available through the office of admissions" (p. 103). Similar to Kastner, Burns, and Woodburne (1958) also relate the task of the Director of Admissions along AACRO guidelines. Eble (1978) goes beyond this and is generally more humanistic in his approach, suggesting such basic principles as paying attention to details, sorting through priorities, dealing with people, and developing a strong office staff (pp. 16-18).

Regarding leadership, Brown (1979) is optimistic for the potential of effective leadership. Especially appreciated are his comments that an effective leader must understand the present momentum of the institution, consistently apply solid educational convictions, think globally, respect expertise in others, possess interpersonal skills, and act with energy (pp. 85-93). Most of the leadership in the Bible college movement has come from the ranks of the classroom teacher. This is a potential troublespot as Lahti (1973) observes:

> This source of leadership leaves much to be desired and results in administrators who come to their posts as amateurs, lacking management skills and the knowledge of application to management systems. For example, the selection of a division chairman or department chairman for a typical academic institution proceeds with the supervisor searching the faculty roster for one or two outstanding teachers who have already been "mentally tapped" as candidates. Too often, the candidate accepts the managerial posts because he thinks it will bring him more money and prestige, more fringe benefits, and an image of success. In reality, the instructor who has been a leader and motivator of students in a classroom setting has accepted a managerial challenge about which he knows very little (pp. 34-5).

Lahti also comments on the shortage of competent managers in education and the challenge of offering management development programs (p. 35). Otherwise, upwardly mobile academicians may flounder.

Baldridge and Tierney (1979) discuss Peter Drucker's MBO system by defining its application to education. They describe its values and how it worked at Furman University, Earlham College, and Arkansas College (pp. 84-86). Bible college leaders should be able to relate to the Arkansas College case since the situation is so parallel. Arkansas College faced financial hard times in 1974, but later recovered. Management by objective principles aided its revitalization, although insufficient enrollment growth still plagues the institution (p. 96).

Admissions Marketing

Because of sagging enrollment figures, colleges have developed and continue to develop marketing strategies. Formerly, most college administrators believed marketing to be the particular domain of business and industry. Realizing the job they save might be their

own, educators began to sharpen their marketing tools. One of the foremost advocates is Philip Kotler (1976) with a seven-pronged approach in applying marketing theories to college admissions (pp. 56-66). Especially valuable to Bible college leaders is his information on institutional positioning and portfolio planning. Other significant authorities include Lewis (1980) with his presentation of the "differentiated product" (pp. 66-75), Stuhr (1974) with his insistence that marketing be a total college effort (p. 27), Knorr (1965) who pioneered a predictive formula for student persistence, Doermann (1968) breaking new ground regarding procedures for assessing student markets, and Jewett (1971) who describes major parameters of the future freshman market.

A marketing program in a Bible college, in order to be successful, must be developed from a solid data base. Assuming that a particular Bible college desires to raise the retention level of its student population, and that this increase is a goal to be achieved, an effective marketing program can be the means to help the college reach its goal. For example, the data indicated that persistence seemed to be associated with being a graduate of a Christian high school. Therefore, a marketing program should be formulated which would most naturally attract students currently enrolled in Christian high schools. Such a strategy places knowledge about persistence characteristics into a workable plan.

Retention and Attrition

Retention and attrition are the postive/negative poles of the enrollment battery, or to scramble the metaphor, the obverse/reverse sides of the coin. There has been a shift in emphasis in recent days from devoting so much energy on why students drop out of college (attrition) to a more positive emphasis on what collegs can do to keep students satisfied with the "product" they are buying (retention). However, an understanding of each is in order to appreciate fully today's enrollment challenges.

Nearly thirty years ago, Fullmer (1956) said it was easy to predict academic success based on the entrance exam and high school rank, but that it was impossible to predict perseverence (p. 128). A decade later, Trent (1966) felt that persistence through graduation was influenced largely by the student's family environment, academic motivation, and attitudinal disposition (p. 85). More recently, Rausch (1980) described retention being achieved through social integration, community support, individual development, and physical amenities (p. 212).

Researchers have conducted many studies about attrition. Representative literature includes Shuman (1956) who, nearly three decades ago, emphasized the importance of a counseling and teaching staff who could spot potential dropouts (pp. 347-54) and Chambers (1961) who linked attrition to such causes as a poor high school preparation and the "sink or swim" attitudes of most college professors (pp. 127-128).

Nationally recognized authorities have also spoken to the issue. Astin (1976) recognized that environmental variables precipitating

dropping out for academic reasons were quite different from dropping out because of marriage or children (p. 181). Dressel (1976) blamed attrition on a faulty recruiting process, which also led to more transfers than desirable. He felt recruitment costs should be related to total student years, rather than merely the number of students recruited. He also stated that the effectiveness of individual recruiters could be enhanced by relating each salary plus expenses to the years of attendance and the satisfaction of those recruited (p. 140).

A. W. Chickering (1974) felt there was a correlation between persistence and the status of being a resident student rather than a commuting student. He felt resident students had wider contacts with faculty members and fellow students, were more active participants in extracurricular activities, and were more likely to assume positions of leadership.

He notes the student differences between the commuters and resident student are related to differences in parental background, high school achievements, affluence, and career aspirations. As a rule, he feels the resident student has the advantages in terms of demographic characteristics and therefore programs must be developed for the commuting student to fill the gap getween the latter and the resident student.

When the differences between the two categories of students are described, it becomes clear why the resident student is more likely to persist. Chickering (1974) argues accordingly:

> Students who lived at home with their parents participated in various kinds of cultural and extracurricular activities less frequently than dormitory residents, and their relationships with faculty members and fellow college students were more limited. Students who lived at home were less satisfied with their college and less frequently planned to return or to study full-time. These differences occurred in both the public and private two- and four-year colleges, and in the public and private universities. And they occurred regardless of institutional size and selectivity (pp. 57-58).

Although Bowen (1977) does not directly relate characteristics of the persisting students, his discussion of student goals are relevant because of the association between goal orientation and persistence. Therefore, the college which can help its students fulfill their personal goals should enhance its level of retention. Among the goals presented, the following bear most directly on the subject of retention:

1. Development of the whole person. The college must endeavor to help students develop in every area of life including the intellectual, moral, religious, emotional, social, and esthetic dimensions.
2. Individuality. Colleges must appreciate the student as an individual and encourage the student to develop his or her particular characteristics and potentialities.
3. Student services. Students need positive encouragement through new curricular programs, financial aid, vocational guidance, and tutorial help.
4. Total learning environment. The college is obligated to help the student develop in the three areas of cognitive

learning, affective development, which includes moral, religious, and emotional interests, and practical competence or performance in citizenship, work, family life, consumerism, and other practical affairs.

5. Carrer choice and placement. The college must provide vocational counseling for the students and an opportunity to consider various career opportunities.
6. Direct satisfaction and enjoyment. Because people spend as much as a third of their whole lives in formal education, and seldom less than a sixth--personal satisfaction and enjoyment is by no means a frivolous goal (pp. 31-44).

Beal and Noel (1980) provide a wealth of material on retention including factors related to persistence and specific action programs. Included from among the latter are faculty awareness and development, peer programs, career assistance, learning support centers, expanded orientation, and academic advisement (pp. 94-96).

Lenning, Sauer, and Beal (1980) discuss types and correlates of retention and make a rather unique contribution with their presentation on single-facet and multifaceted approaches to improving retention. The authors provide an extensive description of admissions and recruiting, advisement, counseling, early warning and prediction, exit interviews, extracurricular activities, financial aid, housing, and orientation. All of these subjects are related to student retention and are recommended as specific action programs.

Bible college personnel should appreciate one of their concluding remarks:

> Among the institutional characteristics correlated with retention were the prestige or academic standing of the institution; adequacy of student support services; availability of residence hall accommodations; and the quality of faculty, staff, and student interactions. Regarding the student-institution fit, a number of theories attempt to explain why this factor is so important. These theories emphasize a variety of factors, including moral, social, and academic integration of students with campus life; the responsiveness of the institution to student needs; and how well the institution realizes student expectations and needs (p. 44).

In her study of the comparison between completers and noncompleters, DeStigter (1983) investigated students enrolled at the doctoral level. Nevertheless, because of the similarities of findings among undergraduate students, her conclusions were quite instructive for Bible colleges as well.

She evaluated the following variables:

1. Regarding gender, there was no significant difference between males and females on persistence.
2. There was a marginally significant relationship between being married and completing the doctoral programs.
3. A higher percentage of Caucasians were completers than other racial groups.
4. Older persons were more likely to complete the requirements for the degree.
5. There was a significant relationship between the student's grade point average and persistence.

6. Persisters were more likely than nonpersisters to have the primary support group of their families (pp. 111-117).

In conclusion, it appears obvious that a great deal has already been written relative to the challenges and complexities of admissions and enrollment trends in higher education. Obviously, too, nearly everything that has been written has come from sources other than leaders in the Bible college movement. Nonetheless, administrators of Bible colleges could profit by reading, digesting, and implementing principles articulated by higher education authorities from the public sector.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

In view of the basic purpose of the study as described in Chapter I, it was necessary to order several steps for collecting and organizing data.

Procedural Steps

The first step was to formulate a set of objectives which could be later expressed in a survey instrument. Several questions were of interest to the researcher. These were narrowed to six, each of which suggested an objective.

The first question was: What were AABC students like? That is, what sort of person applied to an AABC institution? Thus, the objective was to develop a profile of the typical AABC student in terms of personal demographics. The second question was: How did they hear about the college? Here the objective was to determine key factors in arousing or attracting interest which eventually led to application. Third: Why did they come? The objective was to uncover personal reasons involved in making application, including a rank order of factors involved in making application to an AABC institution. Fourth: Why did students remain? The objective would be to state, from the student's point of view, the factors most conducive to retention.

Fifth, What sorts of extra-curricular activities did AABC students most favor, which seemed to be the most popular? Sixth, What were the special needs of AABC students? Therefore, the objective was to view, again from the student's perspective, whether or not specific, special needs were being met by the AABC instituion. Finally, two separate questions were included on the instrument to which a voluntary reply could be given. These were about plans regarding the student's decision to withdraw or transfer to another institution. Beyond collecting this data, the goal of the study was to determine areas of relationship between demographic and personal information and the student retention statistic of the college.

With the above information in view, the next step was to construct a survey instrument which would include the necessary questions. A questionnaire was developed which asked questions of a demographic sort, reasons for their decision to apply, personal objectives, institutional impressions, extra-curricular activities, and special help. The survey gathered data from 12 AABC institutions from Fall term, 1981, through Fall term, 1983. A sample of the survey instrument is in Appendix A.

A pilot study was conducted to refine the survey instrument. The pilot study was accomplished at Dallas Bible College in November, 1982. Given the institution's small enrollment, about 200 students, it was possible to make the questionnaire available to the entire student body. One hundred ninety-two were distributed to the students in their mail boxes, along with instructions to return them to the office of the Director of Admissions by a specific date. By that

date 93 (48.4%) were returned. Admittedly, this rather low percentage involved a self-selective bias since more than 50% of the students were not surveyed. Students were also asked their opinions concerning the survey itself, such as whether or not they felt the questions were valid and which questions should be added or deleted. The pilot study provided enough feedback from the students to make refinements in the instrument before making it available to a larger block of students.

Third, a survey sample of the students in the AABC movement as a whole was conducted. During the 1982-83 school year, there were 83 accredited members in the American Association of Bible Colleges. Some of these were institutions of less than 100 students and some were colleges located in Canada and one did not offer a baccalaureate degree. Eliminating institutions in those three categories, a letter was mailed in January 1983 to the remaining 57 institutions to determine their level of interest in participating in a student retention survey. A self-addressed, stamped post card was included along with a sample survey. Of the institutions contacted, 39 of the 57 (68.4%) replied they would like their students to participate in the project and would appreciate more information regarding the logistics of conducting the survey (cf. Appendix B).

In the fourth step the 39 institutions from step three indicating an interest in the student survey were contacted. A letter was mailed to these colleges explaining the options and methods of conducting the survey. Again, an enclosed stamped post card was

included for their reply. Of these institutions, 11 requested the researcher to duplicate the surveys and mail them to the respective colleges. This response was greater than expected, and furthermore, meant that about 26,000 pieces of paper would need to be duplicated in order to accommodate the request. Therefore, another contact was made with these 11 colleges by way of telephone explaining the predicament. All of the 11 agreed to do their own duplicating, greatly relieving the task for the researcher.

Of the 39 institutions who indicated an interest in conducting the survey, 22 (56.4%) actually did follow through with this task. These 22 colleges ranged in enrollment from 117 to 732 students. The percentage of the student body in a given college who completed the survey ranged from a low of 11.2% to a high of 82.4%. The twelve colleges having the highest percentage of students filling out the survey, with one exception, were used in the data analysis. The one exception was the seventh highest, which after conducting the survey, did not grant use of their data without special permission from the administration; therefore, it was decided to drop that college and include the 13th highest in order to employ an exact dozen for the study. These 12 colleges ranged from a low of 48.7% to a high of 82.4% of their student body completing the survey. In the 12 colleges, there was a total enrollment of 3937. Of these, 2465 (72.6%) completed the survey. For the sake of anonymity, the 12 colleges were assigned code numbers.

The data collected were organized into a descriptive study identifying general trends, rather than a more precise statistical

analysis. The researcher believed that a rudimentary analysis was all that the rigor of the design justified.

Population of the Study

In the directory of the American Association of Bible Colleges for the 1982-83 shcool year, 83 accredited members were listed (AABC Directory, 1982-83). Of these, 76 were located in the United States, while seven were in Canada. Moreover, six of the American colleges were under 100 in enrollment. Since Canadian colleges and American colleges of less than 100, and one American college which did not offer a four-year degree were not contacted for this study, 83 minus 14 (7 + 6 + 1) or 69 American colleges of an enrollment of 100 or more offering a four-year degree constituted the population for the study.

The sample for this study included students from 12 of the accredited institutions in the United States with an enrollment of 100 or more and offering a bachelor's degree as of the Spring term, 1983. The sample was selected according to the criteria of denominational diversity within evangelical Christianity, institutional size, and geographic location.

Regarding denominational diversity, the list of denominations and number of colleges from that denomination were as follows: Christian churches--two; Interdenominational--two; and one each for the Church of Christ, Independent, Baptist, Grace Gospel Fellowship, Church of God, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and Wesleyan

Methodist. These denominations also represented a blend of Pentecostal, Charismatic, and non-Charismatic theological systems.

The enrollment figures for the sample colleges ranged from a low of 117 to a high of 593. Total enrollment for the 12 colleges was 3,937 students and the mean enrollment was 328.1 (AABC Directory).

Concerning geographical location, six of the colleges were located in the Midwest, two in the Pacific Northwest, two in Southeastern United States, and one each in the Southwest and the Northeast. Seven of the colleges were located in urban centers with a population over 100,000 and five in smaller or rural communities with less than 100,000 population (cf. Table 2).

Instrumentation

The sample surveyed was part-time (enrolled in at least one course for credit) or full-time male and female undergraduate students from 12 AABC 4-year institutions. The survey was made available to the entire undergraduate student body of each of the 12 schools. Because of the relatively small size of these schools, this procedure was operationally feasible.

Certain parts of the survey were not analyzed, such as Section I, letters J and K. Preliminary analysis in constructing the survey did not preclude the logistic difficulty of attempting to analyze and organize these data. Furthermore, it became apparent that because of the admissions standards of the colleges, divorced students, divorced and remarried students, and separated students were so few in number that they were not included in the data. Finally, all of

Table 2. Participating Colleges

College	Enrollment	Completed Surveys	Percentage	Geographic Location	Size
001	593	289	48.7	Midwest	Rural
002	205	102	49.8	Northwest	Rural
003	407	292	71.7	Midwest	Rural
004	470	314	66.8	Midwest	Urban
005	170	101	59.4	Midwest	Urban
006	366	198	54.1	Southewst	Urban
007	567	467	82.4	Northwest	Urban
008	180	135	75.6	Midwest	Urban
009	117	93	79.5	Midwest	Rural
010	150	80	53.3	Northwest	Rural
011	532	272	51.1	Southeast	Urban
012	180	122	67.8	Southeast	Urban
Totals	3937	2465	62.6		

*Rural areas were cities with a population less than 100,000. Urban areas were cities with a population over 100,000.

the columns will not total 100% because tabulations were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a decimal point.

The survey questions were on a Likert scale of a variety of items including the student's demographic background, personal objectives, college impressions, and extra-curricular activities.

After data were collected and tabulated relative to demographic and student opinion vairables, the next set of data collected were retention statistics from the 12 sample colleges. In May, 1984, letters were mailed to those 12 colleges describing in detail the request for retention statistics (cf. Appendix B). Most of the colleges returned the post card with the requested information. However, in order to achieve greater accuracy, contact was made by telephone or in person with each of the 12 colleges. Request was made for an enrollment list of students for Fall, 1981, and Fall, 1983, plus a list of the names of graduates within that time span. All of the 12 colleges complied with this request and subsequently a detailed name-by-name reckoning and verification was made of all the enrollment and graduate lists of the above time frame for all 12 colleges.

Thus to derive the retention/attrition data from the 12 colleges, the study identified the undergraduate students, enrolled in at least one course for credit, by name, in the Fall term, 1981. Then the study also identified, by name, those same students enrolled for the Fall term, 1983. To illustrate: supposing there were 100 names in the enrollment list for Fall, 1981, but only 50 of these could be

found in the enrollment list for Fall, 1983, an attrition rate of 50% might be assumed. However, graduation lists were also searched, and if 20 of the original 100 from the 1981 list had graduated prior to 1983, then the attrition rate was only 30% (100 - 50 + 20 = 70% retention rate or 30% attrition).

Ultimately, the retention data were reduced to a statistic which was a decimal representation or percentage representing the names of those completing a program or still enrolled in 1983 over the names enrolled in 1981. Thus 70/100 would be represented by the statistic 0.70 or 70%. Moreover, 100/100 would be 1.00 or 100%. This ratio was a retention statistic, not an attrition statistic.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The study comprised two separate analyses. The first analysis was an assessment across the 12-member instituitons of the AABC in order to describe certain background and demographic data. The second analysis was a comparison between institutions with a higher percentage of retention and those with a lower percentage of retention. Factors which seemed to be associated with levels of retention were identified.

Method of Scoring

Because the enrollment of the 12 institutions ranged from a low of 117 to a high of 593, it was necessary to develop a mathematical weighting which would provide uniformity in scoring. The weights applied to responses are shown as follows:

SA	= Strong agrees	= x5
A	= Agree	= x4
N	= Neutral	= x3
D	= Disagree	= x2
SD	= Strongly disagree	= x1

For the survey section with five columns (section IV), the total number of responses for each column in a particular institution was multiplied by the respective weight and, in turn, all five products

were added together and divided by the number of students who took the survey. The resultant score had a possible range of 1.0 to 5.0.

Other sections of the survey contained only four columns (excluding does not apply columns) and the final product was figured as in the case of the section having five columns, except now the possible range was only 1.0 to 4.0 and the columns were weighted as follows:

VI = Very important = x4
MI = Moderately important = x3
SI = Slightly important = x2
NI = Not important = x1

The weighting method was not used for survey Sections I, VI, and VII since these data were more naturally analyzed using mean scores or percentages. For comparisons among institutions, accuracy and uniformity were thus assured. The Likert responses represented opinions on the part of the students completing the survey.

Demographic Analysis

The average age of AABC students was 22.7 years, as shown in Table 3. While AABC colleges attracted a large percentage of American Caucasians, they recruited minorities in smaller percentages as demonstrated by a minority composition of only 3.4% Blacks and 1.1% Hispanics. The colleges were much higher in single student numbers than other categories, with singles accounting for 74.1%, engaged 7.6% and married students 16.6%. Divorced, divorced and remarried, separated and other categories of students composed about 1.5% of the student population.

Table 3. Age, Race, Gender, and Marital Status

College:	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Mean for 12 colleges
Age (Years)	22.9	27.9	21.3	22.3	21.4	22.7	23.0	22.0	21.3	21.9	23.4	22.3	22.7
Racial/Ethnic(%)													
American Black	0.7	1.0	0.3	2.6	0.9	20.2	0.0	2.9	1.1	1.3	1.8	8.2	3.4%
Foreign Black	0.3	2.0	0.0	1.0	0.0		0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.8	0.7%
American Caucasian	94.8	93.0	97.6	95.2	96.0	79.8	93.8	90.4	93.6	95.0	87.8	86.9	92.0%
Foreign Caucasian	2.8	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		2.6	2.2	2.2	1.3	4.0	0.8	1.5%
Oriental	1.4	0.0		0.3	0.9		0.9		1.1		1.5	2.5	0.7%
Hispanic	0.3	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0		1.0		1.1	1.3	2.2		1.1%
Other	0.3	0.0		1.0	0.0		1.7					0.8	0.4%
Gender (%)													
Male	44.6	65.7	47.6	48.9	45.5	71.2	57.4	48.5	55.9	52.5	55.5	59.8	54.4%
Female	55.4	34.3	52.4	52.1	54.5	28.8	42.6	51.5	44.1	47.5	44.5	40.2	45.7%
Marital Status (%)													
Single	75.9	68.0	79.5	74.8	85.1	73.4	73.2	72.1	74.2	81.3	68.1	63.9	74.1%
Engaged	9.9	7.8	7.9	5.7	5.0	5.8	9.0	8.8	4.3	10.0	8.1	9.0	7.6%
Married	13.1	20.4	12.7	18.3	9.9	18.5	15.9	17.7	17.2	7.5	23.8	23.8	16.6%
Other	1.1	4.0	6.0	1.2		2.3	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.3		3.3	1.3%

The Bible college movement has advertised heavily among Christian secondary schools, yet they only attracted 11.5% of their students from that source, as shown in Table 4. Two of the colleges were exceptions with more than 23% of their students graduating from Christian high schools. Of the respondents, 35.5% were from a rural background, while 69.4% were from the combined urban and suburban areas.

AABC institutions attracted 43.0% from the first quartile of their high school graduating class as indicated in Table 5. The high school grade point average yielded a mean score of 3.0, using 4.0 as equivalent to an A. These figures were based on the self-reporting of the students and may be slightly exaggerated.

Table 6, from Section II of the survey, categorizes sources of information--factors which influenced a student to make application. The most important reason given was the program or curriculum of the college. This factor was scored only slightly higher than reputation of the college, which was not unexpected since the two factors are hardly mutually exclusive. Ranked third was the reputation of the faculty.

Students responded they were not influenced significantly by high school teachers and counselors (ranked 14th), the male-female ratio (ranked 13th), or even because of contact with a representative of the institution (ranked 12th).

Table 7, from Section III of the survey, lists the personal objectives of the students regarding their decision to make application

Table 4. Education and Environmental Background

College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Mean for 12 Colleges
Year in College (%)													
Freshman	27.0	33.0	39.0	31.4	34.0	36.8	37.7	34.6	40.9	29.5	33.1	29.6	33.9 %
Sophomore	21.8	23.0	27.7	23.5	25.5	27.0	29.0	27.2	24.7	34.6	29.4	29.6	26.9 %
Junior	24.6	27.0	17.8	24.1	18.0	17.8	26.2	19.9	23.7	27.0	24.6	20.9	22.6 %
Senior	26.6	17.0	15.1	21.0	22.6	18.4	7.0	15.4	7.5	9.0	12.9	20.0	16.0 %
Secondary Ed. (%)													
Public High School	87.7	81.4	73.3	71.5	87.9	85.5	81.1	94.6	92.6	91.4	67.5	87.0	83.5 %
Private Christian	8.1	13.7	23.3	23.1	11.1	7.4	13.8	2.2	2.1	2.5	21.6	8.9	11.5 %
Private Secular	1.9	2.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	2.3	1.0	0.0	0.0		5.7	0.0	1.3 %
GED	1.9	2.0	1.7	2.5		2.8	2.7	2.2	1.1	2.5	3.5	4.1	2.3 %
Other	0.4	6.0	1.7	1.9			1.1	0.7	4.2	1.2	1.8		1.2 %
Mean Years Since High School Grad.	4.5	5.1	3.3	4.5	3.8	4.3	4.9	4.1	3.5	3.7	5.1	4.7	4.3
Location of High School (%)													
Urban	29.4	22.7	43.8	26.0	27.9	34.9	28.9	32.4	30.1	26.0	24.7	19.8	28.9 %
Rural	34.1	36.1	32.5	37.0	26.0	37.8	27.6	39.7	52.7	36.4	27.0	38.8	35.5 %
Suburban	29.7	35.1	18.5	33.2	45.2	23.8	36.6	18.4	10.8	32.5	45.2	37.2	30.5 %
Does Not Apply	6.5	6.2	4.5	3.8	1.0	3.5	4.1	7.4	3.2	5.2	3.1	4.1	4.4 %

Table 5. Secondary Education

College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Mean for 12 Colleges
No. of Students in High School Graduating Class	324.9	265.6	241.2	254.2	334.9	311.0	349.3	310.8	261.8	296.4	332.8	319.1	300.2
High School Class Rank (%)													
1st Quarter	53.6	26.0	47.6	46.1	45.5	41.5	47.1	41.9	44.1	35.5	43.1	44.3	43.0%
2nd Quarter	26.4	31.0	23.3	18.0	23.8	24.6	23.6	29.4	28.0	30.3	23.7	26.2	25.7%
3rd Quarter	10.7	22.0	8.6	11.2	12.9	9.9	9.9	10.3	12.9	11.8	15.7	8.2	12.0%
4th Quarter	3.1	4.0	0.7	5.4	4.0	2.3	2.6	0.7	2.2	3.9	3.8	1.6	2.9%
Unknown	6.1	17.0	19.5	19.3	13.9	21.6	16.1	15.4	11.8	18.4	13.7	19.7	16.0%
High School G.P.A. (Mean)	3.1	2.8	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.0

Table 6. Sources of Information: Likert Means for 12 AABC Institutions

College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean	Rank
Program/Curriculum	3.47	3.57	3.45	2.78	3.30	3.19	3.63	3.26	3.20	3.36	3.63	3.52	3.36	1
Reputation College	2.94	2.99	3.41	3.07	3.46	3.03	3.54	3.01	3.14	3.18	3.66	3.33	3.23	2
Reputation Faculty	2.78	3.07	3.17	2.75	3.16	2.76	3.16	2.96	3.16	3.15	3.11	3.34	3.05	3
Reputation Pastors	2.77	2.96	3.17	2.79	3.02	2.95	2.43	2.73	2.92	3.04	2.78	3.08	2.89	4
Recommendation of Friends	2.58	2.30	2.86	2.60	2.86	2.59	2.93	2.65	2.56	2.88	2.79	2.63	2.69	5
Recommendation of Parents	2.49	2.12	2.91	2.69	3.02	2.20	2.43	2.27	2.48	2.35	2.81	2.19	2.50	6
Campus Visits	2.30	2.71	2.92	2.39	2.26	1.83	2.24	2.85	2.81	2.78	2.43	2.41	2.49	7
Correspondence	2.58	2.74	2.54	2.17	2.64	2.04	2.36	2.24	2.48	2.53	2.11	2.38	2.40	8
Friends Attend	2.29	2.11	2.65	2.23	2.68	2.13	2.48	2.57	2.37	2.58	2.14	2.43	2.39	9
College Catalog	2.44	1.88	2.45	2.52	2.52	2.27	2.52	2.24	2.34	2.19	2.41	2.75	2.34	10
Contact College Representatives	2.26	2.61	2.41	1.95	2.62	2.30	1.86	2.32	2.54	2.38	1.98	2.43	2.31	11
Magazine Advertising	1.41	1.45	1.39	1.41	1.46	1.57	1.49	1.25	1.22	1.18	1.52	1.33	1.39	12
Male/Female Ratio	1.39	1.31	1.49	1.08	1.47	1.18	1.34	1.40	1.42	1.34	1.31	1.32	1.34	13
High School Teachers/ Counselors	1.25	1.47	1.46	1.24	1.23	1.15	1.25	1.26	1.28	1.21	1.27	1.27	1.28	14

NOTE. Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 4.00.

Table 7. Personal Objectives: Likert Means

College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean	Rank
To increase understanding of the Bible	3.57	3.75	3.77	3.81	3.99	3.22	3.96	3.77	3.70	3.95	3.83	3.90	3.77	1
To develop in spiritual maturity	3.65	3.78	3.90	3.44	3.90	3.23	3.82	3.90	3.91	3.85	3.63	4.08	3.76	2
To obey the will of God	3.62	3.95	3.83	3.59	3.95	3.35	3.55	3.83	3.76	3.48	3.82	3.76	3.71	3
To prepare for vocational Christian Service	3.40	3.80	3.60	3.43	3.84	3.34	3.58	3.60	3.39	3.30	3.64	3.73	3.55	4
To become a better educated person	3.38	3.85	3.64	2.99	3.79	3.18	3.50	3.64	3.03	3.74	3.17	3.71	3.47	5
To make new friends	2.88	2.60	2.88	2.42	3.06	2.20	2.54	2.88	2.73	2.73	2.40	2.56	2.66	6
To prepare to make a living	2.73	2.81	2.51	2.33	2.62	2.54	2.33	2.51	2.55	2.53	2.12	2.74	2.53	7
To help me make up my mind about career	2.51	2.19	2.65	2.40	2.93	1.90	2.48	2.34	2.86	2.71	2.23	2.67	2.52	8
To develop independence from parents	2.10	2.05	2.74	1.80	2.34	1.82	1.79	2.74	2.16	2.18	1.68	2.11	2.13	9
To meet people of opposite sex	1.80	1.78	2.07	1.73	2.18	1.43	1.77	2.07	1.97	1.95	1.80	1.74	1.86	10

NOTE. Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 4.00.

to a Bible college. The number one reason, by rank order, was to increase personal understanding of the Bible.

The differentiation of the three objectives was relatively small--the range of scores was similar for each. They scored slightly higher than the objective about preparing for vocational Christian service. Making up one's mind about a career (ranked 8th), developing independence from parents (ranked 9th), or meeting people of the opposite sex (ranked 10th), were objectives of minor importance to the students. The objective of making a living ranked only 7th.

Table 8, Section A, indicates the twenty strongest (most favorable) impressions students felt about their college. In Table 7 it was observed that the primary objective for entering a Bible college was to increase personal understanding of the Bible. In view of the students' responses, it was significant they were very positive regarding acquisition of Bible knowledge.

In their public relations, Bible colleges stress factors such as Christian lifestyle, spiritual maturity, and a caring faculty. These factors were rated high by the students. Students identified the cost of attending college as reasonable (4.00, ranked 9th), other students were friendly (4.18, ranked 7th), but school morale was rated lower (3.70, ranked 20th). Although students responded in Table 8, Section B, they did not enroll in college to meet members of the opposite sex, the score regarding the opportunity to meet members of the opposite sex was a fairly respectable 3.66, 22nd in rank order.

Table 8. College Impressions: Rank ordered 1-20 and 21-40 in Likert Means

Question Number	College:	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean	Rank
	A. College Impressions: Rank Ordered 1-20 in Likert Means														
8.	Learned about Bible	4.29	4.13	4.76	4.13	4.66	3.82	4.71	4.66	4.62	4.64	4.61	4.47	4.46	1
7.	Promotes Christian Life	4.21	4.28	4.73	4.43	4.54	3.79	4.51	4.23	4.58	4.23	4.62	4.37	4.38	2
15.	Matured Spiritually	4.23	4.21	4.51	4.17	4.47	3.78	4.50	4.32	4.38	4.50	4.49	4.34	4.33	3
21.	Faculty Cares	4.30	4.16	4.60	3.97	4.47	3.85	4.56	4.21	4.35	4.48	4.28	4.44	4.31	4-5
32.	Life-time Friendships	4.24	4.42	4.50	3.16	4.54	3.95	4.48	4.44	4.40	4.64	4.02	4.90	4.31	4-5
6.	Vocational Service	4.28	4.14	4.52	4.17	4.41	3.74	4.34	4.29	4.30	4.23	4.45	4.59	4.29	6
22.	Friendly Students	4.22	4.34	4.51	3.47	4.43	3.71	4.45	4.32	4.17	4.36	4.04	4.08	4.18	7
3.	Academic Reputation	3.94	3.85	4.46	3.86	4.26	3.39	4.61	3.96	4.39	4.51	4.41	4.01	4.14	8
4.	Cost is Reasonable	3.74	3.37	3.81	3.26	4.36	2.74	3.75	4.25	4.16	3.75	3.51	3.84	4.00	9
1.	High Quality Academics	4.17	3.71	4.50	3.65	3.64	3.59	4.38	3.91	3.47	3.91	4.34	3.90	3.93	10-12
18.	Dorm Relationships	3.03	4.09	4.22	3.85	4.12	3.27	4.26	4.03	4.29	3.99	4.10	3.85	3.93	10-12
31.	Major Issues	3.71	4.27	4.05	2.99	4.17	3.53	4.37	3.83	4.04	4.16	3.81	4.22	3.93	10-12
23.	Foreign Students	4.06	3.87	3.63	3.56	3.74	3.74	3.84	4.13	4.40	3.68	4.43	3.99	3.92	13
12.	Self-Confidence	3.83	3.94	4.11	.355	4.32	3.45	4.02	3.91	3.98	4.31	3.81	3.72	3.91	14
36.	Finish Study	4.03	4.01	4.29	2.82	3.68	3.45	4.05	4.29	3.83	3.74	3.67	3.84	3.81	15
25.	Functional Campus	3.94	3.83	4.00	2.86	4.06	3.00	4.00	3.85	4.10	4.01	3.79	3.95	3.77	16
17.	Housing Available	3.00	3.49	4.00	4.69	3.95	3.04	3.81	3.94	3.86	3.96	3.44	3.78	3.75	17
19.	Dorms Comfortable	3.57	3.59	4.14	3.55	3.91	2.92	3.75	3.66	4.08	3.92	3.88	3.88	3.74	18
24.	Beautiful Campus	4.46	3.99	3.98	2.27	4.38	2.22	4.13	3.66	4.06	3.73	3.66	4.12	3.72	19
33.	School Morale	3.86	3.61	4.33	3.11	3.86	3.15	4.17	3.76	3.91	3.48	3.57	3.61	3.70	20

Table 8.--Continued

Question Number	College:	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean	Rank
	B. College Impressions: Rank Ordered 21-40 in Likert Means														
34.	Academic Stress	3.75	4.14	4.11	2.82	3.65	3.28	3.85	3.68	3.92	3.85	3.30	3.91	3.69	21
14.	Meet Opposite Sex	3.69	3.51	3.96	3.40	3.66	3.08	4.01	3.54	3.67	3.71	3.95	3.78	3.66	22
40.	Hopes Conform Reality	3.44	3.53	3.86	2.62	3.80	2.84	3.80	3.46	3.87	3.73	3.43	3.78	3.52	23
13.	Excellent Geographic Location	3.07	3.78	3.44	3.42	3.39	2.32	3.37	4.01	3.57	4.50	3.27	3.80	3.50	24
27.	Library Facilities	3.01	2.76	4.04	2.55	3.40	3.33	4.41	3.43	3.96	3.75	3.19	3.70	3.46	25
29.	Financial Aid	3.76	3.70	3.78	2.49	3.54	3.05	3.40	3.57	3.32	3.45	2.99	3.82	3.41	26
38.	Plan Vocational Career	3.51	3.80	3.74	2.51	3.30	3.18	3.42	3.49	3.43	3.39	3.22	3.59	3.38	27
20.	Quality of Food Service	3.28	2.60	4.33	2.42	3.98	2.61	3.55	2.98	3.44	3.96	4.06	2.95	3.35	28
11.	Enrollment about Right	3.69	3.18	3.28	3.31	3.39	2.88	3.70	3.48	3.47	2.64	3.71	2.67	3.28	29-30
16.	Jobs Available	2.47	3.34	3.69	2.86	3.28	3.60	3.23	3.64	3.41	3.23	2.90	3.68	3.28	29-30
2.	Preparing Good Living	3.42	3.37	3.58	3.20	3.19	3.05	3.24	2.84	3.62	3.10	2.89	3.78	3.27	31
28.	Rules and Regulations	3.42	3.29	3.88	2.79	3.50	2.52	3.02	2.99	3.46	3.22	2.97	3.95	3.25	32
35.	General Education Courses	3.12	3.54	3.49	2.53	3.39	3.08	3.18	3.01	3.45	3.09	3.22	3.52	3.22	33
26.	Classroom Facilities	2.84	2.81	3.59	1.92	3.38	2.25	3.81	3.12	3.98	3.23	3.06	3.19	3.10	34
5.	Earn Good Grades	3.21	2.18	2.75	2.42	3.36	2.26	3.50	2.93	3.18	3.47	3.61	2.55	2.95	35
30.	Scholarships	2.14	3.08	3.12	1.98	3.17	2.70	3.04	3.30	3.13	2.88	2.73	3.50	2.87	36
10.	Enrollment Too Small	2.62	3.30	3.00	2.38	2.91	2.56	2.37	2.81	2.70	3.42	2.39	3.54	2.83	37
39.	Recreation Facilities	2.68	3.16	3.45	2.35	3.70	1.90	3.15	2.65	3.38	2.90	2.13	2.31	2.81	38
37.	Required Courses	2.68	2.60	2.43	1.87	2.78	2.22	2.68	2.68	2.47	2.35	2.77	2.38	2.49	39
9.	Enrollment too Large	2.00	1.77	2.07	1.91	1.66	1.78	1.94	1.85	1.60	1.56	2.10	1.59	1.82	40

NOTE: Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 5.00.

According to Table 8b, students also had negative feelings about their colleges. They were generally unenthusiastic about the physical campus rating both campus function (3.77, ranked 16th) and campus beauty (3.72, ranked 19th) relatively low. However, great variety existed among the 12 colleges about how students regarded their campus. The scores ranged from 2.86 to 4.10 for functionality and from 2.27 to 4.46 for beauty.

Students showed concern about the geographical location of the college. This factor received an overall mean score of 3.50, 24th in rank order. A wide range of individual scores were again recorded, from a low of 2.32 to a high of 4.50. The lowest score, 2.32, came from an urban center with a reputation for a dynamic economy in the Southwest, while the highest score of 4.50 came from a suburban community in the Pacific Northwest.

Students were generally displeased with policies on rules and regulations of personal conduct. However, the negative impressions were much stronger in some colleges than others. Education courses were ranked near the bottom of the list (3.22, ranked 33rd), classroom facilities were viewed as rather mediocre (3.10, ranked 34th), and the quality of recreational facilities was rated as poor (2.81, ranked 38th). AABC students, in general, felt the enrollment of their college was not too large (1.82, ranked 40th).

Students believed their colleges were not providing as much financial aid as other colleges (3.41, ranked 26th) or in providing scholarships (2.87, ranked 36th). Moreover, students were not

favorably impressed with the ability of their colleges to prepare them for a vocation (3.38, ranked 27th). Neither did they rate high the quality of food service (3.35, ranked 28th). A wide range of scores was found among the 12 schools concerning food service, from a low of 2.42 to a high of 4.33.

Table 9, from Section V of the survey, is a list of extra-curricular activities in which AABC students participated. In all 12 colleges, with only one exception, the most important factor was student-to-student interaction with a score of 3.63. Student-to-faculty interaction, 3.49, was a close second. A score of 3.30 reveals that students expressed a high level of commitment for Christian service. School-wide socials were rated higher than class socials (2.90 versus 2.68), while varsity athletics and intramural sports received mediocre scores of 2.67 and 2.62, respectively. Weekend retreats received a poor rating of 2.59, but the value of this activity as a source for developing student-to-student and student-to-faculty relationships somewhat overrules this low score.

Table 10, from Section VI of the survey, displays 11 types of special academic and personal needs underclassmen anticipated in their college career. The greatest anticipated need was for financial assistance, 52.7% responding positively to this category.

In Table 8b, it can be seen that students did not rate highly the availability of financial aid (3.41, ranked 26th) and scholarships (2.87, ranked 36th) at AABC institutions. However, when compared with Table 11, 63.9% of the upperclassmen in all 12 colleges responded

Table 9: Extra-Curricular Activities Most Preferred by Students in AABC Institutions

Question Number	College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean	Rank
21.	Student-to-Student	3.63	3.49	3.60	3.40	3.72	3.31	3.70	3.60	3.73	3.84	3.94	3.57	3.63	1
22.	Student-to-Faculty	3.47	3.28	3.50	3.25	3.50	3.04	3.53	3.41	3.66	3.83	3.72	3.73	3.49	2
8.	Christian Service	3.06	3.39	3.61	3.38	3.46	2.61	3.32	3.20	2.91	3.04	3.82	3.76	3.30	3
5.	Music-Team/Choir	2.80	3.12	3.23	2.68	2.99	2.62	2.82	3.07	3.11	3.06	3.12	3.00	2.97	4
4.	School-wide Socials	2.78	2.85	3.00	2.71	2.99	2.68	2.80	2.77	3.18	2.75	3.24	3.04	2.90	5-6
14.	Student Missions	2.98	2.93	2.77	3.10	2.73	2.37	2.79	3.01	2.78	2.95	3.46	2.91	2.90	5-6
7.	Dating/Courtship	2.78	2.76	3.17	2.62	3.39	2.46	2.98	2.74	2.82	2.79	3.52	2.57	2.88	7
20.	Local Church Socials	2.32	3.01	3.20	2.65	2.68	2.68	2.76	2.75	2.99	3.13	3.13	3.17	2.87	8
16.	Residence Hall	2.57	2.86	2.77	2.61	2.71	2.17	2.74	2.80	2.83	2.78	3.00	2.67	2.71	9
3.	Class Socials	2.54	2.80	2.78	2.48	3.02	2.44	2.77	2.54	2.69	2.51	2.94	2.62	2.68	10
11.	Varsity Athletics	2.74	2.97	2.71	2.50	2.99	2.32	2.60	2.68	2.49	2.79	2.34	2.95	2.67	11-12
15.	Community Service	2.45	2.89	2.51	2.18	2.52	2.21	2.48	2.75	2.81	2.97	2.65	3.59	2.67	11-12
2.	Campus Publication	2.74	2.62	2.62	2.44	2.40	2.51	2.65	2.50	2.66	2.48	2.88	2.88	2.62	13-14
12.	Intramural Sports	2.77	2.80	2.72	2.25	2.65	2.40	2.60	2.66	2.63	2.57	2.74	2.63	2.62	13-14
19.	Faculty Sponsored-Socials	2.39	2.70	2.35	2.32	2.63	2.20	2.62	2.66	2.83	2.55	2.96	2.94	2.60	15
1.	Student Government	2.55	2.91	2.55	2.29	2.66	2.42	2.45	2.55	2.61	2.73	2.81	2.50	2.59	16-17
9.	Weekend Retreats	2.19	2.63	2.45	2.20	2.98	2.17	2.69	2.79	2.73	2.75	2.87	2.58	2.59	16-17
6.	Dramatics	2.38	2.54	2.72	2.09	3.04	2.30	2.14	2.58	2.91	3.08	2.42	2.50	2.56	18
17.	Special Interest	2.37	2.41	2.29	2.18	2.49	2.12	2.40	2.50	2.71	2.55	2.70	2.68	2.45	19
10.	International Students	2.32	2.41	2.16	2.07	2.20	2.11	2.29	2.67	2.60	2.39	2.95	2.49	2.39	20
15.	Campus Radio/Television	2.98	2.34	1.44	2.85	1.88	1.85	2.09	2.37	2.48	1.69	2.68	2.34	2.25	21
13.	Cheerleading	1.88	2.35	2.39	1.89	1.95	1.56	1.97	2.19	2.09	1.59	2.10	2.44	2.03	22

NOTE. Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 4.00.

Table 10. Mean Percentages of Positive Response for Anticipated Special Help--Freshmen and Sophomores

College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean *
English Composition	26.6	28.4	33.0	24.0	28.6	37.2	28.8	17.4	25.4	32.7	26.8	29.2	28.2
English Grammer	25.5	28.4	37.0	29.1	29.9	41.7	28.1	24.1	30.7	28.3	30.2	30.3	30.3
Greek Grammar	27.5	38.8	38.9	37.9	39.1	49.4	41.0	57.7	23.7	64.7	48.8	41.2	42.4
Reading Speed	35.6	29.6	30.8	36.6	31.3	35.7	38.2	29.4	24.2	22.6	32.9	28.8	31.3
Reading Comprehension	27.2	22.2	25.7	29.5	26.2	32.3	28.8	30.2	30.7	22.6	23.8	28.6	27.3
Study Skills and Habits	27.7	30.9	33.2	30.8	39.4	39.8	33.8	32.1	34.4	30.2	34.6	34.3	33.4
Public Speaking Skills	42.3	28.8	53.5	52.0	53.0	58.8	62.7	51.8	50.0	47.2	46.9	47.9	49.6
Vocational/ Career Guid.	56.6	29.6	36.0	41.4	43.1	41.4	46.2	40.2	27.0	40.4	41.7	28.6	39.4
Personal Counseling	37.2	23.5	27.7	32.6	31.3	32.0	32.9	27.1	28.6	26.4	39.8	29.6	30.7
Financial Assistance	57.6	52.4	58.7	47.3	69.2	61.6	55.4	40.0	38.1	51.9	51.2	48.6	52.7
Creative Thinking/ Problem solving	30.6	19.5	21.6	32.4	19.7	30.1	33.3	29.8	23.7	24.5	34.4	28.2	27.3

*Not in rank order.

they had indeed received financial assistance. The difference between the anticipated need for underclassmen, 52.7%, and the fulfilled need for upperclassmen, 63.9%, was a net difference of 11.2%.

Public speaking and foreign languages rendered a mean anticipated need of 49.6% and 42.4%, respectively. The lowest anticipated needs were for English composition, reading comprehension, and creative thinking and problem solving.

A comparison of Table 10 with Table 11 reveals the difference between the anticipated need among underclassmen and the fulfilled need among upperclassmen on a particular factor. For example, the greatest difference for any factor was made for English composition where a mean percentage of 28.2% of the underclassmen reported anticipated special help for this subject while 67.1% of the upperclassmen reported a fulfilled need for the same subject, a net difference of 38.9%. Similar wide differences were recorded for creative thinking/problem solving, 34.8% and English grammar, 33.6%.

The least net difference of 0.8% was for reading speed, but only 31.3% of the underclassmen identified an anticipated need for this subject. The data also shows negligible differences between underclassmen and upperclassmen for Greek grammar, 4.2%, financial assistance, 11.2%, and vocational/career guidance 15.5%. Regarding financial assistance, the small net difference was offset by the mean of 63.9% of the upperclassmen responding they had received financial assistance.

In summary, AABC students were attracted to a Bible college primarily because of the programs and curriculum offered, the overall

Table 11. Mean Percentages of Positive Response for Fulfilled Special Help--Juniors and Seniors

College	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	009	010	011	012	Overall Mean*
English Composition	67.6	68.7	58.6	59.2	71.4	85.5	70.0	47.1	53.9	66.7	74.6	82.2	67.1
English Grammar	56.9	68.7	69.0	60.3	62.9	82.5	66.5	40.8	61.5	60.0	54.4	82.2	63.9
Greek Grammar	23.9	23.8	29.6	37.8	60.6	38.1	33.9	61.5	57.7	88.0	40.4	63.8	46.6
Reading Speed	21.5	25.4	53.0	43.7	14.3	34.9	30.9	31.9	26.9	41.7	30.6	29.8	32.1
Reading Comprehension	37.9	42.9	50.0	48.4	26.5	60.3	48.4	36.5	44.4	32.0	42.0	58.3	44.0
Study Skills and Habits	55.9	58.7	66.4	64.6	50.0	67.7	68.3	70.6	69.2	72.0	63.4	79.6	65.5
Public Speaking Skills	67.6	78.8	72.7	73.8	85.7	79.7	77.3	77.6	80.8	88.0	78.2	91.8	79.3
Vocation/Career Guidance	55.6	60.9	58.6	56.6	50.0	60.9	43.8	51.9	53.9	40.0	57.7	68.8	54.9
Personal Counseling	53.4	57.1	58.1	61.2	68.4	64.6	47.6	63.0	55.6	52.0	66.0	81.3	60.7
Financial Assistance	72.4	71.2	70.4	50.0	65.8	59.4	62.8	56.9	63.0	68.0	59.0	68.1	63.9
Creative Thinking/ Problem Solving	47.9	52.3	50.0	67.5	73.0	68.8	62.3	41.2	66.7	64.0	66.3	85.1	62.1

*Not in rank order.

reputation of the college, and the reputation of the faculty. They were much less influenced by the college catalog, magazine advertising, college representatives, the male-female ratio, or the advice of high school teachers and counselors.

Their primary reasons for enrolling were to increase personal understanding of the Bible, to develop in spiritual maturity, and to obey the Will of God. Preparing to make a living, developing independence from parents, and meeting members of the opposite sex were regarded as being much less important.

In view of their reporting a strong desire to understand the Bible, it was a positive finding to discover they were quite favorable in their impression about fulfilling this objective. They also appreciated the emphasis on a Christian lifestyle, developing friendships, and a caring faculty. More negative were impressions about geographic location, food service, job availability, and classroom and recreational facilities.

The most important extra-curricular activity was student-to-student interaction. Christian service assignments, college socials, music teams, choirs, and church socials were all given high ratings. Dramatics, international student affairs, campus radio and television, and cheerleading were of much less interest.

In the area of special needs, students reported they had received assistance in all eleven categories. The greatest help was realized for English composition, creative thinking/problem solving, and English grammar. The least was for reading speed and Greek grammar.

Retention Analysis

The second analysis in this study was to compare the data from the institutions which rated high in student retention with those which rated low. The objective was to ascertain which factors appeared to account for the level of retention. Comparisons were made between the mean scores for the four institutions having the highest percentage of retention with the four colleges having the lowest percentage of retention. In addition, individual comparisons from the two groups were identified from the 12 colleges overall. Table 12 is the composite percentage of retention for the 12 colleges who participated in the study. The four highest retention colleges will hereafter be referred to as Group One and the four lowest retention colleges as Group Two.

Students in Group One differed from those in Group Two in several areas: they averaged 1.3 years older in age, enrolled a higher percentage of American Caucasians, had a higher percentage of single than married students, and about twice as many graduates of a Christian high school (cf. Table 13). Moreover, Group One had a lower percentage from a rural background, higher percentage from small high schools, and a slightly higher percentage graduating from the first quartile in their senior class.

Two comparisons were quite striking. The first was the male/female ratios for the two groups. The 12 colleges, as a whole, were made up of 54.4% males and 45.7% females. But in three of the four colleges in Group One, females outnumbered males. Furthermore, the

Table 12. Student Retention at 12 AABC Institutions

College Number	Enrollment Fall, 1981	Enrollment Fall, 1983*	Interim Graduates	Total Retention	Percentage	Rank Order
001	653	195	231	426	65.2	1
002	220	58	85	143	65.0	2
003	450	135	153	288	64.0	3
004	501	158	162	320	63.9	4
005	157	44	56	100	63.7	5
006	297	96	84	180	60.6	6
007	597	122	199	321	53.8	7
008	173	37	55	92	53.2	8
009	119	33	26	59	49.6	9
010	154	54	21	75	48.7	10
011	532	132	111	243	45.7	11
012	196	24	55	79	40.3	12
Totals	4049	1088	1238	2326	57.5%	

*These figures are the actual number of same persons who were also enrolled in Fall, 1981.

Table 13. Demographic Information for Group One and Group Two

	Mean of 12 Colleges	Group One 4 Highest Retention	Group Two 4 Lowest Retention
Age (Years)	22.7	23.5	22.2
Racial/Ethnic (%)			
American Black	3.4	1.2	3.1
Foreign Black	.7	0.8	0.6
American Caucasian	92.0	95.2	90.8
Foreign Caucasian	1.5	1.2	2.1
Oriental	.7	0.4	1.3
Hispanic	1.1	1.3	1.2
Other	.4	0.3	0.2
Gender (%)			
Male	54.4	51.7	55.9
Female	45.7	48.5	44.1
Marital Status (%)			
Single	74.1	74.6	71.9
Engaged	7.6		
Married	16.6	16.1	18.1
Other	1.3		
Year in College (%)			
Freshman	33.9	32.6	33.3
Sophomore	26.9	24.0	29.6
Junior	22.6	23.4	29.6
Senior	16.0	19.9	12.4
Secondary Ed (%)			
Public High School	83.5	78.5	84.6
Private Christian	11.5	17.1	8.8
Private Secular	1.3	1.5	1.4
GED	2.3	2.0	2.8
Other	1.2	1.3	1.8
Years High School Grad	4.3	4.4	4.3
Location of High School (%)			
Urban	28.9	30.5	30.2
Rural	35.5	34.9	38.7
Suburban	30.5	29.1	31.4
Does Not Apply	4.4	5.3	3.9
Number Students High School Graduating Class (Mean)	300.2	271.5	302.5
High School Class Rank			
1st Quarter	43.0	43.3	41.8
2nd Quarter	25.7	24.7	27.1
3rd Quarter	12.0	13.1	12.2
4th Quarter	2.9	3.3	2.9
Unknown	16.0	15.5	15.9
High School G.P.A.	2.96	2.98	2.97

mean for Group One was closer to a 50/50 ratio than for the 12 colleges as a whole: 51.7% males and 48.5% females, compared to the average ratio of 54.4% males and 45.7% females. In Group Two males outnumbered females in each of the four colleges and the male/female ratio for Group Two was more widespread than for the 12 colleges: 55.9% males and 44.1% females, compared to 54.4% males and 45.7% females.

A second contrast was that in each of the Group One colleges, a significant percentage of the students were graduates of private Christian high schools. Two of the four colleges had more than 23% of their students from this source. The mean percentage for Group One was 17.1%, compared to 11.5% mean for all 12 colleges. Only one college from Group Two enrolled more than 10% of their students from a Christian high school. The mean percentage for Group Two was 8.8%, compared to an overall mean of 11.5%.

The mean score for Group One for all 14 sources of information was 2.40. An almost identical score of 2.43 for Group Two was scored as can be seen in Table 14. Except for the factors of the influence of the recommendation of friends and the influence of the recommendation of parents, there were few differences between the two groups. Group Two scored higher in recommendation of friends, while Group One scored higher in recommendation of parents.

Table 15 also rendered similar data for Group One and Group Two. The mean score for Group Two of 2.62 on factor 8, deciding on a career, was slightly higher than the mean score of 2.44 for Group One. On the other hand, the mean score for Group One on preparing to make a living was higher than the mean score for Group Two.

Table 14. Sources of Information for Group One and Group Two

Sources	Overall Mean	Rank	Group One	Group Two
			4 Highest Retention	4 Lowest Retention
Program/Curriculum	3.36	1	3.32	3.43
Reputation College	3.23	2	3.10	3.33
Reputation Faculty	3.05	3	2.94	3.19
Reputation Pastors	2.89	4	2.92	2.96
Recommendation of Friends	2.69	5	2.59	2.72
Recommendation of Parents	2.50	6	2.55	2.46
Campus Visits	2.49	7	2.58	2.61
Correspondence	2.40	8	2.51	2.38
Friends Attended	2.39	9	2.32	2.38
College Catalog	2.34	10	2.32	2.30
Contact College Representatives	2.31	11	2.31	2.33
Magazine Advertising	1.39	12	1.42	1.31
Male/Female Ratio	1.34	13	1.32	1.35
High School Teachers/ Counselors	1.28	14	1.36	1.26
Mean			2.40	2.43

NOTE. Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 4.00.

Table 15. Personal Objectives for Group One and Group Two

Objectives	Overall Mean	Rank	Group One 4 Highest Retention	Group Two 4 Lowest Retention
To increase understanding of the Bible	3.77	1	3.73	3.85
To develop in spiritual maturity	3.76	2	3.69	3.87
To obey the will of God	3.71	3	3.75	3.71
To prepare for vocational Christian service	3.55	4	3.56	3.52
To become a better-educated person	3.47	5	3.47	3.41
To make new friends	2.66	6	2.70	2.61
To prepare to make a living	2.53	7	2.60	2.49
To help me make up my mind about career	2.52	8	2.44	2.62
To develop independence from parents	2.13	9	2.17	2.03
To meet people of opposite sex	1.86	10	1.85	1.87

NOTE: Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 4.00.

The data from Table 16, college impressions, was unexpected, since the mean score on all 40 factors was slighly higher for Group Two than for Group One, 3.68 and 3.52, respectively. Even the difference for factor 36, finishing one's course of study, was negligible between the two groups. Group One and Group Two rendered almost identical scores for factor 29, the availability of financial aid, 3.43 and 3.40. However, if a comparison were made between the three highest colleges of Group One and the three lowest from Group Two, the range of scores on factor 29 were more widespread, 3.75 compared to 3.42. The 3.75 score was also higher than the overall mean, but the 3.42 was almost equal to the overall mean of 3.41.

A sharper contrast was identified between the two groups on the factor of academic expectations. The problem of grade difficulty was more acute for Group Two than for Group One, as the scores of 3.20 and 2.54 would indicate. The score for factor 30, concerning the availability of scholarship, was also much higher for Group Two than Group One, 3.06 and 2.58, respectively.

Table 17 reveals no appreciable differences between the two groups relative to the importance placed on 22 different extracurricular activities. The rank order was also almost identical for Group One and Group Two.

In Table 18, the colleges in Group Two scored higher in meeting the special needs of upperclassmen than the colleges in Group Two for 10 of the 11 categories. The groups were similar in that help was achieved for every category, except Greek grammar for the

Table 16. College Impressions for Group One and Group Two

Question Number		Overall Mean	Rank	Group One 4 Highest Retention	Group Two 4 Lowest Retention
8.	Learned about Bible	4.46	1	4.33	4.59
7.	Promotes Christian Life	4.38	2	4.41	4.45
15.	Matured Spiritually	4.33	3	4.28	4.43
21.	Faculty Cares	4.31	4-5	4.26	4.39
32.	Life-time Friendships	4.31	4-5	4.08	4.49
6.	Vocational Service	4.29	6	4.28	4.39
22.	Friendly Students	4.18	7	4.14	4.16
3.	Academic Reputation	4.14	8	4.03	4.33
4.	Cost is Reasonable	4.00	9	3.55	3.82
1.	High Quality Academics	3.93	10-12	4.01	3.91
18.	Dorm Relationships	3.93	10-12	3.80	4.06
31.	Major Issues	3.93	10-12	3.76	4.06
23.	Foreign Students	3.92	13	3.78	4.13
12.	Self-confidence	3.91	14	3.86	3.96
36.	Finish Study	3.81	15	3.79	3.77
25.	Functional Campus	3.77	16	3.66	3.96
17.	Housing Available	3.75	17	3.80	3.76
19.	Dorms Comfortable	3.74	18	3.71	3.94
24.	Beautiful Campus	3.72	19	3.68	3.89
33.	School Morale	3.70	20	3.73	3.64
34.	Academic Stress	3.69	21	3.71	3.75
14.	Meet Opposite Sex	3.66	22	3.64	3.78
40.	Hopes Conform Reality	3.51	23	3.36	3.70
13.	Excellent Geographic Location	3.50	24	3.43	3.79
27.	Library Facilities	3.46	25	3.09	3.65
29.	Financial Aid	3.41	26	3.43	3.40
38.	Plan Vocational Career	3.38	27	3.39	3.41
20.	Quality of Food Service	3.35	28	3.16	3.60
11.	Enrollment About Right	3.08	29-30	3.37	3.12
16.	Jobs Available	3.28	29-30	3.09	3.31
2.	Preparing Good Living	3.27	31	3.39	3.35
28.	Rules and Regulations	3.25	32	3.35	3.40
35.	General Education Courses	3.22	33	3.17	3.32
26.	Classroom Facilities	3.10	34	2.79	3.37
5.	Earn Good Grades	2.95	35	2.64	3.20
30.	Scholarships	2.87	36	2.58	3.06
10.	Enrollment too Small	2.83	37	2.83	3.01
39.	Recreation Facilities	2.81	38	2.91	2.68
37.	Required Courses	2.49	39	2.40	2.49
9.	Enrollment too Large	1.82	40	1.94	1.71
	Mean			3.52	3.68

NOTE: Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 5.00.

Table 17. Extra-Curricular Activities Most Preferred by Group One and Group Two

Activity	Overall Mean	Rank	Group One	Group Two
			4 Highest Retention	4 Lowest Retention
21. Student-to-Student	3.63	1	3.53	3.77
22. Student-to-Faculty	3.49	2	3.38	3.74
8. Christian Service	3.30	3	3.36	3.38
5. Music-Team/Choir	2.97	4	2.96	3.07
4. School-wide Socials	2.90	5-6	2.84	3.05
14. Student Missions	2.90	5-6	2.95	3.03
7. Dating/Courtship	2.88	7	2.83	2.93
20. Local Church socials	2.87	8	2.80	3.11
16. Residence Hall	2.71	9	2.70	2.82
3. Class Socials	2.68	10	2.65	2.69
11. Varsity Athletics	2.67	11-12	2.73	2.64
18. Community Service	2.67	11-12	2.51	3.01
2. Campus Publication	2.62	13-14	2.61	2.73
12. Intramural Sports	2.62	13-14	2.64	2.64
19. Faculty Sponsored Socials	2.60	15	2.44	2.82
1. Student Government	2.59	16-17	2.58	2.66
9. Weekend Retreats	2.59	16-17	2.37	2.73
6. Dramatics	2.56	18	2.43	2.73
17. Special Interest	2.45	19	2.31	2.66
10. International Students	2.39	20	2.24	2.61
15. Campus Radio/TV	2.25	21	2.40	2.30
13. Cheerleading	2.03	22	2.13	2.06

NOTE. Potential Likert range: 1.00 to 4.00.

Table 18. Positive Responses of Special Help--Juniors and Seniors

	Overall Mean	Group One 4 Highest Retention	Group Two 4 Lowest Retention	Group One Difference	Group Two Difference
English Composition	67.1	63.5	69.4	35.5	40.9
English Grammar	63.9	64.0	64.5	34.0	34.6
Greek Grammar	46.6	28.8	62.5	-7.0	17.9
Reading Speed	32.1	35.9	32.3	2.7	5.3
Reading Comprehension	44.0	44.8	44.2	18.6	17.8
Study Skills and Habits	65.5	61.4	71.1	30.7	37.7
Public Speaking ing Skills	79.3	73.2	84.7	29.0	36.7
Vocation/Career Guidance	54.9	57.9	55.1	17.0	20.7
Personal Counseling	60.7	57.5	63.7	27.2	32.6
Financial Assistance	63.9	66.0	64.5	12.0	17.0
Creative Think-ing/Problem Solving	62.1	54.4	70.5	28.4	42.8
Mean				20.7	27.6

NOTE. Scores are in percentages.

upperclassmen in Group One. In that category, there was a net loss of 7.0%.

In summary, a comparison between the two groups yielded more critical data for identifying retention factors from the demographic characteristics than for any other type of data. The study seemed to indicate the following student profile is associated with persistence: female rather than male, older rather than younger, Caucasian rather than minority, private Christian high school graduate rather than public school, and urban background rather than rural. On the other hand, the younger, male, minority, married, public school, and rural student profile was a general trend of the colleges which had a lower than average percentage of retention.

The rest of the data did produce collaborative information with the demographic profiles. Although the differences were sometimes quite subtle, persistence appeared to be associated with parental, rather than peer influence regarding the decision to make application, decisiveness, rather than indifference about making a living or pursuing a career, and a positive perception about making good grades. Among these factors, the perception of grade difficulty was the most critical. Adequate finances and meeting special needs did not impact student persistence significantly.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Private and independent colleges, of which Bible colleges constitute a segment, have struggled in recent years with declining enrollments and rising operating costs. If Bible colleges could ameliorate this trend through an investigation of critical retention factors and an application of appropriate recommendations, they might more easily increase their enrollments.

Review of the Study

Because Bible colleges are small, relatively unknown, often located in remote areas, and operate on a very limited budget, their enrollment status is especially precarious. In order to alleviate the constraints imposed by shrinking enrollments, leaders in Bible colleges should increase their emphasis on student retention. Effort expended on helping students persist in their studies would be literally an effort toward institutional survival.

The purpose of the study was to identify the concomitants and correlates of high and low retention among selected member institutions of the American Association of Bible colleges. In order to accomplish this task, the study concentrated on two analyses: the first analysis was a demographic profile across 12 colleges with membership in the

AABC. The second analysis was a comparison on several variables between colleges with a high percentage of retention and those with a low percentage of retention.

The two analyses represent a logical approach in solving the dilemmas imposed upon Bible colleges due to high rates of attrition. Before initiating a specific retention action program, it is necessary to describe the complexities of the present situation. The analysis helps the Bible college movement to understand what sort of person is most likely to matriculate in one of its institutions and the impressions he or she develops about the college experience. From this background of information, the next strategic move would be to describe the general trends and directions associated with high or low levels of retention. Only after completing the first two analyses should an institution begin to formulate specific action programs which hopefully would help to raise the level of retention.

Included in the study was an investigation of several specific questions. What were the characteristics of Bible college students? What factors led them to enroll? What were their impressions about the college environment? What were the personal and educational objectives of the students? What steps should Bible colleges take to increase retention?

Summary of Demographic Analysis

Bible college students were similar to college students everywhere. They averaged 22.7 years of age; they were bright and academically oriented students, judging from their high school academic

records. They maintained vibrant impressions, both positively and negatively, about their colleges. They enjoyed and participated in a variety of extra-curricular activities. But in other ways, Bible college students differed from their public school counterparts. Divorced students, for example, were almost nonexistent. Doctrinal standards at some Bible colleges forbid them even to make application: "Application from divorced persons, or those married to divorced persons, will not be processed" (Faith Baptist Bible College Catalog, 1982-1984, p. 15).

In terms of their goals and aspirations, they were unique. Earning a living was not the chief end of education, as they saw it. Christian service assignments, church socials, gospel teams, and sacred music occupied much of their schedule. They were critical of their schools for not providing as much financial aid and scholarships as other colleges, but this was not a major deterrent to pursuing an education.

The major reasons students gave for applying to Bible colleges were the program or curriculum of the college, the reputation of the college, and the reputation of the faculty. Admittedly, the three factors were closely related. In recent years, Bible colleges have increased their attention to image and reputation. As Harvard University has earned a reputation for its law school, and MIT for engineering, Bible colleges have developed a reputation for various programs. Columbia Bible College, for example, has emerged as a leader in training foreign missionaries. Philadelphia College of Bible has

excelled in its inner-city ministries. Excellent programs were the result of careful curriculum planning, implemented by a competent faculty.

The Bible college movement maintained a strong rural consistency. With the shift of population to urban and suburban centers, the movement would be better served to concentrate efforts accordingly, without forsaking the rural student.

Students gave magazine advertising a very low rating as an influence relative to their decision to apply. This finding might cause financial reconsideration of the budget. A more cost effective method might be direct personal contact with prospective students.

The major objective for enrolling in a Bible college was to increase personal understanding of the Bible. Historically, this parallels their central mission for the past century. The task was presumed as an absolute necessity in training workers for vocational Christian service. Institutions in the AABC today are broadening their curriculum base with the inclusion of liberal arts and technical courses. Formerly the domain of public colleges and Christian liberal arts colleges, now Bible colleges offer them too, ostensibly to bolster recruitment efforts and meet career goals of students. This trend has merit as long as the Bible college movement does not lose sight of its historic mission and heritage.

The immediate consideration was that many of the courses Bible colleges presently offer can be secured in a community college or public university. These larger schools offered better equipped

classrooms and laboratories in addition to lower tuition rates. Whether the Bible college movement admits it or not, it was in direct competition with the public sector in some of its curriculum. The competitive factor may not be acknowledged by the administrators and faculty, but it was very real to the students.

The study revealed that students, with a few exceptions, projected a negative impression of the natural beauty and functionality of their campuses. Admittedly, a well-designed and beautifully landscaped campus does not insure students will remain enrolled, but it probably does influence how they will feel about their college. Learning environment, from classroom facilities to tree-lined walks, played a role in the psychological dimension of education. Bible colleges typically coped with limited budgets for campus beautification and maintenance. Nevertheless, students were entitled to feel proud of their campus. Personal satisfaction at this juncture also enabled the present student body in inviting their friends to make application.

Regarding geographical location, the study suggested that Bible college administrators and board members critically evaluate their present setting. Opinions should be sought from the constituency, alumni, and present student body. An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the present location should be conducted.

The factor of too small of an enrollment was rated 40th out of 40 items. It was probable that students in AABC institutions were disturbed about their schools not enjoying a larger enrollment.

Smallness was a psychological subtlety affecting students' attitudes about their college. While the study concentrated on retention factors, steps taken to improve student persistence should have a salutary effect on enrollment statistics.

Food service also received a low rating from the students. As with the factor of campus beauty and function, the quality of food service may not directly correlate with retention. Fortunately, it was one area the college could improve without undue stress or a major increase in the food budget. Competent dietitians, chefs, and assistants can work together in performing this valuable service.

The literature on retention has devoted space describing the "significant other" concept as a specific action program (Beal & Noel, 1979, pp. 94-95). A student who was able to develop a meaningful interpersonal relationship with at least one other person was more likely to persist in his education. Student-to-student and student-to-faculty relationships were rated as the most important extra-curricular activities on campus. Extra-curricular activities, such as intramural sports, weekend retreats, and dramatics, were scored much lower. However, the context in which lower rated activities took place offered rich territory for growth and development of personal relationships. Therefore, they may be of higher value than indicated in the data.

The data on special help revealed that financial assistance, public speaking, and Greek grammar were the three greatest anticipated needs. Meeting those expressed needs through advising, counseling, and tutoring should strengthen retention levels.

> Furthermore, effective advising would be expected to contribute to the students' self-confidence and sense of where they are going in their college careers, a student characteristics that has been found to be related positively to retention (Lenning, Sauer, & Beal, 1980, p. 19).

The evidence also indicated that students received more help in English composition, creative thinking/problem solving, and English grammar than in other areas.

Summary of Retention Analysis

The comparison between Group One, composed from the four colleges having the highest percentage of retention with Group Two, the four colleges with the lowest percentage of retention, produced a mixture of results. The data seemed to indicate that having a higher percentage of females than males, or a ratio closer to 50/50 than the overall ratio, was associated with higher retention. This finding was not in agreement with previous studies:

> Although the demographic characteristics of age and sex are related to the reasons students give for dropping out, they seem to be generally unrelated to the actual dropout rate. In other words, while men and women and older and younger students drop out for different reasons, they tend to drop out with about the same frequency. . . . When other variables such as socioeconomic level and motivation are controlled, age and sex have not been found to be major factors in retention (Lenning, Sauer, & Beal, 1980, p. 11).

An explanation was needed. Bible colleges have been more successful in attracting men than women, partly because of a theological assumption which limits pastoral training to men only. The study seemed to indicate one step Bible colleges could take would be to develop programs which would attract more women students without compromising doctrinal standards.

A wide differential of scores was noted between the two groups regarding the objectives of preparing to make a living and making up one's mind about a career. Students from Group One were more oriented toward making a living and less indecisive regarding career decisions than students from Group Two. Group One appeared to be slightly more confident about career goals and therefore the concept of making a living was also more settled.

The literature on retention posits a correlation between determination and persistence (Lenning, Sauer, & Beal, 1980, p. 12), but this study evidenced no significant difference betwen Group One and Group Two on this factor. The literature has also indicated a correlation between financial aid and persistence (Beal & Noel, 1979, p. 5). Again, in this study, no significant difference was observed between the two groups on the factors of financial aid and scholarship availability.

Group Two perceived making good grades as a more difficult task than Group One. The evidence suggested that financial aid and scholarships do not correlate with persistence nearly as much as perceptions of academic difficulty. Students were more likely to drop out because of academic difficulty than lack of finances, even though the latter rationale may be more socially acceptable (Lenning, Sauer, & Beal, 1980, p. 12).

The literature argues for a relationship between participating in extra-curricular activities and student retention; a varied and balanced involvement outside the classroom was a characteristic of

the persisting student (Lenning, Sauer, & Beal, 1980, pp. 28-30). The questionnaire employed in this study did not denote the number or frequency of extra-curricular activities in which a student engaged. Rather, the data indicated impressions of a respondent on the relative importance of 22 different activities. Among these activities, no significant difference was observed between Group One and Group Two.

In 10 of the 11 categories of special help, Group Two scored higher in meeting special needs than did Group One. This finding suggested an inverse correlation between special needs and persistence; the less the college did for the student, the more likely the student would be to remain in college. Such as interpretation was contrary to common sense and to other findings (Beal & Noel, 1979, p. 43). A more probable explanation was that because of the different demographic characteristics of Group One and Group Two, students from Group One had greater potential as persisters at the entry level. Therefore, they were not in as great a need for the special help areas as students in Group Two.

Conclusions

Bible college students are bright, academically oriented, vibrant in their attitudes about the quality of the education they are receiving, and participants in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. They enroll to learn more about the Bible and to develop in spiritual maturity. They maintain positive impressions about accomplishing these objectives. But they are negative in their

impressions of the quality of food service, classroom facilities, recreational opportunities, elementary education courses, and the availability of part-time employment.

Bible colleges with high retention levels are more likely to have a higher percentage of students who are female, Christian high school graduates, American Caucasian, from an urban environment, and posses an ability to make good grades. On the other hand, Bible colleges with low retention levels are more likely to have a higher percentage of students who are male, public school graduates from a racial minority, and a rural environment, and lack the ability to make good grades with relative ease.

It is the firm conviction of the author that a major strategy available to Bible colleges to increase levels of retention would be to recruit more students who, because of their demographic profile, are more likely to persist in their studies. The evidence seems to indicate that an implementation of such a strategy would be more effective in increasing retention levels than what the college does or does not do for its students subsequent to matriculation.

This is not to say, however, that Bible colleges have completed their obligations once they enroll the person who is more likely to persist. They should strive to provide the very best student services program possible. They should also develop specific retention action programs in view of the demographic and retention data analysis in this study. Through recruiting students who fit the profile of persistence and by formulating programs designed to meet the peculiar

attrition-prone characteristics of Bible college students, leaders in the Bible college movement should be able to improve their enrollment patterns.

Recommendations

On the basis of the foregoing, 11 steps of implementation are recommended to the accredited member institutions of the American Association of Bible Colleges which fit the population criteria of this study. The recommendations are in the following categories: public relations, curriculum evaluation and development, demographic analysis, educational mission, academic advisement, enrollment development, women's studies, financial aid, extra-curricular activities, campus development, and food service.

First, regarding public relations, the study identified the personal objectives and impressions of the students. Bible colleges should interface this data with the sources of information most determinative in making a decision to apply. To be avoided in the public media would be objectives receiving a low priority or negative impressions.

Second, in curriculum evaluation, the data indicated a negative impression about some subjects, such as the quality of education courses. Special needs were expressed for Greek grammar and public speaking. Academic leaders in Bible colleges should investigate these problem areas further. It might be that contractual agreements could be reached with area community colleges for courses such as public

speaking and the students enroll accordingly. However, the same strategy is not recommended for subjects such as Greek grammar.

Third, the demographic analysis in the study described the characteristics of typical students and factors which seemed to be related to persistence. Therefore, a campus-wide alert system should be developed as an intervention tool for potential dropouts. Since personal relationships were rated very important, this system should include opportunities for students to counsel and tutor other students with personal and academic needs.

Fourth, in educational mission, Bible colleges should relate the objectives and aspirations of the students with those of the college. Are they going in the same direction? The Bible college, by its nature, has advantages which relate to student retention.

> . . . private institutions tend to have higher student retention than do public instituitons. In addition, higher-cost institutions tend to have higher retention than lower-cost institutions, and those with a clearly defined mission and role have lower attrition rates than similar institutions with a less well defined mission and role (Lenning, Sauer, & Beal, 1980, p. 13, italics mine).

Fifth, regarding academic advisement, the data gave evidence of a relationship between persistence and relative ease in making good grades. It was more critical than the availability of financial aid. A tutorial program involving both faculty and upperclass students could alleviate some of the academic problems. But a word of caution is in order:

> As David Riesman has pointed out, students often attend college with their metaphorical bags packed. The point is that, despite our best efforts, many student will not feel the need to make reciprocal commitment. Thus, there may

> be little we can do to retain a portion of any student group, no matter how we perform the essential tasks of admission, advising, and instruction (Beal & Noel, 1979, p. 103).

Sixth, enrollment development involves marketing the college to prospective students. Educators have long believed that if colleges would build a better mousetrap, students would beat a path to the door. In a humorous vein, Gaither (1979, p. 33) remarks, "the first question to be considered is whether there is a market for mousetraps, no matter how 'good' the product is, and if so, where that market is located."

The recommendation, in view of student demographics and sources of information about the college, would be to market the college in proven areas of strength. For example, persistence appeared to be related more with Christian secondary school graduates than public school graduates. Therefore, the Christian high school should be a productive area for a marketing strategy.

Seventh, regarding women's studies, the data seemed to indicate that enrolling a higher percentage of females with a correlate of retention. Historically, Bible colleges have recruited more males than females. In the study of the 12 colleges, there were 54.43% males and 44.67% females, a difference of 9.76%.

The recommendation, in view of these data, would be to research and market a program in womens' ministries. Once Bible colleges have resolved the philosophical questions relative to the place and role of women in the church, they should begin a needs assessment study which

eventually would develop into a women's department in harmony with the overall curriculum.

Eighth, the data indicated that financial aid did not impact student persistence significantly. Nevertheless, students use lack of finances as a rationale for dropping out. Sometimes they lack knowledge about what is available. Part-time work is a correlate to retention, particularly if the work is on campus (Mayhew, 1979, p. 196). The recommendation to financial aid officers is to be aware of these factors and implement strategies accordingly.

Ninth, the study on extra-curricular activities provided data which has application to institutional planning. For example, since personal relationships were rated very important, it might be more strategic for the college to construct a student center than a campus radio station. Site development priorities should parallel those of the students. The primary value of personal relationships should be emphasized in all of the college's extra-curricular activities.

Tenth, regarding campus development, the data revealed negative impressions about the beauty and function of many of the campuses of the 12 colleges. The recommendation is to secure additional input from the present student body in terms of what they like or do not like about the campus. A site development team could evaluate the campus and suggest improvements. Features, such as parking convenience, lighting, heating, air conditioning, maintenance, landscaping, and barrier free architecture should be analyzed, both by the students and the faculty.

Eleventh, food service was another major area of negative impressions in the data. Again, students should be allowed to express specifically what they appreciate or do not appreciate about the meals. Beyond this, Bible colleges could profit from contact with large state universities which often must feed thousands of students daily. Michigan State University, which has one of the largest resident student populations in the nation, uses strategies of volume buying, quality basic ingredients, creative menu planning, and skilled food personnel in providing thousands of meals daily, and at a cost efficeint basis. A Bible college will never approach the size of a major university operation, but it could profit by interaction with those who have been successful at an enormous task.

A study of critical retention factors should enable Bible colleges to comprehend more accurately how students regard their institutions. They should continue to enhance their strengths and take corrective measures in areas of weakness.

The study did not anticipate certain findings or attempt to predict attrition if certain procedures were not taken. Rather, the attitude was to analyze the positive features of Bible colleges as seen through the eyes of the students themselves.

Implications for Future Research

While the literature in the public sector has devoted a great deal of space to retention and attrition, these subjects have not yet been sufficiently explored by leaders in the Bible college movement. The present study among 12 member institutions in the

American Association of Bible Colleges provides some general characteristics of Bible college students and factors which appear to be associated with retention. But the need remains for others to engage in additional studies.

Concerning the demographic profile, there is a need for additional comparative studies. For example, among Bible college students, a comparison could be made between public high school graduates and private Christian high school graduates, between transfer students and nontransfer students, between singles and married students, and between those who have already decided on a vocational career and those who have not. The comparison should be made on several factors such as personal objectives, perspectives on grade difficulty, and impressions about the quality of general education courses. The purpose would be to correlate these with persistence levels.

In addition, a study should be conducted on former students who, for any number of reasons, decided to drop out of Bible college. What led them to this decision? A comparison might be made between currently enrolled students with dropouts seeking to compare their impressions of the college experience.

Another study should be conducted to determine the correlation of retention with providing special help for a variety of academic and personal needs. Are some needs more critical than others regarding retention? Is there a correlation between financial aid availability and persistence? If grade difficulty is correlated with attrition, what steps could be taken to correct the situation?

The implication from this research in this present study was that Bible colleges can increase levels of retention by recruiting more students who, because of their demographic profile, are more likely to persist in their education. The stragegy parallels the "college-fit" theory so popular in the literature today. But what about the prospective student who does not fit this profile? Should he or she be recruited anyway? If he or she does enroll, what measures can the college take to enhance the probability of persistence?

In the study, an exact comparison between the 12 AABC institutions and other types of institutions was not possible because of the different techniques in tabulating retention percentages. Table 12 shows that the retention percentages for the 12 AABC colleges ranged from a high of 65.2% to a low of 40.3% with a mean percentage of 57.5%. This would appear to compare favorably with the Beal and Noel (1980) study which shows a 62% retention rate over a two-year period for four-year private secular institutions and a 55% retention rate over a two-year period for four-year private religious institutions (p. 37).

The problem in the comparison is that Beal and Noel (1980) based their retention statistics on the number of students who matriculated in a particular year and were still enrolled two years later. Interim graduates obviously were not included in the retention percentages (p. 17). However, in this study, the 1981 column in Table 12 represents the total number of enrolled students, not just those who matriculated that year, while the 1983 column includes all of the 1981 names still enrolled. Interim graduates were included in the

total retention column and percentage column since the 1981 column was not limited to freshmen as was done in the Beal and Noel study.

Therefore, a study should be made which would use the same methodology for AABC instituions and all other types of institutions used in the comparison. The design of the study would need to control all variables including the reporting of the number of transfer and part-time students.

The above implications suggest several testable hypotheses as follows:

1. Christian high school graduates are more likely to persist in Bible college than public school graduates.
2. Transfer students are more likely to persist in Bible college than nontransfer students.
3. Single students are more likely to persist in Bible college than married students.
4. Urban students are more likely to persist in Bible college than rural students.
5. There is a significant difference between Bible college completers versus noncompleters on several variables (the variables would then be stated).
6. Students who fit the profile of persistence characteristics are more likely to persist in a Bible college than students who do not fit the profile.
7. Students who receive adequate financial aid are more likely to persist in a Bible college than those who do not receive adequate financial aid.

Bible colleges are facing more difficult and perplexing challenges today than ever before. By providing answers to questions yet unsolved, the Bible college movement will be in a better position to grow and mature in the years ahead.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENT FOR GATHERING DATA

Section I - Background Information

DIRECTIONS: Complete all areas by selecting the single most appropriate response in each case.

A. NAME OF COLLEGE _____

B. AGE

___ 18 - 20
___ 21 - 23
___ 24 - 26
___ 27 - 29
___ 30 - 39
___ 40 - 49
___ 50 or over

C. RACIAL/ETHNIC ORIGIN

___ American Black
___ Foreign Black
___ American Caucasian
___ Foreign Caucasian
___ Oriental
___ Hispanic
___ Other (identify)

D. SEX

___ Female
___ Male

E. MARITAL STATUS

___ Single
___ Engaged
___ Widowed
___ Married
___ Divorced
___ Divorced and Remarried
___ Separated

F. YEAR IN COLLEGE

___ Freshman (0-25 sem. hrs.)
___ Sophomore (26-55 sem. hrs.)
___ Junior (56-92 sem. hrs.)
___ Senior (over 92 sem. hrs.)

G. HOME STATE OR COUNTRY

_____

I. SECONDARY EDUCATION

___ Public High School
___ Private Christian H.S.
___ Private Secular H.S.
___ GED
___ Other

H. PREVIOUS COLLEGE EDUCATION (TRANSFERS ONLY)

___ Bible College
___ Christian Liberal Arts College
___ Community College
___ Public College/University
___ Private College/University
___ Armed Services
___ Other

J. INDICATE YOUR PLANNED COLLEGE MAJOR

_____

K. INDICATE YOUR OCCUPATIONAL GOAL

_____

L. NO. OF YEARS SINCE H.S. GRADUATION

____ less than 1 year

____ 1 - 2 years

____ 3 - 4 years

____ 5 - 10 years

____ 11 - 15 years

____ over 15 years

M. LOCATION OF HIGH SCHOOL

____ Urban

____ Rural

____ Suburban

____ Does not apply

N. NO. OF STUDENTS IN H.S. GRADUATION CLASS

____ fewer than 25

____ 25 - 99

____ 100 - 250

____ 251 - 499

____ 500 - 999

____ 1000 or over

O. HIGH SCHOOL CLASS RANK

____ Top Quarter

____ Second Quarter

____ Third Quarter

____ Bottom Quarter

____ Unknown

F. HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGE

____ A- to A (3.5 - 4.00)

____ B to A- (3.0 - 3.49)

____ B- to B (2.5 - 2.99)

____ C to B- (2.0 - 2.49)

____ C- to C (1.5 - 1.99)

____ D to C- (1.0 - 1.49)

____ Below D (0.00 - 0.99)

____ Do not know; does not apply

Section II - Sources of Information

How important were the following factors in your decision to apply to this college? Be sure to respond to each question.

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
1. Overall reputation of college	____	____	____	____
2. Program/curriculum offerings	____	____	____	____
3. Reputation of faculty	____	____	____	____
4. Recommendation of parents	____	____	____	____
5. Recommendation of friends	____	____	____	____
6. Recommendation of pastors/ church leaders	____	____	____	____
7. Contact with college reps.	____	____	____	____
8. Magazine advertising	____	____	____	____
9. College catalog	____	____	____	____
10. Friends attend college	____	____	____	____
11. Campus visits	____	____	____	____
12. Correspondence with college	____	____	____	____
13. High School teachers/ counselors	____	____	____	____
14. Male/female ratio	____	____	____	____
15. Other _____ (specify)	____	____	____	____

Section III - Personal Objectives

How important were the following factors regarding your decision to enter this college? Be sure to respond to each question.

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
1. To prepare myself to make a living	____	____	____	____

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
2. To become a better educated person	____	____	____	____
3. To prepare myself for vocational Christian service	____	____	____	____
4. To help me make up my mind about a career	____	____	____	____
5. To increase my understanding of the Bible	____	____	____	____
6. To develop independence from my parents	____	____	____	____
7. To meet people of the opposite sex	____	____	____	____
8. To make new friends	____	____	____	____
9. To develop in spiritual maturity	____	____	____	____
10. To obey the will of God	____	____	____	____

Section IV - College Impressions

Check the areas below which most accurately represent your feelings. Be sure to respond to each question.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. This college has a high quality academic program in my field of study	____	____	____	____	____	____
2. This college is preparing me to make a good living	____	____	____	____	____	____
3. This college enjoys an overall high quality academic reputation	____	____	____	____	____	____
4. The cost of attending this college is reasonable	____	____	____	____	____	____
5. It is difficult to earn good grades at this college	____	____	____	____	____	____
6. This college is preparing me for vocational Christian service	____	____	____	____	____	____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does not Apply
7. This college promotes a Christ-centered life-style	___	___	___	___	___	___
8. I feel I have learned a lot about the Bible at this college	___	___	___	___	___	___
9. The enrollment of this college is too large	___	___	___	___	___	___
10. The enrollment of this college is too small	___	___	___	___	___	___
11. The enrollment of this college is about right	___	___	___	___	___	___
12. This college has helped me to develop more self-confidence	___	___	___	___	___	___
13. This college has an excellent geographic location	___	___	___	___	___	___
14. This college affords a good opportunity to meet people of the opposite sex	___	___	___	___	___	___
15. I feel I have matured in my spiritual development at this college	___	___	___	___	___	___
16. Jobs are readily available in this college's location	___	___	___	___	___	___
17. Housing is readily available in this college's location	___	___	___	___	___	___
18. Personal relationships in the dormitories provide a positive experience	___	___	___	___	___	___
19. The dormitories provide a comfortable living environment	___	___	___	___	___	___
20. The quality of the food service is satisfactory	___	___	___	___	___	___
21. The faculty cares about individual students	___	___	___	___	___	___
22. Students at this college are friendly	___	___	___	___	___	___
23. Foreign students make a positive contribution at this college	___	___	___	___	___	___

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
24.	The physical campus is beautiful	___	___	___	___	___	___
25.	The physical campus is functional	___	___	___	___	___	___
26.	This college has high quality classroom facilities	___	___	___	___	___	___
27.	This college has high quality library facilities	___	___	___	___	___	___
28.	The number of rules and regulations at this college are about right	___	___	___	___	___	___
29.	This college provides as much financial aid as other colleges	___	___	___	___	___	___
30.	This college offers as many scholarships as other colleges	___	___	___	___	___	___
31.	This college helps me to think through major issues of life	___	___	___	___	___	___
32.	My college experience has provided some life-time friendships	___	___	___	___	___	___
33.	This college enjoys a high level of school morale & spirit	___	___	___	___	___	___
34.	I am able to handle the academic stress level at this college	___	___	___	___	___	___
35.	This college offers high quality general education courses	___	___	___	___	___	___
36.	I feel it is right for me to finish my course of study at this institution	___	___	___	___	___	___
37.	This college has too many required courses	___	___	___	___	___	___
38.	This college has helped me to plan my vocational career	___	___	___	___	___	___
39.	The recreational facilities at this college are excellent	___	___	___	___	___	___
40.	My hopes and expectations of this college conform closely to reality	___	___	___	___	___	___

Section V - Extra-Curricular Activities

How important to you are each of the following extra-curricular activities? Be sure to respond to each question.

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Does Not Apply
1. Student government	____	____	____	____	____
2. Campus publication (yearbook, newpaper, etc.)	____	____	____	____	____
3. Class socials	____	____	____	____	____
4. School-wide socials	____	____	____	____	____
5. Music team/choir	____	____	____	____	____
6. Dramatics	____	____	____	____	____
7. Dating/courtship	____	____	____	____	____
8. Christian Service Assignment	____	____	____	____	____
9. Weekend retreats	____	____	____	____	____
10. International student affairs	____	____	____	____	____
11. Varsity athletics	____	____	____	____	____
12. Intramural athletics	____	____	____	____	____
13. Cheerleading	____	____	____	____	____
14. Student Missions Fellowship	____	____	____	____	____
15. Campus radio/T.V.	____	____	____	____	____
16. Residence hall organization	____	____	____	____	____
17. Special interest (homemaking, camping, karate, etc.)	____	____	____	____	____
18. Community service organizations	____	____	____	____	____
19. Faculty sponsored socials	____	____	____	____	____
20. Local church socials/recreation	____	____	____	____	____
21. Student-to-student interaction	____	____	____	____	____
22. Student-faculty interaction	____	____	____	____	____
23. Other _____ (specify)	____	____	____	____	____

24. Other _____ (specify)

Section VI - Special Help - Freshmen & Sophomores

Do you feel you will need special help in any of the following areas as you continue your education? Mark yes, no, or unsure/perhaps for each item. (Class standings as per question F in Section I).

Yes	No	Unsure/Perhaps	
____	____	____	English Composition
____	____	____	English Grammar
____	____	____	Greek Grammar
____	____	____	Reading Speed
____	____	____	Reading Comprehension
____	____	____	Study Skills and Habits
____	____	____	Public Speaking Skills
____	____	____	Vocational/Career Guidance
____	____	____	Personal Counseling
____	____	____	Financial Assistance
____	____	____	Creative Thinking/Problem Solving

Section VII - Special Help - Juniors & Seniors

Do you feel you are/have receiving/received help in the following areas in your education? (Class standing as per question F in Section I).

Yes	No	Unsure/Perhaps	
____	____	____	English Composition
____	____	____	English Grammar
____	____	____	Greek Grammar
____	____	____	Reading Speed
____	____	____	Reading Comprehension
____	____	____	Study Skills and Habits
____	____	____	Public Speaking Skills
____	____	____	Vocational/Career Guidance
____	____	____	Personal Counseling
____	____	____	Financial Assistance
____	____	____	Creative Thinking/Problem Solving

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE

Dallas Bible College

TELEPHONE 214/328-7171
8733 LA PRADA DRIVE
DALLAS, TEXAS 75228

Dear Student:

As you are probably aware, two of the greatest challenges facing the Bible college movement today are student recruitment and student retention. I have particularly been disturbed by the continuing problem of student retention which often results in attrition in the enrollment figures. For quite some time now I have felt constrained by the Lord to address this problem in my Ph.D. dissertation at Michigan State University. The topic for this dissertation is "An Examination of Critical Factors in Student Retention Among Selected Member Institutions of the American Association of Bible Colleges."

Therefore, I am writing to solicit your help with my survey instrument. I would appreciate it very much if you would read the survey distributed to you and fill it out.

Please rest assured I genuinely appreciate your time and effort in helping me in this way with my dissertation requirement. Beyond the academic aspects of the dissertation, I believe the results of this survey will help all of us to understand and hopefully solve various aspects of the enrollment crunch our movement now faces.

Again, thank you for your help with this project.

Heartily in Christ Jesus,

James R. Crosby

James R. Crosby
Past Director of Admissions
Dallas Bible College

JRC:krf

Dallas Bible College

TELEPHONE 214/328-7171
8733 LA PRADA DRIVE
DALLAS, TEXAS 75228

January 17, 1983

David E. Wiles, Registrar
Miami Christian College
2300 NW 135th St.
Miami, FL 33167

Dear Colleague in Christ:

As you know, two of the greatest challenges facing our Bible college movement today are student recruitment and retention. I have especially been disturbed by the continuing problems of retention and attrition. For several years now I have felt constrained by the Lord to address this situation in my Ph.D. dissertation at Michigan State University. The topic of the dissertation is "An Examination of Critical Factors in Student Retention Among Selected Member Institutions of the American Association of Bible Colleges."

Therefore, I am writing to solicit your help with my survey instrument. I would appreciate it very much if you would do two things: (1) read the survey and decide whether or not you would like for your students to participate and (2) fill out the enclosed postcard and return this to me at your earliest convenience.

If you do decide to participate in this project, I would be delighted to furnish you with the results about December 1, 1983. Again, rest assured I genuinely appreciate your consideration and time in helping me with my dissertation requirement. Beyond the academic study of this topic, I believe the results of the survey will help us to understand and deal with various aspects of the enrollment crunch our movement now faces.

Sincerely in Christ,

James R. Crosby
Past Director of Admissions

JRC:krf

Dallas, Texas
January, 1984

Dear AABC Colleague:

I am returning your school's retention survey originally promised to you by December, 1983. However, since the response of member institutions was so great, it took longer to tabulate the approximately 4000 returned surveys than first estimated. We do believe the data to be extremely valuable because it will help you to evaluate in depth your student retention status.

We received ____ surveys from an enrollment of ____, according to the 1982-82 AABC Directory, for a ____ percent rate of response. The survey represents only a simple tabulation of raw responses, so please allow a few suggestions as to how you might further study the data.

In sections with four columns, such as Sections II and III, multiply the number of responses in "very important" by 4, "moderately important" by 3, "slightly important" by 2, and "not important" by 1. Then rank order the various categories to determine which is most significant, which is next most significant, and so forth. In sections with five columns, such as Section IV, multiply the number of responses in "stronlgy agree" by +2, "agree" by +1, "neutral" by 0, "disagree" by -1, and "strongly disagree" by -2. Ignore the "does not apply" column in these computations. Again, rank order the various categories for a complete perspective of that section. Note that it is mathematically possible to obtain a negative score in the sections containing five columns.

Rest assured we have attempted to achieve great accuracy in counting your surveys and feel quite confident that the data are at least 99% correct. This, of course, makes the report trustworthy. Unfortunately, we had to omit a few questions in counting, such as Section I, letters G, J, and K, due to reporting irregularities.

Because of postage costs, I have not returned Section VIII, containing the student's personal remarks. If you would like to receive these, please make your desire known on the enclosed postcard and mail it to me.

If you have any questions about the survey, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

James R. Crosby

James R. Crosby
(214) 328-7960

Dallas, Texas
May 17, 1984

Dear AABC Colleague:

Thanks to you, I have finished the first phase of data gathering in relation to my dissertation on the topic "Factors in Student Retention Among Selected Member Institutions of the American Association of Bible Colleges." This data has now been tabulated and your school should have received the results quite some time ago.

I am writing once more to ask again for your reply to a second set of data. Allow me to explain what I need: In order to derive the retention/attrition data for the schools being studied, I will need to identify the undergraduate student body by name in the Fall terms of 1981 and 1983 and also the number of those same students who graduated or finished their programs during that same period of time. To illustrate: Suppose there are 100 names enrolled for the Fall of 1981, but only 50 of these same names are enrolled in the Fall of 1983. A 50% attrition rate might be assumed. However, graduation records would also be searched, and if 20 of those original 100 had graduated (either with a one-year certificate, two-year associates degree, or a bachelors degree) and thus are no longer enrolled in your school, then the attrition rate would be only 30% (100 - 50 + 20 = 70% retention rate or 30% attrition).

Therefore, for the sake of accuracy, I need to know how many of the same students were enrolled for the Fall term, 1981 who were also enrolled in the Fall term,1983. Please include all part-time or full-time undergraduate students who went through the regular enrollment (not application) process. Students who completed a one-year certificate or two-year A.A. degree during this time period, and then re-enrolled during the same period, should also be included in the Fall, 1983 enrollment figures.

For your protection, the data from your institution will be kept strictly confidential; no other school will know your status, unless of course, you give it to them.

I am enclosing a self-addressed post card. Please fill this out at your earliest convenience and mail it to me. If you have any questions regarding my request, feel free to call me collect at (214) 328-7960 in Dallas, Texas.

Again, thank you very much for your participation.

Heartily in Christ Jesus,

James R. Crosby

James R. Crosby

Dallas, Texas
December 27,1984

Dear AABC Colleague:

As promised earlier, I am returning the complete data from the 12 AABC institutions which participated in a survey for my study on retention. Your school number is_____ and so you may want to study your own school's data and compare this with the other schools. Numbers have been used, rather than the actual name of the institution, in order to maintain anonymity.

Perhaps a few words of explanation will help you in your study of the data. In the survey, some sections used five columns, others four. A mathematical formula was used to tally the responses. In five column sections, the range would be 5.0 to 1.0; in four column sections the range would be 4.0 to 1.0. I can furnish you the formula if you would like to have it.

With just an elementary knowledge of statistics, you can use the raw data to compute standard deviations, standard scores (Z scores) and the like. At any rate, the data should provide you enough information for faculty discussion and policy evaluation.

Again, may I express my sincere thanks for your willing participation in this dissertation research. Best wishes for a successful and joyous New Year.

Sincerely,

James R. Crosby

James R. Crosby
8231 San Benito Way
Dallas, Texas 75218

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