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FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE EXTRACURRICULAR
INVOLVEMENT OF THE 18-TO-23 YEAR OLD COMMUTING
STUDENT AT A SMALL MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY
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FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE EXTRACURRICULAR
INVOLVEMENT OF THE 18- TO 23-YEAR-OLD COMMUTING
STUDENT AT A SMALL MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

By

Diane Lynne Brimmer

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ABSTRACT

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT OF THE 18- TO 23-YEAR-OLD COMMUTING STUDENT AT A SMALL MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

By

Diane Lynne Brimmer

In this qualitative study, three standardized interviews were conducted to determine (a) the factors that influence commuting students to become involved in the college extracurriculum, (b) the factors that influence commuting students to maintain their involvement in the extracurriculum, and (c) how one postsecondary institution might encourage the extracurricular participation of its commuting students. The 20 study participants were 18- to 23-year-old commuting students at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) in east central Michigan. The students interviewed were members of student organizations who had never lived on any campus and were of sophomore, junior, or senior class standing.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data from the interview transcripts were categorized and examined, using methods of inductive data analysis. The eight themes emerging from the interview data were:

1. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to satisfy a desire for a sense of community and/or belongingness.

2. Involved commuting students at SVSU were encouraged to participate in the extracurriculum and/or were supported for their extracurricular involvement.

3. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to explore an area of interest.

4. Involved commuting students at SVSU became active in the extracurriculum early in their college careers.

5. Attaining a sense of accomplishment helped the commuting students at SVSU maintain their extracurricular involvement.

6. The involved commuting students at SVSU were limited by the time constraints of work, class, and study schedules. Given these limitations, convenience became of utmost importance.

7. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought accurate information that was quickly read and easily accessible.

8. Involved commuting students at SVSU found that opportunities for extracurricular involvement increased once they became involved.

These themes provided answers to the study questions, were listed as study conclusions, and were the basis for discussion and recommendations in the final chapter of the research project.

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- In thanks for the
time, opportunity, resources, support, and friends
needed to complete this study.

- And to Mom and Dad
for emphasizing the importance
of a good education.

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

A widespread interest in postsecondary education is to develop techniques to engage students more completely in the learning process in and outside of the classroom. A 1984 National Institute of Education report entitled Involvement in Learning stated that the amount of student learning is directly related to the quantity and quality of student involvement in a program. The same year, Astin (1984) published an article entitled "Student Involvement: A Developmental Theory for Higher Education." In the article, Astin outlined the importance of involvement in the academic experience. Astin's view was that the academic experience is not limited to the classroom and that student involvement "refers to the quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience" (p. 307). "Such involvement," said Astin, "takes many forms, such as absorption in academic work, participation in extracurricular activities, and the interaction with faculty and other institutional personnel" (p. 307). Educators, Astin believed, should center their efforts on student involvement. In his words, "student involvement--rather than resources or techniques typically used by educators" must be "the focus of concern" (p. 301).

Creamer (1987) supported Astin's convictions as he claimed that: "Regardless of history, involvement is a basic indicator of excellence in student affairs" (p. 12). Other researchers have agreed and have maintained that the degree to which students manifest effort in classroom and extracurricular learning is the most significant factor associated with quality education (Pace, 1980). Quality learning may be seen, then, as being more closely associated with the use of resources than with the monetary value and number of resources available (Pace, 1980).

Quality education is not the only benefit of involvement. Student involvement results in continued learning; greater growth, accomplishment, and satisfaction; and an increased number of graduating students (National Institute of Education, 1984). Astin (1977), Pascarella (1980), and Tinto (1987) found that involved students exhibited higher levels of achievement, tended to be more satisfied with their college experience, and were more likely to persist and graduate. Involvement also is a demonstration of a functioning mission statement, campus spirit, and unity (Noel, Levitz, Saluri, & Associates, 1985).

Involvement is especially helpful to the commuting student who seeks a sense of belonging within the institution. Social skills, financial gain, and new opportunities are also among the benefits of commuting students' involvement (Rosenblum, 1986). However, commuters may have difficulty in obtaining extracurricular involvement as they do not have the convenience of location, quick access to college resources, and frequent interaction with the faculty and staff that are more readily accessible to resident students. Time spent traveling

and in one's home community may further impede the extracurricular involvement of the commuter. Returning to campus for meetings and activities also may be inconvenient (Cohen & Brawer, 1982). Concerns about family, time, and transportation are commonplace among commuting students (Chickering, 1974), and family or work may take precedence over school and studies (Counelis & Dolan, 1974).

Commuting students have become known as the forgotten students (Graff & Cooley, 1970) and the neglected majority (Jacoby & Girrell, 1981). The complications related to serving them are among the reasons for the ongoing negligence. Astin (1985) and Pascarella (1985) recognized the trials associated with extracurricular participation by commuting students. Both invited educators to take up the challenges. Pascarella asserted:

If student involvement is a major force in student development as Astin suggested, then an important question focuses on those structures that provide involvement. . . . At commuter institutions and with commuter students . . . greater compensatory needs may exist. Consequently, the most significant challenges to the creative programming of student affairs staff are likely to be found at these settings and with these students. (p. 298)

Pascarella's critical question of structures, services, and programs that best provide and facilitate commuting students' involvement is addressed in this investigation.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, much concern has been expressed about the quality of campus life and the lack of student involvement at colleges and universities.

Boyer (1987) stated that "the effectiveness of the undergraduate experience relates to the quality of campus life. It is directly linked to the time students spend on campus and to the quality of their involvement in activities" (p. 191). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1990) reported that "very early in our study, we observed an unhealthy separation between in-class and out-of-class activities. . . . It became increasingly apparent during our study that the quality of campus life is declining" (p. 3).

Whereas the quality of campus life is deteriorating, the number of commuting students is increasing. These students have held majority status nationally since the early 1970s (Schuhman, 1974). Yet administrators have been slow to respond to these students' educational needs (Educational Facilities Laboratory, 1977).

Researchers have acknowledged the troubles associated with engaging commuting students in learning experiences outside of the classroom. Still, they have invited postsecondary educators to create programs and services that will engross the commuting student in the extracurriculum (Astin, 1985; Pascarella, 1985).

Purpose of the Study

The researcher's purpose in this study was to determine the factors that contribute to the initial and ongoing involvement of commuting students in the college extracurriculum. It was also the researcher's intention to determine how educators at one university might better encourage the involvement of its

commuting students. This task was accomplished by analyzing the content of in-depth, qualitative interviews with commuting students who had displayed a pattern of college-campus involvement.

Qualitative research was selected for its ability to uncover answers to questions of how and why. The researcher was interested in knowing how and why commuting students became involved and continued their involvement. The interview discussions explored the reasons for and benefits of the students' involvement and practices that might be employed to enhance the extracurricular involvement of traditionally aged commuting students.

Need for the Study

This examination focused on two areas in need of research: student involvement and commuting students. Astin (1984) recommended further study of student involvement. He suggested evaluation of the various forms of involvement, the range and intensity of involvement, developmental outcomes, and methods for the nurturance of student involvement. Winston and Massaro (1987) reported that "studies are also needed to identify which strategies for encouraging student involvement prove most effective" (p. 173). To know what influences student involvement is, as Pascarella (1985) indicated, an important question. This question introduces a great challenge to institutions with large numbers of commuting students as such students are often constrained by time, distance from campus, and competing obligations (Pascarella, 1985).

Many have expressed a need for research on the commuting student (Harrington, 1972; Jacoby, 1989; Likins, 1986; Rhatigan, 1986). Schuhman (1974) suggested that commuting students must be more engaged in "the total educational process" (p. 486). Chickering (1974) recommended that postsecondary institutions design experiences to lessen the fragmentation of a commuting student's life. Increased commuting-student involvement and decreased fragmentation of the commuter's life are both ideal and possible. However, attaining this ideal will require studies examining present patterns of activity for the commuting student.

Importance of the Study

The importance of this research lies in its subject matter, timeliness, and methodology. Campus life and student involvement are currently matters of interest to a great number of educators. This study follows recent research on student involvement (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991) and a call for improved campus life by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1990). Because campus life and student involvement recently have been raised as issues worthy of serious study and improvement, many student affairs professionals are seeking services and solutions to cultivate and foster them.

It also is notable that the methods used in this study were qualitative in nature. Much of the research done in the field of student affairs is quantitative. It has been said that "qualitative methods have the potential to more accurately

describe and, perhaps, help student affairs staff, faculty, and others better understand the behavior of individual students and groups of students" (Kuh & Andreas, 1991, p. 397). Schuh and Whitt (1992) stated that qualitative research is best suited to questions of why and how. These are the precise questions addressed in this study as commuting students were asked how and why they became participants in the extracurriculum.

Finally, the study is important because the researcher examined the patterns of those commuting students who were exemplary in their campus involvement. The students were asked about their involvement and the factors that influenced it. The researcher followed the approach outlined in three recent books: Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Learning and Development Outside of the Classroom (Kuh et al., 1991), In Search of Excellence: Lessons From America's Best Run Companies (Peters & Waterman, 1982), and Traits of a Healthy Family (Curran, 1983). Although each of these publications was based on a unique structure—postsecondary institutions, the corporate organization, and the family system, respectively—each focused on good practice rather than that which is unsatisfactory. It was the researcher's intention to uncover those things that work in encouraging the out-of-class participation of the commuting student by soliciting information from those who had succeeded in campus involvement. That is to say, this research was intended to tell why students became involved rather than why they did not do so.

The Research Question

This research project was based on personal, in-depth interviews with commuting students who had demonstrated involvement in the extracurriculum. The researcher's purpose was to determine the factors that contribute to or influence the extracurricular involvement of commuting students. The primary research question was:

What are the factors that contribute to or influence the extracurricular participation of involved commuting students at Saginaw Valley State University?

Subsidiary Questions

Other questions under study and related to the main research question are as follows:

What are the factors that contribute to or influence the maintenance of commuting students' extracurricular participation?

How might Saginaw Valley State University encourage and nurture the extracurricular participation of commuting students?

Conceptual Framework

"The behavioral view of involvement (Astin, 1984, 1985; Pace, 1980, 1986)--that involvement can be found in what students do and how much effort they expend in various activities" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 367)--was used in this research. However, it should be noted that:

Because the concept of involvement is relatively new, it remains somewhat ambiguous, a state of affairs typical of the early stages of development of a social construct. When an idea or construct attracts the interest of researchers, there is a period during which its scope and parameters must be examined before precise definitions can be

developed (Baird, 1989). Baird suggested that the concept of involvement encompasses dimensions of behavior in addition to that which can be observed. . . . Aspects of a student's personality, such as motivation and interests, may be relevant. . . . In addition, involvement probably has a social dimension. A student may become involved in an activity because of affiliation needs. . . . Some students feel responsible for advancing the status or causes of their group. (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 367)

In 1984, the National Institute of Education said that:

Highly involved students demonstrate their commitment in a variety of ways: by devoting considerable energy to studying, by working on-campus rather than off-campus jobs, by participating in student organizations, and by frequently interacting with faculty members and student peers. (p. 17)

Astin (1984) defined the involved student as "one who devotes considerable energy to studying, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts with faculty members and other students" (p. 297). Astin (1977, 1984, 1985b) believed that a student's involvement is of utmost importance in determining the quality of that person's educational experience.

The present investigation was centered on the portion of the preceding definitions that speaks to participation in a student organization. The rationale for this decision was that, because the researcher was concerned with extracurricular involvement, the study should be focused on the portion of the definition dealing with involvement in student organizations. Further, the researcher assumed that members of student organizations regularly converse with other students and with faculty members. No requirement of study time was made of the interview participants as it would be difficult to measure the time and effort put into learning. On-campus employment was not required of the

interview participants because the researcher reviewed volunteer extracurricular participation.

Setting

The study was conducted at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU), "a comprehensive, co-educational, four-year, state-supported university offering bachelor's and master's degrees" (SVSU, 1992, p. 1). SVSU is situated in east central Michigan between the cities of Saginaw, Bay City, and Midland. The university enrolls approximately 6,800 students. The university's convenient location is among many reasons for a large population, approximately 90%, of commuting students. It should be noted that approximately one-half of the university's students attend class during the evening hours. It is also noteworthy that approximately one-half of SVSU's student body is 25 years of age or older.

Subjects

The subjects of this study were 20 traditionally aged commuting students who voluntarily participated in at least one student organization or governing group at SVSU. The students were of sophomore, junior, or senior class standing and had never lived on any college campus.

Traditionally aged students between the ages of 18 and 23 were selected for the study because their needs are said to be different from those of older adult students (Knox & Associates, 1980). Also, the researcher surmised that nontraditional students may be less interested in involvement in student organizations because of the time demands of work and family obligations.

Members of student organizations and governing bodies were chosen as study participants because their participation was most likely to be voluntary. Unlike members of intercollegiate athletic teams or student employees of the university, most of the members and representatives in campus organizations do not receive payment, stipend, salary, or scholarship. Hence, the motivation for joining a group is typically nonmonetary.

Participants were recruited through contacts with faculty and staff club advisers, notices posted in classrooms, telephone appeals, and an announcement at an SVSU Student Government meeting. A small stipend was offered to entice commuting students to participate in the research project. There was no need to reduce the number of volunteers with selection criteria as locating 20 eligible study participants proved to be a challenge.

Methodology

Qualitative research was selected for the study because of its ability to elicit deep and thorough responses and to provide answers to questions of how and why. Standardized open-ended interviewing was the specific technique used. This method has advantages over other qualitative interview techniques. Among the benefits of standardized interviews are these: (a) greater consistency between interviews (Kahn & Cannell, 1957; Payne, 1951); (b) a more exact and accurate data analysis provided through routine questions, order, and format; and (c) the ability to inspect the interview instrument (Patton, 1990).

Three standardized interviews were arranged with each of the 20 study participants. The interviews were conducted between February and May 1993. In most cases, the length of the initial interview was one and one-half hours. As a part of this interview, students responded to demographic questions, probes about their initial campus involvements, and influences on that involvement. The second interview took about 20 minutes and contained questions necessary to clarify data. In most cases, the third and final interview lasted 40 minutes. Questions in the final interview focused on maintaining involvement, significant moments in involvement, and closing recommendations. Each of the interviews was recorded on a standardized coding form and on an audiotape.

As recommended by Patton (1990), a content analysis was conducted on the verbatim transcripts of the interviews. Conclusions were drawn from the transcribed data only after coding, counting, and noting patterns and metaphors (Miles & Habermann, 1984). The inductive analysis associated with qualitative research was managed by using small units of data to develop larger categories, patterns, and themes as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1981). The researcher preserved an audit trail of survey and coding forms, audiotapes, verbatim interview transcripts, and consent and interview release forms. The audit trail, methods, codes, counts, and interpretations were authenticated by an external auditor, as proposed by Schuh and Whitt (1992).

Limitations and Delimitations

As is the case in a great number of studies, this research project has its limits. The study used what Astin (1984) referred to as "a student development theory based on involvement" (p. 297) in its conceptual framework. It has been said that Astin's theory of involvement offers a "general dynamic, a principle" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 51) rather than a set of interrelated constructs, concepts, and propositions that typically comprise a theory. "It remains to be seen whether Astin's involvement propositions are useful in guiding research beyond a general, conceptual orientation" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 51). It is precisely that conceptual framework for which Astin's work was used in this investigation. Although Astin's views of student involvement are suitable in providing direction and underpinnings to this particular examination, educators must determine the appropriateness of Astin's ideas to other studies.

Some may find the participant requirement of being a member of a student organization or governing group to be narrow. It can be said that membership in a campus organization does not equate to participation in activities such as intercollegiate athletics, orientation leading, honors programs, or on-campus employment. The researcher's concern was that, for each of the aforementioned groups, money or scholarship may have been the motivation for participation. For this reason, volunteer membership in an SVSU student organization or governing group was selected as a requirement. Student organizations and governing groups may attract members differently than do other groups associated with the extracurriculum. Hence, generalizations may be limited.

Another limitation was the use of a paid volunteer sample. Paid volunteers may be more motivated, introspective, or in need of money than a group of students who are required to undergo the interview process. Hence, the sample may not have been representative of the entire commuting population at SVSU or any other college.

Further, no distinction was made among students living at home with parents and those who had moved to the area to live with other relatives, those who were married, and those who were apartment dwellers. In this study, only one student was married and living in an apartment. Two others had moved to the area to live with other relatives. Although all were or had been commuting students, the uniqueness of these situations may have had an effect on the data they provided.

It also should be noted that the researcher/interviewer held a position in the division of student affairs at SVSU. A part of her role was to coordinate campus events and services to student organizations. Because of this, student interviewees may have been reluctant to express displeasure with or improvements needed in the campus environment. They may have spoken more freely with an interviewer from another campus or someone who was not responsible for the coordination of extracurricular activities. However, her familiarity with the campus and various opportunities for extracurricular involvement may have balanced this liability with an ability to probe the students' responses more deeply.

This inquiry also was limited by the size of the study group. Twenty students from one postsecondary institution participated as interviewees in the research project. Because the study was constrained by a small sample and the use of one institution, the findings may not be generalizable.

Whereas SVSU has a student population similar to that of many other institutions, it is unique in its history, culture, and location. With only one institution and 20 students under study, it would be imprudent to generalize the findings. Given this caveat, the findings and recommendations should be useful in developing an understanding of the commuting student and how and why she or he participates in the extracurriculum. This research is also useful in identifying areas in need of further examination.

Definitions

The following terms are defined in the context in which they are used in this dissertation:

Audit: In qualitative research, "dependability and confirmability can be established by means of an audit, in which someone not involved in the research examines the products and processes of the study" (Whitt, 1991, p. 413).

Audit trail: An audit trail is an accumulation of the

raw data (tape recordings, transcriptions, and notes from interviews and observations), products of data analysis and synthesis (all phases of category-development and themes), process notes (including decisions about research strategies and researcher reflections, questions and insights) and materials relating to the intentions of the researcher, such as notes and journals. (Whitt, 1991, p. 413)

Researchers using qualitative methods compile these materials to ensure the trustworthiness of their data and in anticipation of questions concerning findings and conclusions.

Commuting student or commuter: "In the last decade or so, the definition of commuter students as all students who do not live in institution-owned housing has emerged as the preferred one" (Jacoby, 1989, p. 1). For the purpose of this study, the preceding definition of a commuter student was employed.

Credibility: According to Patton (1990):

A credible, qualitative study will . . . need to address all three of these issues: (1) What techniques and methods were used to ensure the integrity, validity, and accuracy of the findings? (2) What does the researcher bring to the study in terms of qualifications, experience, and perspective? (3) What paradigm orientation and assumptions undergird the study? (p. 461)

External auditor: The use of an external auditor is common in and recommended for qualitative research. The auditor is not a part of the research. Instead, he or she "examines the products and processes of the study" (Whitt, 1991, p. 413).

Extracurricular activities or extracurriculum: Two definitions of the extracurriculum were used in this study. The extracurriculum is typified by organized activities, as in the following definition:

Student activities can generally be described as anything involving a group of two or more students who form an organization or participate in an activity or an organization that can effect social, moral or political change. What this definition comes down to is any activity from producing a student newspaper to learning how to whitewater canoe, to joining a sorority, to attending a play, to promoting a concert. (Shandley & Shandley, 1985, p. 22)

However, it is necessary to broaden the given definition as it does not necessarily account for activities coordinated by faculty or staff members, intercollegiate athletics, student representation on all-university committees, employment, or participation by one individual in an activity or organized group. For this reason, a broader definition also was used to define extracurricular activities and the extracurriculum. Extracurricular activities are those activities "carried on outside the curriculum or regular course of study in school or college life" (Morris, 1976, p. 466).

Inductive data analysis: "Qualitative data analysis is inductive: using small units of data to develop categories, patterns and themes, and hence, interpretations and findings" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). "Procedures typically used in inductive analysis of qualitative data include organization of data; generation of categories and themes; seeking alternative explanations for data by challenging the themes that seem to be emerging; and writing a report on the findings" (Whitt, 1991, p. 412).

Involved student: "The highly involved student was defined by Astin (1984) as "one who devotes considerable energy to studying, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students" (p. 297). The National Institute of Education (1984) said, "Highly involved students demonstrate their commitment in a variety of ways: By devoting considerable energy to studying, by working on-campus rather than off-campus jobs, by participating actively in student organizations, and by interacting frequently with faculty members and student peers" (p. 17). It was required that

each interview participant be a member of a student organization or governing body at SVSU. The requirement was made to ensure the interview participant's involvement and with the assumption that members of student organizations and governing bodies have frequent contact with other students and family members. An on-campus job was not required of the participant as the motivation for employment is generally financial and because this researcher explored other incentives for involvement.

Involvement or student involvement: "The behavioral view of involvement (Astin, 1984, 1985; Pace, 1980, 1986)--that involvement can be found in what students do and how much effort they expend in activities" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 367)--was the definition that was used for the purpose of this study.

Qualitative research:

A precise and generally agreed-upon definition of qualitative research is at this time--perhaps for all time--elusive. The development of a common definition for qualitative research is complicated by the fact that it has its roots in many disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, history and feminist studies (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). . . . The "paramount objective" (Merriam, 1988) of qualitative research is understanding rather than the ability to generalize or the identification of causes and effects. Thus, the qualitative researcher seeks to understand the ways in which participants in the setting under study make meaning of--and so understand--their experiences. (Whitt, 1991, p. 406)

Standardized interviewing: With this type of interviewing, interview questions are written out exactly as asked by the interviewer and in a prescribed order (Patton, 1990).

Student organizations, clubs, campus clubs, or campus organizations:

"Student organizations are formally sanctioned opportunities that allow students

to associate and work together toward accomplishing common goals" (Coyne, 1983, p. 394). For the purpose of this study, these terms--student organizations, clubs, campus clubs, and campus organizations--referred to those groups registered with the Office of Student Life at SVSU.

Overview

Chapter I contained an introduction to the research problem. Included were a statement of the problem, the purpose of and need for the study, the importance of the study, the research question and subsidiary questions investigated in the study, the conceptual framework for the research, the setting and subjects for the study, a brief description of the methodology, limitations and delimitations, and definitions of key terms.

Literature pertinent to the study is reviewed in Chapter II. Topics included in the review are a historical perspective of extracurricular involvement, involvement as a concept, the importance of extracurricular involvement, concerns about extracurricular involvement, increasing extracurricular involvement, involvement and the commuting student, commuting students, trends in the literature concerning commuting students, the concerns of commuting students, changing attitudes about commuting students, and improving the quality of life for commuting students.

The methodology used in the research is described in Chapter III. The population and sample are described, and data-collection methods are delineated. The rationales for using qualitative research and standardized

interviewing are set forth. Selection of the interview questions and data-analysis techniques are discussed, as are credibility, consent, and confidentiality.

Results of the data analyses are presented in Chapter IV. A profile of the study group is given, followed by individual profiles of the 20 student interviewees.

A summary of the study and conclusions drawn from the study findings are presented in Chapter V. Suggestions for SVSU and general recommendations are set forth, as are suggestions for related research. Some final thoughts of the researcher also are presented.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Extracurricular Involvement: A Historical Perspective

Throughout history, students have demonstrated a need for out-of-class activities and groups. When such ventures were not available, students created them. Today's extracurriculum was born out of centuries of an innovative student spirit and struggle between students and faculty/administrators. Campus organizations, intercollegiate and intramural athletics, and student-run publications were student initiatives coordinated in response to a rigid curriculum with little opportunity for student input.

Campus life was born in revolt. . . . The recorded history of associations of university students began in the twelfth century, at the very origins of the university itself. When students and teachers first gathered in urban centers in Italy, students organized to protect themselves. . . . Records of youthful hedonism and collegiate customs in North America go back to Harvard's beginnings. Its poverty, simplicity, piety, and small scale may have initially inhibited adolescent enthusiasm, but Harvard in the heart of Puritan New England caught its students playing cards, drinking and stealing the turkeys of the Cambridge neighbors. (Horowitz, 1987, p. 24)

The concept of a research university was imported from Germany in the late 1800s. With it came the notion of academic freedom for students and faculty. In Germany, student freedoms were granted to teach the students responsibility. The concept did not "take" in the United States, presumably

because American faculty members had previously gained control of procedures for decision and policy making (Horner & Horner, 1966).

The advent of modern extracurricular activity was gradual. In the eighteenth century, "American students enjoyed a vigorous, creative fellowship in the literary societies of their own devising" (Horowitz, 1987, p. 24). The first of these groups was established at Yale in 1753. Many years later, after the Civil War, colleges and universities experienced growth and development in the extracurricular activities. Organized endeavors then expanded to include newspapers, drama clubs, music groups, debate societies, and intercollegiate athletics.

In 1787, the Princeton faculty prohibited shinney, a form of hockey. A gymnastics movement began in the early 1800s. The year 1852 marks the beginning of intercollegiate competition. In that year, Harvard competed against Yale in crew or boat races (Rudolph, 1962). Informal athletic games were held before the Civil War; organized competition followed it (Horowitz, 1987).

For the American college student, recreation and team sports were necessary for the fullest enjoyment of life. They were institutions in which the student imbedded his values, the values of worldly success; institutions in which he clarified the nature of the distance that stretched between his view of life and the view that the college purveyed. (Rudolph, 1962, p. 154)

College officials found sports to be useful as they channeled student energies and rebellion into an organized exercise (Horowitz, 1987).

Fraternities were founded at Union and Hamilton Colleges in the 1820s and 1830s, respectively, and led to the decline of literary societies. Fraternities

were established to bring men together and to fulfill the needs of home and family. They met other needs of a break from monotony and the lack of privacy in the dormitory setting (Rudolph, 1962). Rudolph saw fraternities and other campus organizations as vital in transforming the college from a provincial society to an urban center teaching students the ways of the world (Horowitz, 1987). By the 1920s, colleges had accommodated extracurricular life. "The trick was to harness college life, limit its hedonism and more destructive elements, and to emphasize its relationship to citizenship and service (Horowitz, 1987, p. 108).

Extracurricular participation increased at a steady rate until after World War II. At that time, many war veterans were attending college. The commuting student population had increased, and some students were uncomfortable in an unaccepting environment stimulated by the McCarthy hearings (Horowitz, 1987). Due to these and other factors, students acquiesced to faculty and administration in the 1950s, an era of *in loco parentis*, a philosophy by which it was expected that the college take on the role of the parent (Horner & Horner, 1966). By the late 1950s, many undergraduates became uncomfortable with the conformity required by colleges and universities (Horowitz, 1987). The 1960s followed, with an elevated student desire to participate in campus policy making (Horner & Horner, 1966). With this yearning came a rebellion, which subsided in the 1970s when students' aspirations shifted more to careers and professions.

By 1979, only one-third of all students lived on campus or in a fraternity house. An expanding number of commuting students, the focus on professional

life, making money, goals of graduate school, a lack of community spirit, a decline in social activities, less formal dating, and fewer Greek organizations contributed to a diminished feeling of campus life in the 1970s and 1980s (Horowitz, 1987). During the same era, most postsecondary institutions decreased emphasis on and support of campus activities (Wise, 1978).

This lack of concern for out-of-class learning experiences led Boyer (1987) to declare that:

The college of quality remains a place where the curricular and cocurricular are viewed as having a relationship to each other. At a time when social bonds are tenuous, students, during their collegiate years, should discover the reality of their dependency on each other. They must understand what it means to share and sustain traditions. Community must be built. (p. 195)

Boyer's (1987) book College: The Undergraduate Experience in America, a 1987 National Institute of Education report entitled Involvement in Learning, and a Carnegie Foundation (1990) report on campus life were instrumental in creating a renewed focus on and revitalization of campus life in the 1990s.

Involvement as a Concept

In 1970, Astin proposed a model demonstrating the effect of the college experience. The model was illustrated using three words: "input--process--output" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 50). When educators use this three-word paradigm, there is a tendency to treat the student as a sort of black box. Provided at the input end of the box are the policies and procedures of a college or university; at the other output end are the various achievement measures, such as the grade point average or scores on standardized examinations (Astin,

1984). Astin believed that this view of education was lacking "some mediating mechanism that would explain how educational programs and policies are translated into student achievement and development" (p. 299). Later, Astin espoused the purpose of higher education to be student talent development (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Then, "based on his own research and Pace's work on quality of effort, Astin proposed a 'theory of involvement' to explain the dynamics of how students develop" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 50).

Astin (1984) saw involvement as a "construct that should not be either mysterious or esoteric. Quite simply, student involvement refers to 'the amount of physical or psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience'" (p. 297). According to Astin, an involved student is one "who devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students" (p. 297). The National Institute of Education (1984) had a similar definition of student involvement: "By involvement we mean how much time, energy and effort students devote to the learning process" (p. 17).

To explain involvement, Astin drew on Freud's theory of cathexis. Cathexis theory proposed that "people invest psychological energy in objects and persons outside of themselves" (Astin, 1984, p. 298). Astin also incorporated the learning theory of time on task. Supporters of time-on-task theory have maintained that "the concept of effort . . . has much in common with the concept of involvement" (Astin, 1984, p. 298). Astin saw involvement as the active

participation that one often finds in task completion. The activity required with involvement suggests a behavioral component.

Astin's concept of involvement contains the following five postulates:

1. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific (preparing for a chemistry examination).
2. Regardless of its object, involvement occurs on a continuum; that is, different students manifest different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.
3. Involvement has both qualitative and quantitative features. The extent of a student's involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook and daydreams).
4. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational degree program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program.
5. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement. (p. 298)

Astin recognized that the last two propositions are not true postulates as they are subject to empirical proof.

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) believed that Astin provided a "general dynamic, a principle" (p. 51) rather than a theory. These authors used Kerlinger's definition of theory as "a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables with a purpose of predicting phenomena" (Pascarella &

Terenzini, 1991, p. 51) to say that Astin did not provide variables that are related to one another. Nonetheless, Pascarella and Terenzini did recommend that the concept of involvement be used as a foundation for research.

As stated previously, Pace's research inspired Astin. Both men believed that the qualitative aspects of involvement are related to the effort put forth by a student. Pace (1980) said, "The quality of energy or behavior can range from passive to active, from silent spectator to active participants and public advocate. The effort made to gain quality or intensity of experience can vary from high to low" (p. 112). Pace contended that quality comprises both product and process, both time and effort. Typically, educators look to the product--certification, grade point average, skills acquired, and the modification of values and attitudes--as being most valuable in the student's collegiate experience.

Pace (1980) advised that education be seen as a value-added experience. He wrote:

One could think of value added as all things that did not exist before and so have been added to one's life. . . . What our research shows is that this value added element, or in our terms the percent who make substantial progress toward the attainment of the important goals of higher education, is primarily the result of the quality of effort students put into their education. (p. 105)

Given this, one might say that the quality of a student's collegiate experience has more to do with what students do with campus and personal resources than with the resources themselves. In other words, quality, time, and effort are of utmost importance in acquiring a superior education.

In developing this concept of involvement, Astin also examined five traditional measures of educational quality used by academicians: (a) the nihilist viewpoint, (b) the reputational perspective, (c) a view based on resources, (d) another centered on outcomes, and (e) a value-added notion. Proponents of the nihilist view maintain that the quality of education is not measurable because the institutional activities, objectives, and organizational structures are complicated and diverse. Using reputational measures of educational quality, those schools seen as most prestigious are of the highest quality. "Quality, in this view, is whatever people think it is" (Astin, 1982, p. 10). The resource measure of institutional quality equates quality with a college's educational resources--bright students, sought-after faculty members, facilities, and affluence. With a measurement of outcomes, quality rests in the worth of a college's products. Finally, value-added measures are those derived from a philosophy that "true quality resides in the institution's ability to affect its students favorably" (Astin, 1984, p. 11).

Astin (1982) accepted a value-added measure of institutional quality and recommended that educators heed "a large body of evidence that shows that students learn best when they . . . invest time and energy in the learning task" (p. 13). Value-added research shows that the benefits of college are directly proportionate to the student's degree of involvement in the educational experience. Involvement can be manifested in various ways: "how much time students spend on campus, how much they study, how much they participate in extracurricular activities, and so forth" (Astin, 1982, p. 13).

Astin's concept of student involvement had its roots in a longitudinal study of college dropouts. In that study, Astin (1975) endeavored to identify factors in the college environment that significantly affect the student's persistence in college. In reviewing results of the study, Astin found that virtually every significant effect could be rationalized in terms of involvement. That is, every positive factor was likely to increase student involvement in the undergraduate experience, whereas every negative factor was likely to reduce involvement (Astin, 1984, p. 320). Astin developed the concept of involvement for the aforementioned reasons and because it can be easily understood. The concept also explains most of the research concerning the environmental influence on student development, embodies a number of dissimilar theories presented in several fields, and is used effectively by both researchers and practitioners (Astin, 1984).

"Because the concept of involvement is relatively new, it remains somewhat ambiguous, a state of affairs typical to the early stages of the development of a social science construct" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 367). Baird (1989) suggested that involvement may be more than physical or psychological energy. Involvement may also contain personality factors--motivation and interests, for instance, and social components (Kuh et al., 1991). "Clearly, more needs to be learned about individual student variables that influence student involvement and the mutual shaping of student characteristics and institutional factors and conditions that promote student participation in out-of-class learning experiences" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 368).

The Importance of Extracurricular Involvement

In 1985, Astin stated that nearly all forms of student involvement were associated with a change in the characteristics of freshman students. Student involvement is more closely associated with developmental changes in students than are the characteristics of the entering student or of the institution (Astin, 1985a). Students apparently learn from involvement (Astin, 1985a). These statements are made, given a "behavioral view of involvement (Astin, 1984, 1985; Pace, 1980, 1986)--that involvement can be found in what students do and how much they expend in activities" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 367).

Extracurricular involvement--involvement in those activities occurring at a college or university and "carried on outside the curriculum or regular course of study" (Morris, 1976, p. 466)--appears to affect student development and retention significantly. In 1983, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) cited four areas in which extracurricular involvement was shown to have a dramatic effect on students. These four areas are (a) student retention, (b) personal development, (c) satisfaction with the institution, and (d) activities after graduation, including career and civic and alumni involvement.

Regarding retention, "most research seems to support the belief that participation in activities is a part of integration to the college environment and, therefore, a factor in retention" (ACPA, 1983, p. 5). According to Chapman and Pascarella (1983) and Tinto (1987), students who participate in out-of-class learning experiences are more likely to become integrated into the academic and social life of their institutions. Such students tend to be happier, exhibit higher

levels of achievement, and be more apt to complete an undergraduate education (Astin, 1975; Pascarella, 1980; Tinto, 1987). Those students who hold membership in Greek organizations are less likely to withdraw from college (Feldman & Newcomb, 1968; Summerskill, 1965). Astin (1975) found that participation in extracurricular activities reduced the risk of student attrition and that persistence was positively correlated with the level of involvement. In Boyer's (1987) words, "It is not an exaggeration to say that students who get involved, stay enrolled" (p. 191).

Graduates often note that extracurricular involvement was essential to their personal development--increased confidence, competence, and self-assurance (Marchese, 1990). The evidence consistently has demonstrated that collegiate extracurricular involvement positively affects the development of interpersonal and leadership skills (Bowen, 1977; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Students themselves seem to believe that extracurricular involvement has a favorable effect on their self-concept, personal life, and social life (DeCrane & Coleman, 1991) and will evaluate their participation according to the contributions made to their own personal development (Wise, 1978).

A positive relationship between student participation in campus life and satisfaction with one's collegiate experience has been demonstrated (Bowen, 1977; Cook, 1973; Kapp, 1981). It appears that the intensity of extracurricular involvement and satisfaction are also favorably related (McKaig, 1982). Bowen (1977) stated that student involvement in extracurricular activities assists in the achievement of success during and after the student's collegiate experience.

Bowen's remarks are supported by research indicating that out-of-class experiences are associated with the attainment of one's first post-college job (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Studies also have shown that students learn job skills and civic responsibility through participation in extracurricular activities (Kapp, 1981). Finally, Nelson (1983) found out-of-class involvement during one's undergraduate years to be associated with monetary gifts to an institution in later years, and Krumboltz (1957, cited in Power-Ross, 1980) found extracurricular participation to be the only indicator of adult success.

Extracurricular participation is beneficial not only to the individual, but to the institution and to society. College graduates are better prepared for volunteer, paid, and leisure experiences as a result of participation in campus life. Horner and Horner (1966) contended that student involvement in university decision making is essential to the improvement of democracy. They concurred with Keyes (1968), who said that all constituents in a campus community should be consulted on decisions. When decisions are made in this fashion, students, faculty, and staff members are supplied evidence of a moral democracy.

Student activity adds vitality to a campus (Boyer, 1987). Further, it enhances the mission of the institution, adds a spirit of community, and helps to retain students (Noel et al., 1985). DeCrane and Coleman (1991) stated that institutions benefit from the volunteer work done on campus by students, especially in times of fiscal restraint. Extracurricular activity is associated with campus vigor, quality of campus life, and adding value to a student's experience. In Astin's (1985a) words,

True excellence lies in the institution's ability to affect its students and faculty favorably, to enhance their intellectual and scholarly development, and to make a positive difference in their lives. The most excellent institutions are, in this view, those that have the greatest impact--"add the most value" as economists would say--on the student's knowledge and personal development. (pp. 60-61)

Astin held the conviction that increased involvement leads to improved educational practice and to less student indifference. His thoughts on the effect of involvement on a campus were not unlike those of Ward and Kurz (1969). Ward and Kurz compared a campus to a city and said that the activity and people make the city, not the buildings. Grobman (1988) maintained that "the atmosphere of a campus is determined largely by the mix of curricular and extracurricular activities" (p. 69). Woodrow Wilson (cited in Ward & Kurz, 1969) asserted about 80 years ago: "The real intellectual life of a body of undergraduates, if there be any, manifests itself not in the classroom, but in what they do and talk of and set before themselves as their favorite objects between classes and lectures" (p. 10).

Concerns About Extracurricular Involvement

In 1968, Keyes asked: "Why involve students at all?" as most are "ill-informed, excitable, immature, rude and hardly have the qualities one would want in sober captains of higher education" (p. 78). Keyes also stated: "A generally accepted case for student involvement has yet to be made. A subsequent definition of its legitimate role is even more elusive" (p. 78). The concern that involvement should not be cultivated for the sake of involvement is prevalent. Involvement for involvement's sake has been likened to caterpillars that starve

while circling a plant on the rim of a flowerpot. Without direction or purpose, they merely traverse in circles and will eventually expire from a lack of nourishment (Drake, 1992). It also has been said that the effects of involvement are curvilinear. Too much or too little is not of benefit to the student, but an appropriate amount can provide a paramount educational experience.

Boyer (1987) avowed that the importance of campus life and out-of-class learning is not understood by most faculty members. Because extracurricular involvement is not seen to be serious or academic by many faculty members, it lacks the zest and energy that it might otherwise possess. To change this situation, Heller (1988) believed that extracurricular activity and college course work must be closely related. A partnership between academic and student affairs divisions is necessary to make this happen (Horner & Horner, 1966). The student affairs administration "must take the lead in involving faculty, administration, and students in developing an institutional posture supporting the total educational experience of its students" (Shaffer, 1968, p. 12).

Winston and Massaro (1987) encouraged practitioners and researchers to measure the qualitative as well as the quantitative in reviewing students' activities. The authors said that previous researchers have defined extracurricular involvement in three ways: (a) participation or no participation, (b) the number of organizations in which a student is involved, and (c) the hours spent in active participation. They challenged such measures with a concept of intensity of involvement which includes the quantitative dimension of amount of time spent in extracurricular involvement and the qualitative dimensions of

physical presence, affiliation, investments, contributions, and goal achievement. Howard (cited in Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991) supported this view as he held that breadth of experience is as important as level of position within an organization.

Increasing Extracurricular Involvement

Many of the recommendations made by educational researchers for the purpose of increasing extracurricular involvement have been similar to those made for increasing student involvement in the total academic experience. In 1984, the National Institute of Education suggested that student involvement might be escalated if colleges and universities followed these tips:

1. College administrators should allocate faculty and other institutional resources toward increased service to first- and second-year undergraduate students.
2. Faculty should make greater use of active modes of teaching and require that students take greater responsibility for their learning.
3. Learning technologies should be designed to increase, and not to reduce, the amount of personal contact between students and faculty on intellectual issues.
4. All colleges should offer a systematic program of guidance and advisement that involves the student from matriculation through graduation. Student affairs personnel, peer counselors, faculty and administrators should all participate in this system on a continuing basis.
5. Every institution should strive to create learning communities, organized around specific intellectual themes or tasks.
6. Academic and student services administrators should provide adequate fiscal support, space, and recognition to existing cocurricular programs and activities for purposes of maximizing student involvement. Every attempt should be made to include

part-time and commuter students in these programs and activities.
(pp. 25-35)

Astin's (1985a) recommendations were similar and included allocating increased resources to the first years of college, experimenting with the academic schedule to devise methods of increasing involvement, adding innovations to the curriculum, and increasing faculty and student contact. In the same publication, Astin proposed the use of activities to foster student involvement. Academic advising, residential life, financial aid, counseling, and campus life in general were seen as vehicles to nurture out-of-class participation. Regarding campus life, Astin encouraged postsecondary educators to address these questions:

To what extent does campus life provide opportunities for students to take part? What changes in the physical plant and surroundings might make the campus a more exciting place? What special provisions are made for commuter students? Are social and cultural events scheduled so as to encourage students' participation? Are enough activities offered to permit most students to get involved in at least one? (p. 167)

In addition, Astin (1985) recommended that institutional research be conducted to increase campus involvement, use of the concept of talent development, and provisions for a special focus on commuting students. Astin saw that the role of student affairs broadens if involvement is used as a theoretical foundation to an institution's policy and procedure: "If an institution commits itself to maximizing student involvement, counselors and other student personnel workers will probably occupy a central role in institutional operations" (p. 151).

Creamer (1987) supported Astin's contention that institutions must question themselves on matters of interaction and involvement. Better advertising, needs assessments, activities related to the academic mission, and increased activity fees were Benacci's (1991) proposals for improving extracurricular involvement. Parker and Aldred (1986) thought that the challenge is to uncover methods to get students engrossed in their college experiences. They advised that this might be done by encouraging students to (a) take courses different from those they might choose on their own, (b) change their residential situations, (c) become involved in on-campus activities, or (d) associate with new peer groups.

For the purpose of increasing involvement, academicians might also need to know which student groups and which types of schools have shown a propensity to involvement. Highly involved students are likely to come from relatively educated and affluent families. Such students typically have good grades in high school, score well on college admission tests, attend selective postsecondary institutions, and tend to live on campus (Frielander & McDougall, 1991). A recent study of colleges and universities known to be exemplary in campus life and spirit demonstrated that institutions that are most likely to foster involvement possess these commonalities: high expectations and shared vision articulated well in mission and philosophy statements; an understanding and celebration of the school's own campus culture; an environment conducive to student ownership and belonging; and clearly outlined expectations, policies, and procedures that promote campus involvement (Kuh et al., 1991).

Involvement and the Commuting Student

Writings specific to institutional involvement of commuting students have been presented. Swartz (1985) advised that college student affairs administrators review Schlossberg's (1984) transition model when addressing commuter student needs. According to this model, one's capacity to adapt to a transition is affected by the individual's perception of the transition and the individual's adeptness at balancing assets and liabilities in response to change. Transitions may be seen as events or nonevents. Nonevent transitions are those an individual had anticipated, but which do not occur (Schlossberg, 1984).

Swartz (1985b) thought that commuting students may experience college attendance as a nonevent. Starting college might be seen as an opportunity for change, when in fact "commuters are not thrown into a new environment with all new values and lifestyle. They are caught between old ways and the new" (Swartz, 1985b, p. 2). Commuters may not know how to cope; this might be interpreted as apathy by college personnel. Apathy may actually be ambivalence about where to channel energies and how to make connections (Swartz, 1985b).

Swartz recommended discussion of these questions:

- * How do commuters view their transition?
- * Is college attendance a major event or a minor transition?
- * Is attending college seen as an event or a nonevent?
- * Is college attendance overwhelming?
- * Has attending college required a significant change in the student's support systems and social networks?

- * How does the campus differ from other community environments?
- * What is the individual's attitude and actions regarding the balance of resource assets and deficits?
- * Is involvement an infringement on the commuting student's time?
- * Are commuters anxious to be involved, but uncertain about how to do so?
- * Do commuting students feel comfortable on campus?
- * Is the campus environment one that shows sensitivity to commuting students' needs?
- * Is the environment appropriately challenging?

Swartz (1985b) also recommended that colleges and universities measure commuting students' perceptions of the environment regularly and that their thoughts be incorporated into program and service design. She advised that opportunities for involvement be offered at various times through multiple forms and avenues.

Rosenblum (1986) thought that campuses should measure the involvement of commuting students. He believed that evidences of involvement are (a) increased self-confidence, (b) personal and professional development, (c) requests for references and recommendations, and satisfaction with one's collegiate experience. Rosenblum instructed student affairs personnel to use these questions as short-term measures of commuter student involvement:

- * Do the commuting students stay involved?
- * Are commuters able to manage academic, social, and lifestyle commitments?
- * Do the commuting students feel a sense of accomplishment?

- * Are the friends of these students being encouraged to become involved?
- * Are the commuting students becoming active in other areas of the campus?

Wilmes and Quade (1986) offered five steps for good practice in involving commuting students in the extracurriculum. Effective programming for and service to commuting students provides for:

- * Good information that is easily accessible to the student.
- * Institutional identifications or developing a sense of belonging to a campus community.
- * Frequent interaction between students.
- * Regular communication and sharing between students and the faculty and staff.
- * Integrating support systems or including the student's family and friends in the activity of the institution.

Commuting Students

The National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs (1980, cited in Jacoby & Girrell, 1981) defined the commuting student as "any student not living on campus" (p. 36). Flanagan (1976) believed that commuting students are those students who live off-campus by themselves, with parents or families. Stewart and Rue (1983, cited in Jacoby, 1989) stated: "In the last decade or so, the definition of commuter students as all students who do not live in institution-owned housing has emerged as the preferred one" (p. 1). Jacoby contended that such a definition is appropriate and useful despite its breadth. Her view was expressed in the following statement:

Despite the diverse nature of the population, the use of the broad definition of commuter student promotes recognition of the substantial core of needs and concerns all commuter students share. It also encourages institutions to regard their population of commuter students as an aggregate for the purpose of ensuring that they receive their fair share of attention and resources. (p. 2)

Commuters are diverse in nature. It has been suggested that, to represent the commuting student population accurately, subgroups be identified. Stewart and Rue's (1983) classification was based on three variables: "(1) dependence or independence in living arrangements, (2) traditional or non-traditional age, and (3) full or part time enrollment" (Jacoby, 1989, p. 4). This categorization allows all commuting students to fit into one of the following eight subgroups:

- * Dependent, traditional, full time.
- * Dependent, nontraditional, full time.
- * Dependent, nontraditional, part time.
- * Dependent, traditional, part time.
- * Independent, traditional, full time.
- * Independent, nontraditional, full time.
- * Independent, nontraditional, part time.
- * Independent, traditional, part time.

The classification system is designed to assist colleges and universities in determining the number and percentage of students in each category and to allocate resources accordingly.

Trends in Literature Concerning Commuter Students

In explaining the literature on commuter students, Jacoby (1989) said:

Although the body of literature about commuter students is limited in quantity and breadth, it is difficult to synthesize. It is possible to distinguish five waves of literature, each of which evinces common characteristics, themes and attitudes. (p. 17)

The first wave of reports on commuting students was narrow in scope and negative in image. Emphasis was placed on academic performance, emotional well-being, and place of residence. Comparisons frequently were made between residents and commuters. Commuters did not fare well, but the collection of writings and research is not considered reliable as the studies cited used dissimilar methods, samples, and variables.

Jacoby (1989) tagged the second wave of commuter literature as "Major Studies, Increased Interest" (p. 17). Two longitudinal, national, and multi-institutional studies prevailed during this time--Chickering's (1974) research on commuting and resident students and Astin's (1975, 1977) studies of student attrition. The result of Chickering's study demonstrated that resident students were more apt to come from families with higher incomes and levels of education. There was also an increased likelihood that residents had participated in more high school activities and had better academic standing in high school. These data led Chickering to conclude that commuting students should have experiences on the college campus equivalent to those of the resident student.

Astin (1975) found that living on campus was associated with a decreased chance of dropping out of college. In 1977, Astin determined from his research that:

Among the most positive effects of living on campus were involvement in extracurricular activities, interaction with faculty, achievement in academic studies and leadership, career development, social life, and satisfaction with the undergraduate experience. (Jacoby, 1989, p. 22)

As a result of his findings, Astin recommended that educators offer more opportunities for involvement in learning--both inside and outside the college classroom.

The 1970s proved to be a time of increased interest in the commuting student. However, studies centered on the heterogeneity of commuting students, the damaging effects of commuting, and reasons for the favorable effect of on-campus housing on students. Studies during this era continued to be inconclusive and perpetuated negative characterizations of commuters (Jacoby, 1989).

The third wave of literature on commuting students focused on the students of the late 1970s and 1980s who were diverse in nature. The students studied during this period were adult learners, ethnic minorities, urban, community college, and academically disadvantaged. Hence, although each group had its particular needs, many were related to commuting and the difficulties associated with travel, multiple life roles, and limited affiliation with campus personnel (Jacoby, 1989).

"The fourth wave of literature regarding commuter students is characterized by a challenge to the residential bias of student services and programs and advocacy for a comprehensive response to commuter students' needs" (Jacoby, 1989, p. 25). This selection of writings contains much on good practice in commuter student services and on the direct and indirect effects of the residential experience. Pascarella's (1984, 1985) research substantiated notions that the positive effects of the resident student experience might actually be associated with another variable. The variable found to directly influence the student's college experience was that of interaction with fellow students, faculty, and staff members. Place of residence had only an indirect link to student achievement and satisfaction with the undergraduate experience.

Another significant study included by Jacoby (1989) in the fourth wave of literature was completed by Abrahamowicz (1988). The results of this study, conducted at a commuter institution, indicated large differences in levels of satisfaction with the collegiate experience between those who participated in campus organizations and those who did not. Abrahamowicz's study ended with recommendations that colleges increase opportunities for extracurricular involvement to heighten satisfaction with the college experience. The literature of the fourth wave also contains writings that stress the importance of both multi-institution and institution-specific research.

Finally, educational-reform reports dominate the fifth and final wave of literature on commuting students. Many of the reports were focused on curricular matters, whereas others placed learning in a broader framework. The special

needs that commuting students have for involvement and interaction were mentioned in some of the written works (Jacoby, 1989). Reports that are included in this last collection of literature about the commuting student include Involvement in Learning (1984) by the National Institute of Education, Astin's (1985) Achieving Educational Excellence, Boyer's (1987) College: The Undergraduate Experience in America, and the Association of American Colleges' (1988, cited in Jacoby, 1989) A New Vitality in General Education.

Many other publications from the era dealt with community colleges. These accounts said that the residential experience has been viewed as the norm in higher education and that institutions must uncover models and techniques to make a commuting student's college life more akin to that of the resident student.

The concepts of "involvement," "normal progress" toward a degree, and "identification" with the institution, however, must be reexamined and redefined when, as the reports readily point out, the vast majority of students in higher education are commuters. (Jacoby, 1989, p. 28)

The Concerns of Commuting Students

Wilmes and Quade (1986) identified the essence of all commuting students' needs and concerns with the following four items: (a) multiple life roles, (b) integration of support systems, (c) developing a sense of belonging, and (d) transportation issues. What is meant by multiple life roles is that for commuting students, student status is only one of several significant roles. Other roles may involve status at work, within the family, or the community. The commuting students' multiple commitments of student, employee, parent, child, sibling, or

spouse lead such students to view themselves as jugglers--often waiting for one ball to crash (National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs, 1983). Many postsecondary educators view students with multiple roles as lacking commitment to the educational process. However, it is possible that these students are actually more devoted than others because they attempt education despite other pressures and responsibilities (Scherer, 1975, cited in Andreas, 1983).

Due to the responsibilities of work and family, a commuting student's time can be more restricted than that of the resident student (Harrington, 1972; Schuhman, 1974). Research has shown that commuting students usually are employed and that they spend as little time on campus as possible (McConnell & Hurst, 1962, cited in Garni, 1974). A commuting student must plan school and study around travel time, work, and parenting (Hardwick & Kazlo, 1973, cited in Andreas, 1983). Travel typically requires one-half hour or more one way to school. More road time is necessary for those students who work at a third location. "Many spend more time traveling than resident students spend attending class and studying" (Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1977, p. 9). College personnel must become more knowledgeable about and responsive to this situation.

The support systems for the commuting student might include parents, siblings, friends, children, or co-workers. These important persons should be a part of college life for the commuting student. Colleges and universities have become more sensitive to a need for integrating the individual student's support

systems into that person's college experience. Services frequently offered for this purpose are orientation programs for family members, events designed for families, and discount ticket rates to the families and friends of enrolled students. Personal counseling and workshops also have been made available to help students cope with the stress of academic and family life. Programmatic efforts are critical as "commuters may be more prone to suffering the consequences of stress than residents" (National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs, 1983, p. 2).

The most apparent of all concerns that commuters share are those associated with transportation--commuting time, costs, parking, weather conditions, and so on. "Commuting for most people is not viewed as a joyous task" (Parrino, 1983, p. 6). Because of this, researchers began a study indicating that stress-related problems may be associated with commuting and travel time (Parrino, 1983). Meanwhile, most schools have not concerned themselves with commuter transportation issues beyond bus service and parking spots.

Earlier, a model developed by Wilmes and Quade (1986) was presented. The model showed multiple life roles, support, belonging, and transportation as major issues for commuting students. It was formulated because professionals lacked a theoretical framework to demonstrate the appropriate response to commuting students' needs. There is also a tendency among educators to ignore commuters because they are too large a group with which to contend. The model helped many to see the numerous subgroups within a commuting student population. Graff and Cooley (1970) had like thoughts as they believed

it necessary to know commuting students' lifestyles, needs, and concerns to serve them adequately. Andreas (1983) agreed that institutional census data and needs assessments are essential to proper planning for commuter services.

Andreas (1983) also stated several generalizations that hold true for most commuting students. The generalizations followed and supported what was written by Wilmes and Quade (1986). Commuters tend to be employed more than residents (Harrington, 1972; Schuhman, 1974). The age range for commuters is wider than it is for resident students (Chickering, 1974). Family life and work are often of greater priority than the educational environment (Counelis & Dolan, 1974). A commuting student's life is divided by the number of life roles that a student performs (Chickering, 1974; Hardwick & Kazlo, cited in Andreas, 1983; Harrington, 1972; Schuhman, 1974; Ward & Kurz, 1969). The schedule of a commuting student interferes with forming friendships on-campus unless faculty and staff members encourage such relationships (Astin, 1977; Chickering, 1974; Ward & Kurz, 1969).

Students choose to attend college to build social relationships, to respond to external expectations, to improve one's social well-being, to advance professionally, to stimulate one's intellect, to escape an unfavorable situation, and to explore academic interests (Rhatigan, 1986). The major reasons for nonresident status are low cost, proximity to place of residence, and convenience to work, according to the Educational Facilities Laboratories (1977). However, there are obstacles associated with goal achievement for commuters. Demos (1967, cited in Harrington, 1974) told of the difficulty commuters have in

developing meaningful contacts and close personal relationships, getting involved in activities, and breaking through barriers of anonymity and depersonalization. Melisky (1982) agreed. Upon surveying commuting students at Boston University, Melisky uncovered the greatest disadvantages cited by commuters. Items mentioned by Boston University students were time spent commuting, not being able to meet people, dissatisfaction with transportation services, lack of knowledge of available university events and services, and lack of adequate parking.

Changing Attitudes About Commuting Students

Commuting students "account for over 80 percent of the students in American colleges and universities today" (Jacoby, 1989, p. 1). Commuters have been the majority student population since the 1960s (Harrington, 1972; Schuhman, 1974). Given this information, and if it is true that "the future of higher education is increasingly the large, urban, commuter campus. . . . The traditional campus belongs to another age" (Freedman, 1969, cited in Harrington, 1972, p. 85), why have postsecondary institutions been slow to respond to the needs and concerns of commuting students, as has been suggested by the Educational Facilities Laboratories (1977)?

Knefelkamp (1983) stated that the resident experience is seen as the normative one on most college campuses. Likins (1986) concurred, as did Van Bebber (1985). Likins wrote, "Despite the fact that commuters outnumber resident students on many campuses, educators persist in thinking of the

collegiate experience as primarily residential" (p. 11). Van Bebber noted, "The 'commuter university' is a reality, but one that many people refuse to accept" (p. 6). Pierce (1985) believed that college faculty and staff members assume that most campuses are residential because their own backgrounds are residential in nature, because they have romantic notions of the ideal university, and because most of what is written on college students focuses on the student who lives on campus. A report from the Educational Facilities Laboratories (1977) declared:

Many administrators were educated at schools with residence requirements and have not adjusted to commuters, especially evening and late afternoon students. . . . Although it is an old-fashioned view, many administrators still look down on "subway circuit" students and treat them as second-class citizens in the college community. They are separate and not equal. (p. 7)

In her book on campus life, Horowitz (1987) referred to commuters and other groups of nonresident students as outsiders. She believed that outsiders always have existed, a fact that most schools choose to ignore. Horowitz's use of the term "outsider" may be an accurate description of the commuting student. Professional student affairs personnel may indeed treat commuting students in a manner different from that used with residents (Foster, Sedlacek, Hardwick, & Silver, 1977, p. 291). This lack of concern is related to commuting students' becoming designated as the have-nots (Chickering, 1974), the forgotten students (Graff & Cooley, 1970), and the neglected majority (Jacoby & Girrell, 1981).

How might this lack of regard for commuting students be reversed? Arthur (1977) stated that educators must go beyond discussions that merely recognize

the commuter's home situation. Action must be taken to enrich the learning experience of the commuting student and to make that student's life seem less fragmented. Kniefelkamp and Stewart (1983) thought that commuting students must be seen as assets and not deficits to an institution. She agreed with McCann and Blair (1955, cited in Graff & Cooley, 1970), who asserted that, by the nature of commuting, commuters make priceless contributions to the institution. Kniefelkamp also believed that researchers must separate political, economic, maturational, and developmental issues when studying commuters, and that new institutional and developmental models are needed for the study of commuters.

Andreas (1983), Jacoby (1983), Parnell (1985), and Rhatigan (1986) also considered research on the commuting student to be of great importance. Each researcher recommended the use of student census data and the review of an institutional profile of commuter subgroups, before developing commuter services. Jacoby proposed parental input as a good source of information, and Parnell maintained that educators must seek the best for all college students, not only those who reside on campus. "If we don't cultivate the best in all, we are a wasteful society" (Parnell, 1985, p. 171). Parnell believed that the critical question for higher education is: "Is your school cultivating or chasing excellence?" (p. 171).

The commuting student who is not a part of campus friendships or activities often receives only half an education (Hatala, 1976). Many postsecondary educators view commuting students as apathetic, whereas

students themselves say they do not know how to use resources or how to take the initial steps related to becoming a part of the extracurriculum (Pierce, 1985). Resident students have advantages of intense peer experience and ease of access to "university resources for study, fun and coping with bureaucratic necessities" (Hatala, 1976, p. 310). To balance this discrepancy for the commuting student, Hatala contended that substantial institutional change will be required and that colleges may need to redefine community. He wrote,

The simple view of a totally unified community sharing identical experiences and knowledge may be a reality on small campuses molded by the English tradition. Most campus communities are, however, better described as a network of flickering clusters. Dormitories, courses, teams, projects, trips and special activities provide rallying points for a special purpose. When the end is met, the cluster splinters, its members joining in other clusters for other ends. The process is not unlike that described by Kenneth Keniston in his definition of "youth" as a stage of development coming between adolescence and adulthood. It is characterized by high mobility and deep, but evanescent commitment to cause or action. Clusters formed on campus meet individual needs with time constraints felt by commuting students. (p. 311)

Hatala (1976) believed that, to respond to the needs of commuting students, colleges and universities must also consider the ages and jobs of those students. New programs and modifications to past programs must also be established. The Educational Facilities Laboratories (1977) discovered many administrators to be afraid of a costly and unnerving adaptation to commuting student needs. Such fears may be unfounded.

What appears to be needed is a shift in the way of looking at student services and a greater flexibility about where, how and when services will be provided. The cry of the commuting student is that most units have no understanding for the great diversity of lifestyles and time schedules in most student bodies. (Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1977, p. 69)

Chickering (1974) found that colleges had the greatest effect on commuting students in the last two years of attendance. The largest influence on resident students was felt during the first two years. Chickering also discovered that commuting students' development was more gradual and was constrained by internal and external pressures. The researcher deemed resident students to be advantaged by access to faculty, staff, facilities, and programs. This edge, and the finding that commuting students tended to come from less advantaged home lives, led Chickering to refer to resident and commuting students as the haves and the have-nots, respectively.

Improving the Quality of Life for Commuting Students

"Four categories have been proposed for sorting the variety of functions that are and should be performed to improve the quality of life for commuting students: services, programs, advocacy and research" (Jacoby & Girrell, 1981, cited in Jacoby, 1989, p. 25). Even with these categories, "it can be exceedingly frustrating to develop programs for commuters," particularly if one is "designing programs in a conceptual vacuum" (Wilmes & Quade, 1986, p. 25). To lessen the exasperation, campus administrators have been advised to keep the commuting student concerns of multiple life roles, integrating support systems, developing a sense of belonging, and transportation in mind (Wilmes & Quade, 1986). Program planners must also remember that examples of good practice in work with commuting students include information, involvement of other students, involvement of faculty and staff members, and the integration of

support systems (Wilmes & Quade, 1986). Programs and services offered on campuses with large numbers of commuting students must also be designed to overcome the challenge of involving students outside of the classroom, of promoting interaction among members of the campus community, and of diminishing feelings of isolation and depersonalization (Demos, 1967).

Chickering (1974) made these recommendations for improving the life of the commuting student: (a) connect commuting students with courses and extracurricular activities appropriate to their backgrounds, (b) strengthen relationships between commuting students and faculty and staff members, (c) develop creative programs to broaden the experience of the commuting student, and (d) "thoughtful development of new arrangements which make 'resident experiences' a fabric of educations" (p. 10).

Fullerton (1985) recommended increasing knowledge of one's commuting student population. Keller (1985) advised colleges to assess needs. Swartz (1985b) thought that, if proper techniques are used, commuting students will be better served by (a) matching demographic patterns, (b) individualized programs, (c) balancing challenge and support to students, (d) providing opportunities to meet with friends, and (e) offering occasions to identify with one's peer group.

Tidbitts (1977, cited in Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1977) believed that "conveniently located is the commuter's slogan" (p. 10). Hatala (1976) said that institutions must provide programs and services equivalent to those afforded resident students. The Educational Facilities Laboratories wrote, "Essentially what commuters lack is a base from which to operate, a place to hang their hats"

(p. 6). The services and facilities that commuters express a desire for are places to put belongings and children, to study, to eat, to nap, to hang out, to meet friends, to receive information, and to recreate (Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1977). Facilities of this nature are essential to improving student, faculty, and staff interaction (Ward & Kurz, 1969). The operating expenses for commuter services might be realized through rentals, fees, and vending or franchise operations (Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1977).

Some other services recommended for commuting students are walk-in counseling services, experiential academic study groups, psychological education, counseling referral services, academic advising, and peer counseling services (Garni, 1974). Graff and Cooley (1970) suggested the aforementioned services in addition to advising and counseling personnel trained in the special needs of commuting students, information of interest provided to commuters during orientation, and direct-mail notices of campus services and events. Training for all staff members in academic advising was proposed by O'Banion (1971).

Jacoby and Girrell (1981) suggested car-pool services, off-campus housing lists, an information center, child care services, bus services, legal aid, special meal plans, overnight housing accommodations, and lounges in classroom buildings. The two researchers proposed that the following topics be covered during orientation programs for commuting students: campus resources, campus outreach centers and outposts, student organizations, vehicle

registration and parking information, transportation alternatives, off-campus housing, campus events offered during the day, and recreational facilities.

Mentoring programs for commuting students were recommended by Beardsley and Beardsley (1987), and Gregg (1986) proposed a lounge and recreation center with a fully equipped kitchen. Finally, evening child care and an emergency locator service to find students quickly were proposals made by Harrow (1987).

Regarding activities programming, Keller (1985) suggested holiday parties, family activities, and theme-park discounts. Kubik (1985) demonstrated success with musical programs in high-traffic areas, short day programs, and placards for quick identification of such programs. Harrow (1987) was a proponent of spouse and dependent discounts and free tickets to local cultural arts programs. Requests from the students themselves appear to indicate modest and conventional desires. Nonresident students often are pleased with minor renovations that require more imagination than money (Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1977).

Commuter advocacy is needed to increase awareness of the student as commuter (Rue & Ludt, 1983). The most prevalent method of achieving this awareness is by recording and reviewing demographic information on a regular basis and by conducting periodic needs assessments. College administrators often distribute this information to key decision makers and follow distribution with a strong public relations effort (Rue & Ludt, 1983). Advocacy services typically provide recognition of the diversity of commuting students, a display of

the need to have commuting students involved in decision making, and recognition of the needs and schedules of commuting students (Sloan, 1989a). The advantages of using advocacy as one component in an effective overall plan to improve commuter services are those of information exchange, understanding the commuter client's unique needs, and supplying information to college employees in designing appropriate policies and procedures (Swartz, 1985a).

Likens and Beifus (1989) supported the establishment of commuter advocacy programs. They placed emphasis on well-designed marketing campaigns that promote the well-being of commuting students. Jacoby (1989) held that good commuter advocacy includes (a) an institutional mission statement that indicates a clear commitment to all students, (b) campus executives who frequently articulate their commitment to commuting students, (c) regularly collected data on commuters and subgroups, (d) a campuswide initiative to identify and correct erroneous assumptions about commuters, (e) equal practices for resident and commuting students, (f) a recognition that faculty interaction is crucial to the intellectual and personal development of commuting students, (g) arrangements made by campus officials for units to work together to improve services to commuters, (h) the use of technology to streamline processes, and (i) college and university executives who work together with governing boards to make certain that commuting students and commuter institutions are treated justly.

Institutional research about commuting students begins with demographic and census data. Observations, surveys, and interviews might also be

implemented. Jacoby and Girrell (1981) were of the opinion that administrators should ask these questions when revising or expanding services:

- * What specific services can we provide commuting students?
- * How can we make present services more accessible to nonresident students?

Andreas (1983) encouraged institutional researchers to find the answers to these questions:

- * How many full-time and part-time students are enrolled?
- * At what time and on what days are students on and off campus?
- * From where do students commute? What is the distance?
- * For which commuting students does a particular program provide a quality experience?
- * Are institutional policies formulated to benefit the student?
- * Do college procedures enhance or stifle the development of students?
- * Are staff members aware of student developmental needs? If so, how aware?

Wilmes and Quade (1986) offered another set of questions to be answered by student affairs professionals:

- * Do programming efforts target student groups?
- * Do programs take into account the multiple time demands of students?
- * Are the program times and formats efficient and effective?
- * Does the campus have a system that provides timely and accurate information?

- * Is there support for campus life and student involvement?
- * Does the campus offer opportunities for involvement?

Discussions with commuters about their preferences and lifestyles are vital to sound and suitable programs. It has been said of ethnic minority students that:

They need ladders with every rung in place in order to have a fair opportunity to overcome incomplete preparation for college, unfocused educational objectives, and the discrimination that has been a part of the minority experience in the United States. (Richardson, 1989, p. A48)

Although this research intends for no comparison to be made between commuting students and minority students, it is true that in a like fashion, an all-out and carefully coordinated initiative will need to be launched to provide commuters with appropriate services. Services, programs, advocacy, and research will require thoughtful discussion, coordination, evaluation, and revision.

Our mere recognition of the fact that commuters remain in their home environment, suffer parental dominance and indebtedness is not getting the job done. Too frequently discussions of commuting students stop at this realization which is, in fact, only a starting point. (Arthur, 1977, p. 317)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

The population for this study was drawn from all 18- to 23-year-old commuting students at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) who were members of student organizations during winter semester 1993. The study sample consisted of 20 commuting students who were members of student organizations or governing bodies at Saginaw Valley State University. Each of these 20 students was 18 to 23 years old, had never lived on any college campus, and were of sophomore, junior, or senior class standing. The study participants were classified as paid volunteers because they were given a small stipend for assistance with the study.

A number of techniques were used to recruit interview participants. The methods used were (a) a request for names from campus club members, faculty club advisers, and student affairs personnel; (b) notices posted in classrooms; (c) telephone contact; (d) personal contact; and (e) presentation at a student government meeting.

Data Collection

During and immediately following winter semester 1993, 25 commuting students enrolled at Saginaw Valley State University and holding sophomore, junior, or senior class standing participated in three standardized interviews. The interviews were held in an administrative office at SVSU. The first interview was the lengthiest. For most participants, it lasted approximately one and one-half hours. The second interview, the shortest, took an average of 20 minutes. The final interview ran approximately 40 minutes in length.

The initial interview asked for demographic information and data related to becoming involved as a commuting student at SVSU. It also requested replies to questions of how to promote better participation on campus. The purpose of the second interview was to clarify demographic information gained from the first interview. In the third and final interview, questions of campus involvement were further probed for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the students' patterns of involvement. Also explored in the last interview were the student interviewees' reasons for seeking positions of leadership and for remaining involved.

Rationale for Use of Qualitative Research

In the case of this study, an attempt was made to understand the involvement patterns of commuting students and how colleges might assist in student participation in the extracurriculum. Qualitative methods were selected to accomplish this task. These techniques were chosen as the researcher

sought answers to questions of why and how--a task well suited to qualitative research (Whitt, 1992). The researcher was particularly interested in gaining insight into and an awareness of the involved commuting students' attitudes, practices, and perceptions. Qualitative methods appeared most appropriate as:

The goals of qualitative research are concerned more with understanding than with causes. . . . The qualitative methodologies seek direct access to the lived experience of the human actor as he or she understands and deals with ongoing events. The goal is to describe and analyze the activities and reasoning processes by which persons create their own behaviors and understand and deal with the behavior of others. (Patton, 1990, p. 391)

The aims of qualitative thinking are to see the parts, the whole and the tensions (Giarelli & Chambliss, 1988). It was important to the researcher to review each of these three elements.

Many of those educators presently doing research in the field of student affairs have advised and invited the use of qualitative methods to gain deeper insight into systems within higher education (Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Kuh & Whitt, 1991; Schuh & Whitt, 1992; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1990). Qualitative research was selected for this research because of its advantages and because it produces richer data than are elicited in surveys. Qualitative analysis is used to unravel and comprehend the changes in the social world and in the behavior of persons (Patton, 1990). It also can clarify the hidden aspects of institutional cultures (Kuh & Andreas, 1991). Such research often will put individuals within the organization in touch with one another and challenge assumptions made within an institution (Kuh & Andreas, 1991). It was accessible to the researcher because it relies on the skills of looking, listening, and speaking (Biklen &

Bogdan, 1986). Qualitative data are also attractive and undeniable (Miles & Haberman, 1984).

Some of the other fundamentals in qualitative study were important to the researcher as well. Qualitative research is focused on an objective of understanding an insider's perspective, naturalistic inquiry, a sense of the unique in context, value-laden inquiry, inductive analysis, personal contact and insight, and design flexibility (Patton, 1990; Schuh & Whitt, 1992). Understanding, obtaining the commuter student's own perspective, and working in context were mentioned earlier as issues that were significant to the researcher. Having the individual and special contact provided by qualitative methods was also a consideration, as was the ability to change direction given the changeable structure that qualitative methods provide.

The researcher was also aware of the pitfalls linked with qualitative methodology. It can be labor intensive, deceptive, and appear to be less difficult than it is (Biklen & Bogdan, 1986). Such techniques are frequently expensive (Whitt, 1991) and may overwhelm the researcher with data and decisions at every juncture (Whitt & Kuh, 1989). It has also been said that qualitative research is less rigorous because it is seen as being subjective, is based on assumptions, and is value laden. On this point, Britain (1981) disagreed. He saw neither experimental nor contextual evaluation as more rigorous. Each, he said, carries values and can only be tested in application. As for assumptions, it was Britain's belief (1981) that interpreters of both quantitative and qualitative

research must make suppositions and leaps in thinking by the very nature of examination and deduction.

Three other concerns associated with qualitative methodology are particularly significant to this research. Kane (1985) warned researchers that "the more familiar the situation is to you, the more likely you are to make premature judgments and the more effort you will have to make to avoid them" (p. 54). The researcher was employed at the university in which the study was conducted. Because there is no prior instrument in most qualitative studies, emphasis is placed on contextual validity and the conceptual framework (Miles & Haberman, 1984). In this study, the research instrument was designed by the interviewer/researcher. Finally, due to its focus on the unique, generalizability is typically limited when using qualitative methods (Britain, 1981).

Rationale for Use of Standardized Interviewing

The particular type of qualitative research used in this study was the interview. Interviewing was seen as the desirable mode for this research because it is penetrating and uncovers past memories and future plans (Dandapan, 1971). It also allows for a process of interstimulation from which rich raw data come. The result of the interaction can be insight, new thoughts, and new processes. Of interviews, Guba and Lincoln (1981) said, "The ability to tap into the experience of others in their own natural language, while utilizing their value and belief frameworks, is virtually impossible without face-to-face and verbal interaction with them" (p. 155). Guba and Lincoln (1981) favored the

interview format over survey research when it appears that it will provide more and better data and for its flexibility, probes for greater depth, and ability to lessen the chance of misunderstanding and to be altered according to the interviewee's background and knowledge. They also believed that interviewers are less likely than survey researchers to be turned down (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Denzin (1970s) saw that interviewing offers the advantages of equality and comparability that are not available in methods of observation.

The standardized or structured interview is the particular type of interviewing that was chosen for the research study because of its strengths in overcoming the difficulties of asking inappropriate questions and a lack of common definitions. Standardized interviewing also allows for less complicated interpretation and for exact replication. With a standardized procedure in each interview, questions are the same and are asked in the same order. Standardization is recommended because it is clear-cut and offers the opportunity for comparison between interviews (Kane, 1985).

Structured or standardized interviews might look like surveys. Yet they provide for clarification, probing, more detailed replies, greater depth, and flexibility. Standardized interview techniques do not require that the respondent be literate. They do, however, allow for questions to be restated and approximate real life more closely than survey research (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

In comparing standardized interviews to less structured interviews, Patton (1990) reported that structured interviews have the benefits of a systematic interview process, providing an instrument that is available for scrutiny and

evaluation, minimizing variance between interviews, time effectiveness, written questions, careful consideration of wording, appropriately placed probing questions, less chance of judgment by the interviewer during the interview, easier analysis and comparison of data, and more legitimacy and credibility. The disadvantages of the standardized format are that questions may be of dubious merit (Mishler, 1986) and that standardized interviewing does not allow the interviewer to follow up on issues not anticipated when outlining a single interview script (Patton, 1990).

The researcher also was cognizant of other troubles associated with interviewing. Interviews can be inefficient and costly. They are vulnerable to interviewer bias and to mistaken cues. Interviews may be influenced by the personality, customs, and attitudes of the interviewees. In interview research, samples are typically small, which makes generalizability problematic (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). All of the aforementioned issues of concern were considered in the development and implementation of the research project. The researcher also was of the belief that the advantage of rich description from students outweighed these disadvantages.

Selection of the Interview Questions

With qualitative analysis, one seeks to describe a situation and not to confirm or deny a hypothesis (Schuh & Whitt, 1992). The research questions were designed accordingly. It was known that questions of uncertain value are followed by like answers (Mishler, 1986). Because of that, and as required with

the standardized technique, questions were carefully worded and delivered exactly as written (Atkinson, 1979; Patton, 1990). All questions were examined by the researcher and others to ensure understanding, standard English, and a lack of interviewer bias. Each question contained only one thought and was worded to avoid violation of the respondent's privacy (Fink & Kosecaff, 1985). Probing questions were properly placed in the interview script (Patton, 1990), and the interview questions were field tested for clarity (Payne, 1951).

The interviews included questions about the interviewee's behavior, experience, feelings, knowledge, opinions, and demographic status (Patton, 1990). Neutral questions were asked first, and those requiring personal opinion and experience were asked later once rapport had been established (Patton, 1990). Many of the questions were open-ended for the purpose of eliciting serious, profound, and heart-felt responses. Questions commanding a more neutral reply often were composed with a forced- or multiple-choice format. Card sorts also were used in questioning. This technique was recommended to educational researchers by Gable and Rogers (1987). The card-sort method can assist interviewers in distinguishing patterns in participant responses. Goldman (1992) also favored this interview technique as it extracts specific data while actively involving the interviewee in the questioning process.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research is based on nonnumeric approaches to evaluation. It seeks data not in numbers but in words, symbols, and behaviors (Paradise &

Papa-Lewis, 1986). Qualitative methods are used to unravel and comprehend the changes in the social world and in the behavior of persons (Patton, 1990). Techniques for gaining these data are observation, interviews, case studies, and content analysis. Data analysis involves an examination for common themes and recurring comments (Paradise & Papa-Lewis, 1986).

Data have no significance until they are examined. "Qualitative analysis is inductive: using small units of data to develop categories, patterns and themes, and hence, interpretations and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Procedures typically used in inductive analysis of qualitative data include organizing data, generalizing categories and themes, seeking alternative explanations for data by challenging the themes that seem to be emerging, and writing a report of the findings" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, cited in Whitt, 1991, p. 412). In qualitative research, analysis is not a separate process. The three stages of design, data collection, and analysis are intertwined (Biklen & Bogdan, 1986).

Before data analysis, the wording of questions was given much thought (Atkinson, 1979). Interviews were field tested and revised as necessary (Miles & Haberman, 1984). During the research interviews, the interviewer was diligent in ensuring an appropriate setting and in establishing rapport, listening, and observing (Fenlason, 1962). The interviews were recorded on tape, and brief notes were taken during the interview. Interview notes were reviewed, completed, and sorted after each interview (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Verbatim transcripts of the interview audiotapes were produced (Patton, 1990). The researcher was careful to follow the advice of Patton to peruse transcripts and notes, organize data, check for emergent patterns, and cross-validate sources and findings. To determine patterns, each reply given was divided into shorter phrases. These phrases were categorized and tallied to provide a more exact, accurate, and reliable review of the interview data. The tallies allowed for the development of codes and categories as advised by Atkinson (1971), Biklen and Bogdan (1986), and Patton (1990).

The interview notes, transcriptions, tallies, and reports were critiqued and studied for patterns, themes, relationships, inconsistencies, key events, people, processes, issues, and chronology, as was discussed by Guba and Lincoln (1981) and Patton (1990). The interview transcriptions were evaluated individually and as a part of a set of interviews (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Patton, 1990). The written interview report available for examination in the next chapter includes a study-group profile, summaries of each interview including demographic data, and a combined account of the responses given to each interview question. The purpose was to ensure both individual and group data. In other words, the data are presented in such a way that they will provide both individual snapshots and a composite picture of the group.

Because there is no prescribed blueprint or outline for writing qualitative research reports (Whitt, 1991b), the researcher followed two recommendations made by Patton (1990). First, the report includes a detailed explanation of procedures, perceptions, and insights with the support of verbatim quotations

(Patton, 1990; Whitt, 1991b). It was the desire of the researcher that this study be used by student affairs professionals to improve extracurricular participation and services to commuting students.

Last, it should be noted that an external auditor was used to check the formation, procedures, and motifs found in the study. The auditor was not involved in the study, but facilitated it as an independent and objective observer.

Credibility

A credible qualitative study will . . . need to address all three of these issues:

1. What techniques and methods were used to ensure the integrity, validity, and accuracy of the findings?
2. What does the researcher bring to the study in terms of qualifications, experience and perspective?
3. What paradigm orientation and assumptions undergird the study? (Patton, 1990, p. 461)

The procedures used to strengthen the study's integrity, validity, and accuracy of analysis follow. Standardized interviewing was selected purposely to enhance analysis. This form of interviewing is a less complicated comparison than is available through the other qualitative methods of observation and nonstructured interviewing. Questions also were restated in the interview script to check previous responses for consistency. This allowed the researcher to inspect the data for negative cases and inconsistencies. Many of the questions found in the second and third interviews were asked to clarify the responses of a prior discussion.

Care was taken in evaluating interview transcriptions and counting repeated phrases and responses to verify emergent patterns, themes, and inconsistencies. This assisted in making the study a more valid and accurate one. Observations and insights about the data were also discussed with the typist and reviewed by an independent observer to ensure accuracy in interpretation.

In response to the second question, the researcher's background includes 14 years of professional employment in the field of student affairs. Throughout that time, her work has included directing the operation of campus activities units and facilitating the development of campus organizations. Her professional background gives her insight into extracurricular participation. She has also conducted numerous survey research and job employment interviews.

Attendance at or employment by four predominantly commuter institutions is also a part of the researcher's background. Her own undergraduate experience was as a commuting student. Such background allows for a sensitivity to commuting student concerns that other researchers might not possess.

Regarding paradigm orientation and the assumptions that underlie the research project, as was stated earlier, qualitative research was selected to answer the questions of how and why involved commuting students became and remained involved in the extracurriculum. Quantitative analysis could not provide the depth needed for such study. Finally, Astin's work on student involvement was selected to provide "a general, conceptual orientation" (Pascarella &

Terenzini, 1991, p. 51) for the research, in part because Pascarella and Terenzini stated that it was appropriate to do so. The concept of student involvement was also chosen to guide the study because of its appropriateness to the study of extracurricular involvement.

Consent and Confidentiality

The commuting students electing to participate in this study signed two consent forms. The first form indicated their agreement to participate in the interview study. Before the interviews, the students were made aware that the interviews would be recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. They also confirmed their knowledge that they could discontinue participation at any time and that the responses would in no way affect their academic records or participation in the extracurriculum.

Confidentiality was guaranteed, as was indicated on the consent form. The interviewer, transcriber, supervising professor, and an external consultant are the only persons permitted access to the tapes and transcriptions.

The second signature and consent form provided the researcher with the ability to use verbatim quotations in the final dissertation report. Student interviewees were informed that their names would not be printed in the dissertation.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter contains four unique approaches to inductive data analysis. First, to offer an overview of the study participants, a group profile of the students' demographics is presented. To render portraits of the commuting students interviewed in the study, the second portion of the chapter provides individual profiles. These individual summaries contain demographic information, concerns, suggestions, and quotations from each student. Confidentiality was retained by identifying each student with a letter from the alphabet. The third component of this chapter contains a summary response to each of the interview questions. Finally, the fourth analysis strategy is to present factors that are common to the interview participants.

The final section of this chapter is entitled Interpreting the Data. Under the subheading is a review of inductive data interpretation. Then, an initial interpretation of the research data is presented. Additional interpretation follows in the final chapter of this research study.

Profile of the Study Group

An overview of the study group should begin with requirements made of the interview participants. Each interviewee was a sophomore, junior, or senior commuting student at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) who had never lived on any college campus. Each student was between the ages of 18 and 23 years and was a member of a student organization or student governing body. This study group comprised 11 women and 9 men who typically attended the university full time (12 credits or more) in the fall and winter semesters. All of the interviewees lived in Bay County or Saginaw County. (The university is located in Saginaw County, less than one mile from the Bay County line.) Sixty percent of those interviewed lived fewer than 20 minutes from the university, 35% lived 21 to 40 minutes away, and 5% or one participant lived more than 40 minutes from the university.

The average age of the interviewees was 21.1 years, and the average number of course credits completed at the time of the first interview was 90.4, which was just below senior class standing. Interview participants averaged 7.7 terms or 3.25 years in attendance at SVSU. For the five transfer students who participated in the interviews, the mean was a lower one of five terms and 2.2 years in attendance at SVSU. For nontransfer students, the average number of terms in attendance at SVSU was 8.6 terms and 3.6 years.

Although each of the interviewees came from a family in which at least one family member had attended college, 11 interviewees (55%) would be the first in their families to graduate from college. Two interview participants (10%)

came from homes where no other family member had registered in a college course of any kind. Eleven of the 20 interview participants (55%) had a mother who had been enrolled in college. Twenty percent or four interviewees had mothers who had graduated from college. Six of the students interviewed (30%) had fathers who had taken college classes. Four of those students' fathers had graduated from college. Of the interviewees, five or 25% had sisters who had been enrolled in college classes; in two families (10%), the sisters had graduated from college. The brothers of nine participants (45%) had attended college; in four (20%) of the families, those brothers had graduated.

Ninety percent of the commuting students who were interviewed received some type of financial aid. All but one participant (5%) typically worked during the fall and winter semesters while attending SVSU. Eleven of the students interviewed (55%) typically worked one job in the fall and winter semesters; nine (45%) typically worked two jobs during those semesters. Forty percent worked at the university, 35% worked off-campus, and 20% worked both on and off campus.

Each of the university's five colleges--the College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences, the College of Business and Management, the College of Education, the College of Nursing and Allied Health, and the College of Science, Engineering and Technology--was represented by one or more of the student interviewees. Of these students, 95% held grade point averages of 2.5 or better, with 20% in the 3.5 to 4.0 range, 35% in the 3.0 to 3.5 range, 40% in the 2.5 to 2.9 range, and 5% in the 2.0 to 2.5 range. When asked about classroom

participation, 25% of the respondents said that they entered into class discussion very frequently, 65% believed that they took part fairly frequently, and 10% said that their participation in class was rare. All but one interviewee had been involved in at least one activity and typically more during his or her high school career.

The average number of campus groups to which the student interviewees belonged was 2.4 organizations. Most had been involved in capacities other than club work, as well. The range of SVSU student organizations represented was fairly extensive. Of approximately 45 SVSU student organizations, 20 were represented by student interviewees. The groups represented by the greatest number of interview participants were the SVSU Student Government, the Association for Computing Machinery, the Hispanic Student Association, the Psychology Club, the Science Club, and the Commuter Club.

Ethnic minority groups were represented by six interview participants. One interviewee (5%) categorized himself as African American/Black. Five interview participants (25%) described themselves as Hispanic. Thirteen (65%) stated White/Caucasian as the appropriate ethnic classification.

Fifteen (75%) of those interviewed had attended SVSU since they started college. Five (25%) were transfer students, each of whom had come from a community college setting. Those colleges represented were Daytona Beach Community College in Florida; Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek, Michigan; and Delta College, which is located approximately three miles from SVSU in University Center, Michigan. Three of those students who were

interviewed had transferred to SVSU from Delta College. The remaining two community colleges were represented by one student each.

Individual Profiles and Interview Summaries

Student A

Student A was a sophomore from Saginaw, majoring in computer science and mathematics. She was a member of the Association of Computer Machinery (ACM) and of the Hispanic Student Association (HSA). She was also an Art-icipator. As such, she aided in the coordination of the university's performing arts series. This student had been quite active in high school as she had held membership in school clubs, the student council, the Boy Scout Explorers, and Junior Achievement.

This student stated that her grade point average was between 3.0 and 3.4. Her financial assistance included a work-study position and scholarships based on merit and need. She had a mother and a sister who had attended college, but she would be the first in her family to graduate. She had her own car.

Student A was a quiet person who said she rarely participated in classroom discussions. She remarked that four other students persuaded her involvement in her freshman year. When asked why she became involved, A gave a variety of reasons. She had liked being involved in high school. She also wanted to have fun, to meet people, and to learn more about computers, her cultural heritage, and planning events. A also had hoped to be a part of the campus community. The personal qualities that A believed had led to her

involvement were her ability to get along with others, perseverance, and a desire to assist others. She had continued involvement because "I found it fun and interesting. It makes you get good information about certain things. You learn certain skills. You learn how to deal with difficult people. It is learning that is a big part of it."

Like other Hispanic students who were interviewed, A mentioned her family and their part in her campus involvement:

My freshman year, they had a lot of lunches and a scholarship breakfast during Family Festival Day where I brought my dad. My dad was real proud of me. I got to bring my little sisters, brother, and my cousins came. Another activity would be the Taste of America. That was fun because I brought my Dad and two of my uncles, and they really liked it.

A also found learning about her culture through the Hispanic Student Association and Hispanic Heritage Month events to be of great value.

With the Hispanic Club, you get other leaders from the city . . . telling you about things and what is wrong about Hispanic communities. They tell you about things that maybe you could do. . . . We wanted to have tours on campus for students of junior high and things like that. We are thinking about having a scholarship. . . . The dinner during Hispanic Heritage was really nice. I was really surprised that the cafeteria could cook that good. That meant a lot really. We are not really used to having events like that. Our high schools never had anything like that. We didn't even have a Hispanic Club."

A worked in the Learning Assistance Center. Her position as an assistant led her to knowledge of the tutoring program. A was an academic tutor at the time of the interview. She believed that her job had had "a big impact. . . . That was my first job. That was my first real paycheck. I put a lot of time and effort into it. I found it fun. I tried to do a lot of things every day. It made me think that

I could work anywhere if I put my mind to it." When asked about notable experiences, A stated:

I would say tutoring because of being able to work with students. That meant a lot to me. If I didn't work well with them, I could not help them. It made me realize that I had to try hard to understand them and be active with them. I had to think if I could be fun with them or act serious with them. It was trying to choose a style or whatever to fit the student.

Time had limited A's campus involvement. She had missed ACM meetings because they often conflicted with her class schedule. However, she found other members to be willing to give her meeting updates. An on-campus job and homework also limited her involvement. "It limited me, but it didn't stop me. I would always find out and ask what happened at the meetings. Others would stop me in the hall and tell me what happened at the meeting. They would keep me informed." She had recently been elected to the position of secretary for the Hispanic Student Association. She ran for the position because:

I thought I could be the communicator of the club. I remember going to those meetings and never knew what was going on or when the meetings were. . . . I wanted to make certain everybody got involved or had a chance to attend the meetings or help out with different events.

In A's opinion, SVSU facilitated activity through the Office of Student Life, use of facilities, printed material, and mailings. She believed that club contact persons, more club mailings, and sample or special events would add to campus life and would aid clubs in their organization. She believed that the university should offer more events with refreshments at no charge. Her rationale follows:

If they have food or refreshments at no charge, you are going to have people show up. I remember my freshman year, and I didn't have any kind of money. I was out here all day. There was no food, and everything was so expensive. I went to events that offered free food. It is bad to say,

but true. A lot of people are like that. People stay out here all day whether they have food or not.

In addition to these things, A thought that getting commuting students involved in on-campus activities would take "a lot of encouragement." She believed that "the faculty could be friendlier and more understanding. . . . They can say, 'You are doing a good job,' or 'You can come to me with your problems.' . . . You can tell the ones that mean it." She referred to a recent article in the Valley Vanguard to illustrate her point:

I just want to bring up about _____ over there at Student Government. That newspaper article was an example of what the university can do for somebody. They made him get involved, and he works well. I was reading the article and I thought, "Dang, that is how I am." He had _____ looking after him. I don't have anybody. I am going to try talking to more people and more students.

In her closing remarks, A said of involvement and commuting students:

It is hard. . . . Being involved is a good thing. They tell you that you should always get involved and it will look good for you with employers. It takes a lot. You have to put a lot into it. I don't really get mad at anybody if they don't get involved if they say that they've got to look at their classes. They are smart because they are putting all their effort into their classes. I look at myself and say, "Maybe I am spreading myself too thin." I think that you should have shown me that I have to work a little bit harder if I want to get everything I want. I have to work harder than some other people.

Student B

Student B was the only married student of those interviewed. She, a senior, had recently changed her major from psychology to social work. She had attended the university full time for five years, with the exception of two summers. B maintained a grade point average of 2.5 or better. She received no

financial aid, worked 20 to 29 hours per week at two off-campus employment sites, and drove her own automobile. B had participated in high school sports, clubs, and off-campus volunteer commitments. She classified herself as White/Caucasian. Her mother was a college graduate.

B was in her fourth year as a Student Government senator. She had been a member and secretary of the Psychology Club for two and one-half years and had recently jointed two groups--the Student Social Work Organization and Art-icipators, a group that assists with the university's performing arts series. B was the secretary of the Student Social Work Organization. She also had served as a member of the all-university Family Festival Day Committee and the Math Curriculum Committee.

B characterized her class participation as fairly frequent. She attended her first Psychology Club meeting during the second semester of her freshman year. A member of the Psychology Club recommended B's attendance. When asked the reason for her initial involvement, B replied that she wanted to develop leadership and communication skills. The personal characteristics that assisted her in involvement were her ability to work with people of varying opinions, wanting to help, and her organizational and time-management skills. She maintained campus involvement because of "the enjoyment derived from meeting several different kinds of people and new students. . . . I like working for faculty and staff in our university. We help them with the planning of events for our school. By staying involved, I think of it maybe as a time filler." Of

unexpected benefits, B said, "I made a lot of new friends. I have also learned to work better as a team member. Maybe I have a better sense of who I am."

The occasions that B cited as most meaningful were all related to her position as a Student Government Senator. Her work as the Senate Parliamentarian, attending a conference at another state university, working with others, and planning events were those B mentioned as being of great significance. Through Student Government, B had "developed better team skills, leadership skills and communication skills. It has also helped me plan some successful events." To be successful in her role as Parliamentarian, B "had to know Robert's Rules of Order. It gave me a chance to have a higher position than Senator." The conference taught her that "Saginaw Valley State University doesn't have the problems we think we have. Other schools have similar problems. It just takes time to work them through."

B held that SVSU promoted involvement through free or low-cost activities offered at convenient times. Her own involvement had been limited by class and work commitments, illness, and her spouse. B attended campus events with friends. Her friends and parents had encouraged her to seek campus positions of responsibility.

My parents were always hoping that I would become involved with campus activities, and they were thrilled with the idea that I ran for Student Senate elections. . . . With the Student Social Work Organization, I have always been interested in running for an officer's position. A friend of mine suggested that I should run for the position. He is the one that nominated me.

B expressed concern about the lack of campus spirit and attendance at events. When asked what it would take to encourage more involvement, she said:

I honestly wish I knew the answer to that one. I know that is something that Program Board and Student Government have been working on and trying to encourage more involvement. . . . There will always be the question on how to get people to attend. Take what you get and be happy with the results of it. . . . The people who participate in the planning have done a wonderful job, and we always have fairly good turnouts for events. There is always going to be different interests.

Regarding the maintenance of involvement, B asserted, "I think it would help by seeing more faculty and staff getting involved. This would keep the students involved because they would see teachers and administrators getting involved. . . . I think that is the biggest key."

Student C

Student C majored in nursing and had one brother who had graduated from college. He was a junior who typically worked two jobs in the fall and winter semesters while attending SVSU full time. C's grade point average was in the 3.0 to 3.4 range. Financial assistance for C came in the form of a merit scholarship and a work-study position. C had his own vehicle, lived quite close to SVSU, and was offered a Residential Life scholarship for his academic achievement and for taking part in high school clubs, sports, and community service. C categorized himself as White/Caucasian. He said that he joined in classroom discussions very frequently.

C had attended SVSU for three years or eight semesters. During that time, he had been employed on campus as a Student Government secretary, a lifeguard, and in the institution's book store. He had also been a cheerleader and a member of the Student Nurses Association, the Tennis Club, and the intramural water polo team. He had not held an officer's position, although he had helped with swim meets and lock-ins. He also had attended leadership and Student Government conferences.

C's first knowledge of college life came when he was a senior in high school and at new-student orientation, although he did not immediately avail himself of out-of-class opportunities.

I knew right away that I wanted to be involved, and since I decided that is why I wanted to live on campus, but my dad made me look at the other side too. So, right away I knew that I wanted to be involved, and I guess I didn't feel like being a commuter I would have that opportunity. . . . During my first semester, I wasn't as active as I would have liked to have been, and I kind of thought for that reason I didn't like college, but once I started to get involved I started to feel more relaxed. So, I guess it was the fact that I didn't have the experience, I could use that into comparison. I guess that was what made it a positive experience.

C said that the encouragement of three SVSU staff members, an orientation leader, and the Student Government President assisted his entering into campus life. "I just think their openness and encouragement just helped a lot." Why did he become involved? C's response was typical:

Mostly to fit in and to feel like I was a part of what was going on. I wanted to feel like I was making a difference for others or someone could look to me and say that they are jealous of me because I know so many people or do so many activities. Plus, I wanted to establish some connections and resources. If I had certain problems or needed information, I would have someone that could help or guide me in the right direction. I would have the right contacts.

C thought that his desire to be involved, interaction skills, dedication, and willingness to participate as an active member were essential to his initial involvement. He stayed involved because "I found it was to my benefit, and it was something I enjoyed participating in." C's own experience had been enhanced by emotional support. "I think having a mentor on campus has helped a lot, too. You need somebody to talk to like faculty or even a peer that has been around on campus for awhile. That has been very helpful. They have been very encouraging to students to get involved and to stay involved."

Through his out-of-class experience with Student Government, cheerleading, and the Student Nurses Association, C had gained skills and confidence. "I know how to use the computer and word processor along with phone communications. Now, it doesn't bother me because I was a little nervous about talking to important people. Through that, I gained that comfortable feeling when I talked to important people." In speaking of the profound moments in his extracurricular experiences, C said that the Student Government helped him learn of other clubs and campus resources. He also stated, "The thing that sticks out in all of my jobs is that I was there to serve other students. I think that has been most important."

Student C believed that it is simpler for resident students to join into activities.

I have noticed that a lot of commuters need to work or have other responsibilities other than school. . . . either that or the fact that distance plays a large part. A lot of people travel from up north or far away. I notice that a lot of commuter students hang out in Brown Concourse. That is good when they bring events up there. That involves the

commuter students a little more. Having events take place in commuter areas helps a lot.

C also thought that commuting students should be shown the benefits of involvement and be persuaded to join up:

Well, I am glad that I got involved. It has enriched my college experience tremendously. If it is possible for other college students to get involved, I would suggest to them to get involved in any type of capacity. . . . They should just participate in a sporting event or meet new people. They should try joining a club. . . . Tell them maybe how they can feel more a part of the school. Tell them that it is not a place where they go to learn, but a place where they can be involved and make a difference for someone else. I would also have to say that they would have to choose what suits them. When I was first trying to get involved, I looked into a few different things. I tried RHA [Residence Hall Association] and attended a Program Board meeting, but I was lost in that. I just kept trying and attending different events, even though it may have been only once just to see if I liked it. I just kept trying to find something that suited me. . . . You will be able to look back on your college career and say you made a difference. It will keep you from having regrets.

Student D

Student D transferred to SVSU from Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek, Michigan, after one year. She was a junior at the time of this study and lived with her sister north of the university in Bay City. D was majoring in Spanish and secondary education. Her affiliation with modern languages had led her to close contact with the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program. D said her grade point average was between 2.5 and 2.9 and that she received financial aid based on merit and need. D also held a work-study position in the university's personnel office, where she worked 11 to 19 hours each week.

D's brother and sister had graduated from college. She was a White/Caucasian student who depicted her interaction in classroom discussions as

fairly frequent. Her high school participation included club work and athletics. At the time of the study, D drove her own vehicle.

D was a member of Alpha Mu Gamma, a honor society for foreign-language students. She had been the president of the Commuter Club and was currently a Student Government Senator. D had also volunteered for the Project Pride program offered by the Saginaw Public Schools, had been a member of the Student Government's International Committee, had assisted with the Spring Fling and a Lock-In, and had emceed the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program's annual banquet.

New student orientation and a friend had been instrumental in D's initial awareness of campus events. D became involved for a "feeling of camaraderie or a connecting with my fellow classmates." She thought that her parents had supported her involvement: "My parents are very involved in the church and with community organizations. They think it is very important to give time to different types of events, activities and organizations." Also, the Director of Bilingual Education had encouraged her involvement:

She is always encouraging me to get involved and to go to different activities. She was the happiest person when I became a Senator on the Student Government. Since I don't have a lot of contact with my mother and my father, that really meant a lot when someone reacted the way your parents would.

D thought of herself as "outgoing and fun." She believed that these qualities, along with good communication skills, led to her involvement. She also had a desire to make her college experience a memorable one and believed that involvement was critical to this goal. Upon becoming involved, D decided to

keep at it because "I wanted to meet new and more people. These people had different ideas and different opinions. It is neat to hear different suggestions."

Important events in D's involvement had been her work with Project Pride, membership on the International Student Committee, and completing a task for Student Government that no one else wanted. Project Pride was significant because it "relates to my major and is very helpful. It gives me insight for my career." The International Student Committee assisted D in learning about various cultures, and completing the task gave her a sense of confidence.

Although D's involvement had been limited by study, work schedules, and visiting her family some weekends, the unexpected gain of involvement for D was attaining an understanding of various viewpoints and lifestyles. She believed that SVSU did encourage involvement. "I think SVSU does everything possible that it can to get students more involved. I think students don't want to get involved. Students just stay in groups and don't break out of them. I honestly think we do what we can." She mentioned recreational activities, better use of the Ryder Center's health and fitness facilities, and faculty support when asked about increasing student and commuter involvement. Of faculty involvement she said, "I think the professors could make the students more aware. . . . I do not think I have ever heard a teacher saying something about an on-campus activity. I have seen some of the administrators at a lot of these events, but I have yet to see a lot of faculty at these events."

Student E

Student E was a junior majoring in computer information systems and business management. He attended SVSU full time and held an on-campus work-study position in the microcomputer laboratory, at which he worked 11 to 19 hours per week. None of E's immediately family members had graduated from college, and he had not been involved in high school activities. E's grade point average was between a 2.5 and a 2.9. He was supported financially through assistance based on merit and need. He categorized himself as White/Caucasian. E drove his own vehicle.

E had recently been elected to the position of Vice-President of SVSU's Student Government. He also held membership in Delta Sigma Pi, a fraternity for business majors, the College Republicans, and the Commuter's Club. He also had been a member of the university's Wargames Club. E had chaired the Student Government's tuition, library, computer, and Spring Fling committees. He had volunteered for the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts, the Family Holiday Party, and Fish Tales, a summer camp for children with physical disabilities. Being a student with a disability himself, E planned to teach at a summer camp. He said, "When I was younger, my parents never stopped me from doing anything. Sometimes, I feel that parents are afraid because they don't know. If they see someone who has done it, it gives a little bit more hope. That is why I do all that volunteer stuff."

E described himself as "a very determined person, and I keep my eyes focused on my goals. . . . I am always active. I like to stay moving. I don't like

to stay in the same spot all night long. It bugs me. Plus, I get bored really easy."

He believed that his impatience, assertiveness, confidence, and skill in dealing with others had led to his involvement. He explained remaining involved in this fashion:

I would say it kept me busy. It led to many different avenues. . . . I don't get bored with myself. My friends have helped. When I started to get involved, I met several interesting people, and you just get really used to them. . . . They do many different things. You have a group of people doing many different things, you are never bored with them. There are always exciting times with them.

A friend informed E of the Association for Computer Machinery when E was a second-semester freshman. Shortly thereafter, he attended a Student Government meeting and had since become a Senator. He did not consider attending college events his first semester because

I was here because I was getting familiar with the campus, and I was kind of scared to get to know people. I didn't know anyone here. The second semester, I started to hang around the same crowd of people; I started to think that I wanted to get involved and followed that crowd of people. What they did, I did. Plus, my teachers encouraged us to attend the Computer Club meeting.

A number of people had inspired E's involvement. His orientation leader, instructors, club advisers, friends, parents, and grandmother all supported his activity. E said, "My dad has stressed becoming involved a lot because in high school I should have been more involved. . . . He wants me to get involved because from this point on after it just shows how much I am willing to put forth into an organization." When asked about a mentor or a significant adult role model, E said:

This would have to be my grandma. She has taught me how to give and learn from others. She would go out of her way to help someone. She helps me pay for college so I can spend time learning and getting involved. She says that you are not going to learn by sitting in front of a television.

E also credited the State of Michigan for playing a part in his involvement. He was a student with a disability and believed:

The State of Michigan has encouraged me and helped me get involved on campus. They provided me with a car. They have paid for fees and books. They encouraged me to get involved. The idea is that if they could pay for school, they won't have to support me for the rest of my life.

For E, campus life had led to "another life and another group of friends who I could study with and who would understand that when Friday night came it wasn't always party night." He was also looking for "job leads . . . new avenues and new opportunities." E had gained an appreciation of politics and of other people. He said:

I realized through Student Government that many cultures and people have many different thoughts and opinions on how to handle a situation. You learn to listen to other people and what they have to say. In my honest opinion, college is not a place of learning exactly to teach you like how to count one through ten. The main idea that you should get through college is how to communicate your ideas to other people and how to associate with other people. In that sense, it has helped me out. . . . When they had the gay couple come out and talk, I didn't actually attend, but I did notice that a lot of people got involved even if they didn't attend, but they talked about it. . . . If they didn't attend they realized that there are other kinds of people out there. They do have feelings. . . . Events like that really give a good atmosphere because college is about learning about different kinds of people. We sure did learn a lot that week.

When asked about significant occurrences in his extracurricular involvement, E frequently alluded to Student Government

. . . because lately all my work is going into it. . . . You have a little bit more power and authority. . . . It is Student Government's job to represent

students. . . . Also, being the Student Government Vice-President. . . . Being a Vice-President and managing 12 Senators gives me a lot of experience in managing people.

He also mentioned Student Government's Library and Computer committees and the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM). "I guess keeping on with the ACM Club is more meaningful because my friend . . . was President before me. . . . He is a good friend of mine and has taught me a lot."

E said that commuters could be influenced to become active on campus through a large and relaxing study hall with food, beverages, and long hours of service.

They would have to have someplace where the commuters can call their spot. It sounds kind of weird because people don't like to separate the dorm students from the commuters. . . . We don't have anywhere besides Brown Concourse. A lot of times, it is a hallway and you are walking and in the middle of everything. It is not really a place to go.

Although SVSU supports campus involvement, E thought that club advisers and encouragement were of utmost importance.

Knowing that an adviser to a club is one of the instructors, it makes it easier for a student to ask for advice. . . . A lot of times, you feel more comfortable going to them to talk than going somewhere else on campus to get help, and you do not know who they are. The ones that keep you involved are the ones who know who you are. _____ is our adviser, and he keeps us in line. We feel comfortable going to him before going to anyone else. Having that special relationship keeps you more involved than anything."

Although each of these incentives was vital, when E reflected on his own activity he said, "It mostly came from the heart, and I wanted to do it myself. It really does need to come from within."

Student F

Student F was a junior, majoring in communication and theater. He attended SVSU full time, held a grade point average in the 3.0 to 3.4 range, and typically did not work during the fall and winter semesters. F received financial aid through loans and assistance programs based on merit and need. Both of F's parents had graduated from college. He had taken part in high school theatrical performances and described his involvement in college classes as fairly frequent.

F drove his own car from Saginaw, from a location less than 20 minutes from the university. He was White/Caucasian and had attended SVSU for four years or seven semesters. F had been the sound designer for the following seven major productions sponsored by the Department of Communication and Theatre: Blithe Spirit, The Hobbit, Pizza Man, Newcomer, Graceland, Chicks, and Beauty and the Beast. He was also a member of the Alliance for the Performing Arts, a writer for SVSU's student newspaper, the Valley Vanguard, and sound technician for the university's Talent Show.

F did not see his involvement as being related to his personal characteristics, nor did he consider himself to be socially oriented.

I consider my personality to be in the process of changing. . . . I have always been reserved and conservative. . . . I am starting to be more outgoing, artistic and outspoken. I started to get involved to break out of my shell, just to get involved, and my changing personality has helped me to get involved with things.

F also credited his friends with his involvement. He attended his first audition because he "was dragged by some friends" and to "get an idea of what the

actors and actresses would be like and to meet the director." F was also hoping to obtain more experience and "freedom from boredom," and to spend time with people of similar interests. F called campus participation, especially work in the theater and on the newspaper, his "favorite thing to do."

F maintained his involvement because:

I made friends with the people that were also involved, like with the theater and the newspaper. . . . It is something to make you feel good about yourself. . . . It is the people mainly. I happened to find people that I shared interests with. Especially with the theater, we all spoke the same language and understood various aspects without having to explain it to each other.

Of his involvement, F said:

It is helping me because I'm terminally shy or used to be. My involvement with the newspaper has helped me see that I have some writing talent where I thought I never did. Being involved with these things is helping me see the person I am better. Plus, it is fun.

For other students, F thought that campus involvement "keeps them off of the streets. It gives them a sense of unity with the school so that people are involved with other things than just going to classes or hanging out and studying in the library. It gives the campus life."

Club members, club advisers, staff members, and other students had influenced F's involvement. His mother also had helped, as had his friends.

My mom encourages me to be everything I can be. When I get involved with something, my mom is always there for me. . . . Various friends from over the years have helped me get involved. These people are the kind that keep pushing you toward involvement. They are real helpful. I have my friend, _____, to thank. It has snowballed from there.

When asked about events of most influence, F referred to the newspaper most frequently.

I would say the newspaper because it was my chance to be heard, and I was able to voice my opinions. . . . I think it helped me realize some of the other talents that I have. Before I started working on the newspaper, I didn't think I could write. I used to dislike writing and poetry. I am getting into that now. . . . I learned from working on the newspaper the journalistic responsibility. Basically, I learned how not to set yourself up for a [libelous] article.

F also mentioned his work with the theater department as being "a lot of hard work, but it is a lot of fun." Another significant event for F was the Talent Show. "I had a lot of fun on the Talent Show," he said.

To assist commuting students in extracurricular endeavors, F suggested offering more activities, more often, and at more convenient times. He also would like to see more Greek organizations and a radio station. Advertising, he thought, should be bolder, and programs and services must be operated at times accessible to commuting students. F asserted:

The best way to keep students involved is to encourage the clubs and keep them moving along. Like with the _____, I don't think we met all this semester. . . . I was interested in getting back into it when I came back this semester, and it just kind of died out. The clubs in general need support from the faculty and the administration, both financially and otherwise. They have to show that there is more out here than just going to class and then going home, especially for the commuters that drive an hour and a half to get here.

F also believed that:

They need to stop treating commuters as outsiders. I know that it is not intentional, but sometimes I am treated as an outsider. There are certain things that are considered to be for the resident students. I think the main thing is to start making commuter students belong. Then they will want to do things and become involved. . . . When dealing with students and especially commuter students, as a whole, students can be . . . ostracized, although inadvertently, by the faculty and the administration. . . . If they focus on trying to become a community and aim for that goal, more students will become involved.

Student G

Student G lived in Merrill, Michigan, which was 41 minutes or more from the university. G drove his own car from that location. He was a junior biology major who attended SVSU and worked 20 to 29 hours per week. G had attended SVSU for three years or eight terms and typically worked one job in the fall and winter semesters. His father had attended college, but no one in his immediate family had graduated from college. G was of White/Caucasian descent.

G had been very active in extracurricular activities in high school. He had participated in clubs, performing groups, student publications, and off-campus volunteer commitments. G's educational expenses were offset by a merit scholarship. He held a 3.5 to 4.0 grade point average and claimed that his classroom participation was very frequent.

G had been a member of SVSU's Science Club for three years and had been the club's treasurer for one year. He had attended International Club meetings and was chairperson of the Young Democrats. G also sat on the university's Environment Committee as a student representative and had assisted with alumni fund-raising telephone campaigns. In his home community, G taught catechism classes and had traveled to various locations to assist with Hugh O'Brien leadership-training programs for high school students.

When asked about personal characteristics that might have led to his involvement, G said:

Absolute intolerance of imperfection. . . . I tend to jump right in there and do it [the job] myself. I get bored very easily. I am very easily distracted. I do as much as I can to keep myself busy and find a variety of things to

do. I find that it relieves stress. . . . Most of the people that I know that are there and don't do anything are the ones that simply don't care. They don't seem to care about keeping their grades up or getting involved. I don't like the idea of someone else leading me. It doesn't seem like anyone else's responsibility but my own.

G learned of the opportunities of college life in high school and again at new-student orientation. He believed that he began considering extracurricular involvement in the first two months of his freshman year at SVSU. He said:

I used to sit down in the student lounge all the time and was really bored and lonely because I didn't know anyone down there. I figured I should probably find something to do. . . . My family was very pushy in telling me to quit sitting in the student lounge if I was bored and to go find something to do. My catechism class that I was teaching also said to try and find something else to do. . . . Being a science major, I thought it [the Science Club] would be a good start and a good club to get started in. I think it was at the Card's party when I found out when the first meeting was.

Of extracurricular involvement, G said:

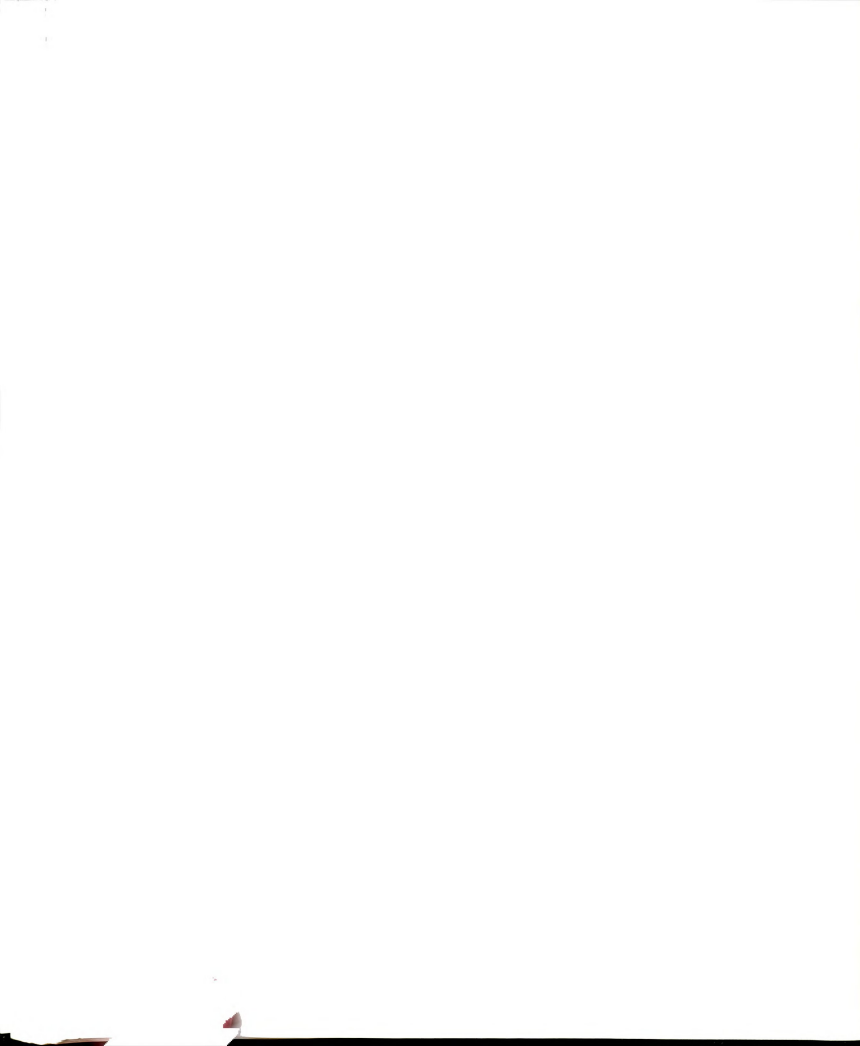
I always like to be a part of the system and to be involved. It is very motivating to me because school in and of itself is not enough to keep me going. I have always wanted more. I really like working with people and being exposed to different ideas. . . . In the Science Club, we do a lot of helping each other, for one thing, especially with classes and studying. It is very nice to have a group of people that you can sit down with and have a stimulating scientific discussion with. You actually know what they are talking about. Whenever you get involved, you kind of have the effect of getting known by the teachers and the staff. There are a lot of benefits with being one of them as a player or an insider. Being able to walk up to the teachers and talk to them or get information from them is very helpful. We have easier access to things, I guess, by being involved. . . . It [involvement] is very beneficial because it acts as a stress reliever from classes and for me commuting ten hours a week. Commuting is a terrible and horrible thing. Knowing that I have a group of people that I can sit down with and talk to, and I know where they are going to be. I know that I am going to be active and get involved in something, [and that] makes commuting not that bad.

G's family, high school and college friends, fellow club members, club advisers, and instructors encouraged his involvement. G also mentioned the

support of the university staff. "They have always had good involvement with our club. Mr. _____, who is the vice-president, looked into recycling details for us. He was very encouraging and offered us money to help find possible solutions." G was one of the few students interviewed who spoke of an off-campus supervisor as supportive of his involvement. "My boss at Dow likes to listen to what I am doing. He gives me time off to pursue some of my projects."

In responding to specific reasons for his involvement, G stated that he wanted to be in an organization affiliated with his major because "it helps you see what kind of field it is and the opportunities that go with it. You can't get this in a classroom. We are going to a real Science Fair." Meeting people was important to G because "as a commuter, it is very hard to meet people without being involved." Finally, when asked if he had become involved to help build a résumé, G answered, "I don't get involved to strengthen my résumé. If you don't do it for yourself, then you shouldn't do it. You shouldn't be a product of your résumé; your résumé should be a product of you."

G ran for the position of treasurer of the Science Club because "I figured that it was one of my two favorite positions. My other favorite is president. I collect coins, and I enjoy playing with money. I just couldn't jump right into being president." He maintained involvement for these reasons: "When I become involved, I normally end up as an officer. It is fun. I like and enjoy it. Officers and advisers . . . come to me for help or advice because they know that I will help them."



G had derived a great deal of pride and enjoyment from his involvement both on and off campus. Of his experience, he said:

There are three off-campus ones that are more meaningful to me. I have always been very religious. That has helped. Going into ecology as a major, the environment movement has always had a nice calling. With HOBY [Hugh O'Brien seminars] is one of the most special things that has happened in my lifetime. The largest impact in my life would be the Science Club because it takes up most of my time, and most of my friends are related to the Science Club or the Science Department. . . . I guess the year that I was an officer of the Science Club was far more fun and interesting to me than it has been this year because I was not an officer. Even though we had problems, the four of us that were officers are still very close friends. I really enjoyed working with them. Our officer's trip to San Francisco was probably one of my favorite highlights. Our Science Club was nationally recognized. . . . I guess it is always an honor to be allowed to be an officer and to get involved. To be nominated to be on the committee with Vice-President _____ is an honor.

Several campus publications, including flyers and banners, assisted in G's awareness of campus programs and projects. When asked about posted notices, G replied, "This is where I see what is going on. If you don't read them, you will miss a lot and lose out. It is good for me to know that we have an active campus." G had not seen a lot in the community newspaper about the activities at SVSU, but he did rely on the radio and the campus paper for information.

I hear advertisements about our campus on the radio. I hear about a play or the Boat Show. I think it is effective in getting the word out. . . . [The school newspaper] may not be the best, but I think it is nice because you get a little club recognition and find out what is going on with other clubs and around campus.

In speaking of increasing commuter spirit and involvement, G said:

I guess time is a very big thing. The times that meetings are held are sometimes inconvenient. I think it would be very nice if Student Life would put up a big bulletin board and list different clubs and meeting times. They could also list the contact person. . . . One of the things that I have found very helpful is the fact that the Science Department has a

refrigerator and a microwave. They don't mind if we use them. It is like a treat for our Science Club to use them. Things like that are very useful. It is nice to have someplace to store your food if you are going to be here all day. . . . I have learned to schedule things and how to plan things around things--not only for commuting, but for the fact that I work at Dow. This may be something that they could help the freshmen with at freshman orientation.

Student H

Student H had transferred to SVSU from nearby Delta College two years before this study took place. She lived fewer than 20 minutes from the university, in Bay City. H had spent two years or four terms at Delta and had spent exactly that amount of time at SVSU, as well. She was a senior, majoring in marketing. Her full-time student status was partially supported with a merit scholarship. H worked two jobs for a total of 20 to 29 hours a week and said, "I work a lot, but I don't make a whole lot of money. One is a volunteer job for experience."

H was from a White/Caucasian family in which some members had attended college; none had graduated. She had been a part of athletic activities, clubs, and community service events during her high school years. She had her own vehicle and maintained a 3.0 to 3.4 grade point average. In this student's opinion, her own class participation was fairly frequent.

At Delta College, H had been a member of Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society for students at two-year colleges, and played on an intramural volleyball team. The honor society "depended upon your grade point average. . . . It was not really a club, but they did hold regular meetings. They announced the meetings, plus they would always send a letter to my house making me aware

of the meeting." Her team had begun playing volleyball because "when I was in my volleyball class, the instructor had mentioned intramurals to a few friends of mine and myself." H had become involved at Delta because "it was something to do, I guess."

At SVSU, H had become involved in the Polish Club. She also volunteered for the church's festival picnic each year. Many members of H's home community had backed her participation. She expressed this throughout her interviews:

For the Polish Club, we had a Christmas celebration. There was a lot of people from my neighborhood and church. It was nice to see everybody in a different setting. I was a little nervous speaking in Polish, but it was nice. . . . We [H and her friend] decided to take the Polish class together. . . . My mom wanted me to take the Polish class, which got me involved with the Polish Club. . . . One of my teachers in high school goes to the Polish masses at St. Stan's, where I go to church. He encouraged me to take the Polish class. He thought it would be really neat. . . . Both of my parents encouraged me. My mom is Polish and my dad is not. His dad is from Wales. My grandfather is always sending stuff with Welsh written on it. My family thinks it is neat that I'm involved with my cultural heritage. . . . My uncle has helped me because he speaks Polish. Also, my friend's mother because her parents are from Poland. She also speaks Polish.

H's classmates also had been supportive of her involvement. "A guy in the Polish Club was in one of my management classes. The vice-president position was open, and he thought that someone young and on campus should be the vice-president. He nominated me, and no one ran against me. I got it."

H joined the Polish Club for cultural enrichment and knowledge and because she had hoped to study in Poland. She had first become aware of SVSU's Polish class offerings by reading a poster on a bulletin board. "There was a big poster in Brown [Hall] that was right outside of one of my classrooms,

and it had the University of Poznan. I knew that was in a Polish poem, so I read it. I checked into it and found out that we offered Polish classes and signed up." Mailings from the Polish Club kept her informed of and interested in the club. "I was here almost a year before I joined the Polish Club.

H said that she had "a tendency to take charge of things." That and another personal characteristic had led to her campus involvement. "I hate not doing anything. I always have to be doing something because I don't like to sit." When she compared herself to others, she said, "This is going to sound rude, but a lot of students are lazy. Anything that they have to go out of their way for, they don't get involved with. . . . A lot of students are not willing to give anything of themselves." The reasons that H stayed involved follow:

It was fun. It gave me something to do. I wanted to make new friends and find out stuff about other people. Especially with the Polish Club, the age ranges were so different. There were people that were younger than me. Dr. _____ is the adviser and is older. You hear a lot of stories and experiences.

H remembered the Polish Club's Christmas celebration and the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts to have had greatest significance for her. She noted:

Probably the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts because I paint and sculpt. You get good ideas on all the different things to do. . . . Plus, I have friends who are art students out here, and I look at their work. . . . Probably when I spoke at the Christmas celebration. That was nerve wracking. There was a lot of people from my church there. They had seen me at masses that are done in Polish, but I don't think they realized that I knew Polish. It was neat. It made me feel like I was a part of something.

H's collegiate extracurricular activity had been limited to the one organization by time, work, class, and studies. Her comments about her own involvement and that of other commuting students reflected her time constraints:

The only thing I really attended was the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts. I draw and sculpt myself. It was very neat to be around all the art. I work two jobs, so I don't have much time to be out here. . . . Most of them [commuting students] work and live at home. It is hard to find time with work and go to school. Usually, you have to do homework and research. With the Polish Club, I don't think we have met since October or November. It is one of the easiest clubs to join. . . . I am too busy to look out for things. I am not around that much. If I had a half an hour or an hour break, I would stay here so I would have more time to notice more. It is either [that I have] one class a day or a three-hour break. I usually go home or to work.

The challenge of involvement, and particularly commuter involvement, was "a tough one" for H. In her response, she again brought up the issue of time. "A lot of students that are not involved are married and have four kids plus working full time. You don't want to spread yourself too thin, especially if you have a family." To increase involvement, H recommended: "Do things that are interesting within the club or organization. If you don't do anything, it tends to get boring and you feel like you are wasting your time. Something as simple as a little field trip might make you want to stick around and do it again."

Student I

Student I was also a senior transfer student from Delta College. She was an elementary education and English major, with a grade point average in the 3.5 to 4.0 range. She maintained a merit scholarship and also received assistance based on need. Student I attended SVSU full time, lived fewer than 20 minutes

from the university, and worked off campus 20 to 29 hours a week. She had her own car and believed her participation in class to be fairly frequent.

Student I attended Delta College, outside of Bay City, Michigan, for two years and four terms. She had completed two years and five terms at SVSU. I's father had graduated from college. She had been involved in athletics, student organizations, and performing groups in high school. At Delta College, she had founded the Environment Committee and had been a member of Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society for community college students. She was presently in the SVSU Polish Club and the Honors Program. I was considering membership in the English Club, the Science Club, and Art-icipators, a group that assists the Office of Student Life with its performing arts series.

Student I did not get involved until her second semester at Delta. "I don't think my first semester I really did because I wasn't used to college yet. I think that it was when I got used to everything around me, and I started feeling comfortable. That is when I started to look for something to do." She had limited her participation in clubs at SVSU because "I knew I wanted to join all of them, but I knew I would get in over my head. I am in the Polish Club; that is something I really, really wanted to do. I wanted to be a part of it." Her conversation also reflected regret that she could not be more active on campus; she mentioned:

Sometimes I don't really feel like I am a part of the community or close to the students. It seems like I just come to my classes and leave. The people who live here are closer to the campus. I don't really know any of the dorm students. It is just like I am one of those people who just comes and goes.

Student I had joined up with groups "to be around people who have the same interest as me and to gain more knowledge." The benefits of the extracurriculum had been:

getting to know other people and becoming friends with people I would not probably run into if I wouldn't have become involved with the group. I can see how with the English [Club], if I join, if I would say something about my writing, people probably wouldn't laugh or think I am crazy for what I wanted to write. I think we are all going through the same thing. I can see how that would be beneficial.

Of personal characteristics that may have influenced her involvement, Student I said:

I can talk to people of all ages and am very outgoing. . . . I am friendly and understanding. I am a real good listener and I can work with people. I don't feel intimidated around people, and I can work with other people and their opinions. I don't feel that my ideas are less. . . . I don't like just going to school. I don't feel like I am using my potential if I am not doing more things in school than just work.

She had remained active in extracurricular activities because "I got to know the people in the group. I liked the people in the group and liked being with them. I felt that I had something to offer them."

When asked about those people who influenced her involvement, Student I mentioned four faculty members. Their words of support are shown here:

I had a tutoring and writing class with Dr. _____. I had the opportunity and was chosen to present a paper at the Michigan Council for Teachers of English in Lansing. That made me want to get more involved. . . . With the Polish Club, we went to an ethnic Polish dance festival. That is where I got involved with my ethnic heritage. This past week, I called the Polish Club at the University of Michigan, and one of these days we will join our groups and have meetings. Dr. _____ was happy that I did that. . . . Dr. _____ took some of my poems and was going to put them in the Cardinal Sins pamphlet.

Student I's father had also been reassuring of her out-of-class projects. "My dad will always ask how I am doing and gives me advice to be as active as I can be. He tells me to take advantage of all the opportunities I can.

Her membership in the Polish Club had been most significant to I. She revealed:

With the Polish Club, I think it is just because everyone there has the same kind of background. We get together as friends and talk about the things that we have in common . . . about the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa. They are more organized and structured, but I really didn't feel a connection for some reason. . . . With the Polish Club, I enjoy being with the people. I had a purpose to be there. I had felt connected to them and to the group."

She also expressed pride in her role in Delta College's Environment Day:

The activity that I was really excited about was the Environment Day that we put on. We funded it and invited other people from different organizations. It took up the whole hallway. I played a big role in that. . . . I think that one was really fun and significant because I realized to myself that I helped bring all these people here.

Student I had noticed event listings and direct-mail pieces. However, media announcements had not caught her attention. She looked for a piece that had been printed in the student newspaper a year before. "I was wondering if they would list the events, activities, and organizations like they did last year. It is really when I got interested. There were two pages dedicated to the activities."

To make involvement more appealing, Student I suggested, "By somehow making groups seem personal to them. Let them see how it can benefit them or they can benefit the group. . . . You should set a time where everyone can meet socially and not just as a meeting. . . . You need a relaxed and friendly atmosphere." Along with creating a sense of community, Student I

recommended convenience. "If they can't make it to an event, let them somehow know that they can participate. . . . They could do work at home by making phone calls. They could send them newsletters about the event. They could send them minutes of the meeting if they can't make it."

Finally, Student I communicated a sense of accomplishment and a desire to do more.

After the first interview when I looked back over everything that I have done, I was proud of what I have done already. For some reason, I felt the urge that I could be doing more after I looked at it on paper. It made me realize that even though I do commute and work, I somehow made the time to get involved and keep the interests that I have. I will make the time.

Student J

Student J hailed from Saginaw and lived fewer than 20 minutes from the university. She was a senior accounting major who described her class participation as fairly frequent. J held a grade point average in the 3.0 to 3.4 range. She worked two jobs--one on campus and one off campus--for a total of 20 to 29 hours each week. J drove her own automobile.

J had attended SVSU for four years or eight terms. Her financial aid package included a merit scholarship, loans, and a work-study job. Although her mother had taken college classes, none of J's immediate family members had graduated from college. J was of Hispanic descent.

J's high school activities had included clubs, sports, and off-campus volunteering commitments. At SVSU, she had been a member and treasurer of the Hispanic Student Association. She had been an employee, tour guide, and

mentor for the Office of Minority Services. She also had served as a guide for the "Adopt A School" and "Should I Be Thinking of College Now?" programs for local elementary and high school students.

In explaining the qualities that may have led to her involvement, J said:

I have an interest to be involved. I like to be active and not just sit at home and do nothing. I like to network with others. I get bored by myself. . . . I am more outgoing and aggressive than some other students. I am not afraid to speak up. I am not afraid to ask questions. . . . Sometimes I think that I am a little bit more mature than some of the students that we have at our college.

J continued with extracurricular involvement because she enjoyed being around others with similar interests. "Another reason was because of the networking. There was a lot of people that I met that could help me out in the long run. I thought that I might as well stay with it because it would only help me out."

J found out about the college extracurriculum at orientation and again

when I started working with _____ in one of the offices here; I got to meet a lot of new people. You find out where they were and what they do. Then, you decide whether you want to be involved or not. I am really active in the Hispanic Student Association [HSA], and I learned about that through the president because he was very outgoing.

J became involved at SVSU in the second semester of her freshman year. "I really wanted to do good in my first semester. I think everybody does. I didn't really think about joining any clubs or anything until the second semester." She believed that the university encouraged involvement through people and through publications like Student Happenings--a weekly listing of events, the Valley Vanguard--the student newspaper, and KIOSK--a direct-mail newsletter.

J had attained the new friends and contacts she had hoped to when she first became involved at the university. Her extracurricular participation also had led to acquaintance with and access to some administrators.

Like with HSA, we wanted to go to a conference and needed a little bit more extra money. I knew Dean _____ fairly well and so did _____. I think it made it easier for us to ask him for the money, and he did give us the money. He knew what we stood for. I guess it was a little favoritism. I got to know Dr. _____, and we got to be pretty good friends. There was a job opening, and he informed me about it right away. It helped me get the job I have today. I have the opportunity to know important people.

She ran for an office within the Hispanic Student Association because:

For one thing, they did not have anyone running for the position. I thought I would benefit the club more if I was in an officer's position instead of just being a member. It was a good experience for me, and it will look good on my résumé. I was one of the most active and most visible members. . . . There was not a lot of commitment and involvement from the other members.

In J's case, on-campus employment had increased her involvement as she had been required to attend several campus events. She had found class assignments and family obligations to be limiting as she frequently cared for her siblings.

My parents are divorced, and I have younger brothers and sisters and live with my mom. A lot of times she needs help taking them places or if they had to get to practice. She could not take them, so I had to. There were a lot of times where things would conflict if I wanted to go to something. My family came first.

J found events related to the Hispanic Student Association or the Office of Minority Services to be those that were most meaningful in her extracurricular experience.

I would say the Hispanic Student Association for me because I am Hispanic, and it dealt with a lot of things and activities that I was interested

in. The two programs that I was a guide for were meaningful to me. Those were meaningful because I was an elementary education major at the time, and it dealt with young kids. It was good for me to be with the younger kids. . . . When we built the float for the Cinco de Mayo parade, that was pretty significant. That did show the work that we had done with other people. I was on the float. Another significant [thing] for me was being a tour guide. . . . One of the responsibilities as a treasurer is that you are responsible for all the money in the account. You write all checks, and just being responsible for all that money is a big job. That was significant for me. When you are a tour guide, you are basically responsible for the kids when they are out here. That was significant also. Even though they are only out here for one day, you do make an impression on them.

Of commuting students, J said:

A lot of students feel that nobody cares about them out here. That is why they just come to class and go home. They don't feel that anybody really cares whether they attend events or not. I wish more people would attend events. That way they would meet some people and wouldn't feel so left out. They would feel like hanging around after class instead of going straight to your car and leave. I know I like to stay here. Sometimes, I will just come out here on days that I don't have class just to sit in the office or lounge to talk to people.

To improve the activity level of commuting students, J suggested:

More events like the picnic put on by Student Government. . . . A lot of events are held over at the Doan Center. . . . It is such a long walk. . . . I think that the Doan Center is mainly for dorm students. . . . The only reason that I go over there is if I am here all day and working, I will go over to lunch.

'To keep people involved, J recommended that "The activities have to be interesting to the students once they come and attend them. . . . If they liked it, they will go back. It basically has to be meaningful so that they will remember it."

She also thought that:

There needs to be more open forums. I know that the things that I tell you once you write your dissertation, the administrators are going to say that the students need this and that. I think that is what they need to see. They need better communication with the students.

Student K

This commuting student was from Birch Run, Michigan, which is about one-half hour south of the university. Student K was a senior, majoring in criminal justice; she attended the university full time and worked on campus 10 to 19 hours each week. In addition to her work-study employment, K had received a merit scholarship. She had a 2.5 to 2.9 grade point average, her own car, and a mother who had graduated from college. K had attended SVSU for three years or eight terms. She classified herself as Hispanic.

K had been kept quite busy in high school with out-of-class projects. Her high school involvement included club work, performances, and volunteering in her home community. K had been a member and vice-president of the Hispanic Student Association. She also had been an orientation leader and a staff member in the Office of Minority Services. She had aided that office as a counselor and/or volunteer for the "Adopt-a-School," "Mr. Rogers," King-Chavez-Parks, and "Should I Be Thinking of College Now?" programs. K also had served as a volunteer for the university's Club Fair and had been a tour guide for the Bilingual-Bicultural Program and for Thumb Day, a day on which high school students from Michigan's thumb area visit the university.

"I like to be around people and meet people" is what K said when asked about personal qualities that might have influenced her involvement. She explained:

I like to keep my days filled, and in order to do that I need to be involved with things. I like to have fun because I have a sense of humor. . . . I am concerned about my future and my career. Being involved looks good

and gives you the opportunity to meet people. . . . I am easygoing, so that if something goes wrong, I just figure out a way to fix it. . . . I get along with most anybody.

Her involvement continued because "It was fun. When I was not involved, I was really lonely. . . . I felt out of place. It opened a lot of doors, and I figured it could open a lot more."

K had become aware of and involved in activities in the first semester of her sophomore year. At that time, she became employed in the Office of Minority Services "by hearing them talk about different events in the office. I also noticed a lot of events posted on bulletin boards on campus. . . . Part of my job as a mentor is to let student mentees know what is going on around campus. I have to get them involved in different types of activities." Her first experience in attending events was required as a part of her office responsibilities. Regarding that initial incident, she said, "I felt like I didn't want to be there. It was like I was more or less forced to go." Her opinion changed:

When I started working at Minority Services, I met more kinds of people. At that point, I wanted to attend these activities on my own. It wasn't like I was forced to go. You start to feel comfortable and welcome. They are all pretty much fun, and I usually have a good time.

The Minority Services staff, K's mother, and a past president of the Hispanic Student Association (HSA) had been instrumental in K's involvement. Her on-campus position "helped me because not only do I learn about stuff that is going on, but if I really want to go, my boss will let me go. He likes to see us get involved." Her mother "feels that it is good for me to get involved with school

and with other people." The HSA president was "the one that really got me involved and was pushing me to be involved in different types of activities."

On the other hand, K's activity level had been limited by time, travel, money, transportation, class assignments, and family obligations. Her comments follow:

With work, school and taking care of my family, it is really hard sometimes to get involved. Either my father is in the hospital or in therapy. Now, time has been really limited for me. . . . This [study schedule] really limits my involvement. If there is an exam or something the next day, I won't come here to the event. Class comes first. . . . My family also comes first. There is a lot going on in my family.

High school friends also detracted from K's involvement. "They probably limit my involvement because most of them didn't go to college. They would rather have me hang out with them than to drive all the way to school to attend an activity."

K mentioned study-skills workshops and lectures on different cultures as being of value. What she hoped for and what she obtained as a result of campus involvement are reported in these statements:

I wanted to gain better involvement with the school. I was hoping to become more relaxed and get more out of the school than just showing up for class and leave. . . . I found opportunities for different jobs. Attending these activities gave me the courage and confidence and made me try out for an orientation leader. I got the job, also. Another benefit would be the [King-Chavez-Parks] program, and it helps me do a better job of my own job. That has helped me.

Being a leader for new-student orientation had been a valuable experience for K. When asked about significant occasions, she remarked:

I would say orientation because there is so much training put into it. I think of all of the things that I have done, that has benefited me the most. It has really taught me a lot about different students and their fears. It has taught me different ways to approach problems. . . . Most of the stuff that



I have volunteered for was working with minorities. This was the one chance of breaking my security of sticking with minorities and fitting in. It was really different for me to be around nonminorities during my first year of orientation. It was kind of hard in a way.

The Partnership Program administered by the Office of Minority Services also had been of great benefit to K:

I have to plan the tours myself. I am given a budget, and I have to plan the day. To me, that gives me a lot of responsibility, and I learn how to deal with certain things like how to contact people and schedule things. I have to work with the budget money.

According to K, SVSU promoted activity by

putting up friendly signs and bulletin boards. They are always inviting the students to attend different activities and events. The people who represent the activities going on are usually friendly over the phone. People should not be afraid to call for more information. If they show up, they are friendly, and it makes you want to go to another one.

She also found posted notices, lists, the student direct mailings, radio announcements, and the Valley Vanguard to be useful in keeping her informed.

Of mailings, she said, "I always read them, and they are always coming to my house. My mom gets them also. So we have double copies of the information."

With the radio, "there are constant announcements. It is good to hear that there is something going on." The student newspaper was "a big-time assist. I love reading the paper. I think every student should read it. I think every student I know loves reading the paper. My mom makes me take one home so she can read it."

K viewed commuter involvement as somewhat problematic. This attitude came forth in the following statements:

[Encouraging commuting students to become involved] would take a lot of work. Most commuter students just go to school, study, go to their job, and tend to their families. You have to make them want to stay here. I am up here a lot, but I don't have kids like most commuting students do. With my friends who have kids, there is no one to watch these kids while they get involved. . . . As a commuter student, it all depends on transportation. All of my friends who don't have a car barely get to class, let alone get involved in activities. . . . Gas costs money, so if an activity that costs money happens on a day that I am not out here, there is a chance that I won't make it because gas costs too much money for that. . . . They should maybe try different time slots for commuter students. I would like to go to Comedy Night, but they don't start until 10:00 p.m. That is really late for a commuter student. I would have to drive all the way out here, stay for the show, and then drive all the way back home. When I would get home, I am so very tired.

K also believed that offering free refreshments would help in overcoming commuters' apprehensions. "College students are poor students. I think that if there is free food, they will stay around. Make it fun. Make it worth their time to come up here to stay."

K thought that the university might keep students involved by recognizing them. In her words:

Maybe recognize people more, sort of, like send a letter to me or publish their names in the paper more. I know of all the things that I have done, I have only been recognized as an orientation leader. For all the other programs that I have volunteered for, they have never sent me a letter of thanks or anything. I think being recognized makes you appreciate it and makes you want to stay involved.

Information helps too, according to K. She suggested:

Informing them of what is going on. I know last year at the _____ program, I had no idea what was going on. I swore that I would not be involved with it again. This year, they promised me that we would be informed. If you just show up and don't know what is going on, you just feel real stupid and not needed.

In closing, K offered these recommendations: "Take their ideas and get them involved both physically and mentally. . . . I think you should offer more activities, but I know that it is hard for commuter students."

Student L

Student L was a senior, majoring in sociology. She was from Saginaw and lived fewer than 20 minutes from the university. She was of White/Caucasian origin and typically worked two jobs in the fall and winter semesters. One was an on-campus job, and the other was an off-campus position. Her work demanded 20 to 29 hours of her time each week. She had her own car. L received financial assistance based on need in the form of grants, loans, and a work-study position.

L's mother had an associate's degree from the local community college. L, herself, had been active in high school volunteering, sports, and organizations. Currently, she participated in classroom discussions fairly frequently and held a grade point average in the range of 2.5 to 2.9.

L had been a member and treasurer of the International Club. She also had been a member, treasurer, and vice-president of the Science Club and had been a Student Government Senator. L also involved herself in the Distinction in Leadership Award program and had received two gold awards. She had been the chairperson of the Student Government's Multi-Cultural and International Committees and a member of the Bills and Budget Committees. She had served as a volunteer for the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts, Family Festival Day, the Talent Show, and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Commemoration Dinner.

L described herself as "an easygoing person, and I guess I am a goal-oriented person. Once I set a goal, I strive to achieve it. I get along good with others." When asked to measure herself against others who might not be involved, L said, "It is more of a personal thing for me. Instead of thinking it is something to add to your résumé, it is more like a personal enjoyment to me." Friends and personal satisfaction provided the reasons that L had remained involved. "I like to hang out with the people that I have met in the different organizations. It is like a gathering time for us. The feeling of importance was also there--that people needed me to be around for advice or whatever." She had been an officer in three different organizations because she had "always been interested in seeking out challenges." L said, "It's not as bad as it looks from the outside. You just got to give it a go."

L told of discovering campus life through her work at the university:

When I started working here at Saginaw Valley, I was working in the Chemistry Department. People that I worked with got me involved with the Science Club. . . . They told me how much fun it would be. They also told me how many people I could meet. Everybody was really nice, and because I didn't know anybody from high school that went to Saginaw Valley, I thought that I might as well give it a try because that would be the only way that I would meet people to become friends here. . . . Before then, I didn't know if I was interested in doing anything in college.

She was heartened by "the warm welcome that I got from the first club that I was involved in. Being accepted to the group so quickly was very exciting."

L's parents were understanding, "but not at first. Mom thought I should be home studying and not getting involved. Then, she saw the progress and how well I was doing. She then started to back me up." Students in the Science Club

and the Student Government also influenced L's involvement, as did the Distinction in Leadership program.

Going along inside of that [the leadership program] and along with the things they would ask us to be involved in like the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts, we are required to get involved in several activities. It gives me personal feelings of importance and need from the staff members from here instead of just the students.

L also felt satisfaction when coordinating events:

Activities that I have been in charge of, like through the Science Club I was in charge of their seminar series. That gave me a feeling of control and importance to the club. With the Student Government, being in charge of the Fall Picnic and the Spring Fling committees.

L desired "sort of like a popularity" when she first became involved. She wanted

. . . to know a lot of people and being able to get recognized by those who just see you in the hall or wherever. And probably the satisfaction of breaking out of my shy shell and becoming more assertive. [I have learned] what it can do for your résumé. It has brought me closer to the faculty and staff on campus. It has kept me here. At first, I wasn't sure if I was going to stay at Saginaw Valley for the whole four years. It gave me such a welcoming feeling that I didn't want to leave. I still don't want to leave.

The Student Government and her work in the Distinction in Leadership Award program offered L the most gratification. Student Government was worthwhile because:

It gave me more responsibility as a student here. It gave me an opportunity to interact with the faculty and staff that most students would not have the chance to do or think of doing. . . . It gave me the opportunity to meet with some other important people like Senators and Congressmen of Michigan. . . . With my second year with Student Government, I was Parliamentarian. It was really meaningful to me because nothing had really ever been done with this position before. . . . I gave it my all. I had to know Robert's Rules of Order. I gave up my voting privileges because of this. That was a sacrifice because I like to

vote and have a say in what goes on. . . . Some of the activities from the Distinction in Leadership Award were more meaningful because it was something that benefited the community. I was helping the community, not just for my college events. I was a big part of them.

When she spoke of the extracurricular activity of other students, L was nonjudgmental:

Since I got involved right away, it is hard for me to judge that because I am on the inside, and I started out being on the inside looking out toward the students. I don't know what it is like for those who have been here for awhile and have not yet become involved. I don't know if it is because we don't reach out to them or if they are just not interested.

Of involving commuting students, she said:

I think we have tried just about everything on that. For some reason, that I don't know why, I got involved right away. Commuting students just think that it is a waste of time to get involved. I don't know why because I have not been in their shoes before. I have the best time of my life because I got involved with these organizations. The only thing we have not done is bribe them with money or something.

To involve more students, L proposed

. . . offering more activities for them to be in charge of or take on the responsibility of. Always make sure, when it is time to decide on new and better things for the students to do, make sure to ask for the students' opinions to let them know that you are really interested in getting them involved.

She would like to see the hours of the health and physical education building extended. "The Ryder Center is closed to the students a lot. They bring this big building here, and they let us use it only half of the time. It is like giving them a cookie and then taking it away." She was also in favor of an activity center or student union and more family events.

Although job obligations and studies limited L's participation, time, she said, did not. "The time between classes was the time I would spend on



extracurricular activities and homework." She adjusted her time schedule to include the extracurriculum and did not understand why others did not do the same. "There has to be a reason they don't show an interest other than family. . . . There has to be some reason why they don't get involved." In her remarks on SVSU's campus life, she said, "For the most part, as far as I can see, it is pretty good. I'd like to see more people get involved in different types of activities, not only because of the time we spend planning, but it would benefit them, too." Her closing comments were these:

Just that we can never give up. I am a commuter student, and I have always been a commuter student. I was scared at first, too, but when the doors started to open up for me it became a part of my life. I never want to change that part of my life. I am grateful that I have that experience. If I could give what I have received from the university back to other students and tell them what it has done for me, it would be very special to me. If I could see other people not giving up on commuter students, I would be grateful.

Student M

Student M was a junior psychology major. She worked in the university library for 11 to 19 hours per week, had a merit scholarship, and held a grade point average that fell between a 3.0 and a 3.4. M was of White/Caucasian origin and had her own car.

M would be the first in her family to graduate from college. "Fairly frequent" was her description of her college in-class involvement. In high school, her extracurricular endeavors included sports, clubs, volunteering, and performing.

M had been a member of SVSU's marching band. At the time of the study, she was a Student Government Senator, a member of the Psychology

Club, and the president of SafeHaven, a student organization that works for substance-abuse prevention. She was also a member of three all-university committees: the Campus Life Team, the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee, and the Sex Week Planning Committee. She had been a member of these Student Government committees: the Fall Picnic, Spring Fling, and Inter-Club Council. M recently received the Distinction in Leadership Gold Award. The requirements for the award included volunteering for major campus events. M had assisted with Homecoming, Family Festival Day, and the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts.

M had "a lot of persistent qualities" that aided her in her extracurricular initiatives.

When I do something, I like to stick with it and do a good job. I think that has helped me stay involved, even when it has been frustrating. I haven't let it keep me down for too long. I usually get right back up and keep going. I think you need to be outgoing. You have to want to be involved. . . . I just got involved in more activities and kept going. That is probably one reason why I have stayed involved versus someone who didn't.

She has remained involved because "It was exciting. There was a lot of excitement. I was constantly meeting new people and new challenges." The officer's positions that she had held had helped, too. "I wanted to be a leader and one of the ones that did all the planning and organizing. I think more so than just being a member."

In the first semester of her sophomore year, M signed up for the Emerging Leader program offered by SVSU's Office of Student Life. She did so because of her on-campus supervisor's encouragement. She had been a part of the

marching band in her freshman year but thought that the leadership program "was the first thing that really started my involvement here at SVSU." She had considered extracurricular participation earlier.

I always thought about it. I guess I just needed a little more encouragement. . . . The staff here at SVSU really helped me. There were a lot of staff like _____ and _____ that really encouraged me. I think that was really positive. I just kind of flourished after that. I don't think I would have gotten involved if it wasn't for encouragement by the staff.

She also thought that faculty members, other students, and her supervisor had helped her along.

My club members do assist me in my involvement. They are always trying to get me to run for an office. They give me the drive or incentive I need. Yes, I do think that they have assisted me. . . . My supervisors at the library are flexible with my work schedule, so I can go to the programs that I want to. It has helped me this term because I am trying to get the Gold Award in the Distinction in Leadership program.

M participated to "grow as a person and to become more exposed to different people and ideas--I guess to make friends." She developed "a lot more knowledge in my area of study" and "a sense of spirituality which I did not have before." She indicated that her awareness of out-of-class activities had been heightened by the student newspaper, direct-mail pieces, postings, and listings of clubs and events. M said that her participation had been limited by her health and a negative experience with an orientation leader. "I don't think I got involved right away because of this person." She thought that her community-service work had suffered because her on-campus participation now took her time.

For M, the most significant and memorable moments in her involvement had been some of those connected with her experience in Student Government and in working on the Distinction in Leadership award.

Being a Student Government Senator was probably more significant because you have to work with such a diverse group of people. . . . You have to learn how to check your ego at the door really quick. . . . I think Student Government responsibilities are pretty big . . . you are very visible. . . . I think people have a lot of expectations of you. . . . It puts a lot of pressure on you. For me, this is a positive thing, and that is what I like. It is more meaningful to me. . . . I would say the Distinction in Leadership award. You have to do certain requirements to get the award. I think just doing them all gives you a sense of achievement. All the activities really teach you something different. I probably would not have done some of that stuff, and I would probably have missed out on a lot of things had I not been required to do those things. I really feel that I got a lot out of it.

Although M believed that "SVSU does a wonderful job of promoting commuter involvement, it is hard on a campus with 90% of the students being commuters. I don't think we give ourselves enough credit." To better include commuters, she envisioned "a lot more publicity" and "functions at different times so it can accommodate all of the students, including the nontraditional ones." She thought that students would persist in their involvement if encouraged by staff members, particularly on-campus supervisors.

If certain staff members have certain workers, they could suggest certain activities and events. . . . They might be more flexible with their hours. I know that _____ and _____ have helped me a lot because they have been really flexible with my hours. That has probably helped me stay involved.

M thought that commuter students might require some special accommodations for involvement. "Maybe for certain events, they could offer some type of child

care because a lot of our older students have kids. . . . Maybe try to make different times for them and not only evening times."

Of the interview experience, M said:

It has helped me think a lot about the different ways that we do help and maybe things that we could do different. The staff and faculty should be encouraging and supportive toward students to get involved. . . . They could have some free food. We got a lot of commuters out for our Spring Fling.

Student N

Student N was a full-time senior who lived in Bay City, fewer than 20 minutes from campus. Her major was communication and theater. She maintained a 2.5 to 2.9 grade point average and took part in group discussion fairly frequently. N drove her own vehicle, received no financial aid, and worked off campus for 11 to 19 hours each week. N had a mother and brothers who had graduated from college. She was White/Caucasian.

N had been a member and/or officer of the Communication Guild for three years. In that time, she had been secretary, vice-president, and president of the organization. She had organized the Guild's annual public-speaking contest and some of its lectures. She also had participated in the Emerging Leaders and Distinction in Leadership programs. As part of her award requirements, N had served as a volunteer for the performing arts series, the Family Holiday Party, and the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts.

N had been quite involved in her high school's student council, clubs, performing groups, and sports. In fact, one of the reasons that she desired to participate in college life was:

I was so used to it in high school. You get the feeling of being involved in everything and not being by yourself. It took me about my first year to get used to college and adjust to it. . . . I was hoping to gain what I had in high school because I was always involved and in leadership roles. I wanted the leadership back. I basically wanted to be active and have something to do outside of the classroom.

In her first year with the Guild, she became the organization's secretary. She said, "I had experience in that before" as she had been Student Council secretary in high school.

That first year had been her sophomore year in college. She started in the extracurriculum "when Dr. _____ asked me to come to a meeting for the Communication Guild." Dr. _____ was a faculty adviser for the Communication Guild. N referred to him, a staff member, and a friend when she named the individuals who had influenced her initial campus involvement. She also thought that other club members, her family, and a high school instructor had assisted in her collegiate involvement. N continued in campus life because of its benefits.

The public-speaking contest got me to be more organized and to be able to learn the stuff that I got out of leadership and to be able to apply my skills. . . . I gained a lot of respect from Dr. _____ and other people on campus. I received compliments on things that I have done for the clubs and stuff. . . . I got to learn how to work with people. I had lots of conflicts my first year in the Guild. I basically had to work with others. . . . Your options are increased.

The personal attributes and background that might have helped with N's involvement are these:

I was involved as a little kid because my mom was a teacher. I was always doing something and could never sit around the house. You could never sit and watch TV. You had to color. I am very creative, and I like to use my creative ability to do different things. I guess it is the extrovert thing in me is the reason I am so involved. I have a hard time just sitting and doing nothing. . . . I think I have enthusiasm to do things. Once I start something, I finish it. I have persistence. I guess I have a lot of energy. Overall, I want to know things. I am very curious.

N continued her participation in the Communication Guild because "it was the interesting stuff that we did. . . . We did the Public Speaking Contest."

N marked as her most significant and meaningful activities the experience of being in the Guild, and coordinating the Public Speaking Contest and the Distinction in Leadership Award program. Of the Guild, she said, "I really learned how to deal with . . . all different types of people. . . . Being a management major, I learned all about those. You have to apply the stuff that you are learning in class." The Public Speaking Contest was "really the most significant for me because I realized just how organized and effective I can be. . . . I had to plan that twice. It really made me use my skills." In telling of the award program, N said, "Once I talked to you about it, I would say the Distinction in Leadership award. The stuff you had us do really made you realize why you needed all these skills. The self-esteem workshop was really good."

N felt restricted by time, work, and sometimes class commitments. Regarding limits imposed by studying, she remarked, "It depends on what kind

of semester I am having and what types of classes I am having." In respect to class and work, N told that:

I work and don't live on campus. Sometimes, It is hard to squeeze everything in that I want to do. . . . It is hard to get involved and motivated after working all day and going to class at night. I had class at night. It was really hard to keep up with everything.

It was her opinion that other commuters had similar concerns.

Flyers and banners assisted in N's knowledge of events ("They catch my eyes and my attention", as did direct mailings ("If it is mailed, you always read mail") and the student newspaper. Of Student Happenings, she said, "I read these all the time. This list lets me know what is going on." Although the printed materials helped in N's involvement, she explained that:

A lot of people don't know about the programs. I understand that advertising is really hard, but we need to find different ways to advertise things. Maybe like have a certain event that teachers could announce in the classrooms. . . . I guess the dorm students have a better advantage. There are a lot of commuter students. I feel like SVSU treats the commuter students like they are dorm students. You don't find a lot of stuff out if you only come out here once a week. . . . Like with the leadership stuff, I am having the hardest time. . . . Because I don't live here, it's hard to attend all the events. With my self-esteem workshop, I was late for the first one because I didn't even know where it was. I am constantly missing meetings. If you work and want to get involved, it is really hard.

When asked how the university might assist commuting students in extracurricular participation, N said:

Probably by being more aware of the fact that there are commuting students who work and have families to worry about. You are never going to please everybody, but you have to think about the commuters' schedules when you are scheduling events. Leadership for Lunch was good because people come to lunch, but other programs that are put on during the day, people work and they cannot come. If they don't have class, they are not here.

She also stated:

I guess a lot of people don't realize that it is beneficial. They don't take the time to become involved because they don't think it is important. I think that it is because you not only learn how to handle conflicts, you also learn a lot of people skills. You learn a lot more things to do. It is really important for these people to get involved.

To keep people involved, she believed the university should

. . . find out what is important to them and find out what they want for their commuter needs. Give them alternatives. With commuter students, you have to work around business schedules, and most of them only take classes at night. Find out how available they are. You are not going to get everybody involved, but not everybody wants to get involved either. Find out those who do and work around them.

In her closing remarks, N said:

You have to find out what their interests or needs are. When you did the Organizational Leadership for Lunch, like business writing, a lot of people need that, so there were a lot of people there. . . . I don't know what makes people get involved. You can't really decide until you get involved and try it.

Student O

Student O lived about one-half hour northeast of the university, in Essexville, Michigan. She was a senior premed major, with a grade point average of 3.5 to 4.0. She had attended SVSU for four years or nine semesters. Her education was assisted with a merit scholarship, and she worked off campus for 20 to 29 hours per week. Her father had an associate's degree. O drove her own car and was White/Caucasian.

In high school, O had been involved in sports, performances, clubs, volunteering, and Junior Achievement. O had been a member of the Science Club, and Alpha Chi Honor Society, and the Honors Program. She had been

Senator Pro Tempore of the Student Government, president of the Health Professionals Honor Society, and vice-president of the Commuters Club. O had also been an orientation leader, a student representative on the Institutional Review Board, a student employee in Health Services, and a cooperative education employee at Dow Chemical. She had emceed the Talent Show and the Student Leadership Recognition Banquet.

O believed that she was "kind of outgoing." She enjoyed getting to know people and said that "By being involved, that is one way to get to meet a lot of people. I also enjoy being able to plan events and being a leader." In comparison to others, O believed these characteristics had aided in her involvement. "I desire to actually do something on campus. I don't wait for somebody to come to me. I do it by myself. I care just more about the university too. I also think a lot of people from this university don't consider it to be a real college, so they don't waste their time." She stayed involved because "I was having fun. Once you become involved, you learn about other things that are interesting and you want to do them too. It is a chain reaction. You do one and keep on going." She became an officer for these reasons.

I wanted to be in charge of planning events. In Health Professionals, we had a pretty bad president the year before I was. So I wanted to get in there and change things. I thought it would be good on my résumé, too. With being a senator, I wanted to be on Student Government ever since I was in high school. In running for Pro Tempore, I was really nervous to try to get it because it was the head of the Senators. . . . I thought it sounded nice and sounded distinguished.

Student O first had learned of college activities during new-student orientation and was further convinced of their importance at a Freshman

Leadership Day program. She attended an Honors Program luncheon in the fall semester of her freshman year and her first club meeting in the winter semester of the same year. She first considered club participation before she started in college. "We had to make goals for Freshman Leadership Day, and one of mine was to get involved with the Pre-Med Club."

Other students, a friend, and a staff member had helped in O's involvement. The students were upperclassmen and served as role models to O. She said:

I remember how _____ was there, and she mentioned she was in Pre-Med. That was one group that I was interested in. That was my major. . . . She could have been a bit of a role model. We still have classes together now. Also, _____, came to one of our meetings, and I was really impressed with her. She was in Student Government, too. I just kind of used them as role models and learned more about Student Government and orientation.

O and her friend attended meetings and events together. Staff members, club advisers, and an on-campus supervisor whom O knew also stressed the importance of involvement.

The things that spurred O's participation in extracurricular activities are shown in her remarks. "Being an orientation leader was a big one . . . being in Student Government . . . [and] working at bake sales" nurtured her involvement. She thought that club meetings had had an effect on her, too. "By seeing the officers, I kind of wanted to be an officer, too." O started in activities for "popularity because I wanted to know more people. I wanted respect and to have fun. . . . I guess I wanted things to put on my résumé. They tell you to sell

yourself. . . . I wanted to make college more enjoyable than high school." She stayed involved "for friendships, maybe more knowledge in my area of study."

Being president of the Health Professionals Honor Society was an important event for O because "it was the first time and exposure to being president of a club. The effort and time I spent made me appreciate other leaders a lot more." Other rewarding occurrences that O reported were being an orientation leader, being a Student Government Senator, and her co-op and work-study experiences.

Being an orientation leader is a very satisfying job. You learn about yourself. The friends that you made were pretty good and long lasting. . . . It was funny because being an orientation leader was like my coming out. I got more confident in myself. I wanted to get more involved with the campus. I was prouder to be a student here and enjoyed it. Once I got over thinking that the university was smaller, it was easier for me to get involved in a lot of things. . . . My co-op experience at Dow provided me with a lot of experience in the field. . . . My work-study job gave me a new outlook on the school. It was right in the beginning of my sophomore year. I began to meet and become familiar with a lot more people. That was very important. . . . Also, I think being a senator was pretty rewarding. I got a lot of satisfaction from doing that--not so much that there was direct one-on-one help, but I enjoyed the learning experience because I learned to speak my mind and not be nervous if people accepted that or not or believed it the same way."

The Card's Party, flyers, banners, mailings, event listings, and the student newspaper were all helpful in getting and keeping O involved. She enjoyed the Card's Party. "All the clubs were there, and it was really neat. The setting made it fun." She found that signs helped: "They inform me. I guess if I saw a big sign, I new it was going to be a big event." She also liked direct-mail pieces from the university: "I think it is more personal to read them at home than it is to see them everywhere, lying around upstairs."

To keep students involved, O recommended publicity. "I think advertisement is one of the most important things. With the Commuter Club, I noticed that a log because there was not enough information out for people to learn about the different events." She spoke a bit further of her disappointment with the Cardinal Commuter Club when she addressed the issue of commuting-student involvement.

That is hard because with the Commuter Club, I mean, it is like that the club is there and people just don't want to do it. . . . I think a lot of commuter students think it is not cool to be involved in some stuff. Maybe there is some way that we could show them that it is cool. They are just up there [in the lounge], and you know that they know that there is stuff going on. They just don't take the effort. . . . I guess I wish that it [campus involvement] would be more directed towards the commuter students.

O believed that caring staff members helped with involvement. "When you have a supportive or outgoing staff that might encourage students as opposed to discouraging them or making them feel uncomfortable or scared to ask questions about getting involved, it would be helpful. I actually met more people who are nice and willing to answer questions. People like _____ are very nice.

Student P

Student P was a junior transfer student from Daytona Beach Community College in Florida. At the time of the study he lived in Saginaw, Michigan, fewer than 20 minutes from the university. He was majoring in business management. P attended SVSU full time, worked on campus 20 to 29 hours each week, and maintained a grade point average of between 2.5 and 2.9. He had attended

Daytona Beach Community College for one year or two semesters and had attended SVSU for three years or six semesters.

Along with his work-study position, P had obtained loans to pay for his college education. He typically worked two jobs in the fall and winter semesters. P was African American. The car that he drove was his own.

P had been a member of a sports team in high school. He had not participated in activities while he was at Daytona Beach Community College. His sister had graduated from SVSU, where she had been the president of Student Government. P had held the office of vice-president of the Student Government. He also had been an orientation leader, an admissions tour guide, a member of the Black Student Association (BSA), and a student representative on the university's Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee. he chaired the Student Government's Finance and Student Relations committees and was a member of the Lock-In committee. P was frequently called upon to assist in speaking at university functions, including the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Commemoration Dinner. He was a participant in the university's Kwanzaa Celebration and had played intramural football. At the time of the study, he was the campus tour coordinator in the Office of Admissions.

In discussing himself and the traits that might have aided in his involvement, P said, "I seek to learn by staying involved. It is a learning process for me. That is the key for me. That is the strongest one that I have." He saw a difference between himself and others who might not be involved. "I am so far away from home. This is something that I did to meet people and make new

friends. I might have become more mature from that experience and being so far away from home."

At P's first university activity, he read a selection for the university's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Commemoration Dinner. P told how and why he became involved with the banquet:

I was approached by one of my instructors. Dr. _____ wanted to know if I would do a particular reading for this event. . . . I was a participant; I guess that was the biggest reason [that I attended the event]. . . . My sister was there. . . . At first, I was pretty pleased. . . . I felt like I had finally made it to college. But as time progressed, I got a little nervous because I was in the program. . . . When I did the reading, I had numerous administrators that came up to me and shook my hand. It was the first time that I met these individuals like President _____ and Dr. _____, just to name a few. I guess that is what influenced my participation in a sense.

The dinner took place in the second semester of P's freshman year. That summer, he became an orientation leader. "I like being involved with other students and working with them. I like meeting new people. That was fun, and it was less intense than our class work. I guess the group setting really motivated me in a sense."

P named a large group of people who had inspired him to involvement: his sister, several other family members, SVSU staff and faculty members, and other students. P's sister had influenced him at a young age. "When I was a kid, she would send things home to my mom. I would see little newspaper clippings about her in Student Government and anything else she was involved in. I kind of looked up to her. She is the reason why I am in college." P's parents were very supportive. He said his role model and mentor was his father.



My father is a hard worker and encourages me to do the same. Anything that I got involved with since football in high school, he has been a big support. . . . They [my parents] have encouraged me to get involved and supported me in everything that I do. They support and compliment me. They make me want to do more to make them even prouder. The biggest motivator in my life is my parents.

Other family members also had helped cultivate P's involvement.

I would have to say my aunts in Miami. They always ask about me and check on me. They want to know if I have made president of the university yet. My cousin is a Harvard graduate and is in Georgetown Law School now and works in the White House. I have another cousin who is a lawyer in Spain. At family reunions, we get together, and I think that they are role models for me.

There was not much that had limited P's involvement. The only limits he spoke of were homework, high school friends, cold weather, and letting the dog out. His reasons for getting involved were varied:

I had hoped to learn or enhance my communication and leadership qualities. I wanted to enhance my ability to work with others. I would say that these are the three most important things. I thought that I could apply those things after college since I am going into business management. Being involved with those different clubs and organizations, I have built upon those skills. I just wanted to have fun. I wanted something besides school work. I just wanted to get involved in the social aspect of college. You could probably put that as number one.

From out-of-class participation, he had "met some of the administrators. If I have a problem, I have someone to talk to. . . . I have a lot of good friendships. . . . [It] helped me become more organized. . . . It has opened up doors to new things. . . . I have learned a lot about myself from doing some of those things that I would have never dreamed of doing." P added, "I am still learning. I would not say that I have made it. It has helped me. I am much better than I was before."

P referred to several experiences as being significant and meaningful:

I would say Student Government because of the types of things that we have dealt with. . . . We had to be very professional. . . . The experience that I gained from Student Government as far as being a chairperson of a committee and actually running a meeting, I feel is the best thing that has happened to me as far as involvement on campus is concerned. . . . I would also say the Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee. Being a part of that committee and asserting as the only student, I had to deal with faculty members and voice my opinion. I had to sometimes disagree with the faculty members because I represented the students. It taught me to speak out. . . . The one [activity] that sticks out in my mind is the Martin Luther King Commemoration Dinner . . . that was the first thing that I got involved with on campus. That was the first time that I spoke in front of a number of people. It was a confidence builder. . . . As campus tour coordinator, I am responsible for bringing students out to campus. . . . That holds true for orientation as well. I am responsible for a group of people for a day. . . . Serving as vice-president of Student Government, I have a great deal of responsibility. I serve as chair of the Finance committee.

SVSU helped to develop the extracurriculum in the following ways, according to P:

With the amount of clubs and organizations on campus, I guess. There are about 50 clubs on campus. . . . You have numerous work-study opportunities. You have all kinds of sports and intramural sports if you don't want to get involved with an intercollegiate game. We have fraternities and sororities that you can get involved in. . . . I would have to say the Campus Activities Office, of course. I think having an office like this one is very helpful.

P was one of only a few student interviewees who mentioned television as an asset to his involvement.

Watching the newscast at night my first year here and seeing the covered football and basketball games was interesting because I never went to any games. My second year, I went to a few. . . . I did see one of the advertisements for the Boat Show.

He appreciated the student newspaper, signs on campus, and events listings; he especially valued direct mailings. "I really like the KIOSK. It has a list of things that happen on campus. I could hang that on my wall. I can see what is going

on everyday. I found that to be helpful. I remember getting that. I also received an invitation from the Economics Society to come to a banquet."

Scheduling, P believed, is most important in increasing commuters' participation in campus life.

I guess we would almost have to plan around their schedules. Weekend programs may even work, for instance. You could even have some programs during the day. I know most of the programs happen at night. If a commuter student is driving from a distance, he would want to get back on the road before it is too late. . . . I guess I've said it all. It is difficult to get them all involved.

He would like to see a student center that "should maybe have couches, tables, and a TV" and a board listing all of the clubs. P believed that students would stay involved if the faculty and staff backed them more.

If a student did something and it didn't turn out very well, maybe words of encouragement from the faculty would help. The most important thing would be to participate with students and faculty members. If they find time to participate with the club's activities and functions, I think it carries a great deal of weight when it comes to helping a student continue their involvement.

When asked for closing remarks, P said,

For a student who has the time, transportation, and skills, there is no reason why they shouldn't get involved. . . . For myself, I realized that I have been involved in a lot of things. I don't regret it for a single moment. I know that we sacrifice time, but we gain experience that is as important as what we learn in class. . . . I think the university offers a lot that goes unnoticed. . . . Campus involvement is something special. . . . We as students take a lot for granted.

Student Q

Q was a sophomore from Bay City, Michigan, who majored in criminal justice. His home was between 21 and 40 minutes from the university. Q usually

worked two jobs in the fall and winter semesters—one off-campus and one on-campus work-study position. In addition to his work-study position, Q's financial-aid package included grants based on both merit and need. He drove his own car.

Q's grade point average was between a 2.0 and a 2.4. He had attended SVSU for two years or four semesters. He was of Hispanic origin. None of Q's immediate family members had attended college.

Q had been involved in high school sports and had been on the SVSU track team during his freshman year. At the time of the study, he was a SafeHaven member and worked in the Student Government and Placement offices. He was a member of Student Government's Spring Fling Planning Committee and had assisted with the university's Career Day.

Q thought that his "willingness to work with people and wanting to help in some way" had led to his extracurricular involvement. He remained involved, he said,

I guess because my closest friends are the ones that are involved in all the groups. . . . Because I got so close to everybody by being involved in Student Government. . . . Right now, I'm not so involved because of summer being here. Once the fall gets here, I will be right back into it.

Q discovered the college extracurriculum during new-student orientation and again on the first day of his freshman semester as he knew a student who was connected with the Student Government. Q had gone to a SafeHaven meeting the first semester of his freshman year. He had gone to the meeting after talking with the staff adviser of SafeHaven and after working at a drug and

alcohol rehabilitation center in high school. When asked whether there was anything that influenced his extracurricular involvement at SVSU in a positive way, Q said:

I guess working at the rehabilitation center. I thought it was neat that this was something that was brought up on a college campus because drugs and alcohol are such a big part of college life. . . . Peer training with _____ . . . was a way of meeting people like me, [and] I wanted to gain acceptance. I really didn't know that many people when I first got here.

Q stayed involved because it was fun. "With sports, I thought it would be fun. It was actually pretty boring, but with SafeHaven and Student Government, it was fun. So I got involved." Activity also helped Q build confidence. "With Student Government . . . I could make a decision on campus, and that made me feel good about myself." Q explained other advantages of out-of-class involvement:

I got a lot of information, not just about the club, but I did learn more about the school. It made me more open-minded because there is such a variety of students here. . . . [Involvement] gets them culture. It lets them learn a lot more about the other people and sometimes who they are. It gets them actively involved in the learning process.

His most meaningful out-of-class learning experiences had come through the Placement Office.

The most significant [activities] for me were the Job Fairs. . . . I actually got to talk to actual employers just like to talk to an actual person. It was a neat thing and a good way to make connections. . . . I guess the most significant [responsibility] for me is working in the Placement Office. We get a lot of duties delegated to us. If we don't do these duties, the office won't be doing its job. It gives me a sense of pride.

Q believed that extracurricular activity was nurtured by the university

. . . by letting them have the organizations and letting them hold meetings here on campus. I think by helping through fundraisers like the Student



Government popcorn sales and through allocating them money. I like how everything is handled here on campus except that there are not enough students getting involved. There is really not anything the university can do. The students have to motivate themselves. . . . I don't think there is any way they can [better encourage involvement] because there is such a large commuter population. It is hard for everyone to get together at the same time.

He maintained that staying involved is students' responsibility:

To me, that is up to the students on whether or not they want to become involved. There is no way that you can keep someone involved or motivate someone to do something that they don't want to. The only way you can get a person to do something is if they want to do it.

Work and study acted as time constraints for Q. "I have two jobs--on campus and off campus. . . . I missed one meeting because I had to study for a test." His involvement was assisted by friends, staff members, access to transportation, and other club members. SafeHaven flyers and a brochure about the club placed in Q's new-student orientation packet aided his initial contact with the organization. He also wanted to find others interested in substance-abuse prevention. "It is something that needs to be done. Dealing with SafeHaven, it is an issue that is not brought up enough. In the presidential election, there was nothing brought up about alcoholism. To me, it is just as big an issue as the gays in the military or some of the issues."

Q would like to see greater emphasis on intramural sports opportunities for commuting students. He said:

I would like to get involved with intramural sports. . . . Earlier this year, they had a basketball tournament, but it was only for dorm students. . . . To me, that discourages other people who like to play sports. They should base it more towards commuter students to get them involved.

He thought that there was not enough involvement at SVSU and wished that more commuting students were involved. This might happen, Q thought, if they "realized that on campus you can make a difference. . . . here on campus the students make a lot of decisions. . . . They have to realize that they can make a difference here at school." His closing comments were short: "I'm glad you're doing this because this is a commuter school."

Student R

Student R was a sophomore of Hispanic descent, majoring in computer information systems. He was a member of the Association of Computer Machinery and of the Hispanic Student Association. He had attended SVSU for four years or ten semesters. He said he rarely participated in the classroom. R generally worked two jobs during the fall and winter semesters. He had been a secretary in the Student Government Office and had had work-study employment in the Office of Evening Services. His financial-aid package included that position, loans, a merit scholarship, and other assistance based on need. R attended SVSU full time, had a 22- to 40-minute commute, and maintained a grade point average in the range of 3.0 to 3.4.

In R's immediate family, no one had yet graduated from college. During his high school career, R had been a member of performing groups and clubs. He had been a member of the Hispanic Student Association for three years. He was the vice-president of the Association of Computing Machinery. His involvement with the Student Government included work as secretary and



executive secretary; he was currently the president. R had been a co-chairperson of the Student Government's Tuition and Picnic committees. In addition, he had participated in the university's Talent Show and had attended numerous Board of Control functions.

R believed that he had traits that afforded him opportunities for involvement. He commented:

A lot of people allow me to stay around and stay involved. They allow me to be a leader. I think my honesty is another. I guess that I am pretty honest. . . . Being honest with people allows them to be honest with me. . . . That is something that keeps it enjoyable and makes me want to stay involved. I am approachable. I think I do a good job.

His desire to build a foundation for others was also a part of his involvement:

With _____, he wants to do the Bell Tower. It is something that he feels in his heart that he can leave the university. . . . I haven't got to that point yet, but I can relate to that. With Student Government, I want to be able to start something that I would feel is a basis for everybody in Student Government. That is something else that makes me want to stay there. Mine is more of a way, and _____'s is more of a physical thing.

R also stayed involved because:

It has to do with if I want to get something done, then I stay with it. For me, I really stick to one thing hard. I think I chose Student Government rather than one particular class or even one particular person and establishing them as a leader. Right now, it is just Student Government. One of my flaws is that as soon as I am getting closer to one of my goals, I switch to something else. I am going to make it, and I am not too worried about it. . . . When I finish, I want to have a foundation laid down for others to follow. I want to grab ahold of another person and bring out the best in them just like the army.

R's first awareness of college opportunities for extracurricular involvement had come during new-student orientation. "I came out here, and there were club tables set up. . . . So I signed up for a couple to get involved and to see,

hopefully, that they would help me out. I didn't know how it would help me out."

Later, R's orientation leader introduced R to a former Student Government president. The president attempted to get R involved in activities.

He was in my face all the time. . . . He chooses people that he wants to become leaders. . . . We had a lot of arguments because he wanted me to do this and that. It was different; I kind of felt that he was making me grow up when I didn't want to grow up.

R's first college activity was a Student Government meeting. At the time, R was a secretary for the organization.

He hired me. So I worked for Student Government, and I didn't even know what it was about. I didn't even know who the Senators were. When I had an interest to attend a meeting though I was still working, he let me do it. People did not like that because I was still getting paid and I was at the meeting. He wanted me to keep an interest in Student Government. He told me to do whatever it took to keep that interest. I can see that now because I did not know what was going on then. I thought I was getting away with something. That is why I did it.

About that time, the Student Government president took R to Board of Control meetings and other events. "He said, 'This is what you should do, and I will show you.' So I went with him and did it. After that, I trusted him and started to open up. I just followed his lead." R attended the meetings because:

I wanted to go and find out why he wanted me to go so bad. I just didn't understand what was happening here. That was more important to me than the personal things that happened to me at home. I would just sit around and watch television if I wasn't studying or working.

R explained that he had had reservations about SVSU:

I knew that there was supposed to be some college-life activities like the fraternities and sororities. I didn't know how they worked. I just knew about wild college parties and study halls where you don't study. I wanted to go to Michigan State University first, but I could not go because there was not enough money. So I had a bad reaction because I couldn't do what I wanted to do right after I got out of high school. So I got off on a



bad foot because I was fighting it, and I didn't think this campus had anything to offer like the big universities have. I just figured because it was a smaller university that the courses were going to be easier and everything was just going to be on a smaller scale.

R was apprehensive at his first Student Government meetings:

With the Student Government meeting, I was really intimidated and felt like I didn't belong. I was afraid of the people there. At Student Government meetings, there were people only two, three, or four years older than me. . . . If I went to a Board of Control meeting, it is an understanding that these people are 40 or 60 years old. You are supposed to respect your elders, and I did do that. That feeling was not something new to me. . . . It is older students that were a different story.

Despite his misgivings, R continued his involvement and remembered Admissions and Minority Service staff members and Student Government and Program Board members who helped him out in the extracurriculum. He also credited friends, a faculty-member mentor, and his mother with supporting his involvement. Events such as Homecoming, the Fall Picnic, and Spring Fling also attracted this student.

The primary reason that R became involved was "for other students to be involved. . . . I figured it was supposed to be some logarithmic scale. If I was to get involved, I was supposed to bring these people with me to an event. That was what I thought was supposed to happen. So I did it." R thought that there was enough involvement:

I don't think that I will ever be completely satisfied. . . . I want everybody to be involved and to be a part of the understanding of why we do these things. I think it is because what else is there in life to do. I don't like to sit and watch television anymore. I used to like it, but I'd rather be out there.

R sought the position of Student Government president because "I didn't think that anybody could do a good enough job in the sense of what I thought had to get done." He ran for the vice-presidency of the Association of Computing Machinery because "I just wanted to be the back-up. I didn't want to do the hard-core work. . . . I didn't think that I had the time to be president of two organizations.

What are the benefits of extracurricular participation? R thought that there were many. He stated:

The benefits are that I got to work here and stay here. . . . I don't have anybody coming down on me or Financial Aid coming on my back saying that I have limited hours. . . . I don't have to waste time driving somewhere else. It is less stress, and I can do a better job. I work really hard here, and they reward me. . . . Compared to other students on campus, I am doing quite well. . . . Involvement helps with rounding out the personality. We are supposed to take all of these classes that are supposed to round out our personalities, but I thought being involved on campus did that personally. I thought it was a good way to meet people with a common interest. . . . You have a broader idea about things.

Of significant responsibilities, R said, "For me, they are just as important as anything else, and no matter how big it is . . . the little things do count. All of them have an impact on me, they always do. Each responsibility has allowed me to grow." Student Government had been most important to R. He noted:

To me, it is the best club on campus. . . . The thing that I like most about Student Government is the organization because I had to help create it. . . . When I see other meetings, they don't get to sit at a good table where they can see other people's faces. . . . We are always trying to set a good example. That is my favorite thing to do, is to set a good example.

He had also enjoyed working on Student Government's Welcome Back Picnic and said:

Things that really had an impact on me were going to Lansing with President _____ and meeting with the Board of Control at his house. That impacted me the most because those are people that have achieved more than the average person in life. Those are the people that I want to follow.

R believed that the university worked to get students involved "all over," but "it seems that things are slow. It is hard to recruit members." He thought that:

There are plenty of opportunities for involvement. It just depends on how open-minded the person wants to be. You can volunteer for a job on campus, like to work for Valley Fest or attend a sporting event. I see lots of things because I am always looking for things that are going on.

The printed materials that had assisted R in his knowledge of campus events were signs, mailings, listings of events, and the campus newspaper.

Because of its large commuter population, R thought encouraging a campus spirit

. . . is hard. The only ones that I figured that we could shoot for are the ones up to age 31. Anybody higher than that, they already have an established family. . . . I don't know if we can get them out of their way to be involved with something like a club. Generally to get everybody involved, it would have to be something like Spring Fling where people have to stand in line and get some food. It would have to be something that they want.

To keep people involved, R thought students would have to enjoy their participation. "I can't understand how anybody would want to do something that they can no longer have fun at. . . . Somehow, everything needs to be fresh and have a purpose."

When asked about commuting students, R said:

All the young ones are too solo. They just want to study in their cars. When I go out to lunch, I see them in their cars. . . . Pretty soon, I am sure

that they are going to grow up and be mature enough to realize that they should become involved. When the new building gets here, the study hall will be nice.

He believed that campus citizens must get others involved, but he did not think that everyone was capable.

It seems that the people who get other people involved have some kind of special gift. It has two parts to it. They are able to work with these people to get them involved and have the experience of what the other person has been going through. . . . The other part of the gift is being able to find those sorts of people like that. People that we talk about are the ones that have that ability. What we have to do is grab hold of everybody with this special ability. We would probably have a lot of work on our hands.

In ending the interviews, R made several comments:

Lately, during this summer and last, a lot of people are joining clubs and picking up petitions to be on Student Government. Something is changing. That is really important. The people are older, and maybe they are trying to set a new trend. . . . You have to come up with a few ideas to get everyone involved. You have to find one that works. That is when you will really have earned your Ph.D. . . . As far back as I can remember, I just remember the people that I did things with, not the events. I don't gloat on anything that I have done. . . . It is a lot easier just to do something. It is a lot harder to plan and coordinate something that will work. . . . As far as the dissertation goes, I think it is neat. It is trying to do something on paper that I am trying to do in my head. Rather than think, one way or the other, I am trying to think about everything at the same time. Hopefully, it will come together. Rather than learn how I am going to do things, this has given me the opportunity to see what I have actually done. We have not talked about what is right or wrong; we are talking about how things are going.

Student S

Student S lived in Bay City, fewer than 20 minutes from the university. He was a senior, majoring in computer information systems. S typically worked two jobs in the fall and winter semesters, for a total of 20 to 29 hours each week.

Regarding academics, he attended SVSU full time, had a grade point average that fell between a 2.5 and a 2.9, and believed that he added to classroom discussion fairly frequently. S was White/Caucasian, had attended SVSU for five years or 11 semesters, and drove his own car.

S had been involved in team sports in high school. At SVSU, he had been president of the Association of Computer Machinery (ACM), treasurer of the Racquetball Club, and a Student Government Senator. He had worked on campus in the computer lab and had a co-op job at Dow Corning. S was the chairperson of the Student Government Tuition Committee and had been a member of the Budget and Library committees.

In terms of his own involvement, S believed these qualities had helped him remain involved:

I don't like being considered a quitter. I view giving up is just like quitting. Once I put my mind to something, I stick with it until it is finished. It is the main reason I stay involved with clubs and organizations. . . . I have fairly good time-management skills that allow me to juggle so many different things.

S had sought positions of leadership for these reasons:

In the ACM Club, I wanted to be president because I thought the club had a lot more potential. The current leadership seemed like they didn't want to pursue it. With the Racquetball Club, no one felt like they were qualified to manage the funds of the club. I have an accounting background, so I volunteered. I felt that I was qualified. In Student Government, I had tried to become the replacement treasurer, but I lost out to one of my friends. I still wanted to become part of Student Government, so I ran for a Senate position.

S had one brother who had graduated from college. His brother's experience had had quite an influence on S's own extracurricular involvement.

He came here for a couple of years and then transferred up to Michigan Tech. Employers knocked him because he had no extracurricular activities. This worked against him in a minor sense because he just studied. . . . My brother did encourage me to get involved in something other than studying.

S got a similar message from his employers at Dow Corning. S commented:

A big part of their decision [to hire me] was my involvement. By me being involved, I had a lot to offer them along with my academics. They say that they do find people who are only involved in academics do not work so well. People tend to get mental breakdowns because they are workaholics.

S joined ACM during his first semester at SVSU. "I was brought into the awareness of this group by one of my instructors, who recommended to all the class to join the group. I was one of the few that did. . . . I just wanted to see what the club was about and if it would benefit me as far as jobs later on." S claimed that both ACM and Student Government had affected him favorably.

When I did become a part of Student Government, that did affect me in a very positive way. The way I see stuff getting done around campus has opened my eyes a little bit more to the behind-the-scenes aspect of campus. I usually saw all the tuition raises. . . . It was really hard for me to resign from Student Government two weeks ago. . . . I am working third shift. It caused a lot of conflict like trying to find sleep. It was awful hard for me to give up my position. . . . The primary reason I got this job was the ACM Club . . . the fact that the computer department wanted to give members the first crack at job offerings. This is very supporting of the club. Rather than just pass it along to the Placement Office, the faculty recommended me. I guess that company knew that the faculty would have a better idea of who they are recommending for the position. The faculty would have more contact with the person than just papers.

S's brother, faculty members, club advisers, and mentors had given him helpful advice and guidance. S also spoke favorably of upperclassmen ("They encouraged me to stay involved with ACM. That is a part of the reason why I decided to pursue the role of president.") and his Little Brother:

My Little Brother that I got matched up with encourages me to get involved. He has always been interested in helping me out. During the Student Government elections, he helped me put up flyers and helped me with campaigning. He really liked that. He helped me with Homecoming elections. He really liked the Talent Show. He took a lot of pictures.

Others had dissuaded S's involvement. His off-campus supervisor thought, "If you like work here, you should be interested only here. If you are not, you should not work here. My supervisor is not really a supportive person." As for his friends, "For the most part, they have encouraged me, but sometimes they have discouraged me." His parents "primarily support me, but they do remind me that I am here for a degree. They encourage me to look at the amount of time that I have and decide if I have enough time for that activity."

The most significant SVSU organizations with which S had been connected were the Association for Computing Machinery and the Student Government. He had chosen the ACM Club "because I felt it was more meaningful. It had more to do with my major. It also made Club of the Year this year. . . . With Student Government, it had quite a bit of meaning because it represented a large number of students." Coordinating a high school programming contest and speaker series had also been meaningful to S.

With the ACM Club, I took a major part with setting up the high school programming contest this spring. It took quite a bit of effort on my part. I had to plan everything . . . and make sure that it all ran smoothly. Last fall, when we had the speaker presentation, I never knew all that went into planning and arranging it.

The responsibility with most meaning to S was "being on the Senate and having to decide how a portion of the student's tuition is being spent."

Running for Homecoming King also had been exciting for S. "Most of the court was from Student Government. That made it a lot of competition and fun." Although people and events had served to catalyze S's involvement, he did not pay much attention to some of the printed material found around campus.

Pretty much all the flyers and the Valley Vanguard didn't really have any influence on me or my extracurricular activities. The flyers are usually posted on a bulletin board, and they are so cluttered that I didn't take the time to read them. The campus newspaper really doesn't have a lot of involvement in it or extracurricular activities in it.

He did, however, watch for the events listings and flyers "that are lying on the tables in Brown Concourse."

S had enjoyed and prospered from his involvement. He got a start in the extracurriculum as "primarily something to act as an addition to just my academics. It was something to round out my education. It was something to make me more appealing to the employment area that I would be looking for." Did he find what he was looking for? "Yes, I can say that I did get what I was looking for," he said when he spoke of his position at Dow Corning. In addition,

I got to work with some of my fellow students. I have gotten the chance to meet a lot of people. I met more people being involved with Student Government for ten months than I did in the previous four years. Before that time, I would usually just pretty much go to class, and when that was over with, I would leave campus. . . . Student Government helped me get a relationship with high-level administrators by being able to play basketball with them. It made it easier to communicate with them. It seemed like we had something more in common with them than just being a part of the college community. Previous to that, it seemed like administrators were just sitting up in their offices. You never really noticed them, or it was tough for them to come out and mingle with the student body to hear their views on the many different aspects of college life.

S had more to say about the advantages of campus involvement:

When I went into Student Government, I felt it was pretty much something to put on my résumé. I feel kind of bad about that. Once I was there, I did find that I could make a difference. It was of benefit to me. It educated me in a different manner than what I could get academically. With the ACM Club, I figured it would just be a bunch of nerds sitting around playing with computers. They do other activities, too, like playing basketball. They try to have some fun here and there. . . . I do have an interest in computers, but there is other stuff to talk about than computers.

For students in general, S believed involvement was of benefit because "there are tons of clubs available on campus. There is almost something for everyone. . . . They have a target audience." He thought that the university attempted to get students involved.

They try to, but they are missing a big portion of the student body. Most of the students are commuters. . . . They are a little bit harder to get or grab their attention. . . . It is primarily trying to get students to read the information because you can't just go around and tell everyone. It would be nice if there was a big event going on to get the faculty to take a minute and tell the students about it. That is primarily the only way that you could get across to all the students if this was announced in each class. The Student Government asked the instructors to make just a brief announcement for us. I have a feeling that none of the instructors felt anything to make that announcement. I think they were not compelled to do it because there was no benefit to them.

Maintaining involvement was, according to S, most difficult.

It is the hardest part. You get some people involved with one thing, even though it is a continuing thing that happens month to month. It is hard to keep them involved with it. They may have enjoyed it at one time, but they may not want to help out in the future.

S would like to see a commuter lounge and soft music in lounge areas.

"With myself being a commuter student, if the event is not at a time that I am out here or doesn't strike my interest, I have not been interested in returning to campus to attend something. I suppose if there was someplace where I could

go and relax, I might be more apt to stay around for events." About commuter and campus involvement, S stated:

I think more should get involved, but even the Commuter Club only has ten members. . . . I think the average student here is 26 and has one child. That probably affects their involvement somewhat. . . . You see a lot of people that will come up with an excuse for just about anything, though. . . . Student Government has a presidential roundtable where we get the Student Government from other universities to come in and share. . . . It seems not to be just a problem here, but everywhere. . . . The large universities such as State have a campus newspaper that comes out daily to all the residence halls. It is actually delivered daily to the residence halls, so when they get up in the morning, they have a paper on their step. They still have difficulty with getting them involved. Here at SVSU, they do have a lot of offices that do a mailing to a selected group of people. It is not feasible to mail to all 6,500 students. Even that doesn't get a lot of students to pay attention. I know that the flyer tells you to find out more about the event, and I haven't even done that. It didn't necessarily compel me to find out more about the event. . . . Even once you get the people involved, it is hard to get them motivated to work along with the club. . . . With the ACM Club, I am trying something different. . . . I give them points for every hour that they help out. After ten points during the semester, you get a \$10 gift certificate to an established place. It seems to have gotten a few more people interested. . . . It is a shame that more people are not involved. They are really missing out by not getting involved.

Student T

Student T, a White/Caucasian, had transferred to SVSU the preceding fall, after attending Delta College for two years or four semesters. He had attended SVSU for one year or two semesters. T was a full-time senior, majoring in psychology; he worked off campus 20 to 29 hours per week. He lived in Essexville, which was between 21 and 40 minutes from the university and "could be longer if the weather is bad." His brother was attending Central Michigan University, but no one from his immediate family had yet graduated from college.

T typically held one off-campus job in the fall and winter semesters. He also was involved in an armed services reserve training program one weekend each month. T had his own car, a merit scholarship, and a grade point average of 3.5 to 4.0.

T had been involved in clubs and performing groups in high school. He had been a member of Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society for community college students, while enrolled at Delta. At the time of the study, he was treasurer of the Psychology Club and vice-president of Psi Chi, an honors group for psychology students. T had helped with the university's Health Fair, chaired the Psychology Club's Lecture Series Planning Committee, and served on the planning committee for an undergraduate conference for psychology majors.

Of his personality and its effect on his involvement, T said:

I would have to say being extroverted. I am very outgoing. I can talk to just about anyone. I have a great need for a lot of activities. I am a very active person, and I have a lot of energy. I picture myself as being very friendly. I smile a lot.

In comparison to others who might not be involved, T revealed, "I have a greater and personal need to be involved." As for staying involved, T reported:

Again, I think it is my personal need to be involved. The biggest one is that both groups are very beneficial to me. We were doing things and were active. We had a purpose. It is not like _____ at Delta, and I am not knocking them over at Delta. There was not a lot of activities that we did. Here, there are a lot of activities that are going on and stuff to look forward to, like Chicago and our lecture series. There are a lot of activities going on with the group.

His officerships had been sought because:

In all honesty, it looks good on graduate transcripts. It is something that I wanted to do. I enjoy being part of a group, but I also have a desire to

be in charge. Don't take that in a negative way. I enjoy leadership positions. I feel that I can really help our president in this next term. I enjoy it because it is extra responsibilities and extra activities.

T had been made aware of extracurricular activities in his second year at Delta. "I was sent a letter asking me to join in a Phi Theta Kappa meeting. It is a national honor society for two-year community colleges." He visited the meeting to prepare for scholarships to SVSU.

Even at Delta College, being a commuter college, relationships and interactions are brief. You don't often have the opportunity to interact. I was kind of hoping to make, not a lifelong relationship, but I wanted the opportunity to meet other people. In an adverse situation, everybody is there for the same pseudo-reasons. They want to make acquaintances.

Once at the meeting, "There was a little anxiety there. I am a college co-op for Dow Chemical, so I recognized a lot of people from the college co-op. . . . I saw these people and then was at total ease."

A faculty member, secretary, and other students helped to get T involved.

Dr. _____ talked with me about the group. He was friendly, and so was the faculty secretary. . . . I was surprised at the friendliness of the students just in the general classes. I didn't really find any cliques that you would find in high schools. That was the one thing that I did not want to get involved in. I was on the outside of cliques in high school, and I had no desire to fight that again. . . . The events that I think facilitated my involvement were the positive experiences that I had with Dr. _____, _____, and _____. Had any of them been negative, I don't think that I would be involved with any club. . . . I do remember the Club Fair. That was right after the semester started. I really didn't attend that, but I was walking by and seeing everybody out there. I now wish that I had gone to it. I was thinking about that because it would have affected me in attending different events.

T had spent evenings at social gatherings at the homes of two of his instructors. He believed that these events and a bake sale he had helped with had been positive experiences.

Other people in T's life either had limited or really had no effect on his involvement. His comments follow.

My mother never graduated from high school and doesn't really understand what goes on around campuses. She is a nice woman, but she just doesn't know. She probably does not have any idea of what I am doing. . . . None of [my high school friends] came here. I am rapidly losing contact with them. . . . My brother used to go to Delta and now goes to Central Michigan. We are not extremely close, and he doesn't tell me how he feels. . . . [The off-campus supervisor] is not hindering me, but he is not assisting me. I have to work when I have to work. He said school is school, and what I do for the Psychology Club and Psi-Chi is fun. He doesn't think of that as a part of school.

Student T was seeking something to put on his vita for graduate school and to "meet new friends" by joining up with Psi Chi and the Psychology Club.

When asked whether he had gained those things, he said:

In both respects, yes definitely. I would have to say if you were going on a percent scale, I would have to say 110 percent. It was more than I had ever anticipated. That is really not exaggerating. Every friend that I have is either a result of Psi Chi or the Psychology Club. I can't think of a person that I am associated with or say hello to that has not come from one of these two groups. . . . I did find out about the undergraduate convention that is going to be held here. I was strongly influenced to present at it by the Psi Chi group.

When asked about the benefits of involvement, T responded as follows:

A student that is more involved with their studies, in my own personal opinion, is taking more pride in their work and studies and does better. I know that my grades have gone up from Delta to here. I can attribute all of that to involvement. I can certainly say that just from the fact that I know when I come here that there are all these people who are going to see me and say hello. I have all my friends; that makes me want to come to school more. Even if I didn't have any friends, I would still come here because I want a good education. I am just saying that it really facilitates it. Even though, if you know that you are going to just hear a lecture today and you can probably get the notes from a friend, you know that you are going to run into friends out here and maybe end up doing something. You could end up making plans or doing them with your friends. I think that it is important that students become involved with their campus

because it is their campus. That is kind of the way I feel. I feel like it is my campus. I have no problem going to Central to use their library because they have more resources there. I have no problem saying that I am a student at Saginaw Valley. I think a part of that is because I feel so comfortable and welcomed here. I think we have very strong staff people here and in our departments. I have a friend that is a co-worker at Dow Chemical. He does not get involved with the extracurricular activities at all. I do tend to find that he has a negative attitude towards school. . . . This is a place where he has to go. I wonder if this could be changed or altered more if he became involved.

The extracurricular event that had been most significant to T was coordinating the undergraduate conference. Next most meaningful was the lecture series.

It was the most meaningful and significant because it pertains most directly to me at this time because everything I do is geared toward graduate school. That was the one that put me in the best light. It is going to be the one that assists me and makes me most visible. Then, the lecture series because it gave me an opportunity to interact closer with a couple of faculty members that I have not had the opportunity to do so before.

His most significant responsibilities had been

. . . the responsibility of being the treasurer of the Psychology Club and just being a general officer. Our one goal was to raise enough money for Chicago. We had a real problem with membership. It was the responsibility of all of the officers to help out. . . . The only one running close would be the undergraduate conference. Everybody had various duties, such as getting tables, making sure we had food, and other things. We had to be here on the day and direct people. Actually, I would say that these two are tied. The undergraduate conference is a statewide and neighboring-state conference for psychology majors.

The university showed its support of the extracurriculum in the following ways, according to T.

From the point of the faculty and from what I have seen in terms of the club fair and the posters, I would have to say definitely that they want participation. I see a lot of things up for Student Government, wishing that they would get involved. . . . I read the Valley Vanguard pretty regularly,

and I notice that they will list in an article the things that clubs are doing. They printed an article for Psi-Chi about our honor chords. . . . Plus, I would also have to say the allowing of postings around the campus. I think that this is very important. I think the university can come up with reasons why that would not be allowed.

Time was a great limiter for T. He expressed this throughout his interview.

I simply have time constraints with work that Student Government would be too much responsibility for me to handle. . . . In terms of commuters, especially in my case, my time is taxed to the limit. I don't have any spare time. The time I have for my clubs is the time that I make for them. . . . I do work about 30 hours a week and take about 18 or 19 credits each semester. My time is limited. I do try to spend as much time as possible, but I feel my time is limited. . . . I am a member of the National Guard. One weekend each month I have to go up to Grayling. . . . That would be a limiting factor.

T thought that students sustain involvement only if clubs have a course of action and activities are rewarding.

The one thing that kept me involved is the worthwhile activities. You have to have activities first of all because, without them, people are just not going to show up. They have to be worthwhile and work towards a goal like Chicago or the lecture series. That is the problem that we had with the Psychology Club. We didn't have any direction like the Psi Chi had with the conference. They did not have direction, and it definitely showed. We did find direction. . . . The direction we found was because we, the members, focused on trying to raise enough money for Chicago.

He also believed that involvement would be nurtured if meeting procedures were improved. "I am not saying that we should have a lot of meetings because it is a good way to deter people from it. You have to have meetings and maybe post the minutes. That was great if you could not make the meetings and you could find out what happened."

Some final comments from T on commuting students and involvement are provided here. Regarding special services or activities for commuting students,

T said:

I don't think that there is a policy of practice that could be implemented that would be practical. There is no policy. The one thing that I was thinking of is having meetings held in the evenings, but that is up to the clubs to decide, not the university.

He compared SVSU to Central Michigan University:

Central Michigan is heavy into the Greek system, and that is one thing that I hate because right there it is making students deterred from getting involved. . . . That really splits up a school and defines the haves and the have nots. . . . It is good [at SVSU] 'cause there are no distinctions. . . . In terms of commuting students becoming involved, it would have to be something that is worthwhile. I am not saying that there are groups or affiliations on campus that are not worthwhile, but it would be a lot easier for a dorm or an apartment student to get involved with something just for something to do. . . . Sometimes, when they say commuter students, you immediately think of the working family or the nontraditional students. I could be more of a traditional student in that sense. I came right out of college and go to school full-time. I didn't start a family, and in no sense am I a nontraditional student. Commuter students do get misrepresented and misunderstood.

Data Analysis--Question by Question

In this section, data given in response to each question are summarized.

1. **Name:** The names of interview participants were provided in response to the first question.
2. **Address:** The interviewees provided their addresses. From these addresses, it was found that 75% of those interviewed lived in Saginaw or Bay City, Michigan. The others interviewed lived in smaller communities within Saginaw County or Bay County.

3. **Phone:** Interviewees provided their telephone numbers.
4. **Date of birth:** The average age of the student interviewees was 21.2 years. At the time of the first interview, 2 students were 19, 2 were 20, 10 were 21, 4 were 22, and 2 were 23 years of age.
5. **Gender:** The study group included 11 women and 9 men.
6. **What is your anticipated major field of study?** The study group comprised two students majoring in biology, one student majoring in business management, four students majoring in computer information systems, two students majoring in communication and theater, two students majoring in criminal justice, two students majoring in education, one student majoring in marketing, one student majoring in nursing, two students majoring in psychology, one student majoring in social work, and one student majoring in sociology.
7. **How many college credits have you received to date?** At the time of the initial interview, the average number of academic credits completed was 90.4 or just below SVSU's senior class standing, which required a minimum of 93 credits.
8. **How many terms have you attended SVSU?** With this question, the interviewer asked the question as shown and then asked the interviewees to clarify with number of years. The average number of terms reported by the students interviewed was 7.7 terms. They reported an average of 3.25 years in attendance.

The average number of terms and years in attendance for nontransfer students was 8.6 terms or 3.6 years. The average number of terms in attendance for transfer students was 5 terms or 2.2 years.

For this question, the words "terms" and "semesters" were used interchangeably. Interviewees also were asked to count spring and summer as one term.

9. **In the fall and winter semesters, do you typically maintain part-time or full-time enrollment status?** Each of the 20 students typically maintained full-time enrollment status in both fall and winter semesters. At SVSU, 12 academic credits or more is considered full-time status. SVSU classes are generally assigned three credits each. Hence, a student carrying 12 credits would be taking four classes.

10. **Do you typically work while enrolled in college classes?** Nineteen of the 20 interview participants stated that they usually worked while enrolled in classes.

11. **If you work, how many hours per week do you typically spend working while enrolled in classes?** Two of the students interviewed worked ten hours or less each week. Five worked between 11 and 19 hours each week. Eleven spent 20 to 29 hours working each week, and 1 interviewee worked 40 or more hours each week.

12. **If you typically work, do you work on campus, off campus, or both while attending college?** Eight interviewees worked on campus,

whereas seven worked off campus. Four of those interviewed worked both on and off campus.

13. **Approximately how far do you live from SVSU?** Twelve of those students interviewed lived 20 minutes or less from SVSU. Seven lived between 21 and 40 minutes from the campus. Only one of the students interviewed lived more than 40 minutes from SVSU.

14. **Which of your immediate family members have taken any college classes?** Eleven of the students interviewed had mothers who had taken college classes. Six of the participants had fathers who had been enrolled in college. The sisters of five interviewees and the brothers of nine had been enrolled in college classes. Two interview participants reported having no family members who had been enrolled in college.

15. **Which of your immediate family members have graduated from college?** Eleven of the students interviewed reported having no college graduates in their immediate families. In the case of four interviewees, the mother was a college graduate. Two of the interviewees had fathers who had graduated from college. At least one sister of two interview participants and at least one brother of four had graduated from college.

16. **In which (if any) extracurricular activities did you involve yourself in high school?** Fifteen of the student interviewees had been participants in high school clubs. Fourteen reported having participated in high school sports. Ten had had off-campus volunteer commitments in high school. Eight had participated in performing groups, and three had been involved in high

school governing groups. Two participants reported other involvements, which included membership in the Junior Achievement organization and in a computer learning program sponsored by Electronic Data Systems. One student had not been involved in the high school extracurriculum.

Using the same data to review amount of involvement, it can be seen that five interviewees had been involved in at least four different types of high school activities. Seven had been involved in at least three, three in two types of activities, and four in one type. Again, only one interviewee reported no involvement in organized high school activities.

17. Which of the following words would you use to describe your participation in classroom discussions: very frequent, fairly frequent, or rare? Five students characterized their participation in discussions as very frequent. Thirteen said that their classroom involvement was fairly frequent, and two reported theirs to be rare.

18. What is your best approximation of your current cumulative grade point average? Four interview participants responded to this question by saying that their grade point averages were between 3.5 and 4.0. Seven believed that their grade point averages fell in the 3.0 to 3.5 range. Eight estimated 2.5 to 2.9, and one approximated having a 2.0 to 2.4 grade point average.

19. What financial aid (if any) have you received since attending college? Eighteen of the student interviewees had received some sort of financial assistance. Fifteen received merit scholarships. On-campus

employment programs aided 11 financially. Eight received grant assistance based on financial need. Five had taken out loans to subsidize their education, and two had received no financial assistance.

20a. When did you first become aware of opportunities for extracurricular involvement (i.e., activities, clubs, performing groups, student government, and publications)? Two members of the study group knew of college extracurricular activities in high school. Another six learned through new-student orientation, whereas three learned through written materials. An on-campus job led four student interviewees to their knowledge of the extracurriculum, whereas another became aware at a club fair. Finally, one learned of opportunities for campus involvement in that student's second year at a local community college.

20b. How far along in college were you at this time? Two interview participants had been in high school when they first became aware of opportunities for extracurricular involvement. Four had learned of the extracurriculum sometime between their senior year of high school and their freshman year of college. Seven had been in the first semester of their freshman year of college, and three had been in the second semester of their freshman year of college; one had completed two semesters of college. One realized that college offered out-of-class opportunities the first semester after transferring to SVSU.

21a and b. How did you become aware of opportunities for campus involvement? Most of the students who were interviewed became aware of

opportunities for campus involvement through other students, notices posted on campus, new-student orientation, and direct home mailings. Publications, faculty, staff members, tours, presentations, and word of mouth also assisted the interview participants in learning of opportunities for collegiate involvement.

22a. **What was the name of the first college event or meeting you attended?** Of the activities mentioned, 13 were the meetings of student organizations or governing groups, 5 were campus events, and 1 was a campus leadership program.

23a and b. **When did you attend your first college event or meeting?** Seventeen of the 20 interviewees attended their first college event or meeting within the first year of attendance at SVSU. The remaining three began with involvement in the first semester of their sophomore year.

24a and b. **When did you first think about or consider attending a college event or meeting?** Of the 20 commuting students interviewed, 12 considered involvement after talking with another student or after being encouraged to involvement by a staff or faculty member. Some other things that caused the students to ponder involvement were desiring activity, a club fair, a direct-mail piece, and the maintenance of a scholarship.

25a and b. **Why did you attend the event or meeting?** The responses given most often were to explore an interest, to meet people, a desire to be involved, to learn more about a club, for fun, and due to the suggestion of another student. Other reasons given for attending a first meeting or event were to enhance an application or résumé, to fulfill a job requirement, to fulfill the duty

of a participant, to associate with others in a field of study, to continue with an activity of previous involvement, to meet with the cast, and to commemorate a national leader.

26a and b. **With whom (if anyone) did you attend the meeting or event?** Eleven of the 20 participants attended their first campus function alone. Six attended with a friend, one with a relative, and another with his job colleague.

27a and b. **How did you feel when you first attended the function?** The words used by 12 of the 20 study participants to describe feelings indicated discomfort and anxiety. Four interviewees expressed feelings of comfort. Others had been required to attend or could not remember feelings from the past experience.

28a and b. **Is there anything that influenced your extracurricular involvement in a positive way?** Eight interviewees had been influenced by the encouragement of other SVSU students. Another five had been influenced by the urgings of SVSU faculty and staff members. Many said that they enjoyed or desired involvement. Some reported the influence of earlier involvement, whereas others said that they became involved to meet others and make connections. A few of the interviewees had been motivated to participate in the extracurriculum for personal growth, for fun, to fill time between classes, or in response to a mailed invitation.

29a. **What publications or promotional pieces, if any, influenced your extracurricular involvement?** Half of those interviewed said that the signs and notices posted around campus assisted their involvement. The Valley

Vanguard, SVSU's student newspaper; Student Happenings, a weekly listing of events; and KIOSK, a newsletter published twice a year, were also mentioned frequently as influential pieces. Printed materials reported less often as being influential were mailed invitations, sports schedules, club listings, news clippings, and notices posted on faculty office doors.

30a and b. **If there were any students or any other people—on campus or off campus—who influenced your involvement at SVSU, please provide the following information: Name, Position or Relation to Interviewee, On Campus or Off Campus.** Sixteen of the 20 commuting students interviewed told of at least one other SVSU student who had influenced their own involvement. Parents, staff, and faculty members also were mentioned frequently as affecting extracurricular involvement.

31a and b. **What, if any, events or activities influenced your extracurricular involvement?** The majority of responses given to this question dealt with club membership or involvement through assisting with or attending events. On-campus positions (both paid and volunteer), activities related to students' major, and the interaction with others were among the replies provided less frequently.

32a and b. **When you first became involved in campus life, what, if anything, were you hoping to gain as a result of campus involvement?** Many of those interviewed sought to meet others and to establish connections through extracurricular participation. Others wanted to be a part of campus life and of the university. Some wanted to build skills and prepare themselves for

graduate school or the world of work. A few desired an understanding of others, personal growth, experience, new opportunities, to gain acceptance, or to have fun and lessen boredom.

33a. **Did you gain what you had hoped to?** All 20 participants had a favorable response to this question.

34a and b. **You may have started out in extracurricular activities with certain goals in mind and found other benefits. What are those unexpected benefits?** There were numerous answers to this question. Among the unexpected benefits related to the interviewer were working with others; meeting people; building contacts; uncovering job opportunities; becoming more understanding and open-minded; gaining confidence; finding a group of people with similar interests; gaining knowledge of a field of study, the university, or self; discovering hidden talents; attaining skills and a group of friends for discussion; learning about family, culture, and politics; becoming organized; doing things never imagined; reducing stress; realizing a sense of spirituality; and obtaining a desire to graduate from SVSU.

35a and b. **In what ways is campus involvement of benefit to students?** Half of the study participants spoke of a sense of belonging or unity as a benefit of involvement to students. Other benefits of involvement mentioned were friendship, support, easier access to faculty and administration, bringing together people of similar interests, broadening understanding and appreciation, using time constructively, active involvement in learning, becoming well-rounded, doing something more than studying, getting better grades, finding study



partners, exploring interests, becoming more organized, having lots to do, providing something for everyone, gaining confidence or pride in work, preparing for employment, locating jobs, and enriching campus life.

36a. In your opinion, does SVSU encourage the involvement of its students? Fourteen of the interviewees expressed a belief that SVSU did encouragement involvement. The remaining six did not give definitive responses, but they did not say no.

36b. If SVSU does encourage the involvement of its students, how does it do this? The university's encouragement of extracurricular involvement had been shown to most of the students interviewed through student organizations, services to student organizations, notices, events, low admission fees, accessible faculty and staff members, mailings, and informational pieces.

36c. If SVSU does not encourage the involvement of its students, why do you say this? One participant thought that the university did little to get students involved. It was his opinion that students got other students involved and that the university was a minor part of this process. Another thought that counselors did not mention involvement, and yet another said that not being a big sports school was a reason for lack of involvement.

37a. How might SVSU better encourage the involvement of its students? According to the study participants, involvement could be improved with class announcements, convenient starting times, faculty and staff support of campus life, more activities, improved advertisement of and information on campus resources, and improved training to student organizations, as well as by

providing students with easier access to clubs. Other suggested methods of enhancing involvement were emphasizing involvement during new-student orientation, establishing more Greek organizations on campus, planning a unique event each year, instituting a point system for involvement within a club, and nurturing more active and visible student organizations.

38a. What would it take to encourage commuting students to become involved? Most of the answers given to this question indicated that commuting students need to be educated to the benefits of involvement, times and services should be convenient to the commuting student, programs offered must be worth the investment of time, communication must be quick and handy, and commuters will need to be encouraged to involvement and to feel welcomed by the university. Other ideas for increasing commuting students' involvement included a comfortable study area to encourage interaction between classes, providing free refreshments, strengthening club contacts, and that they may need to try clubs out until they find one that suits their needs.

39a and b. I will now present you with four separate sets of cards.

On each card, you will find an item that:

- 1. May have assisted you in becoming involved or enhanced your ability to become involved.**
- 2. May have assisted you in not becoming involved or limited your ability to become involved.**
- 3. May not have affected your involvement.**

4. You may be uncertain about the effect of the item on your involvement.
5. Does not apply to your situation.

Take the cards from me one at a time and place them on the pile that most appropriately describes the relationship between the item written on the card and your own situation. Once you have placed the card where you want it, tell me why you placed it as you did. Please feel free to make comments or to ask questions during this exercise.

The first set of cards contains items that are frequently mentioned in relation to commuting students. [Factors presented in this group were access to transportation, available money, available time, class assignments/study schedule, employment/work schedule, family obligations, off-campus volunteer commitments, and travel time to campus.]

Most of the factors presented did not seem to affect this group of students. However, ten or half of the students interviewed stated that access to transportation assisted their campus involvement. Most explained that they had a car of their own. Six believed that available time assisted their involvement, whereas 11 thought it limited their involvement. Other limiting factors were class assignments or study schedules for 12 of the students and employment or work schedules for 14 participants.

It has been written that family obligations often restrict commuting students' involvement. In this group, six participants described family obligations as limiting, and three said that these obligations actually assisted their

involvement. Those who found family to be an asset to involvement typically mentioned the family activities and recognition programs made available to families by SVSU.

40a, b, c, and d. **Again, I am asking you to stack some cards. These cards represent people who may have influenced your involvement. The stipulations are the same as in the previous exercise. Do you have any questions? Don't forget to tell me why you placed the cards as you did. [Factors presented in this group were admissions representatives, academic advisers, brother/sister, club adviser, club member, staff member, college friends, high school friends, mentor/significant adult role model, off-campus supervisor, on-campus supervisor, orientation leader, parents, upperclassmen.]**

The people who seemed to affect involvement most readily were club members, club advisers, staff members, college friends, parents, mentors, and faculty members. At least 13 students said each one of these groups of people had assisted their involvement. Nineteen mentioned the influence of other club members. Other persons said to have influenced involvement were friends, relatives, and high school mentors. The groups of people who were reported in more than half of the interviews as having no effect on extracurricular involvement were admissions representatives, academic advisers, brothers and sisters, high school friends, off-campus supervisors, on-campus supervisors, and orientation leaders.



The off-campus supervisor was indicated most often as limiting involvement. Five students told of this situation. Four shared that their high school friends had a negative influence on their involvement. Three said that an orientation leader had assisted in limiting their extracurricular involvement. One mentioned the negative influence of an admissions representative, and another said the same of a parent. No one mentioned that a spouse or health had limited involvement.

41a and b. **Again, a set of cards. This one contains activities, events, and publications that may have affected your decision to become involved in the extracurriculum. This procedure is the same as in the last exercise. Any questions? Again, a reminder to tell me why you placed the cards as you did. [Factors presented in this group were admissions material, Card's Party/club fair, catalog, flyers/banners, mailings, club listings, event listings, local newspaper, new-student orientation, admissions presentation, radio, student handbook, student newspaper, and television.]**

When asked which activities or publications influenced the interviewees' extracurricular involvement, a high number of respondents indicated that these items may have assisted in campus involvement: events listings, posted banners and flyers, student newspaper, mailing, and the Card's Party/club fair. Nineteen students responded favorably to events listings, 18 to posted banners and flyers, 15 to the student newspaper, 13 to mailings, and 10 to the club fair. Whereas only one of the items--an admissions presentation--was mentioned as limiting



(and for only one person), several seemed to have had little effect on the students' involvement. Among those were admission materials, the college catalog, club listings, the local newspaper, new-student orientation, admissions presentations, radio, the student handbook, and television.

42a and b. **These cards provide possible reasons for involvement. Follow the directions provided earlier. Any questions? Again, please remember to tell me why you have placed your cards as you have. [Factors presented in this group were To be a member of an organization affiliated with major, To be a part of a good organization, To be with friends, To build communication skills, To build leadership skills, To explore an area of interest, To fill time, To find people with similar interests, To get to know faculty and staff, To learn to handle situations, To meet a member of the opposite sex, To meet new people, To prepare for a career, To strengthen skills in an area of study, and To strengthen résumé.]**

Most of the goals presented were seen as having a positive influence on the involvement of at least half of the study participants. All 20 of the interviewees became involved to meet people. Nineteen wanted to explore an area of interest. Sixteen sought to build communications, another 16 to build leadership skills, and yet another 16 to find people with similar interests. Fifteen interviewees said that these goals assisted in their involvement: to be a member of an organization affiliated with my major, to be a part of a good organization, and to prepare for a career. To be with friends and to strengthen my résumé

were reported by 13 students each to have been goals that assisted their involvement. Twelve wanted to strengthen skills in their areas of study, 11 to learn how to handle situations, and 10 to get to know faculty and staff. Meeting a member of the opposite sex was a motivator for only three people.

Only one of the goals provided was seen as limiting, and that was to only one person. The goal seen as limiting was to fill time.

43a, b, c & d. **Of these four broad categories--Campus Events, Campus Publications, People You Know, and Your Own Personal Goals--which was most important in your decision(s) to become involved? Second in importance? Third in importance? Fourth in importance?**

Of the categories given, 14 students replied that personal goals were most important, and 6 believed that people were most important. Second in importance for the greatest number of interviewees was the influence of people. Eleven provided this response. Third in rank order was campus events, receiving the endorsement of 12 interviewees. Finally, 14 found that publications were least significant to their involvement.

44. **Is there anything more that you'd like to say about commuting students at SVSU?** When asked whether there was anything more to say about commuting students' involvement, five said that they believed that such involvement was difficult to achieve. Two participants said each of these things--that commuters must feel welcome and that they must see the benefits of involvement. One participant said that he thought commuters were misunderstood.



45. **Is there anything else that you'd like to say about campus involvement at SVSU?** When asked whether they had more to say about involvement at SVSU, seven students said no. Four interviewees reported that SVSU did a good job of involving students, and three said that more should get involved. Two participants provided each of these, among other replies: Commuters must see the benefits of involvement, more programs should be designed for commuting students, and more students are becoming involved than in the past.

46a. **Are you a transfer student?** Five of the 20 interviewees responded affirmatively. Fifteen replied that they were not transfer students.

46b. **If yes, what college(s) did you attend prior to attending SVSU?** Three of the five transfer students had previously attended the local community college, Delta College. One had transferred from Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek, Michigan, and another from Daytona Beach Community College in Daytona Beach, Florida.

46c. **If yes, how many years and semesters did you attend your previous institution?** Three of the five transfer-student interviewees had attended their previous college for two years or four semesters. Those three were the ones who had attended Delta College. The other two had attended a two-year college for one year or two semesters. The average of these figures was 1.6 years or 3.2 semesters.

46d. **If yes, how many years and semesters have you attended SVSU?** Each of the responses was different. One transfer student had

attended SVSU for one year or two semesters, another two years or four semesters, another two years or five semesters, another three years or six semesters, and still another three years or eight semesters. The average length of time in attendance at SVSU for study-group transfer students was 2.2 years or five semesters.

47. **Do you have your own car?** Each of the 20 respondents did drive his or her own car.

48. **Do you typically hold one or two jobs during the fall and winter semesters?** Eleven of the interview participants typically held one job during the fall and winter semesters; nine usually held two jobs. The question was not applicable to the one student who generally did not work during the fall and winter semesters.

49. **Verbally list all the college clubs with which you have been involved. If you are a transfer student, include clubs from your previous institution.** The 20 students participating in the study represented a good cross-section of the university's 50-some student organizations and other types of involvement. Twenty-five student organizations and nine other forms of extracurricular involvement were mentioned in response to this question.

Ten of the student interview participants were or had been a part of the SVSU Student Government. The Association for Computing Machinery and the Hispanic Student Association accounted for four interviewees each. Three students belonged to the Psychology Club; another three belonged to the Science Club. The Commuter Club; Honors Program; International Students



Association; Polish Students Association; Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society for students of two-year colleges; and SafeHaven, a club designed to promote the prevention of substance abuse, had each involved at least two of the students in their activities.

One of the interviewees had participated in each of these groups or activities: the Alliance for the Performing Arts, Alpha Mu Gamma--an honor society for foreign-language students, the Black Students Association, Club Red Tour Guides, cheerleading, College Republicans, the Communication Guild, the Delta College Environment Committee, Delta Sigma Pi--a fraternity for business majors, the Health Professionals Honor Society, intramural sports at Delta College, the marching band, Psi Chi--a national honor society for psychology majors, the Racquetball Club, the Student Nurses Association, the Student Social Work Organization, the Tennis Club, the unofficial Smoker's Club, the Wargames Club, the Valley Vanguard--SVSU's student newspaper, and the Young Democrats.

50a and b. **Have your extracurricular experiences been linked in any way? Please explain.** Twelve participants replied that their extracurricular experiences had been connected with one another in some fashion. Seven believed that they had not been linked. One participant believed that her out-of-class experiences had been linked at SVSU, but not at her previous institution.

The explanations provided for linkages usually concerned how one club experience led to knowledge of another or of a job opportunity. The reverse was

reported as well. That is to say, on-campus jobs were mentioned as a source of information about student organizations and other avenues for involvement.

51a. **Which of these ethnic categorizations most appropriately describes your background?** None of the participants was of American Indian, Pacific Islander, or Asian descent. One was of Black/African American origin, 5 were of Hispanic origin, and 13 were White/Caucasian.

52a and b. **Do you have any final comments, suggestions, or questions? If yes, please proceed.** Only three of the participants had a response to this question, the last one of the second interview. Seventeen did not respond. Among the comments of the three students who responded were that clubs are important to a sense of togetherness, that clubs need financial support from the university, and that clubs could benefit from items discarded by university offices. One student reported that he was working on a club bulletin board, and another said that promotional pieces needed to be made bolder.

53a and b. **As you think about yourself as a person, what are the personal characteristics that you have that led to your being and staying involved?** The ability to work well with others and being outgoing were stated as important personal assets to involvement by 11 of the 20 interviewees. Seven referred to their high energy or to being easily bored. These seven saw campus involvement as a channel for excess energy. Three said that they were persistent. Another three enjoyed positions of leadership, and two were goal oriented and determined. Other traits mentioned were honesty, willingness to

help, intolerance for imperfection, a desire to meet new people, and a wish to build a foundation for future involvement.

54a and b. **When you compare yourself to other students, what do you think it is about you that helps you to be and stay involved?** When asked to compare themselves to others who might not be as involved, ten of the commuting students interviewed said that they believed they had a greater need to be involved or greater enthusiasm and drive. Six remarked that they thought they worked with others quite well. Persistence and enjoyment were reported as the qualities of three interviewees each. Maturity and time management were characteristic of two students each. Last, one student stated that his organizational skills assisted in his involvement.

55a and b. **Once you became involved, why did you stay involved?** The reason that 13 interviewees gave for maintaining involvement was meeting and working with others. Ten said that involvement was fun, enjoyable, or exciting. Four reported that they learned skills, and two each said involvement was addictive, beneficial, confidence building, or time filling, or that they were praised for their involvement. One participant enjoyed the opportunity to network, another found that involvement opened other opportunities, and still another appreciated the chance to work with people who understood each other's interest in theater.

56a. **I'd like to double check your club memberships and the officer's position(s) that you have held, if any. Please restate the clubs with which you have been involved. Tell me if you were an officer or a**

member, when you became involved with this club, and when your involvement ended. For instance, say "I am a member of the Wargames Club. I've never held an officer's position. I began as a member in my freshman year and quit the club in my junior year." The data associated with this question show that 18 of the 20 participants had held an officer's position in at least one campus organization. Eleven of those 18 obtained one official position less than one year after joining an organization, and five were elected to office one year after declaring their membership in an organization. Thirteen of the 15 nontransfer students and 4 of the 5 transfer students joined an SVSU student organization during their first year at the university.

The types of extracurricular participation for each individual were provided in the students' profiles and summaries of interviews. The only types of involvement stated here that were not stated as a response to Question 49 were orientation leading, the Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee, SVSU's all-university Environment Committee, and tour guide coordination. None of these additional activities would classify as a student organization.

57a. If you have been an officer, how did you obtain the position?

Seventeen of the interviewees were elected to the officer's position. One was appointed. The question did not apply to two of the students who were interviewed.

57b. If you have been an officer, why did you seek the position?

Ten students sought an official position because they thought they would be good leaders and wanted to improve the organization. Three of those

interviewed had been encouraged by others to run for office. Two were experienced officers, whereas another two wanted to improve their chances of employment or entry into graduate school. One person desired the experience. Three had not sought their positions, and for two the question was not applicable.

58a. Are there any other types of involvement--such as committee work, helping with an activity, being in a performance, involvement through an on-campus job, or intramural sports--that you have had? If so, please state the activity, your role, when you began involvement, and how long your involvement continued. For example, say: "I was the Chairperson of the Program Board Fun and Games Committee. I began when I was a junior and quit that same year." Only 1 of the 20 study participants participated just in student organizations outside of the classroom. In addition to their club involvement, the remaining 19 involved themselves in a number of activities. Each individual's involvement was illustrated in the individual profiles and interview summaries.

A group snapshot of other types of involvement is provided here. Three students each participated in these out-of-class learning experiences: the Distinction in Leadership Award program, working as an intern for Dow Chemical or Dow Corning, working as a secretary to the Student Government, being a member of the Student Government Budget Committee, or volunteering to assist with the Valley Festival of the Fine Arts. Each of the following programs, projects, and services was served by at least two of those students interviewed: the "Adopt-a-School program, the Curriculum and Academic Planning

Committee, the Office of Health Services, intramural sports teams, the Office of Minority Services, the Student Government Fall Picnic, the Student Government International Student Committee, the Student Government Library Committee, the Student Government Spring Fling Committee, and the Talent Show. One interviewee each reported working with the following programs or offices: Alumni Phone-a-thons, the Bilingual-Bicultural Banquet, the all-university Campus Life Team, a local church picnic, a confirmation class, the Family Festival Day Planning Committee, Family Festival Day itself, the Health Fair, a Hispanic Student Association Planning Committee, Homecoming, local Hugh O'Brien Leadership Seminars, the all-university Institutional Review Board, a Job Fair, the King-Chavez-Parks program, the annual Kwanzaa celebration, the Student Leadership Recognition Banquet, the Learning Assistance Center, the swimming pool staff, a Lock-In, the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Commemoration Dinner, the Math Curriculum Committee, a meeting with the university president to discuss the concerns of Hispanic students, the Minority Services Tour Guide program, the "Mr. Rogers" program, the Performing Arts Series, the Office of Placement, the Psychology Lecture Series, the Psychology Undergraduate Student Conference, the Student Government Bills Committee, the Student Government Computer Committee, the Student Government Inter-Club Council, the Student Government Multi-Cultural Committee, the Student Government Pride Committee, the Student Government Tuition Committee, theatrical performances, the "Should I Be Thinking of College Now?" programs, swim

meets, and Thumb Day, which is an admissions project designed to recruit high school students from the "thumb" area of Michigan.

59. **The third interview was improperly numbered. There is no**

Question 59. Proceed to Question 60a and b.

60a and b. **As you think back on the organizations and groups with which you have been involved, are there some that are more significant and/or meaningful? And why?** In response to the first part of this question, interviewees mentioned a particular campus involvement; responses varied. In answering the second part of the question, half of those interviewed expressed their most meaningful or significant experiences as being ones that provided a good learning experience or aided them in building skills. Seven found it significant in gaining a position of responsibility or the opportunity to be heard. Meeting new people and helping with a career were important to three student interviewees. Fun, visibility, and learning to speak out were of meaning to three different individuals.

61a and b. **As you think back on the activities and events with which you have been involved, are there any that were more significant and/or meaningful? And why?** To this question, nine of the study participants responded with an answer that told of an activity or project that they had planned and coordinated. Six found meaning in holding a position of responsibility. Three participants mentioned attendance at a particular activity. One individual found it meaningful to be working with other students, and another was not able to isolate one activity as the only one of meaning or significance.

62a and b. **As you think back on the specific responsibilities that you have had with any of your campus involvements, are there any that were more meaningful and/or significant? And why?** When this question was asked, 15 of the 20 commuting student interviewees reported that they found holding a position of authority to have had a great effect on them and their lives. Two individuals found each of their responsibilities to have been important. One person was most affected by serving other students, another by speaking at a banquet, and another by completing a task that other club members considered undesirable.

63a and b. **We've talked about how the university—its staff, faculty, and students—might get people involved. How do you think it might keep students involved? Any other suggestions?** Six of the students interviewed believed that the university might maintain involvement by encouraging and recognizing students. Another six recommended worthwhile and interesting programs. The support of faculty and staff members through involvement, advice, and promotion was suggested by four students. Two interviewees held that student positions of importance would enhance involvement. One participant proposed that clubs become more inviting. Another implied that clubs need better direction and goals. Finally, two interviewees maintained that students do not want to be involved, and if they lack that desire the university would be unable to involve them.

64a and b. **What special sorts of activities or services might the university need to provide to keep commuter students involved? Anything**

else? Although only one of the following recommendations was made by five persons and the rest were suggested by four or fewer, responses to this question follow: (a) plan events and building hours to suit commuters' schedules; (b) set up a commuter lounge area; (c) sponsor more family programs; (d) provide free refreshments at events; (e) initiate intramural and recreational programs for commuting students; (f) provide easier access to club information, meetings, and minutes; (g) organize larger events; and (h) play soft music in lounges.

65a and b. **As you look back over this interview experience, is there anything that you have learned about yourself, commuters, or involvement that might be helpful to the university in involving students and particularly commuting students?** Among the responses given, there were suggestions that commuter involvement is difficult and for an increase in the support of the faculty and staff. Recommendations not made in response to earlier questions included providing commuting students with an opportunity to store food, day care, locating events in areas of high commuter traffic, establishing a team of people who are good at involving others, and that freshmen should learn time management. Three study participants were pleased with the opportunity to review their own campus involvement.

66a and b. **Do you have any other closing comments, questions, or suggestions? Anything else?** Responses to this question included no comment, expressions of gratitude, and more. One study participant suggested guest cards for campus programs. Another was pleased with a recent newspaper article illustrating the assistance one involved student received from

another student, and another respondent said that having a mentor assisted him in involvement. One individual referred to campus involvement as "something special," and someone else told that involvement had truly enriched his college experience. The response that is most pertinent to this dissertation was, "I'm glad you're doing this because this is a commuter school."

Factors Common to Study Participants

Upon careful review of the interview transcripts, the researcher found the following items to be common to the study participants. First, it should be known that each was required to be an 18- to 23-year-old commuting student who had never lived on a college campus. They were all members of SVSU campus organizations or governing bodies and held sophomore, junior, or senior class standing.

Beyond these requirements, each of the students lived in Saginaw or Bay County and drove his or her own car. All but one of the students commuted to the university for 40 minutes or less.

Only 1 of the 20 students had not participated in high school extracurricular activities, and only two reported their classroom participation to be rare (as opposed to fairly frequent or very frequent). Nineteen of the 20 had grade point averages above a 2.5; 11 had above a 3.0. Eighteen of the 20 received financial assistance; 15 held merit scholarships.

Most of the interviewees will be first-generation college graduates, as only 6 of the 20 had parents who possessed undergraduate degrees. Fifteen had attended SVSU since starting college; five were transfer students.

Seventeen of the study participants had learned about the college extracurriculum before the end of their first year of college. Seventeen had become involved within the same time frame. Eleven of the 17 had attended their first campus event or meeting alone; six had attended with a friend.

All of the study participants were encouraged by another person to participate in extracurricular activities. The individuals most frequently mentioned in relation to encouragement were other students, particularly those who were club members. Club advisers, faculty members, staff members, parents, and other relatives were also reported as persons who recommended campus involvement to the study participants.

Among other objectives, each of the 20 participants had hoped to meet people as a result of campus involvement. Nineteen of them desired to explore an area of interest. Each of the interviewees had received what he or she initially had sought from campus involvement.

The printed materials used most frequently by this group for the purpose of learning about campus functions were those that were readily accessible and short. Included were flyers, banners, ceiling signs, a weekly listing of events, a direct-mail newsletter, and the student newspaper.

When asked about personal characteristics that assisted in their involvement, 11 of the interviewees stated that they were outgoing or worked well



with others. Eight reported being likely to lead, goal oriented, determined, or persistent. Seven said that they had high energy and were easily bored. Campus involvement afforded these students an outlet for their vitality and drive. When asked what kept them involved and what was meaningful in their out-of-class experiences, most spoke of a position of responsibility or authority and/or coordinating a program or project.

Interpretation of the Data

In Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, Patton (1990) stated:

One of the biggest dangers for evaluators doing qualitative analysis is that, when they begin to make interpretations about the causes, consequences or relationships, they fall back on the linear assumptions of quantitative analysis and begin to specify isolated variables that are mechanically linked out of context. In attempting to present a holistic picture of what the program is like and in struggling to understand the fundamental nature of a particular set of activities and people in a specific context, simple statement of linear relationships may be more distorting than illuminating. It is an ongoing challenge, paradox and dilemma of qualitative analysis that we must be constantly moving back and forth between the phenomenon of the program and our abstractions of the program, between the descriptions of what has occurred and our interpretations of those descriptions, between the complexities of reality and the simplifications of those complexities, between the circularities and interdependence of human activity and our need for the linear, ordered statements of cause-effect. . . . The emphasis is on illumination, understanding and extrapolation rather than causal determination, prediction and generalization. (pp. 423-424)

Schlechty and Noblit (1982, cited in Patton, 1990) explained that interpretation may take one of these forms: "(1) making the obvious obvious, (2) making the obvious dubious, and (3) making the hidden obvious" (p. 423).

Marshall and Rossman (1989, cited in Whitt, 1991) said that analysis of qualitative data is generally "a messy, ambiguous, time consuming, creative and

fascinating process." The process used to analyze and interpret qualitative data entails organizing the data; formulating categories, themes, and patterns; inspecting the emerging assumptions against the data; seeking new reasons for the data; and writing the report. Writing the report is seen as an integral part of the procedure for inductive data analysis because it requires the researcher to summarize and clarify the methods, data, and findings (Fetterman, 1989; Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

Although there is no established model for qualitative report writing (Merriam, 1988), Patton (1990) recommended that such reports (a) contain rich descriptions, which may include verbatim quotations to capture the essence of the data; and (b) are written for the intended audience and its needs.

Using guidelines for inductive data analysis and after organizing, counting, and reviewing interview transcripts, summaries, profiles, and commonalities, the researcher presents the following eight themes as those found to be most dominant. The themes are arranged in the given order for three reasons. First, they are listed in order of priority by the number of times mentioned by the commuting students who were interviewed. That is to say, the first theme listed was reported most frequently by the study participants, and the eighth was remarked upon least often. Second, the broader or more all-encompassing themes are given priority. Those with a more specific or narrow scope come later in the list. Finally, the earlier themes deal with the internal desires or motivations of the students. The last three address factors external to students' desires.



1. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to satisfy a desire for a sense of community and/or belongingness.

2. Involved commuting students at SVSU were encouraged to participate in the extracurriculum and/or were supported for their extracurricular involvement.

3. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to explore an area of interest.

4. Involved commuting students at SVSU became active in the extracurriculum early in their college careers.

5. Attaining a sense of accomplishment helped the commuting students at SVSU maintain their extracurricular involvement.

6. The involved commuting students at SVSU were limited by the time constraints of work, class, and study schedules. Given these limitations, convenience became of utmost importance.

7. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought accurate information that was quickly read and easily accessible.

8. Involved commuting students at SVSU found that opportunities for extracurricular involvement increased once they became involved.

These eight themes are explained further as conclusions in the next chapter.



CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This final chapter begins with a project summary and conclusions. The conclusions are then explained. Next is a discussion relating the conclusions to previous research on involvement and commuting students. The discussion is followed by suggestions for SVSU and general recommendations. The researcher closes the study with thoughts and observations.

Project Summary

This study, entitled "Factors That Contribute to the Extracurricular Involvement of the 18- to 23-Year-Old Commuting Student at a Small Midwestern University," was qualitative in nature. Using standardized and in-depth interviews, the researcher held three separate interviews with 20 commuting students to determine the collective response to these three guiding questions:

1. What are the factors that contribute to or influence the extracurricular participation of involved commuting students at Saginaw Valley State University?
2. What are the factors that contribute to or influence the maintenance of commuting students' extracurricular participation?



3. How might Saginaw Valley State University encourage and nurture the extracurricular participation of commuting students?

The Saginaw Valley State University students interviewed were between the ages of 18 and 23; held sophomore, junior, or senior class standing; had never lived on any college campus; and were members of a campus organization and/or governing group. After each interview, transcripts were made and the data were analyzed. The responses were categorized and counted for frequency. Categories and counts were written in columns to assist in a thorough examination of the data. In addition, summaries of each interview were produced, and a synopsis of the replies to every question was compiled. The researcher examined the counts, summaries, and synopses for themes and patterns. The investigation resulted in eight conclusions. An independent observer was employed to reevaluate procedures, data, and findings.

Conclusions

In providing conclusions, it must be understood that the conclusions are interrelated. A single conclusion may offer or be related to a response for more than one of the research questions. Because of this, each conclusion is listed with the question to which it is best suited.

Research Question 1. What are the factors that contribute to or influence the extracurricular participation of involved commuting students at Saginaw Valley State University?

1. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to satisfy a desire for a sense of community and/or belongingness.

2. Involved commuting students at SVSU were encouraged to participate in the extracurriculum and/or were supported for their extracurricular involvement.

3. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to explore an area of interest.

4. Involved commuting students at SVSU became active in the extracurriculum early in their college careers.

Research Question 2. What are the factors that contribute to or influence the maintenance of commuting students' extracurricular participation?

1. Attaining a sense of accomplishment helped the commuting students at SVSU maintain their extracurricular involvement.

2. The involved commuting students at SVSU were limited by the time constraints of work, class, and study schedules. Given these limitations, convenience became of utmost importance.

Research Question 3. How might Saginaw Valley State University encourage and nurture the extracurricular participation of commuting students?

1. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought accurate information that was quickly read and easily accessible.

2. Involved commuting students at SVSU found that opportunities for extracurricular involvement increased once they became involved.

Conclusions Explained

The rationales for the study conclusions are furnished below. The conclusions are presented in order of importance. Again, this order was based

on the frequency of interviewees' responses. In other words, the first conclusion was the one mentioned most often by the commuting students interviewed for this study.

Conclusion 1. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to satisfy a desire for a sense of community and/or belongingness.

A longing for a sense of community was exhibited repeatedly in the data. This yearning for identification with the university was demonstrated in a number of ways. One hundred percent of the commuting students who were interviewed said that the opportunity to meet new people helped them become involved. Some spoke of an initial loneliness that was overcome once they met others and became involved. When asked about the reason for initial involvement, replies such as these were quite common: "I wanted to be a part of the college"; "I wanted that same feeling, more like a campus-involvement type of atmosphere"; "I wanted to gain better involvement with the school. I was hoping . . . to get more out of school than just showing up and then leave"; "The warm welcome that I got from the first club that I was involved in. Being accepted to the groups so quickly was very exciting"; and "It gives me a sense of belonging."

Also important to many of those interviewed was to be familiar with the university, its officials, and its resources. One student said, "I didn't want to pass by the president and not know who he was. That would be embarrassing. . . . I wanted to make some connections." Others were also pleased with the access to resources afforded them through involvement. For example: "Being able to

walk up to the teachers and talk to them or to get information from them is very helpful. We have easier access to things, I guess, by being involved."

The desire for a proper place in the community was also communicated through less favorable comments. These remarks also reveal the respondents' perception of the status of commuting students at the university: "I feel that SVSU treats commuter students like they are dorm students"; "Sometimes, I really don't feel like a part of the community or close to the students. . . . It is just like I am one of the people who just comes and goes"; "They need to stop treating commuter students as outsiders"; and "Commuters do get misrepresented and misunderstood." The interviewees also made frequent mention of a commuter lounge or study area. The recommendation was offered as a way of involving commuters and building a sense of community.

Another indication of a desire for community was the expressed positive reaction to the outreach and service provided by university employees. Quotations illustrating this are provided here: "After talking to all of them that day, it gave me a very positive feeling about SVSU and the faculty"; "I was surprised at the friendliness of the students just in general classes"; and "I think they do this [encourage involvement] by putting up friendly signs. They are always inviting students to attend different activities and events."

Finally, some stated that active membership in the campus community helped them appreciate SVSU and feel accepted as members of the campus community. "I think being an orientation leader was like my coming out. I got more confident in myself. I wanted to get more involved with the campus. I was

prouder to be a student here and enjoyed it. Once I got over thinking that the university was smaller, it was easier for me to get involved in a lot of things." "It [involvement] has kept me here. At first, I wasn't sure if I was going to stay at Saginaw Valley. . . . It gave me such a welcoming feeling that I didn't want to leave."

Conclusion 2. Involved commuting students at SVSU were encouraged to participate in the extracurriculum and/or were supported for their extracurricular involvement.

The importance of encouragement and support in nurturing extracurricular participation was verbalized throughout the interviews, card sorts, and while ranking items. The effect of reassurance and appreciation on the participation of the interviewees was remarkable. Nineteen of the 20 commuting students stated that their involvement was assisted by a student member of a campus organization; 15 by a faculty member; and 14 each by a college friend, staff member, parent, or mentor. Thirteen of these students were encouraged by an upperclassman, and another 13 were encouraged by a faculty member. When asked to rank order the influence of goals, people, campus events, and campus publications on their involvement, 17 students said that other people were the most or the second most significant influence on their involvement.

Comments illustrating the influential nature of encouragement follow. "All of the members of the club share the same enthusiasm for the club, and that makes me want to really become involved." "I think their openness and encouragement helped a lot." "The best way to keep students involved is to encourage the clubs and keep them moving along." "I don't think I would have

gotten involved if it wasn't for encouragement by the staff." "Talking to instructors about involvement, they said that it was very positive and that it was something you should do."

Recognition was also quite meaningful as a form of encouragement and support to the students interviewed. Examples of their statements follow: "Maybe recognize people more; sort of like send a letter to me or publish their name in the paper more. I know of all the things that I have done, I have only been recognized as an orientation leader. . . . I think being recognized makes you appreciate it and makes you want to stay involved." "She was the happiest person when I became a Senator on Student Government. Since I don't have a lot of contact with my mother and father, that really meant a lot to me when someone reacted the way your parents would." One student said that the university could do more to maintain student involvement "by encouraging them. They can say, 'You are doing a good job' or 'You can come to me with your problems.' . . . The faculty could be more friendly and understanding.

Encouragement and support were also offered as suggestions for improving involvement. Several students suggested that faculty members might announce events in class to show support of campus events. Some were disappointed in what they saw as a lack of involvement displayed by the faculty and staff. Their dismay is shown here: "It would be nice if there was a big event going on to get the faculty to take a minute to tell the students about it. . . . The Student Government asked the instructors to make just a brief announcement for us. I have a feeling that none of the instructors felt anything to make that

announcement." "I think maybe the professors could make the students more aware. . . . I don't think I have ever heard a teacher saying anything about an on-campus activity. I have seen some of the administrators at a lot of these events, but I have yet to see a lot of faculty at these events." "If a student did something and it did not turn out well, maybe some words of encouragement would help from the faculty. The most important thing would be to participate with students and faculty members. If they find time to participate with the club's activities and functions, I think it carries a great deal of weight when it comes to helping a student continue involvement." "I think it would help by seeing the faculty and staff getting involved. This would keep the students involved because they would see the teachers and administrators getting involved. I think this is the biggest key."

Conclusion 3. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought extracurricular involvement to explore an area of interest.

Nineteen of the 20 study participants became involved to explore an area of interest. The interests mentioned most often were academic, professional, or cultural in nature. These interests are illustrated with the responses given when asked what goals had led to extracurricular participation. Fifteen of the 20 interviewees, in becoming involved in out-of-class activities, became involved in extracurricular activities "to prepare for a career." "To strengthen my résumé" was a reason given by 13 students. Twelve took part in the extracurriculum "to strengthen skills in the area of study."



Many of the campus organizations and groups represented in the study had an academic connection. This affiliation with area of study indicates an interest in gaining professional contacts, obtaining a more complete knowledge of the field, and becoming better prepared for the world of work. The following groups were represented in the study and had an academic connection: the Alliance for the Performing Arts, Alpha Mu Gamma, the Association for Computing Machinery, the Communication Guild, the Health Professionals Honor Society, the Honors Program, the Marching Band, Phi Theta Kappa, the Psi Chi Honor Society for psychology students, the Psychology Club, the Science Club, and the Student Social Work Organization. Typically, students join these groups to gain knowledge, contacts, or experience in the field and to associate with other students who have similar interests.

It should be noted that (a) many of the students involved in the SVSU Student Government spoke of its importance in their professional preparation and (b) seven study participants belonged to organizations associated with cultural heritage. These interviewees looked to the Black Student Association, the Hispanic Student Association, and the Polish Club for support and a deeper understanding of their own background.

Conclusion 4. Involved commuting students at SVSU became active in the extracurriculum early in their college careers.

Most of the study participants became club members and officers early in their SVSU college experience. Seventeen of the 20 interviewees were made aware of opportunities for involvement by the end of their first year of college.

Another 17 attended a first college event or meeting before their sophomore year of college. Many held club or campus positions of responsibility before the end of their sophomore year of college.

From this information, one can assume that early involvement is important to gaining the active participation of the commuting student in the extracurriculum. Once work, study, and travel routines are established, it may become increasingly difficult to involve the commuting student in out-of-class activities. Hence, as many who have studied or implemented retention programs know (Beal & Noel, 1980; Noel et al., 1985; Upcraft, Gardner, & Associates, 1990), the first year of college is of extreme importance in building a foundation for an enjoyable college experience.

Conclusion 5. Attaining a sense of accomplishment helped the commuting students at SVSU maintain their extracurricular involvement.

Although becoming part of a community and meeting people appears to have assisted those interviewed in becoming involved, it also seems that a sense of accomplishment may keep students involved. When asked about meaningful or significant occurrences in their extracurricular involvement, a great majority of the interviewees mentioned holding a position of responsibility and authority, coordinating events, building leadership and communication skills, or having a say in the operation of the university. It is interesting that 18 of the 20 study participants held an elected position in at least one campus organization. Most of them were installed as an officer within one year of their initial membership.



Quotations from the students who were interviewed are the best indication of their feelings of fulfillment. The many quotations that follow are examples of those that reveal the feeling of confidence and achievement secured from extracurricular participation. "I have to plan the tours myself. I am given a budget, and I have to plan the day. To me, that is a lot of responsibility." "I found an artistic talent that I did not know I had." "I guess it is always an honor to be allowed to be an officer and allowed to get involved. To be nominated to the committee with Vice-President _____ is an honor." "When you are a tour guide, you are basically responsible for the kids. . . . Even though they are only out here for one day, you do make an impression on them." "I think Student Government responsibilities are pretty big." "It gives me a sense of pride." "I got more confident in myself." "Each responsibility has allowed me to grow." Finally, "I enjoy leadership positions. . . . I enjoy it because it is extra activities and responsibilities."

Conclusion 6. The involved commuting students at SVSU were limited by the time constraints of work, class, and study schedules. Given these limitations, convenience became of utmost importance.

A word the interviewees used fairly frequently was "worthwhile." The frequency of this word's usage reinforces students' comments that college-sponsored programs must be worth the time investment. Eleven students saw time as a restriction. Fourteen felt constrained from involvement by their work schedules, and 12 felt limited by class time and assignments. Their concern for time and convenience was displayed in the suggestions they made for expanding commuting students' involvement. Some of the students' recommendations

were: (a) more evening activities, (b) offering the same event a number of times, (c) after-class activities, and (d) scheduling functions in locations more accessible to commuters.

Some students also suggested that participation must be simplified and made more convenient if more commuting students are to be involved. Suggestions of club newsletters, bulletin boards for campus organizations, and posted minutes, times, and locations were made to allow for more participation. One student advised that "Maybe if they can't make the time to come . . . they can have a way that they can be involved, like by having people in the group call or give them newsletters. Maybe they can do something at home and bring it into the adviser. . . . They could work at home by making phone calls for the club."

It should be noted that each of the 20 commuting students in the study drove his or her own car. Twelve of the 20 lived within 20 minutes of the university, and seven more lived within 40 minutes of the school. It might be that involvement by commuting students is related to their access to transportation and/or distance from their place of residence to the school.

The printed materials that were most likely to be read most often were those that were fast reading and handy. Examples of such pieces are Student Happenings, a weekly listing of events; KIOSK, a direct-mail newsletter; the Valley Vanguard, the campus newspaper; and flyers, banners, and ceiling signs posted in corridors and/or classrooms.

Conclusion 7. Involved commuting students at SVSU sought accurate information that was quickly read and easily accessible.

Nineteen of the 20 students received information from events listings, 18 from posted banners or flyers, 15 from the student newspaper, and 13 from home mailings. Each of these pieces is easily read, quick, and convenient. In addition to the continuation of brief pieces of communication, the students interviewed repeatedly proposed improved advertising of events and services. Few offered advice on improvement. Nonetheless, two interviewees advocated more appealing publicity campaigns. "To get people involved, you need to 'Madison Avenue' the posters. . . . They don't really notice it unless it's outrageous or bizarre." "I always tend to remember the ones that are mailed off campus. Once I got an invitation. . . . I thought it was really neat. I liked looking at the paper and the pictures. It really attracted me."

The interviewees expected sound information and were not appreciative of being misinformed. Two spoke of missing meetings because locations were not posted. Another two decided to withhold involvement because they were not provided with complete information. One senior said, "When I first started here my freshman year, they had the volleyball team, and I love volleyball. I came out to watch a game. It was a home game in the gym, but it wasn't there. They had it advertised and everything. I couldn't find it. . . . They didn't have signs to tell people where to go. I felt stupid asking someone where the volleyball game was. I just left, and I haven't watched any sports since that happened--not even a football game." Another senior said, "I wanted to become involved with Program

Board. I went to a meeting, and there was nobody there." Finally, a student who offered information as a recommendation for improved commuter involvement addressed her concern about being inadequately prepared. Her recommendation was "Informing them of what is going on. I know at last year's _____ program, I had no idea of what was going on. I swore that I would not be involved with it again. This year they promised me that we would be informed. If you just show up and don't know what is going on, you just feel stupid and not needed. You need to feel involved and informed."

The commuting student interviewees shared the opinion that improved interaction with the faculty and staff was necessary to increase extracurricular participation. One student expressed this opinion: "I think they should have more open forums on what the students want. . . . They need better communication with the students." Ideas for enhancing discourse with students and student groups included more frequent administrative open forums, class announcements, faculty and staff encouragement of involvement, club contact persons, club displays at events, club representatives to promote clubs, follow-up on club sign-ups, more mailings, club bulletin boards, and direct-mail club newsletters.

Conclusion 8. Involved commuting students at SVSU found that opportunities for extracurricular involvement increased once they became involved.

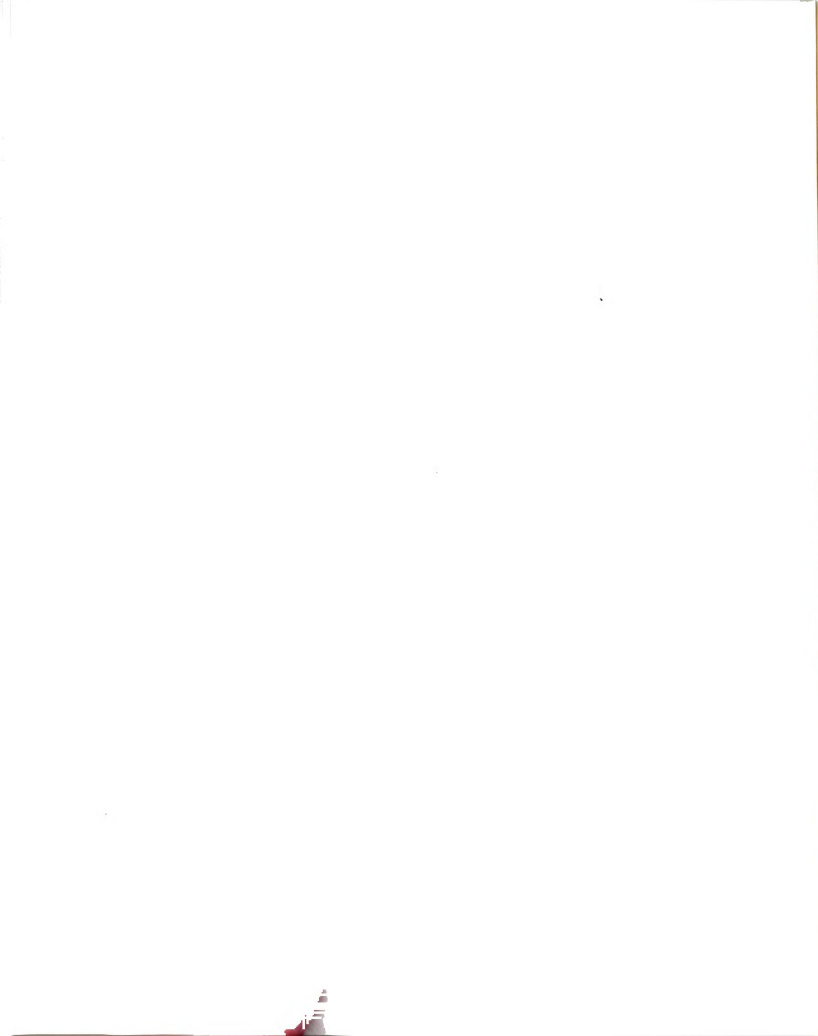
The interviewees indicated that opportunities for involvement mushroomed. Thirteen said that their extracurricular experiences had been linked to one

another. Many found that their opportunities increased once they became involved.

Their comments illustrate this phenomenon. "Once you become involved, you learn about other things that are interesting, and you want to do them, too. It is like a chain reaction. You do one and keep on going." "You get to know people, and through knowing these people, you get to be more involved with other things. . . . Your options are increased." "When I first started working at Minority Services, I met more kinds of people. At that point, I wanted to attend these activities on my own." "I want to get more people involved. I figured it was supposed to be some kind of a logarithmic scale. I was supposed to bring three people with me to the event." "When I worked up in _____'s office, she was really encouraging me to get involved and thought Emerging Leaders was a good thing to get involved with. I guess I just jumped at the chance to get involved, and I was really glad that I did. I think it was the first thing that started my involvement here at SVSU." "I was scared at first, too, but when the doors started to open up for me, it became a part of my life."

Discussion of Conclusions in Relation to the Literature

After the writing of patterns and themes, the researcher noticed similarities between them and what has been written on commuting students and involved students. Recognition and acknowledgment of these likenesses were aids in (a) illustrating the association between Saginaw Valley State University and other



colleges and universities with similar student populations and (b) lending legitimacy to the deductions made by the researcher.

An outline for good practice in serving commuting students was provided in a previous chapter. The blueprint offered by Wilmes and Quade (1986) suggested that institutions assist commuters best when they facilitate (a) good and accessible information, (b) an institutional identification or sense of belonging, (c) frequent interaction among students, (d) recurrent sharing between students and the faculty/staff, and (e) the involvement of student support systems, including family and friends. Many of the themes and conclusions of this project coincide with the recommendations made by Wilmes and Quade. The SVSU commuting students who were interviewed expressed the same desires. They discussed the importance of a sense of community, ready and reliable information, association with other students, and the reassurance and support of faculty and staff.

Wilmes and Quade (1986) also proposed four major issues in working with commuting students. The concerns are (a) multiple life roles, (b) integrating support systems, (c) developing a sense of belonging, and (d) transportation issues. Two apparent similarities are those of the commuting student's need for affiliation and the multiple life roles of the commuting student. Community and affiliation were very important to the commuting students interviewed for this study. However, none of the study-group members were parents. Hence, whereas family matters were not the concern that they might have been with an older group, the young adults had experience juggling the roles of student and

employee. Each of these roles affected the amount of time available to the student for extracurricular involvement.

Tidbitts (1977) spoke of the importance of convenience for commuting students. Convenience was reported to be critical to SVSU students, as it is to other students. A sense of accomplishment and responsibility appeared to be important to maintaining SVSU commuters' involvement. Rosenblum (1986) suggested the same notion when he stated that a sense of achievement is important to keeping commuting students involved.

To increase involvement, the National Institute of Education (1984) made five recommendations that can be linked to the study conclusions.

1. Allocations of faculty time and other resources should be appropriated to increase service to freshman and sophomore students. Such "frontloading" would be appropriate at SVSU as all of the interviewees learned of extracurricular activities and became involved within the first two years of enrolling at the university.

2. Faculty should use active modes of teaching. Community service projects, field work, or extra credit for club participation might be fitting at SVSU as they increase faculty-student interaction and provide a sense of belonging.

3. Programs should be designed to increase interaction between faculty and students on intellectual issues. Such programs would be easily implemented and beneficial to SVSU.

4. The students who were interviewed told of a need for encouragement and support of extracurricular participation from SVSU's faculty

and staff. If a guidance program using all student affairs personnel were to be instituted at the university, as the NIE has suggested, encouraging involvement might become a routine advising procedure.

5. "Academic and student services administrators should provide adequate fiscal support, space and recognition to existing cocurricular programs and activities for purposes of maximizing student involvement. Every attempt should be made to include part-time and commuter students in these programs and activities" (NIE, 1984, p. 25).

The researcher's purpose in this study was to determine methods to nurture the extracurricular participation of commuting students. Some methods are offered in the following section as the researcher offers suggestions appropriate to the institution under study.

Suggestions for SVSU

The following recommendations are made with Saginaw Valley State University in mind. Nonetheless, they may pertain to other institutions, as well. First, SVSU should become more knowledgeable about its commuting students. This might be accomplished by identifying subgroups, lifestyles, and backgrounds. Such institutional research is fundamental. Without it, any attempts to involve SVSU commuting students in the extracurriculum may be futile. In addition to uncovering commuter groupings, lifestyles, and experience, the institution should investigate class schedules to ensure better timing of programs.

Early involvement also should be promoted and addressed by the university. It appears that the first year at SVSU is critical to commuter involvement. It is possible that, in the first year, the commuting student is susceptible to involvement because study, class, and work routines have not yet been established. Anticipatory socialization, a term used to describe the messages and norms communicated to an incoming student by the institution, is a related issue. SVSU may need to place more emphasis on campus involvement in its admissions materials, catalog, handbook, and new-student orientation in an effort to expand the participation of its first-year students. The university should work to set the expectation and standard that an SVSU student is an involved student.

SVSU personnel should question commuting students to determine whether entry into the university is a nonevent transition, as Swartz (1985) suggested it might be. Schlossberg (1984) explained a nonevent transition as a passage that is predicted to be momentous, but turns out to be inconsequential. If SVSU students are indeed experiencing this type of transition, entire college careers may be disappointing. This dissatisfaction spreads.

Swartz (1985) also recommended informing commuting students of procedures for extracurricular involvement. She believed that much of what is perceived to be apathy on the part of commuting students is actually ambivalence and a lack of guidance. SVSU might routinely encourage student involvement by garnering the support of its faculty, admissions representatives,

academic advisers, and other personnel who have regular contact with commuting students. To accomplish this, faculty and staff members will need to be educated about the need for and importance of campus involvement.

Using an academic or career affiliation in planning the extracurriculum is advised for a number of reasons. Programming of this sort allows students to explore their vocational interests. It elicits faculty and staff support, and with it their encouragement. Also, programs or groups with an academic or professional emphasis frequently are seen to be "worthwhile"--a criterion important to SVSU's commuting students.

This affiliation with academic departments can be provided by student organizations. These groups also supply a rare opportunity for the establishment of a strong alliance between the university divisions of academic affairs and student affairs. For these reasons, it is recommended that SVSU work to solidify its club network. Renewing and reinforcing this structure might be accomplished through a club newsletter, club message boards or contacts, new vehicles for leadership development, and more training and support of the faculty and staff club advisers. Student groups should also be given more direction and project ideas. This might result in a sense of achievement and greater campus pride and spirit.

This feeling of pride and achievement would be further enhanced if the university and particularly the division of student affairs worked diligently to develop both paid and volunteer positions of responsibility for students. Students might participate as mentors, representatives on university committees, office

interns, peer advisers, or community service workers. The students' work should be formally and preferably publicly recognized by the university. These extracurricular experiences might also be recorded on a transcript that is available to supplement the student's academic transcript.

To improve communication with commuting students, the university might request that faculty members set aside a brief time during each class for announcements. The university should also place priority on short, readable, bright, and bold pieces of information. It appears that the student of the 1990s is accustomed to professional and flamboyant communiques. Many of the interviewees were impressed were informational pieces that were personally addressed and mailed to them. Personal mail also enhanced the study participants' sense of belonging and identification with the campus community. Thus, the university should consider increasing the number of direct mailings to commuting students.

Although the university has a number of large all-university events, the ones with which the commuting students in this study seemed to be most impressed were the large picnic-type events with free refreshments. These events offer a feeling of celebration to an otherwise ordinary class day and are important to commuting students, who might not be available for weekend celebrations. It is thus recommended that the university (a) add events of this nature to its activities calendar, (b) find other reasons for celebration as this type of merrymaking is essential to building community, and (c) design activities to increase interaction between students and staff/faculty members.

To foster and maintain involvement, a mentoring program for commuting students is also strongly recommended. The staff and faculty mentors trained for the program would nurture campus involvement by attending campus activities with the commuting student mentees and by helping those students learn university procedures. Mentoring programs afford incoming students a sense of belonging and give upperclass mentors a feeling of campus pride and accomplishment.

Some other suggestions are that (a) the university block out time to be used exclusively for extracurricular participation, (b) academic credit be considered to advance some types of extracurricular involvement, and (c) the university implement two promotional campaigns--one to outline the benefits of involvement and another to advance the status of commuting students at the university. Finally, SVSU is advised to follow advocacy guidelines provided by Jacoby (1989), who believed that good advocacy for commuting-student institutions entails (a) a mission statement affirming dedication and responsibility to all students, (b) campus officials who frequently declare their duty to commuting students, (c) regular collection of data on commuting students, (d) a campuswide drive to correct mistaken notions about commuting students, (e) a realization that faculty interaction is vital to the development of commuting students, (f) equity in services to commuting and resident students, (g) a task force designed to improve services to commuting students, (h) proper use of technology to streamline services to commuting students, and (i) college officials

and boards united to make certain commuting students and commuter institutions are treated fairly by state governing boards.

The closing recommendation is that SVSU develop pride in its status as a commuter university. Since its inception 30 years ago, SVSU has had a large majority population of commuting students. However, this is not reflected in attitude, funding, activities, or hours of service. A shift in mindset and resources is needed. The university must realize that the regional institution's mission of serving its community well is an admirable one. A small, versatile, mobile, and diverse student population should not be a source of shame, but one of which to be proud. SVSU must overcome the convention of a residential mentality if it is to meet the challenges of the twentieth century and beyond.

General Recommendations

The recommendations made in this section may be useful to postsecondary educators as a whole. The first recommendation made by this researcher is that institutions become familiar with what is written on commuting students and on involving colleges. Both types of literature address the need for an institutional focus, clearly outlined plans, faculty and student interaction, the knowledge of the students and their lifestyles, knowledge of student subgroups, and the development of talent. Familiarizing student affairs staff members and others with pertinent writings will eliminate confusion and provide directions to those institutions that are struggling with the broad issues of involvement and commuting students.

A second suggestion is that colleges and universities approach the concerns of commuting students and of a lack of involvement in a positive manner and with a plan. Discussions of apathetic commuters without plans for improvement do little to correct a situation. Postsecondary educators may be engaging in self-fulfilling prophecy if they focus on why students are not involved rather than how policy, procedure, services, programs, and the campus environment can enhance their interest in and commitment to campus life.

SVSU and other colleges may want to consider establishing criteria to target the commuting students who are most apt to become involved. Commuting students who have been involved in high school, live close to the school, and have their own transportation appear to be most likely to become actively involved in extracurricular life. That is not to say that involvement should be limited to those students. However, an active core group of commuting students recruited from each incoming class may serve as a model to others and grow to include them.

Wilmes and Quade (1986) advised that postsecondary institutions work to include family and friends of commuting students in their work with those students. Family was not brought up as a major issue with this study group. However, three of the five Hispanic students interviewed in the study mentioned the support and/or pressures of their families. As suggested in articles written on Hispanic college students, postsecondary educators may want to place special emphasis on involvement opportunities for the families of their Hispanic students.

Families might also be enlisted to help involve students in the extracurriculum. If the study group is typical, parents and other relatives are influential in the commuting student's extracurricular involvement. This influence could be solicited for support of an active student role in campus life. Letters and presentations to families and spouses explaining the benefits of involvement might help in this endeavor.

Campus officials should review transportation issues and schedules to improve the involvement of commuting students. Although transportation seemed to be easily accessible to the study group, it may be a cause for concern at other institutions. Rush-hour traffic, time spent commuting, parking fees, and bus and train schedules may limit extracurricular involvement. Transportation has been mentioned frequently in articles and books written about commuting college students. An oversight or correctable issue related to transportation may have a large influence on extracurricular involvement. Bus times and fee schedules might be changed to allow for more involvement.

The researcher was surprised that all of the study participants had their own cars. This luxury affords a freedom that may have a significant bearing on the extracurricular participation of the commuting student. All commuting students and their parents should be encouraged to carefully consider issues of transportation to enhance the probability and convenience of extracurricular involvement.

Astin (1984) stated that on-campus employment can increase student retention. It also appears that on-campus employment assists students in

learning about college protocol and the extracurricular opportunities that are available to them. For commuting students, on-campus employment has another advantage of eliminating travel time to and from work. For these reasons, educators may want to promote on-campus employment especially for commuting students.

Student affairs professionals are advised to secure relations with their faculty colleagues. A great deal has been written on increasing ties between the institutional divisions of academic and student affairs. The extracurriculum offers the appropriate overlap between the two areas. Most college programs and services can be enhanced by requesting faculty assistance with committee work, presentations, and panel discussions. Faculty members also play a vital role as club advisers and look to student affairs for guidance in these positions. Stimulating faculty involvement may require that (a) those responsible for hiring use extracurricular involvement as a standard, (b) evaluations be adjusted to include extracurricular involvement, (c) student affairs professionals acknowledge and appreciate faculty load, and (d) appropriate rewards, training, and communication be instituted.

Finally, it is recommended that college and university employees take seriously their position as role models to college and university students. The students who were interviewed stated that faculty and staff members might need to be more supportive of and active in the extracurriculum if students are to become involved. In other words, the students look to the faculty and staff to set an example and to take the lead. It may be that out-of-class involvement suffers

because of the hectic lives of all campus community members and not only those of students. Nonetheless, if students are expected to grow as a result of a commitment to extracurricular involvement, faculty and staff must be willing to make a similar commitment.

Suggestions for Related Research

Astin (1984) made recommendations for research needed on the subject of student involvement. Questions from Astin that are pertinent to this study and advancing knowledge of both commuters and involvement are related to (a) the range and intensity of involvement, (b) the amount of student involvement that is of benefit to the student, (c) the effect of student-faculty interaction on involvement, and (d) using student involvement as a joint focus for faculty and student affairs administrators. The resulting research questions might be:

1. How does one measure the quality of involvement rather than the quantity?
2. At what point does involvement become a hindrance?
3. How do educators teach students to balance study, work, and involvement?
4. Does improved interaction between faculty and students result in involvement? Does improved campus involvement increase student and faculty interaction?
5. Can a focus on involvement assist in bridging the gap between divisions of student and academic affairs? (Astin, 1984).

Accurate and timely information, presented in an appealing fashion, is important to the student of the 1990s. Local, regional, and national studies must aid educators in becoming more familiar with the lifestyles and patterns of present-day students in general and with commuters in particular. Questions in need of additional study and related to communication are offered here:

1. What promotional methods work best with today's student? With today's commuting student?
2. How can colleges effectively promote involvement?

In The Mismeasure of Woman, Travis (1992) suggested that women have been measured by male standards and that such measures may not be appropriate. Some writers have proposed that a similar situation exists for commuting students. Commuting students have been evaluated using, as a criterion, separation from the parents following high school (Jacoby, 1989). In other words, commuters are evaluated using on-campus residence as a norm. Further, the commuter institution has been portrayed as being one that is insular, with little campus spirit and few students aspiring to advanced degrees (Riesman & Jencks, cited in Jacoby, 1989). Many of these views are perpetuated by faculty and staff members who hold romantic notions about their own resident-student experiences (Van Bebber, 1985). Perhaps research could be designed to uncover the advantages of commuting to the student's development and to the institution. It is possible that commuting assists the student in managing time, building family relations, assuming family responsibilities, and preparing for the world of work. A truer picture of commuting students' development might be

acquired if commuting students were examined in comparison to as many other groups of young adults as possible. Researchers might, for example, measure commuters against residents and young adults who enter the armed services or the world of work exclusively upon high school graduation.

Past experiences, personality traits, or underlying motivators may be common to involved commuting students. Those doing future research may want to explore these factors. Researchers may also be interested in comparing involved commuting students with those who are not involved in the extracurriculum. Another approach to the study is to use the focus-group format. With this strategy, a small number of commuting students would be interviewed as a group. The focus-group interview allows for participant interaction.

The researcher also recommends using the questions posed in this study with a larger study group to refute or verify the conclusions made in this study and to enhance the generalizability of the findings. A comparable research project with a study sample representing more than one postsecondary institution is also advised. Doing so might help ensure that the findings are not specific to one institution. Researchers using the results of this study to design a survey or experimental research is also advised.

In recent years, there has been a focus on the older adult learner. Although studies of the nontraditional student are needed, it is important that the 18- to 23-year-old commuting student also be considered. Because the younger group typically has fewer family commitments, they are more likely to participate in the extracurriculum.



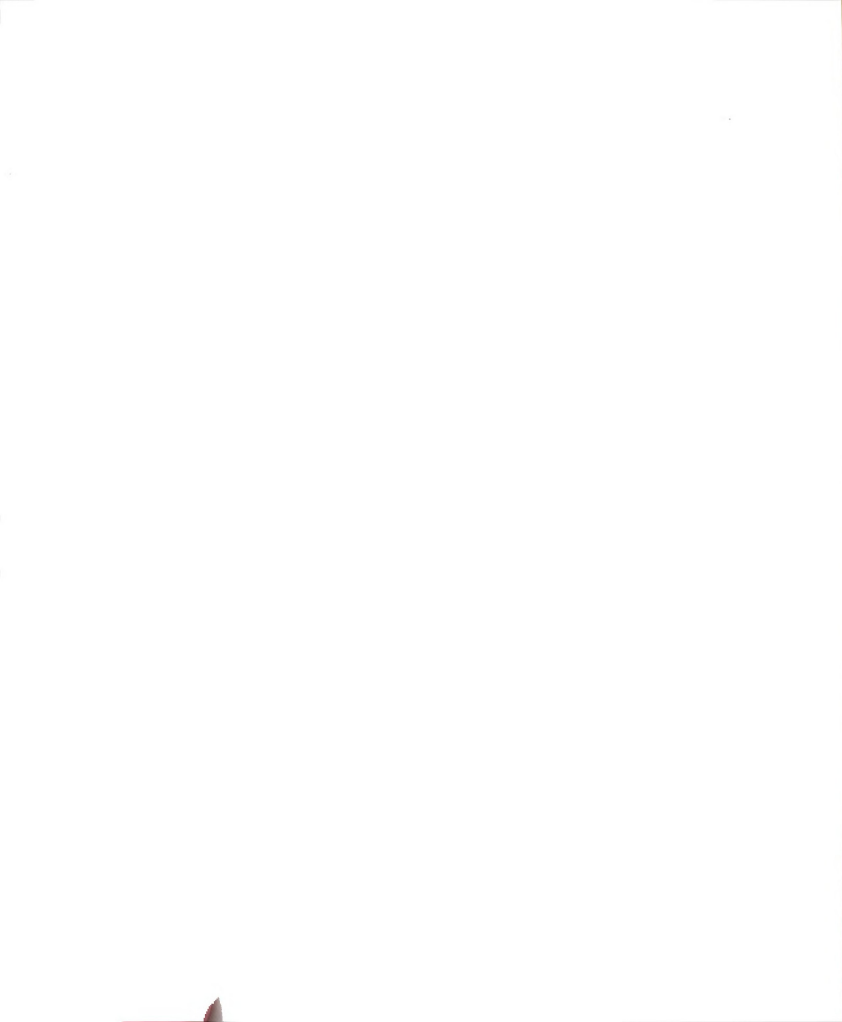
Final Thoughts

Despite long hours, this research project has been a rewarding one. The researcher encourages student affairs professionals to learn and use qualitative methods. The merit of such research goes beyond answering questions of how and why. This study afforded the students interviewed an opportunity to reflect on the meaning and importance of their extracurricular experiences, to express their concerns, and to speak at length with an interested campus official. The benefits to the researcher included increasing knowledge of SVSU commuters, their lifestyles, and interests; cultivating good rapport with the interviewees and their associates; attaining a reputation as a commuter advocate; and discovering that many administrative efforts were helpful to and appreciated by those interviewed.

Schilling and Schilling (1993) suggested that "descriptive, rather than evaluative, approaches to assessment introduce far less fear and suspicion" (p. 3). One of the study participants who had just been elected as an officer of the Student Government expressed something similar. He said:

As far as this dissertation goes, I think it is neat. It is trying to do something on paper that I am trying to do in my head. Rather than to think one way or another, I am trying to think about everything at the same time. Hopefully, it will come together. Rather than learn about how I am going to do things, this has given me the opportunity to see what I have already done. We have not talked about what is right or wrong. We are just talking about how things are going.

Insights such as these are not typical to quantitative methods. For this reason, Schilling and Schilling stated that "comprehensive portfolios, intensive student interviews, focus groups, or student time-use studies make the curriculum visible



by emphasizing its interaction with the lives of students" (p. 3). From this study, the researcher has learned that qualitative techniques are priceless, not only in outcome assessment and research, but also in demonstrating a genuine interest in students and their experiences.

In the first chapter of this study, the researcher referred to three publications. These works, Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Learning and Development Outside of the Classroom (Kuh et al., 1991), In Search of Excellence: Lessons From America's Best Run Companies (Peters & Waterman, 1982), and Traits of a Healthy Family (Curran, 1983), chronicled the characteristics of good practice in three different systems. The systems reviewed in the aforementioned publications were colleges and universities known to be engaging, profit-making corporations known for excellence and well-functioning families. In a similar way, this research project was designed to detect commonalities between active, young commuting students who were involved in the extracurriculum.

The researcher noted some similarities among involved commuting students, families, corporations, colleges, and universities. The commuting students who were interviewed emphasized the importance of sharing, communicating, achieving, and celebrating. The factors that influenced involved commuting students to gain and maintain a part in the extracurriculum were similar to those essential to healthy families, prosperous corporations, and involving colleges. Hence, postsecondary educators may find it beneficial to look



to other types of institutions, organizations, and systems for analogies, insights, ideas, and help.

In closing, the researcher found two things basic to all of the given replies. Each student spoke of a need for affiliation and achievement. These two desires cause one to think of Maslow's theory of human motivation and the needs for belongingness, love, and esteem. Of a need for affiliation, Maslow (1954) said:

If both the physiological and safety needs are well gratified, there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs. . . . Now, the person will feel keenly, as never before, the absence of friends, or a sweetheart, or a wife, or children. . . . Now he will feel sharply the pangs of loneliness, of ostracism, of rejection, of friendlessness, of rootlessness. (p. 43)

In explaining the next higher level of need for esteem, Maslow said there are two subsets:

First, the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom. Second we have what we may call the desire for reputation and prestige, . . . status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity or appreciation. (p. 45)

Maslow's explanations are reflected in the remarks from one of the commuting students interviewed, when he was asked why he became involved in the SVSU extracurriculum. He stated that he became involved "mostly to fit in and to feel like I was a part of what was going on. I wanted to feel like I was making a difference for others, or someone could look to me and say that they are jealous of me because I know so many different people or do so many different activities." In his own modest terms, the student was expressing a desire for love and recognition. "It's just that simple" (Perot, 1992).



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STANDARDIZED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS



INTERVIEW #1

1. Name:
2. Address:
3. Phone:
4. Date of Birth:
5. Gender: ___M ___F
6. What is your anticipated major field of study?
7. How many college credits have you completed to date?
8. For how many terms have you attended SVSU?
9. In the Fall and Winter Semesters, do you typically maintain part-time or full-time enrollment status?
 ___Part-time (11 credits or less)
 ___Full-time (12 credits or more)
10. Do you typically work while you are enrolled in college classes?
 ___Yes ___No
11. If you work, how many hours per week do you typically spend working while enrolled in classes?
12. If you typically work, do you work on-campus, off-campus, or both while you are attending college?
 ___On-campus
 ___Off-campus
 ___Both
13. Approximately how far do you live from SVSU?
 ___20 minutes or less
 ___21 to 40 minutes
 ___41 minutes or more

14. Which of your immediate family members have taken any college classes?
☐ Mother
☐ Father
☐ Sister(s)
☐ Brother(s)
15. Which of your immediate family members have graduated from college?
☐ Mother
☐ Father
☐ Sister(s)
☐ Brother(s)
16. In which (if any) extracurricular activities did you involve yourself in high school?
☐ Clubs
☐ Off-campus volunteer commitments
☐ Performing groups
☐ Sports
☐ Student government
☐ Student publications
☐ Other (Please specify _____)
17. Which of the following words would you use to describe your participation in classroom discussions?
☐ Very frequent
☐ Fairly frequent
☐ Rare
18. What is your best approximation of your current cumulative grade point average?
☐ 3.5 to 4.0
☐ 3.0 to 3.4
☐ 2.5 to 2.9
☐ 2.0 to 2.4
☐ Under 2.0
19. What financial aid (if any) have you received since attending college?
☐ Financial need scholarship or grant
☐ Merit (academic, achievement, sports, talent, etc.) scholarship or grant
☐ Loans
☐ Work-study

- 20a. When did you first become aware of opportunities for extracurricular involvement (i.e., activities, clubs, performing groups, student government, and publications)?
- 20b. How far along were you in your college career at this time?
- 21a. How did you become aware of opportunities for campus involvement?
- 21b. Can you be more specific in how this happened?
- 22. What was the name of the first college event or meeting you attended?
- 23a. When did you attend your first college event or meeting?
- 23b. Please be more specific.
- 24a. When did you first think about or consider attending a college event or meeting?
- 24b. Again, be as specific as you can be.
- 25a. Why did you attend the event or meeting?
- 25b. Can you explain that further?
- 26a. With whom (if anyone) did you attend the event or meeting?
- 26b. Please be more specific.
- 27. How did you feel when you first attended the function?
- 28a. Is there anything that influenced your extracurricular involvement at SVSU in a positive way?
- 28b. Anything else?
- 29a. What publications or promotional pieces, if any, influenced your extracurricular involvement at SVSU in a positive way?
- 29b. Please be more specific.
- 30a. If there were any students or any other people--on-campus or off-campus--who influenced your involvement at SVSU, please provide the following information: (1) Name(s); (2) Position(s); (3) On-Campus or Off-Campus.



- 30b. Anyone else?
- 30c. Please give me more details.
- 31a. What, if any, events or activities influenced your extracurricular involvement at SVSU in a positive way?
- 31b. Any other events or activities?
- 32a. When you first became involved in campus life, what if anything were you hoping to gain as a result of campus involvement?
- 32b. Are there any other things that you were hoping to gain?
- 33. Did you gain what you had hoped to?
- 34a. You may have started out in extracurricular activities with certain goals in mind and found other benefits. What are those unexpected benefits?
- 34b. Did you want to add anything?
- 35a. In what ways is campus involvement of benefit to students?
- 35b. Can you think of any other benefits?
- 36a. In your opinion, does SVSU encourage the involvement of its students?
- 36b. If SVSU does encourage the involvement of its students, how does it do this?
- 36c. If SVSU does not encourage the involvement of its students, why do you say this?
- 36d. Did you want to add anything else?
- 37a. How might SVSU better encourage the involvement of students?
- 37b. Did you want to say more?
- 38a. What would it take to encourage commuting students to become involved?
- 39a. I will now present you with four separate sets of cards. On each card, you will find an item that: (1) may have assisted you in becoming involved or enhanced your ability to become involved, (2) may have assisted you in

not becoming involved or limited your ability to become involved, (3) may not have affected your involvement, (4) you may be uncertain about the effect of the item on your involvement, or (5) does not apply to your situation.

-Take the cards from me one at a time and place them on the pile that most appropriately describes the relationship between the item written on the card and your own situation.

-Once you have placed the card where you want it, tell me why you placed it as you did.

-Please feel free to make comments or ask questions during this exercise.

-The first set of cards contains items that are frequently mentioned in relation to commuting students.

(Factors presented in this group were Access to Transportation, Available Money, Available Time, Class Assignments/Study Schedule, Employment/Work Schedule, Family Obligations, Off-Campus Volunteer Commitments and Travel Time to Campus.)

39b. Are there any other items that may have affected your involvement on campus?

40a. Again, I am asking you to stack some cards. These cards represent people who may have influenced your involvement. The stipulations are the same as in the previous exercise. Do you have any questions? Don't forget to tell me why you placed the cards as you did. (Factors presented in this group were Admissions Representative(s), Academic Adviser(s), Brother(s)/Sister(s), Club Adviser(s), Club Member(s), College Faculty Member(s)/College Teacher(s), College Staff Member(s)/Someone Other Than a Teacher, College Friend(s), High School Friend(s), Mentor/Significant Adult Role Model, Off-Campus Employment Supervisor(s), On-Campus Employment Supervisor(s), Orientation Leader(s), Parent(s), Upperclassman/Upperclassmen.)

40b. Are there any other people who influenced your involvement at SVSU in a positive way?

40c. If so, who?

40d. If so, how?

41a. Again, a set of cards. This one contains activities, events and publications that may have affected your decision to become involved in the extracurriculum. The procedure is the same as in the last exercise. Any questions? Again, a reminder to tell me why you placed the cards as you did. (Factors presented in this group were Admissions Materials, Card's

Party/Club Fair, College Catalog, Flyers or Banners, Letters or Notices Mailed to Your Home, Listings of Clubs, Listings of Events, Local Community Newspaper, New Student Orientation, Presentation From an Admission Representative, Radio, Student Handbook, Student Newspaper, Television.)

- 41b. Are there any other events or publications that had an effect on your decision to become involved?
- 42a. There cards provide possible reasons for involvement. Follow the directions provided earlier. Any questions? Again, please remember to tell me why you have placed the cards as you have. (Factors presented in this group were: To Be a Member of an Organization Affiliated With My Major, To Be a Part of a Good Organization, To Be With Friends, To Build Communication Skills, To Build Leadership Skills, To Explore an Area of Interest, To Fill Time, To Find People With Interests Similar to My Own, To Get to know Faculty and Staff Members, To Learn How to Handle Situations, To Meet a Member of the Opposite Sex, To Meet New People, To Prepare for a Career, To Strengthen My Skills in My Area of Study, To Strengthen My Résumé.)
- 42b. Do you want to add any comments?
- 42c. Were there any other reasons that you became involved in extracurricular activities at SVSU?
- 43a. Of these four broad categories--Campus Events, Campus Publications, People You Know, and Your Own Personal Goals--which was most important in your decision(s) to become involved?
- 43b. Second in importance?
- 43c. Third in importance?
- 43d. Fourth in importance?
- 44. Is there anything more that you'd like to say about commuting students at SVSU?
- 45. Is there anything else that you'd like to say about campus involvement at SVSU?



INTERVIEW #2

- 46a. Are you a transfer student? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 46b. If yes, what college(s) did you attend prior to attending SVSU?
- 46c. If yes, how many years and semesters did you attend your previous institution? ☐ Years ☐ Semesters
- 46d. If yes, how many years and semesters have you attended SVSU?
☐ Years ☐ Semesters
47. Do you have your own car? ☐ Yes ☐ No
48. Do you typically hold one or two jobs during the Fall and Winter Semesters? ☐ One job ☐ Two jobs
49. Verbally list all the college clubs with which you have been involved. If you are a transfer student, include clubs from your previous institution.
- 50a. Have your extracurricular experiences been linked in any way?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 50b. Please explain.
- 51a. Which of these ethnic categorizations most appropriately describes your background?
☐ African American/Black
☐ Hispanic
☐ Native American/Pacific Islander
☐ Asian American/Oriental
☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Other (Please specify _____)
- 52a. Do you have any final comments, suggestions, or questions?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 52b. If yes, please proceed.

INTERVIEW #3

- 53a. As you think about yourself as a person, what are the personal characteristics that you have that have led to your being and staying involved?
- 53b. Anything else?
- 54a. When you compare yourself to other students, what do you think it is about you that helps you be and stay involved?
- 54b. Anything else?
- 55a. Once you became involved, why did you stay involved?
- 55b. Did you want to add anything?
- 56a. I'd like to double-check your club memberships and the officer's positions that you have held, if any. Please restate the clubs with which you have been involved. Tell me if you were an officer or a member when you became involved with this club and when your involvement ended. For instance, say, "I am a member of the Wargames Club. I've never held an officer's position. I began as a member in my freshman year and quit the club in my junior year."
- 57a. If you have been an officer, how did you obtain the position?
- 57b. If you have been an officer, why did you seek the position?
- 57c. If you have been an officer, how long had you been a member before you were granted the position?
- 58a. Are there any other types of involvement—such as committee work, helping with an activity, being in a performance, involvement through an on-campus job or intramural sports—that you have had? If so, please state the activity, your role, when you began involvement, and how long your involvement continued. For example, say, "I was the chairperson of the Program Board Fun and Games Committee. I began when I was a junior and quit that same year."
59. Questions were improperly numbered. There is no Question 59. Please proceed to Question 60a.

- 60a. As you think about the organizations and groups with which you have been involved, are there some that are more significant and meaningful? And why?
- 60b. Did you want to add anything?
- 61a. As you think back on the activities and events with which you have been involved, are there any that were more significant and meaningful? And why?
- 61b. Did you want to add anything?
- 62a. As you think back on the specific responsibilities that you have had with any of your campus involvements, are there any that were more significant and meaningful? And why?
- 62b. Anything else?
- 63a. We've talked about how the University--its staff, faculty, and students--might get people involved. How do you think it might keep students involved?
- 63b. Any other suggestions?
- 64a. What special sorts of activities or services might the University need to provide to keep commuter students involved?
- 64b. Anything else?
- 65a. As you look back over this interview experience, is there anything that you have learned about yourself, commuters, or involvement that might be helpful to the University in involving students and particularly commuting students?
- 65b. Do you want to add anything?
- 66a. Do you have any other closing comments, questions, or suggestions?
- 66b. Anything else?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW RESPONSE DATA



INTERVIEW RESPONSE DATA

In this appendix, the categorization of responses and frequency of each response category is presented.

First Interview

1. **Name:**
2. **Address:** Seventy-five percent of those interviewed lived in Saginaw or Bay City. Others were from smaller communities in Saginaw County or Bay County.
3. **Phone:**
4. **Date of Birth:** Average age was 21.1 years.
5. **Gender:** Female--11 participants or 55%
Male--9 participants or 45%
6. **Major:** Each of the University's five colleges was represented.
 - * College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences--8 participants
2 Communication and Theatre majors, 2 Criminal Justice majors, 2 Psychology majors, 1 Social Work and 1 Sociology major
 - * College of Business and Management--3 participants
1 Accounting major, 1 Marketing major, 1 Management major
 - * College of Education--2 participants
1 Elementary Education major, 1 Secondary Education major
 - * College of Nursing and Allied Health--1 participant
1 Nursing major
 - * College of Science, Engineering and Technology--6 participants
2 Biology majors, 4 Computer Information Systems majors
7. **How many college credits have you completed to date?**
The average number of credits completed by interview participants was 90.4 credits.
8. **How many terms* have you attended SVSU?**
 - * The average number of terms in attendance at SVSU for interview participants was 7.7 terms or 3.25 years.
 - * For nontransfer students, the average number of terms in attendance at SVSU was 8.6 terms or 3.6 years.

- * For transfer students, the average number of terms in attendance at SVSU was 5 terms or 2.2 years.

(*The words "terms" and "semesters" are used interchangeably in this case. Participants counted Spring and/or Summer enrollment as one term.)

9. **In the Fall and Winter semesters, do you typically maintain part-time or full-time enrollment status?**

Each of the 20 students was typically enrolled full-time each term. (Full-time at SVSU in the Fall and Winter semesters is 12 credits.)

10. **Do you typically work while enrolled in college classes?**

Nineteen or 95% of the survey participants typically worked while enrolled in classes.

11. **If you work, how many hours per week do you typically spend working while enrolled in classes?**

- * 10 hours or less--2 participants or 10%
- * 11-19 hours--5 participants or 25%
- * 20-29 hours--11 participants or 55%
- * 30-39 hours--0 participants or 0%
- * 40 hours or more--1 participant or 5%

12. **If you typically work, do you work on-campus, off-campus, or both while enrolled in classes?**

- * On-campus--8 participants or 40%
- * Off-campus--7 participants or 35%
- * Both--4 participants or 20%
- * Not applicable--1 participant or 5%

13. **Approximately how far do you live from SVSU?**

- * 20 minutes or less--12 participants or 60%
- * 21-40 minutes--7 participants or 35%
- * 41 minutes or more--1 participant or 5%

14. **Which of your immediate family members have taken any college classes?**

- * Mother--11 participants or 55%
- * Father--6 participants or 30%
- * Sister(s)--5 participants or 25%
- * Brother(s)--9 participants or 45%
- * None--2 participants or 10%



15. **Which of your immediate family members have graduated from college?**
 - * Mother--4 participants or 20%
 - * Father--2 participants or 10%
 - * Sister(s)--2 participants or 10%
 - * Brother(s)--4 participants or 20%
 - * None--11 participants or 55%

16. **In which (if any) extracurricular activities did you involve yourself in high school?**
 - * Clubs--15 participants or 75%
 - * Off-campus volunteer commitments--10 participants or 50%
 - * Performing groups--87 participants or 40%
 - * Sports--14 participants or 70%
 - * Student government--3 participants or 15%
 - * Other--2 participants or 10%

17. **Which of the following words would you use to describe your participation in classroom discussions?**
 - * Very frequent--5 participants or 25%
 - * Fairly frequent--13 participants or 65%
 - * Rare--2 participants or 10%

18. **What is your best approximation of your current cumulative grade point average?**
 - * 3.5-4.0--4 participants or 20%
 - * 3.0-3.5--7 participants or 35%
 - * 2.5-2.9--8 participants or 40%
 - * 2.0-2.4--1 participant or 5%

19. **What financial aid (if any) have you received since attending college?** Various types of financial aid were mentioned.
 - * 90% of those interviewed received some form of financial aid.

- 20a. **When did you first become aware of opportunities for extracurricular involvement (i.e., activities, clubs, performing groups, student government, and publications)?**
 - * New student orientation--6 participants or 30%
 - * On-campus job--4 participants or 20%
 - * First year at SVSU--3 participants or 15%
 - * Written materials--3 participants or 15%
 - * Club fair--1 participant or 5%
 - * Second year at Delta--1 participant or 5%



20b. **How far along were you in your college career at this time?**

- * First semester, freshman year of college--7 participants or 35%
- * Between senior year of high school and freshman year of college--4 participants or 20%
- * Second semester, freshman year of college--3 participants or 15%
- * Sophomore year of college--2 participants or 10%
- * In high school--2 participants or 10%
- * First semester after transferring to SVSU--1 participant or 5%
- * After first two semesters of freshman year of college--1 participant or 5%

21a. **How do you become aware of opportunities for campus involvement?**

- * Other students--7 participants or 35%
- * Postings on campus--6 participants or 30%
- * New student orientation--4 participants or 20%
- * Mailings--4 participants or 20%
- * Publications--3 participants or 15%
- * Faculty member--2 participants or 10%
- * Staff member--1 participant or 5%
- * Campus tour--1 participant or 5%
- * Presentation--1 participant or 5%
- * Word of mouth--1 participant or 5%

21b. **Can you be more specific in how this happened?**

- * Other students--1 participant or 5%
- * New student orientation--1 participant or 5%
- * Posting on job board--1 participant or 5%

22. **What was the name of the first college event or meeting you attended?**

- * Club meeting--13 participants or 65%
- * Campus event--3 participants or 15%
- * Job-related campus event--2 participants or 10%
- * Audition on campus--1 participant or 5%
- * Campus leadership program--1 participant or 5%

23a. **When did you attend your first college event or meeting?**

- * First semester, freshman year of college--8 participants or 40%
- * Second semester, freshman year of college--7 participants or 35%
- * First semester, sophomore year of college--3 participants or 15%
- * After two semesters of freshman year of college--1 participant or 5%
- * First semester after transferring to SVSU--1 participant or 5%

23b. **Please be more specific.**

I attended an RHA meeting. I was invited because of a scholarship.

24a. **When did you first think about or consider attending a college event or meeting?**

- * Talked with students--5 participants or 25%
- * Talked with faculty member--4 participants or 20%
- * Second semester of freshman year of college--3 participants or 15%
- * Wanted something to do--2 participants or 10%
- * First semester, freshman year of college--2 participants or 10%
- * Talked with staff member--1 participant or 5%
- * On the job--1 participant or 5%
- * Club fair--1 participant or 5%
- * Mailing--1 participant or 5%

24b. **Again, be as specific as you can be.**

- * Wanted to be involved--1 participant or 5%
- * Talked with faculty member--1 participant or 5%
- * Scholarship--1 participant or 5%

25a. **Why did you attend the event or meeting?** Most respondents gave more than one answer. Responses included:

- * To explore an interest--5 participants or 25%
- * To meet people--4 participants or 20%
- * Wanted to be involved--4 participants or 20%
- * Encouraged by a student--3 participants or 15%
- * To find out about the club--3 participants or 15%
- * Sounded appealing or fun--3 participants or 15%
- * Something to do--2 participants or 10%
- * Was associated with major--2 participants or 10%
- * To enhance job or grad school application--2 participants or 10%
- * Was previously involved in a similar activity--2 participants or 10%
- * Encouraged by a staff member--1 participant or 5%
- * To associate with others in my field--1 participant or 5%
- * Was required by employer--1 participant or 5%
- * To meet the director and view actors--1 participant or 5%
- * To commemorate Dr. King--1 participant or 5%
- * Was a participant in the program--1 participant or 5%

25b. **Can you explain that further?**

- * Area of interest--1 participant or 5%
- * Future benefits--1 participant or 5%
- * Wanted to be a part of college life--1 participant or 5%

26a. **With whom (if anyone) did you attend the event or meeting?**

- * Went by myself--11 participants or 55%
- * With a friend(s)--6 participants or 30%
- * With a relative--1 participant or 5%
- * With an office staff member--1 participant or 5%

26b. **Please be more specific.** This probe was not used.

27. **How did you feel when you first attended the function?**

- * Expressed uncomfortable feelings--12 participants or 60%
- * Expressed comfortable feelings--4 participants or 20%
- * Surprised at attendance--1 participant or 5%
- * Was required ("forced") to attend--1 participant
- * Cannot remember--1 participant or 5%

28a. **Is there anything that influenced your extracurricular involvement at SVSU in a positive way?** Interviewees frequently provided more than one response.

- * Student encouragement--5 participants or 25%
- * Like being involved--4 participants or 20%
- * Had been involved before--3 participants or 15%
- * Faculty encouragement--2 participants or 10%
- * Staff encouragement--2 participants or 10%
- * Club involvement--2 participants or 10%
- * Self-improvement--2 participants or 10%
- * Meet people--1 participant or 5%
- * Make connections--1 participant or 5%
- * To fill time--1 participant or 5%
- * Was on campus a lot--1 participant or 5%
- * Mailed invitation--1 participant or 5%

28b. **Anything else?**

- * No--5 participants or 25%
- * Student encouragement--3 participants or 15%
- * Wanted to be involved--3 participants or 15%
- * Club involvement--3 participants or 15%
- * Involvement in an event--1 participant or 5%
- * Staff encouragement--1 participant or 5%
- * Personal growth--1 participant or 5%
- * For fun--1 participant or 5%

29a. **What publications or promotional pieces, if any, influenced your extracurricular involvement at SVSU in a positive way?**

- * Postings--10 participants or 50%
- * Student newspaper--5 participants or 25%
- * Weekly listing of events--5 participants or 25%
- * Direct mail newsletter--3 participants or 15%
- * Mailed invitation--1 participant or 5%
- * Club listing--1 participant or 5%
- * Sports schedule--1 participant or 5%
- * News clippings sent home from sister--1 participant or 5%
- * Notices on professors' doors--1 participant or 5%
- * Word of mouth--1 participant or 5%

30a. **If there were any students or any other people—on-campus or off-campus—who influenced your involvement at SVSU, please provide the following information: Name, position or relation to interviewee, on-campus or off-campus. Data are provided by category:**

- * Students--15 participants or 75%
- * Faculty members--8 participants or 40%
- * Parents--6 participants or 30%
- * Staff members--5 participants or 25%
- * Catechism class--1 participant or 5%
- * Sister--1 participant or 5%
- * Self-motivated--1 participant

30b. **Anyone else?**

- * No--10 participants or 50%
- * Staff member--1 participant or 5%
- * Student--1 participant or 5%

30c. **Please give more details.** This probe was not used in the interviews.

31a. **What, if any, events or activities influenced your extracurricular involvement?**

- * Attended or assisted with specific campus events--10 participants or 50%
- * Club involvement--9 participants or 45%
- * On-campus paid position--2 participants or 10%
- * On-campus volunteer position--2 participants or 10%
- * Activities related to major--2 participants or 10%
- * Interaction with students--1 participant or 5%
- * Interaction with faculty--1 participant or 5%



31b. **Any other events?**

- * No--8 participants or 40%
- * On-campus paid position--1 participant or 5%
- * Role models--1 participant or 5%
- * Intramural sports--1 participant or 5%

32a. **What were you hoping to gain when you first became involved?**

- * Meet people, make contacts--11 participants or 55%
- * Be involved, be a part of SVSU--6 participants or 30%
- * Build skills--4 participants or 20%
- * Broaden understanding, become open-minded--2 participants or 10%
- * Fun--2 participants or 10%
- * Personal growth--2 participants or 10%
- * Wanted different friends than in high school--1 participant or 5%
- * Grad school application--1 participant or 5%
- * Employment--1 participant or 5%
- * Round out education--1 participant or 5%
- * To be social--1 participant or 5%
- * To regain what I had in high school--1 participant or 5%
- * To have something different than high school--1 participant or 5%
- * Lessen boredom--1 participant or 5%
- * Wanted to study in Poland--1 participant or 5%

32b. **Are there any other things that you were hoping to gain?**

- * No--9 participants or 45%
- * Gain knowledge of a particular culture--2 participants or 10%
- * Employment/résumé--2 participants or 10%
- * Experience--2 participants or 10%
- * Get someone elected--1 participant or 5%
- * New opportunity--1 participant or 5%
- * Gain acceptance--1 participant or 5%
- * Fun--1 participant or 5%
- * Favorite way to spend time--1 participant or 5%
- * Gain knowledge of computers--1 participant or 5%

33. **Did you gain what you had hoped to?**

- * Yes--20 participants or 100%

34a. **You may have started out in extracurricular activities with certain goals in mind and found other unexpected benefits. What are those unexpected benefits?**

- * Meet people, make contacts--8 participants or 40%
- * Job opportunities--3 participants or 15%

- * Broaden understanding, become open-minded--3 participants or 15%
- * Gain confidence--3 participants or 15%
- * Group with similar interests--2 participants or 10%
- * Knowledge of field of study--2 participants or 10%
- * Knowledge of college--2 participants or 10%
- * Knowledge of self--2 participants or 10%
- * Employment/résumé--2 participants or 10%
- * Help with studies--1 participant or 5%
- * Uncovered talent--1 participant or 5%
- * Gained skills--1 participant or 5%
- * Found out about events--1 participant or 5%
- * Learned about politics--1 participant or 5%
- * Spirituality--1 participant or 5%
- * Reduces stress--1 participant or 5%
- * Different kind of education--1 participant or 5%
- * Fun--1 participant or 5%
- * Provides for discussion--1 participant or 5%
- * Conference presentation--1 participant or 5%
- * Did things I never imagined--1 participant or 5%
- * Gained a desire to graduate from SVSU--1 participant or 5%
- * Became organized--1 participant or 5%

34b. **Did you want to add anything?**

- * No--10 participants or 50%
- * Found out about my family--1 participant or 5%
- * Learned to work with others--1 participant or 5%

35a. **In what ways is involvement of benefit to students?**

- * Provides a sense of belonging, unity--10 participants or 50%
- * Easier access to faculty and administration--5 participants or 25%
- * Meet people--8 participants or 40%
- * Broadens understanding and appreciation--4 participants or 20%
- * Brings people of common interests together--2 participants or 10%
- * Constructive use of time--2 participants or 10%
- * Active involvement in learning--2 participants or 10%
- * Become well-rounded--2 participants or 10%
- * Something more than study--2 participants or 10%
- * Fun--1 participant or 5%
- * Better grades--1 participant or 5%
- * Study together--1 participant or 5%
- * Learn more about interests--1 participant or 5%
- * More organized--1 participant or 5%
- * Lots to do--1 participant or 5%

- * Something for everyone--1 participant or 5%
- * Pride in work--1 participant or 5%
- * Makes campus life--1 participant or 5%

35b. **Can you think of any other benefits?**

- * Meet people, make contacts--3 participants or 15%
- * Leadership skills--3 participants or 15%
- * Broadens understanding--1 participant or 5%
- * Confidence--1 participant or 5%
- * Cultural diversity--1 participant or 5%
- * Cultural enrichment--1 participant or 5%
- * Employment/résumé--1 participant or 5%
- * Gain what I missed in high school--1 participant or 5%
- * Job opportunity--1 participant or 5%
- * Knowledge of field--1 participant or 5%
- * Something more than study--1 participant or 5%
- * Study partners--1 participant or 5%
- * Support--1 participant or 5%

36a. **In your opinion, does SVSU encourage the involvement of its students?**

- * Yes--14 participants or 60%
- * Attempts to--1 participant or 5%
- * Geared to residents--1 participant or 5%
- * Hard to say--1 participant or 5%
- * Harder for commuters--1 participant or 5%
- * Most of the time--1 participant or 5%
- * Think so--1 participant or 5%

36b. **If SVSU does encourage the involvement of its students, how does it do this?**

- * Clubs or services to clubs--6 participants or 30%
- * Postings--5 participants or 25%
- * Offers events--4 participants or 20%
- * Encouragement--4 participants or 20%
- * Events are free or low cost--2 participants or 10%
- * Convenience--2 participants or 10%
- * Mailed newsletter--2 participants or 10%
- * Mailings--2 participants or 10%
- * Recruitment of volunteers--2 participants or 10%
- * Variety of activities--2 participants or 10%
- * Weekly listing of events--2 participants or 10%
- * Clubs are not discriminatory--1 participant or 5%
- * Faculty and staff are accessible--1 participant or 5%

- * Feels comfortable--1 participant or 5%
- * Greek organizations--1 participant or 5%
- * President's open forums--1 participant or 5%
- * Publications--1 participant or 5%
- * Sports--1 participant or 5%
- * Student newspaper--1 participant or 5%
- * Work-study positions--1 participant or 5%

36c. If SVSU does not encourage the involvement of its students, why do you say this?

- * People get their friends involved. SVSU doesn't have much to do with this--1 participant or 5%
- * Counselors don't mention involvement or its benefits--1 participant or 5%
- * It's not a big sports school like U of M or MSU--1 participant or 5%

36d. Did you want to add anything else?

- * No--9 participants or 45%
- * Activities Office is helpful--1 participant or 5%
- * People on the phone are friendly--1 participant or 5%

37a. How might SVSU better encourage the involvement of its students?

- * Class announcements--3 participants or 15%
- * Make times convenient--2 participants or 10%
- * Offer more activities--2 participants or 10%
- * Improve advertising--2 participants or 10%
- * Faculty or staff encouragement--2 participants or 10%
- * Club displays at events--1 participant or 5%
- * Club representatives to promote clubs--1 participant or 5%
- * Events that unite commuters and residents--1 participant or 5%
- * Follow-up on club sign-ups--1 participant or 5%
- * Media--1 participant or 5%
- * More faculty involvement--1 participant or 5%
- * More Greek organizations--1 participant or 5%
- * New student orientation--1 participant or 5%
- * Plan a sample event so clubs know how to plan--1 participant or 5%
- * Plan a unique event each year--1 participant or 5%
- * Show pride in SVSU--1 participant or 5%
- * Word of mouth--1 participant or 5%



37b. **Did you want to say more?**

- * No—10 participants or 50%
- * Point system for involvement—1 participant or 5%
- * Clubs must be more active—1 participant or 5%
- * Clubs must make events more public—1 participant or 5%

38a. **What would it take to encourage commuting students to become involved?**

- * Convenient times, convenient programs--5 participants or 25%
- * Programs have to be worthwhile--4 participants or 20%
- * Good advertising--2 participants or 10%
- * Involve those who can't attend meetings--2 participants or 10%
- * Advertise community events--1 participant or 5%
- * Appeal to nontraditional students--1 participant or 5%
- * Appeal to those students under 31 years--1 participant or 5%
- * Appetizers, free food--1 participant or 5%
- * Club publicity manager--1 participant or 5%
- * Club contact persons--1 participant or 5%
- * Controversial topics--1 participant or 5%
- * Encouragement--1 participant or 5%
- * Inform them that they may have to persist in finding activities that are of interest to them--1 participant or 5%
- * Mailings--1 participant or 5%
- * Make them feel like they are wanted--1 participant or 5%
- * Open a comfortable study area--1 participant or 5%
- * Pay them for involvement--1 participant or 5%
- * Plan around class topics--1 participant or 5%
- * Show that involvement is cool--1 participant or 5%
- * Survey interests--1 participant or 5%
- * Use dead time between classes--1 participant or 5%
- * Use WIOG jam box for advertising--1 participant or 5%

39a. **I will now present you with four separate sets of cards. On each card, you will find an item that:**

1. **may have assisted you in becoming involved or enhanced your ability to become involved,**
2. **may have assisted you in not becoming involved or limited your ability to become involved,**
3. **may not have affected your involvement,**
4. **you may be uncertain about the effect of the item on your involvement,**
5. **does not apply to your situation.***

(*Key: A = Assisted, L = Limited, No = No Effect, U = Uncertain, N/A = Not Applicable.)

Take the cards from me one at a time and place them on the pile that most appropriately describes the relationship between the item written on the card and your own situation. Once you have placed the card where you want it, tell me why you placed it as you did. Please feel free to make comments or to ask questions during this exercise.

The first set of cards contains items that are frequently mentioned in relation to commuting students.

	A		L		No		U		N/A	
Access to transportation	10	50%	1	5%	4	20%	0	0%	6	30%
Available money	5	25%	3	15%	6	30%	4	20%	3	15%
Available time	6	30%	11	55%	1	5%	2	10%	1	5%
Class assignments/ study schedules	2	10%	12	60%	2	10%	2	10%	0	0%
Employment/work schedule	4	20%	14	70%	0	0%	2	10%	0	0%
Family obligations	3	15%	6	30%	5	25%	2	10%	4	20%
Off-campus volunteer commitments	1	5%	1	5%	8	40%	2	10%	8	40%
Travel time	1	5%	3	15%	11	55%	0	0%	5	25%

39b. **Are there any other items that may have affected your involvement on campus**

- * No--9 participants or 45%
- * Illness--1 participant or 5%
- * National Guard--1 participant or 5%
- * Past experiences--1 participant or 5%
- * People--1 participant or 5%
- * Weather--1 participant or 5%

40a. **Again, I am asking you to stack some cards. These cards represent people who may have influenced your involvement. The stipulations are the same as in the previous exercise. Do you have any questions? Don't forget to tell me why you placed the cards as you did.**

	A		L		No		U		N/A	
Admissions rep.	7	35%	1	5%	6	30%	1	5%	5	25%
Academic advisors	4	20%	0	0%	8	40%	1	5%	7	35%
Brother/sister	8	40%	0	0%	6	30%	0	0%	6	30%
Club adviser	15	75%	0	0%	3	15%	0	0%	2	10%
Club members	19	95%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%
Faculty member	13	65%	0	0%	6	30%	1	5%	0	0%
Staff member	14	70%	0	0%	4	20%	0	0%	2	10%
College friends	14	70%	0	0%	2	10%	3	15%	1	5%
High school friends	5	25%	4	20%	4	20%	0	0%	7	35%
Mentor/significant adult role model	14	70%	0	0%	1	5%	4	20%	1	5%
Off-campus supervisor	2	10%	5	25%	4	20%	2	10%	7	35%
On-campus supervisor	9	45%	0	0%	3	15%	2	10%	6	30%
Orientation leader	7	35%	3	15%	5	25%	0	0%	5	25%
Parents	14	70%	1	5%	0	0%	2	10%	3	15%
Upperclassmen	13	65%	0	0%	5	25%	0	0%	2	10%

40b. **Are there any other people who influenced your involvement at SVSU in a positive way?**

* No--8 participants or 40%

40c. **If so, who?**

- * Aunts--2 participants or 10%
- * Cousins--1 participant or 5%
- * Director of Bilingual Education--1 participant or 5%
- * EDS corporate computer program--1 participant or 5%
- * Friends--1 participant or 5%
- * Girlfriend and her parents--1 participant or 5%
- * Godmother--1 participant or 5%
- * Health has limited me--1 participant or 5%

- * Husband has limited me--1 participant or 5%
- * Little brother from Big Brothers Program--1 participant or 5%
- * Jr. Achievement advisor--1 participant or 5%
- * Uncle--1 participant or 5%

40d. **If so, how?** This probe was not used in the interviews.

41a. **Again, a set of cards. This one contains activities, events, and publications that may have affected your decision to become involved in the extracurriculum. The procedure is the same as in the last exercise. Any questions? Again, a reminder to tell me why you placed the card as you did.**

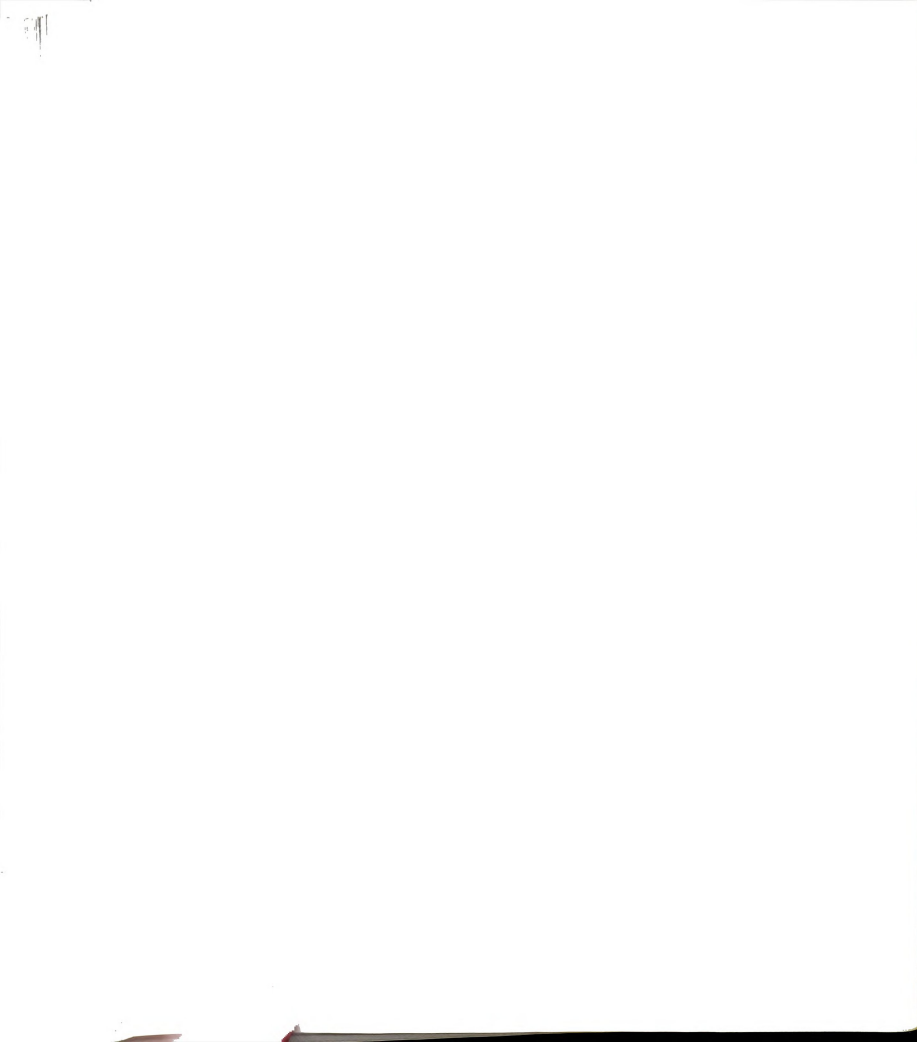
	A		L		No		U		N/A	
Admissions material	7	35%	0	0%	11	55%	0	0%	2	10%
Card's party/fair	10	50%	0	0%	4	20%	1	5%	5	25%
Catalog	4	20%	0	0%	11	55%	3	15%	2	10%
Flyers/banners	18	90%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%
Mailings	13	65%	0	0%	5	25%	0	0%	1	5%
Club listings	9	45%	0	0%	9	45%	0	0%	2	10%
Event listings	19	95%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Local newspaper	1	5%	0	0%	13	65%	2	10%	4	20%
New student orientation	9	45%	0	0%	5	25%	2	10%	4	20%
Admissions presentation	3	15%	1	5%	8	40%	2	10%	6	30%
Radio	5	25%	0	0%	10	50%	1	5%	4	20%
Student handbook	3	15%	0	0%	12	60%	2	10%	3	15%
Student newspaper	15	75%	0	0%	2	10%	2	10%	1	5%
Television	3	15%	0	0%	12	60%	0	0%	5	25%

41b. Are there any other events or publications that had an effect on your decision to become involved?

- * No—13 participants or 65%
- * Mailings—1 participant or 5%
- * Would like a campus radio station—1 participant or 5%
- * Went to a Program Board meeting and no one was there—1 participant or 5%

42a. These cards provide possible reasons for involvement. Follow the directions provided earlier. Any questions? Again, please remember to tell me why you have placed your cards as you have.

	A		L		No		U		N/A	
To be member of an organization affiliated with major	15	75%	0	0%	1	5%	2	10%	2	10%
To be part of a good organization	15	75%	0	0%	3	15%	1	5%	1	5%
To be with friends	13	65%	0	0%	5	25%	0	0%	2	10%
To build communication skills	16	80%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%	2	10%
To build leadership skills	16	80%	0	0%	2	10%	0	0%	2	10%
To explore an area of interest	19	95%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%
To fill time	5	25%	1	5%	9	45%	0	0%	5	25%
To find people with similar interests	16	80%	0	0%	2	10%	1	5%	1	5%
To get to know faculty and staff	10	50%	0	0%	8	40%	2	10%	0	0%
To learn to handle situations	11	55%	0	0%	6	30%	2	10%	1	5%
To meet a member of the opposite sex	3	15%	0	0%	11	55%	1	5%	5	25%
To meet new people	20	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%



To prepare for a career	15	75%	0	0%	4	20%	0	0%	1	5%
To strengthen skills in area of study	12	60%	0	0%	4	20%	1	5%	3	15%
To strengthen résumé	13	65%	0	0%	5	25%	1	5%	1	5%

42b. **Do you want to add any comments?**

- * No—16 participants or 70%
- * Thought it would be fun--1 participant or 5%

42c. **Were there any other reasons that you became involved in extracurricular activities at SVSU?**

- * No—12 participants or 60%
- * Set goals and kept pushing myself to achieve them—1 participant or 5%
- * Wanted to promote change at the school—1 participant or 5%
- * Wanted college to be more fun than high school—1 participant or 5%

43a. **Of these four broad categories—campus events, campus publications, people you know, and your own personal goals—which was most important in your decision to become involved?**

	Number	Percent
* Campus events	0	0
* Campus publications	0	0
* People	6	30
* Personal goals	14	70

43b. **Second in importance?**

* Campus events	4	20
* Campus publications	0	55
* People	11	55
* Personal goals	5	25

43c. **Third in importance?**

* Campus events	12	60
* Campus publications	5	25
* People	2	10
* Personal goals	0	0
* Uncertain	1	5

43d. **Last in importance?**

	Number	Percent
* Campus events	3	15
* Campus publications	14	70
* People	1	5
* Personal goals	1	5
* Uncertain	1	5

44. **Is there anything more that you'd like to say about commuting students at SVSU?**

- * No--3 participants or 15%
- * Commuter involvement is difficult to achieve--5 participants or 25%
- * Commuters must see benefits of involvement--2 participants or 10%
- * Study lounge is needed--2 participants or 10%
- * Wish more were involved--2 participants or 10%
- * Additional parking is needed--1 participant or 5%
- * Commuters are misunderstood--1 participant or 5%
- * Don't like the way snow days are announced--1 participant or 5%
- * Some stay to themselves too much--1 participant or 5%

45. **Is there anything else that you'd like to say about campus involvement at SVSU?**

- * No--7 participants or 35%
- * SVSU does a good job--4 participants or 20%
- * More students should get involved--3 participants or 15%
- * People don't see the benefits of involvement--2 participants or 10%
- * I don't pay attention--1 participant or 5%
- * I like the fact that there aren't many Greek organizations--1 participant or 5%
- * More are getting involved--1 participant or 5%
- * Need more programs directed to commuters--1 participant or 5%

SECOND INTERVIEW46a. **Are you a transfer student?**

- * Yes--5 participants or 25%
- * No--15 participants or 75%

46b. **If yes, what college(s) did you attend prior to attending SVSU?**

- * Delta College--3 participants or 15%
- * Kellogg Community College--1 participant or 5%
- * Daytona Beach Community College--1 participant or 5%

46c. If yes, how many years and semesters did you attend your previous institution?

- * 2 years or 4 semesters--3 participants or 15%
- * 1 year or 2 semesters--2 participants or 10%

46d. If yes, how many years and semesters have you attended SVSU?

- * 1 year or 2 semesters--1 participant or 5%
- * 2 years or 4 semesters--1 participant or 5%
- * 2 years or 5 semesters--1 participant or 5%
- * 3 years or 6 semesters--1 participant or 5%
- * 3 years or 8 semesters--1 participant or 5%

47. Do you have your own car?

- * Yes--20 participants or 100%
- * No--0 participants or 0%

48. Do you typically hold one or two jobs during the Fall and Winter semesters?

- * One job--11 participants or 55%
- * Two jobs--9 participants or 45%
- * Not applicable--1 participant or 5%

49. Verbally list all the college clubs with which you have been involved. If you are a transfer student, include clubs from your previous institution.

- * Student Government--10 participants or 50%
- * Association of Computing Machinery--4 participants or 20%
- * Hispanic Student Association--4 participants or 20%
- * Psychology Club--3 participants or 15%
- * Science Club--3 participants or 15%
- * Commuter Club--2 participants or 10%
- * Honors program--2 participants or 10%
- * International Club--2 participants or 10%
- * Polish Club--2 participants or 10%
- * Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society for Two-Year Colleges--2 participants or 10%
- * Alliance for the Performing Arts--1 participant or 5%
- * Alpha Mu Gamma Honor Society for Foreign Languages--1 participant or 5%
- * Black Student Association--1 participant or 5%
- * Club Red Tour Guides--1 participant or 5%
- * Cheerleading--1 participant or 5%
- * College Republicans--1 participant or 5%
- * Communication Guild--1 participant or 5%

- * Delta Sigma Pi Honor Society--1 participant or 5%
- * Environment Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Health Professionals Honor Society--1 participant or 5%
- * Intramural sports--1 participant or 5%
- * Marching band--1 participant or 5%
- * Racquetball Club--1 participant or 5%
- * Sound designer performances--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Nurses Association--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Social Work Organization--1 participant or 5%
- * Tennis Club--1 participant or 5%
- * Valley Vanguard writer--1 participant or 5%

50a. **Have your extracurricular experiences been linked in any way?**

- * Yes--12 participants or 60%
- * No--7 participants or 35%
- * Yes and no--1 participant or 5%

50b. **Please explain.**

- * Club experience led to knowledge of other opportunities--9 participants or 45%
- * On-campus job experience led to knowledge of other opportunities--2 participants or 10%
- * Was always interested in leadership--1 participant or 5%

51. **Which of these ethnic categorizations most appropriately describes your background?**

- * White/Caucasian--13 participants or 65%
- * Hispanic--5 participants or 25%
- * African American/Black--1 participant or 5%
- * Native American/Pacific Islander--0 participants or 0%
- * Asian American/Oriental--0 participants or 0%

52a. **Do you have any final comments, suggestions, or questions?**

- * No--17 participants or 85%
- * Yes--3 participants or 15%

52b. **If yes, please proceed.**

- * Working on a club bulletin board--1 participant or 5%
- * Clubs are important for sense of togetherness--1 participant or 5%
- * Advertising needs to be bold and outrageous--1 participant or 5%
- * Clubs need financial support from the University--1 participant or 5%
- * Old computers and computer parts could be used by clubs--1 participant or 5%



THIRD INTERVIEW

53a. **As you think about yourself as a person, what are the personal characteristics that you have that have led to your being and staying involved?**

- * Work well with others--11 participants or 55%
- * High energy, get bored easily--7 participants or 35%
- * Persistence--3 participants or 15%
- * Like to lead--3 participants or 15%
- * Am goal-oriented, determined--2 participants or 10%
- * Learn through involvement--1 participant or 5%
- * Want to help--1 participant or 5%
- * Honesty--1 participant or 5%
- * Intolerance for imperfection--1 participant or 5%

53b. **Anything else?**

- * No--18 participants or 90%
- * Like to meet people--1 participant or 5%
- * Want to build a foundation within group--1 participant or 5%

54a. **When you compare yourself to other students, what do you think it is about you that helps you be and stay involved?**

- * Need to be involved, enthusiasm, drive--10 participants or 50%
- * Work well with others--6 participants or 30%
- * Persistence--3 participants or 15%
- * Was fun, enjoyed it--3 participants or 10%
- * More mature--2 participants or 10%
- * Time-management skills--2 participants or 10%
- * Organizational skills--1 participant or 5%

54b. **Anything else?**

- * No--20 participants or 100%
- * Yes--0 participants or 0%

55a. **Once you became involved, why did you stay involved?**

- * Met and worked with others--13 participants or 65%
- * Was fun, exciting, enjoyable--10 participants or 50%
- * Learned skills--4 participants or 20%
- * Felt good about self--2 participants or 10%
- * Was addicting--2 participants or 10%
- * Was encouraged, praised--2 participants or 10%
- * Was beneficial to me--2 participants or 10%

- * Time filler--2 participants or 10%
- * Networking--1 participant or 5%
- * Opened other opportunities--1 participant or 5%

55b. **Did you want to add anything?**

- * No--19 participants or 95%
- * People [were the reason] mainly; spoke same language--1 participant or 5%

56a. **I'd like to double-check your club memberships and the officer's positions that you have held, if any. Please restate the clubs with which you have been involved. Tell me if you were an officer or a member when you became involved with this club and when your involvement ended. For instance, say, "I am a member of the Wargames Club. I've never held an officer's position. I began as a member in my freshman year and quit the club in my junior year."**

Data for each participant are provided in the appropriate profile.

- * Student government--11 participants or 55%
- * Association of Computing Machinery--4 participants or 20%
- * Hispanic Student Association--4 participants or 20%
- * Psychology Club--3 participants or 15%
- * Science Club--3 participants or 15%
- * Commuter Club--2 participants or 10%
- * Honors Program--2 participants or 10%
- * International Club--2 participants or 10%
- * Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society--2 participants or 10%
- * Polish Club--2 participants or 10%
- * SafeHaven--2 participants or 10%
- * Alliance for the Performing Arts--1 participant or 5%
- * Alpha Mu Gamma foreign Language Honor Society--1 participant or 5%
- * Black Student Association--1 participant or 5%
- * Cheerleading--1 participant or 5%
- * College Republicans--1 participant or 5%
- * Communication Guild--1 participant or 5%
- * Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Delta Environment Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Health Professionals Honor Society--1 participant or 5%
- * Marching Band--1 participant or 5%
- * Orientation leader--1 participant or 5%
- * Psi Chi Honor Society--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Nurses Association--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Social Work Organization--1 participant or 5%
- * Theatrical performances--1 participant or 5%

- * Tour guide coordinator--1 participant or 5%
- * Unofficial smokers club--1 participant or 5%
- * Valley Vanguard--1 participant or 5%
- * Wargames Club--1 participant or 5%
- * Young Democrats--1 participant or 5%
- * Racquetball Club--1 participant or 5%
- * Eighteen participants or 90% held an officer's position in at least one student organization.
- * Eleven of the 18 participants or 55% obtained an officer's position less than one year after joining the student organization.
- * Five participants or 25% obtained an officer's position one year after joining the student organization.
- * Thirteen of 15 nontransfer participants (65%) and 4 of 5 (20%) of the transfer students interviewed joined a club during their first year at the university.

57a. If you have been an officer, how did you obtain the position?

- * Election--17 participants or 85%
- * Appointment--1 participant or 5%
- * Not applicable--2 participants or 10%

57b. If you have been an officer, why did you seek the position?

- * Thought I'd be a good leader; wanted to improve things--10 participants or 50%
- * Didn't seek it--3 participants or 15%
- * Encouragement--3 participants or 15%
- * Experience as an officer--2 participants or 10%
- * Résumé; grad school applications--2 participants or 10%
- * Not applicable--2 participants or 10%
- * Good experience--1 participant or 5%

57c. If you have been an officer, how long had you been a member before you were granted the position?

- * Started as an officer--10 participants or 50%
- * One year after joining organization--8 participants or 40%
- * Less than 1 year after joining the organization--4 participants or 20%
- * One and one-half years after joining the organization--1 participant or 5%
- * Two years after joining the organization--1 participant or 5%
- * Three years after joining the organization--1 participant or 5%



58a. **Are there any other types of involvement—such as committee work, helping with an activity, being in a performance, involvement through an on-campus job or intramural sports—that you have had? If so, please state the activity, your role, when you began involvement, and how long your involvement continued. For example, say, "I was the Chairperson of the Program Board Fun and Games Committee. I began when I was a junior and quit that same year."** Data for each individual are reported in the profile and interview summaries.

- * Distinction in Leadership Program participant--3 participants or 15%
- * Dow Corning intern--3 participants or 15%
- * Student Government Secretary--3 participants or 15%
- * Student Government Budget Committee--3 participants or 15%
- * Valley Festival of the Fine Arts volunteer--3 participants or 15%
- * Adopt-a-School Program--2 participants or 10%
- * Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee member--2 participants or 10%
- * Health Services employee--2 participants or 10%
- * Intramural sports--2 participants or 10%
- * Minority Services employee or mentor--2 participants or 10%
- * Student Government Fall Picnic Committee--2 participants or 5%
- * Student Government International Student Committee--2 participants or 10%
- * Student Government Library Committee--2 participants or 10%
- * Student Government Spring Fling Committee--2 participants or 10%
- * Talent Show volunteer--2 participants or 10%
- * Sound designer for theatrical performances--1 participant or 5%
- * Bilingual-Bicultural Banquet emcee--1 participant or 5%
- * Campus Life team member--1 participant or 5%
- * Church picnic volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Confirmation class teacher--1 participant or 5%
- * Family Festival Day Planning Committee member--1 participant or 5%
- * Family Festival Day volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Health Fair participant--1 participant or 5%
- * Hispanic Student Association Planning Committee member--1 participant or 5%
- * Homecoming volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Hugh O'Brien Leadership Seminar assistant--1 participant or 5%
- * Institutional Review Committee student representative--1 participant or 5%
- * Job Fair assistant--1 participant or 5%
- * King-Chavez-Parks program counselor--1 participant or 5%
- * Kwanzaa Celebration volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Leadership Banquet emcee--1 participant or 5%

- * Learning Assistance Center employee--1 participant or 5%
- * Lifeguard--1 participant or 5%
- * Lock-In volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Martin Luther King Commemoration Dinner volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Math Curriculum Committee member--1 participant or 5%
- * Meeting with University president on the needs of Hispanic students--1 participant or 5%
- * Minority Service tour guide--1 participant or 5%
- * Mr. Roger's Program volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Performing Arts Series volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Placement Office employee--1 participant or 5%
- * Psychology Lecture Series chairperson--1 participant or 5%
- * Psychology Undergraduate Conference Committee member--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Bills Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Computer Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Inter-Club Council--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Lock-In Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Multi-Cultural Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Pride Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Student Government Tuition Committee--1 participant or 5%
- * Thumb Day volunteer--1 participant or 5%
- * Phon-a-thon caller--1 participant or 5%
- * Should I Be Thinking of College Now--1 participant or 5%
- * Swim meet volunteer--1 participant or 5%

59. **Questions were improperly numbered. There was no 59 included with the interview questions.**

60a. **As you think back on the organizations and groups with which you have been involved, are there some that are more significant and/or meaningful? And why?**

- * Good learning experience; built skills--10 participants or 50%
- * Gained responsible position; opportunity to be heard--7 participants or 35%
- * Met new people--3 participants or 15%
- * Will help with career--3 participants or 15%
- * Was fun--1 participant or 5%
- * Gained visibility--1 participant or 5%



- 60b. **Did you want to add anything?**
- * No--19 participants or 95%
 - * Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee taught me to speak out--1 participant or 5%
- 61a. **As you think back on the activities and events with which you have been involved, are there any that were more significant and/or meaningful? And why?**
- * Planning or coordinating a project--9 participants or 15%
 - * When working with other students--1 participant or 5%
 - * Can't think of just one--1 participant or 5%
- 61b. **Did you want to add anything?**
- * No--20 participants or 100%
- 62a. **As you think back on the specific responsibilities that you have had with any of your campus involvements, are there any that were more meaningful and/or significant? And why?**
- * Holding a position of responsibility--15 participants or 75%
 - * Serving students--1 participant or 5%
 - * All jobs--1 participant or 5%
 - * Speaking at banquet--1 participant or 5%
 - * All have been meaningful--1 participant or 5%
 - * Activities associated with the Leadership Award--1 participant or 5%
 - * Completing a task that no one else would--1 participant or 5%
- 62b. **Anything else?**
- * No--19 participants or 95%
 - * Distinction in Leadership Award program has taught me that you can't know enough--1 participant or 5%
- 63a. **We've talked about how the University--its staff, faculty, and students--might get people involved. How do you think it might keep students involved?**
- * Encourage; recognize student involvement--6 participants or 30%
 - * Plan worthwhile and interesting activities--6 participants or 30%
 - * Faculty and staff involvement, support--4 participants or 20%
 - * Granting students responsibility--2 participants or 10%
 - * Students don't want to be involved--2 participants or 10%
 - * Make groups more personal--1 participant or 5%
 - * Plan more activities--1 participant or 5%
 - * Show students the benefits of involvement--1 participant or 5%
 - * Set club goals; direction--1 participant or 5%



63b. **Any other suggestions?**

- * No--18 participants or 90%
- * Everyone knew me; that was encouraging--1 participant or 5%
- * Post-meeting minutes--1 participant or 5%

64a. **What special sorts of activities or services might the University need to provide to keep commuter students involved?**

- * Plan around commuter schedules--5 participants or 25%
- * Set up a commuter lounge area--4 participants or 20%
- * Family programs--4 participants or 20%
- * Free food at events--2 participants or 10%
- * Recreational and intramural events for commuters--2 participants or 10%
- * Club bulletin board--1 participant or 5%
- * Club contact person--1 participant or 5%
- * Design ways to involve those who can't attend meetings--1 participant or 5%
- * Convenient hours for facilities--1 participant or 5%
- * Convenient locations for events--1 participant or 5%
- * Plan big events--1 participant or 5%
- * Send out minutes, newsletter--1 participant or 5%

64b. **Anything else?**

- * No--17 participants or 85%
- * Don't know--1 participant or 5%
- * Music in lounges--1 participant or 5%
- * Radio station--1 participant or 5%

65a. **As you look back over this interview experience, is there anything that you have learned about yourself, commuters, or involvement that might be helpful to the University in involving students and particularly commuting students?**

- * No--5 participants or 25%
- * Didn't realize all I've done--3 participants or 15%
- * Need supportive and outgoing faculty and staff--2 participants or 10%
- * Can never give up--1 participant or 5%
- * Commuters are inadvertently ostracized--1 participant or 5%
- * Commuters have other responsibilities--1 participant or 5%
- * Commuter involvement is difficult--1 participant or 5%
- * Day care--1 participant or 5%
- * Easy to plan; hard to find something that works--1 participant or 5%
- * Find out what people need; will differ each year--1 participant or 5%
- * Flexible scheduling--1 participant or 5%

- * Free food--1 participant or 5%
- * Good when activities are located in commuter areas--1 participant or 5%
- * I remember the people, not the event--1 participant or 5%
- * I was scared at first, then the doors started to open up--1 participant or 5%
- * If I could give to others what I have received, that would be special to me--1 participant or 5%
- * I've gained experience--1 participant or 5%
- * Improve advertising--1 participant or 5%
- * May be spreading self thin--1 participant or 5%
- * Need more open forums; better communication--1 participant or 5%
- * Nice to have a place to store food--1 participant or 5%
- * People who get others involved have a special gift--1 participant or 5%
- * Take their ideas and get them involved mentally and physically--1 participant or 5%

65b. **Anything else?**

- * No--18 participants or 90%
- * Those who are pressured to be involved are often inactive--1 participant or 5%
- * Freshmen should learn time management--1 participant or 5%

66a. **Do you have any other closing comments, questions, or suggestions?**

- * No--10 participants or 50%
- * As far as the dissertation goes, I think it's neat--1 participant or 5%
- * Campus involvement is something special; close to real world experience--1 participant or 5%
- * Carpe diem! Seize the day!--1 participant or 5%
- * Gave me an opportunity to see what I've done--1 participant or 5%
- * Glad I got involved; enriched my college experience--1 participant or 5%
- * Glad you're doing this because this is a commuter school--1 participant or 5%
- * Hope you find what you're looking for--1 participant or 5%
- * Issue guest cards for friends--1 participant or 5%
- * Vanguard article on _____ shows what the University can do for somebody--1 participant or 5%
- * You did a very nice job--well-organized, professional, articulate. Appreciate you working around my times--1 participant or 5%

66b. **Anything else?**

- * No—17 participants or 85%
- * Having a mentor helped--1 participant or 5%
- * Seem to have good knowledge of the topic--1 participant or 5%
- * Thanks for some good memories—1 participant or 5%

Hello, _____. Before we get started, I wanted to double-check to make certain that you have signed and received a copy of the consent form.

You understand that this study is concerned with the factors that influence commuting student involvement. All of the study participants are 18- to 22-year old commuting students who are involved in campus organizations. Each of these people has volunteered to be a part of the study.

Please know that your responses will be held in confidence. The only people who will see them are myself, the interview transcriber, an external consultant, and the members of my research guidance committee. Your responses will in no way affect your school records or involvement.

The nature of this interview is somewhat informal. However, I'd like to ask that you provide serious and thoughtful answers to the questions asked.

Throughout the interview, I will be using terms such as extracurricular involvement, campus involvement, campus life, and the extracurriculum. By these terms, I mean those activities including meetings that take place outside of the classroom.

If you are in need of clarification at any time during this conversation, please feel free to ask. If you need any questions reread, let me know.

Your comments are also welcome at any time during the interview.

Are you ready to start? Any questions?

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM





**CONSENT FORM FOR THE STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING
THE EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUTING STUDENTS**

I would like to request your cooperation in the conduct of a study of the factors that affect commuting students in becoming involved in extracurricular activities. The study is titled "Factors Influencing the Extracurricular Involvement of Commuting Students". With it, I hope to learn more about involving commuting students in campus life. This information will contribute to research in higher education and may be beneficial to commuting students and student life at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU).

If you should decide to participate, you will be asked to be a part of two interviews. Your responses will be tape recorded, transcribed and compared with the responses of other commuting students who are active in student organizations. Depending on the number of respondents, you may also be asked to complete the Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII), a short instrument designed to measure the range and intensity of a student's campus involvement.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. In addition, only the researcher, her supervising professor, the interview transcriber and an external consultant will review the interview transcripts.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to participate in this study and that you have read and understood the information in this consent form. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your present or future association with SVSU. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. If you desire a copy of this consent form, it will be provided to you.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the Office of Student Life, 117 Wickes, 790-4170. I can also be reached at my home number which is 792-3242.

Thank you for your time and for considering participation.

Sincerely,



Diane Brimmer

Director of Student Life

Participant's Signature Date

Participant's Printed Name Date

Principal Investigator's Signature Date

Does Participant desire a copy of this form? ____ Yes ____ No

APPENDIX E

RELEASE FORM

RELEASE FORM

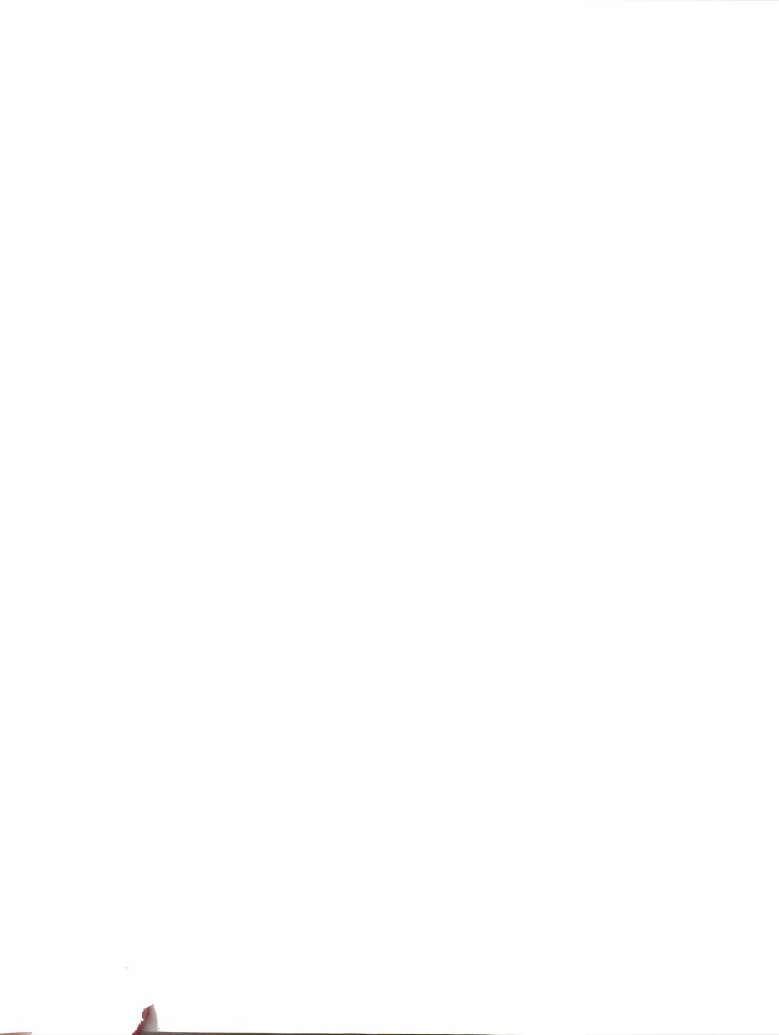
With this signature, I am providing Ms. Diane Brimmer with my permission to use and print my words and quotations from interviews connected with her dissertation research. I understand that I will not be identified in the dissertation.

Signature

Date



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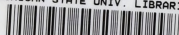
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