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A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF
AN INTER-UNIVERSITY REGIONAL CENTER
AS HELD BY ALUMNI OF THE PARTICIPATING MICHIGAN UNIVERSITIES

By

Quentin Henry Gessner

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF AN INTER-UNIVERSITY REGIONAL
CENTER AS HELD BY ALUMNI OF THE PARTICIPATING MICHIGAN UNIVERSITIES

By Quentin H. ^{Henry}Gessner

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions college alumni have of a continuing education regional center as related to factors influencing their perceptions; namely, experience and need. Experience and need were investigated in terms of the college experience of alumni, their Center participation, and their perceived educational needs.

A secondary purpose was to compare the perceptions of the regional center held by college alumni on the basis of alumni from the three institutions involved in the study.

Methodology

This study used a systematic random sample drawn from a restricted universe. The universe of possible respondents was defined as college alumni of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan living in four selected counties in Southwestern Michigan, i.e., Kent, Ionia, Allegan and Ottawa. A questionnaire was

selected as the most feasible method of obtaining alumni perceptions of a regional center. Responses received from 438 college alumni produced information relative to their perceptions of the inter-university regional center located in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Major Conclusions

1. Essentially, college alumni of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan don't know what is being offered by the regional center.
2. For college alumni to know what is being offered by the regional center, it is important that they have participated in Center programs.
3. College alumni of the three universities know more about related activities offered by the Center than either credit or non-credit programs.
4. To determine the perceptions college alumni have of a regional center, one must be concerned with the age of college alumni, the school they attended and their sex.
5. Alumni perceptions of intent to participate are related to their undergraduate major and time elapsed since last degree.
6. Recency of Center experience was an important factor in alumni perceptions of the Center.
7. Alumni indicated a strong interest in participating in conference activities.
8. Past Center participation by college alumni is the factor most positively related to alumni perceptions of the regional center.

9. Perceived educational needs of college alumni for academic credit programs, home and family living programs, and professional growth programs are significant factors in alumni perceptions.

Recommendations

1. The three universities sponsoring the regional center should assume a greater responsibility in meeting the continuing educational needs of alumni as determined by this study.
2. For alumni to know more about the Center and its functions, it is necessary for the Center to have more alumni participate in its programs.
3. Since admissions and counseling and information services were related factors in alumni perceptions of the Center, it is recommended these activities be utilized as major foci to implement recommendation number one.
4. There is a need for an expanded program of credit offerings in education, business administration, social work, liberal arts, and natural resources.
5. More extensive offerings of non-credit programs are recommended in the following areas: human relations; local, state, and national affairs, creative arts, aging, community development, education, continuing education for women, natural resources, and social, economic and political issues.
6. Perceived educational needs by alumni indicate greater emphasis should be placed on professional growth programs.

7. In view of the popularity of conferences as a function of the regional center, it is suggested this type of short-term learning experience be expanded.
8. Since last degree relates to alumni perceptions of non-credit programs, it is suggested recent graduates particularly be informed of non-credit programs conducted by the Center.
9. Since recency of Center experience was significant in alumni perceptions of intent to participate in Center programs this suggests frequent communication between the Center and recent participants is desirable.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the termination of World War II, the strongest demand for education ever witnessed in America has occurred. Parallel to this increased attention given to education generally is the emphasis currently being placed on continuing education or the concept of life-long learning.

The principle that adults should continue to learn during their lifetimes has gained acceptance in educational circles. The Commission of the Professors of Adult Education suggests that the assumption of learning as a life long process is based on a new fact of life:

....the accelerating pace of social change. For the first time in the history of civilization, the time span of drastic cultural change has been telescoped into less than the lifetime of the individual. The current generation of mature adults now represents the first generation faced with managing a culture different in kind than the one originally transmitted to them. The consequence of this new fact is such that the well educated youth of today is an obsolete man tomorrow. ¹

The implications for continuing education in preventing the obsolescence of man are enormous. Drucker sees the "new educated society as a society with many new commitments by university and individual to continuing education, commitments to the application of knowledge, and

¹ The Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., Adult Education, A New Imperative for our Times, A report by the commission of the Professors of Adult Education, (Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., 1961), p. 5.

commitments to the development of the whole human being, to a personal life as well as work."² Since education is essentially a continuing process of self-renewal, opportunities for continuing education must be made available to the persons living in our society. The University, as an important instrument in the educational process, represents a powerful force not only for providing continuing education opportunities, but to assist in advancing the concept of an educated society.

That the universities of our country must commit themselves to continuing higher education is one of the important imperatives of our time. Blackwell has stated that, "the university should not be merely a mirror of its society but should definitely and actively affect social change."³ Whitehead has said that "the justification for a university is that it preserves the connection between knowledge and the zest for life."⁴ Houle has suggested that universities "have more of an obligation to provide service; they must respond to demands for the proliferation of courses, for complete coverage of subject-matter and for greater spread geographically."⁵

²Peter F. Drucker, "The University in An Educated Society," Oakland Papers, ed. James B. Whipple and Gary A. Woditsch (Boston, Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1966), p. 5.

³Gordon W. Blackwell, "Community Needs and Higher Continuing Education," The Continuing Task, (Boston: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1967), p. 25.

⁴Alfred North Whitehead, The Arms of Education and Other Essays, (The New American Library, Mentor Books Edition, 1949), p. 87.

⁵Cyril O. Houle, Major Trends in Higher Adult Education, (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1959), p. 11.

Since the university is one of the few objective institutions in American society it is obligated to make itself useful in maintaining and improving society. To fulfill this societal role, the university should maintain contact with all segments of the population and be prepared to extend the boundaries of the campus to adults of all ages, after their withdrawal from formal classroom instruction, to make it possible for continuing learning. Former President Johnson has stated:

....the role of the university must extend far beyond the ordinary extension-type operation. It's research findings and talents must be made available to the community. Faculty must be called upon for consulting activities. Pilot projects, seminars, conferences, T.V. programs and task forces drawing on many departments of the University--all should be brought into play. This is a demanding assignment for the universities and many are not now ready for it...⁶

Thus, the die appears to be cast. Universities in the 1970's must be committed to the concept of continuing education and to extending their resources to assist in resolving the social imperatives currently confronting our society.

Generally, universities extend their boundaries through extension divisions or continuing education services. Burch suggests that the presence of university extension in the university hinges on three premises:

.... (1) that a university should make available extension education opportunities for a formal college education--or its equivalent--to young people and others who are unable to become regular fulltime students; (2) that it has an obligation to provide educational services to the wider community that supports it; (3) that it should provide opportunities for continuing education for those who have absorbed as much formal education as they desire, but who wish to continue learning.⁷

⁶U.S., Congressional Record, 89th Congress, 1st Session, 1965, Vol.III, Part 1, p. 510.

⁷Glen Burch, Challenge to the University, (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1961), p. 20.

Extension education can be one of the major instrumentalities through which the adult population achieves the fruits of life-long learning. An important consideration to recognize in reference to the extension of university resources is that a university has many communities it must serve. Creese supports this notion by stating:

....for a college of medicine, the natural community is that of the local physicians, for the school of education it is the community of teachers and schoolmen; and for the engineering college it is the community of engineers, industrial executives, foremen and skilled workmen of industry. To these special communities within communities, the University has an obligation in higher adult education.⁸

Universities naturally differ in the approach they take to reach their communities. One possibility is for the University to establish a regional center located within a given geographical area. Such a regional center can then provide the unique, educational programs and services of the sponsoring institution. In recent years, cooperative efforts by several universities have led to a consortium arrangement on a regional basis for the purpose of offering programs and services for a specific geographical region. Generally, however, institutions of higher education have been slow to form cooperative plans on a regional basis. Enarson points out:

....except for a few activities, such as the regional plans which are gradually developing for professional or specialized instruction, there are not too many examples of educational cooperation among the colleges of the United States.⁹

In Michigan the presidents of the state institutions, in recognition of the desirability of statewide coordination and planning in higher

⁸James Creese, The Extension of University Teaching, (New York: George Grady Press, 1941), p. 83.

⁹Harold L. Enarson, "Federal-Regional Relationships in Higher Education, " Higher Education, XVI, No. 6 (1960), pp. 3-9.

education, maintain an organization known as the Michigan Council of State College Presidents. In 1953 the initial inquiry into the possibilities for inter-institutional cooperation on a regional basis in Michigan was made when the Governor and the Legislature requested a series of higher education studies of selected phases of field and extension services.¹⁰ From 1956 to 1958 a statewide survey of higher education in Michigan was made under the auspices of the legislative committee which employed John Dale Russell as director. The Russell report in 1958 advocated a central coordinating board in the state that would facilitate communication among institutions on matters of program development and to advise institutions relative to program development.¹¹

Russell called the creation of a Field Services Committee, by and under the Michigan Council of State College Presidents, "a notable step in the right direction, it is evident that the work of this committee has resulted in improvement of service to the people of Michigan in all branches of extension and adult education."¹² This committee is now named the Michigan Coordinating Council of State College Field Services (commonly abbreviated to Field Services Council). The Field Services Council was instructed to proceed as rapidly as possible with such measures as joint housing for extension activities; use of joint names for the physical

¹⁰Field and Extension Services of the State Supported Institutions of Higher Learning in Michigan. A report by the Field and Extension Services Study Group for the Michigan Council of State College Presidents, (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers Publishers, Inc., 1956), p. 113.

¹¹John Dale Russell, Higher Education in Michigan. The Final Report of the Survey of Higher Education in Michigan, Lansing, Michigan, September, 1958, pp. 114-117.

¹²Ibid, p. 33.

location, telephone and stationary identification, publicity, and publications; use of joint library and audio-visual facilities; and cooperative inventory, purchase, and use of equipment and standard supplies.¹³

The next year the Michigan Coordinating Council of State College Field Services recommended that the Michigan Council of State College Presidents approve the following broad general policies for the implementation of a system of cooperation and coordination of the field service program of the state colleges and universities in Michigan:

1. The state tax-supported colleges and universities are committed to a system of cooperation and coordination in field service programs on both a regional and a state-wide basis.
2. The individual identity and unique function of each institution shall be respected.
3. The member institutions of the Council are committed to the development of a plan of cooperative and coordinated regional field office operations.¹⁴

These policies, among others, were approved by the Michigan Council of State College Presidents on April 3, 1959 and thus the groundwork was laid for consortiums to be created and operationalized by state supported institutions.

Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, and the University of Michigan have, historically, extended their boundaries to serve the people of Michigan. Although Michigan State University and the University of Michigan conduct programs on a total state-wide basis, this

¹³ M.M. Chambers, Voluntary Statewide Coordination in Public Higher Education, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 46.

¹⁴ Policies Adopted for Michigan Coordinating Council of State College Field Services, (unpublished monograph, East Lansing, March 1959).

study is concerned with the regional center located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where the three universities share a common facility and co-operate in establishing and maintaining educational programs. The Center was established in 1943 as a regional center of the University of Michigan. Michigan State University opened a regional office in the same city in 1956 and Western Michigan University established a regional office in 1965. In 1966 all three universities moved into a joint facility now known as the University Center. Michigan State University, the University of Michigan and Western Michigan University generally adhere to the basic premise that human and cultural resources of the university could and should be expanded to the local communities to serve stated needs and to solve problems of joint concern. Consistent with this statement of purpose each university has attempted to respond to the expressed needs of the community in two ways:

1. By offering the people the resources of the University through courses and programs unique to each of the three universities.
2. To cooperate in the coordinated planning of courses and programs generally demanded of all universities.¹⁵

A potential audience for participation in regional center continuing education programs is the alumni of the sponsoring institutions. Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, and the University of Michigan have a substantial number of alumni living in the geographical area surrounding the Grand Rapids regional center. This provides the three

¹⁵ Report submitted to Mr. Glenn S. Allen, Jr., State Budget Director by the Grand Rapids Board of Education, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1969, (Mimeographed).

institutions with an excellent opportunity for offering continuing education experiences for their graduates.

Statement of Purpose

If one accepts the concept of continuous learning for the adult population of our society (and college alumni are an important segment of that society), and the role of the universities in implementing the process of life-long learning, then it can be said that universities should provide educational opportunities to aid their alumni in continuing their personal, political, philosophical and social growth. Therefore, adult educators should be concerned with the interests alumni have for pursuing such opportunities.

College alumni of the three sponsoring institutions currently participate in program activities offered by the University Center. However, the number is small when compared to the number of alumni living in the geographical area serviced by the University Center. At the present time most programs offered by the Center are for graduate credit and are attended mainly by teachers requiring state certification. It is not known how many alumni of the three universities are aware of the University Center, its functions, and the educational opportunities available to them. It is the intent in this study to examine the perceptions college alumni have of the regional center. It is anticipated that the manner in which the alumni perceive the continuing education activities of the Center will be at least partially dependent upon their experiences and their perceived needs. Therefore, the specific purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions college alumni of Michigan State University,

Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan, living in four counties in Southwestern Michigan, [Kent, Ottawa, Allegan, and Ionia], have of the University Center located in Grand Rapids with respect to their college experience, their center participation, and their perceived educational needs. It is expected that if the University Center can provide educational programs to meet the needs of college alumni, the participation level on the part of the alumni of all three universities can be increased. The possibilities for continuing alumni education through joint action by the three state universities functioning on a regional center basis seems appropriate and feasible and appears to be one area in which cooperation can be extended and improved.

In 1929 Shaw expressed the notion that "the responsibility on the part of college and university bodies in an educational service to their alumni must be accepted."¹⁶ Now, some 40 years later, in 1970, evidence should be obtained which will enable the three universities to carry out this responsibility more effectively.

Assumptions

Underlying this study are certain assumptions which are necessary for critical evaluation of the results derived from the study. These assumptions are as follows:

1. That a valid and reliable instrument has been developed to identify perceived program activities of a regional center.

¹⁶ Wilfred B. Shaw, Alumni and Adult Education, (New York: American Association for Adult Education, 1929), p. 106.

2. That factors exist which relate to how college alumni perceive the continuing education activities of a regional center.
3. That an individual's perceived needs are a valid index of his real needs.
4. That college alumni will respond to a mailed questionnaire.
5. That the respondents responded to the instrument honestly.
6. That the population under investigation is sufficiently large and that it is normally distributed in reference to all of the variables included in this study.

Significance of the Study

At the present time data are lacking relative to how the alumni of the three universities view the regional center operation. Since reliable information upon which to base decisions is an important aspect of administration, before programs actively can be planned for alumni, it is important to determine their knowledge and understanding of the functions of the Center. According to Dressel, "all colleges and universities, private or public, could profitably use survey results in a critical restudy of their operations."¹⁷

The study should provide the directors of continuing education, the directors of the regional center, and the directors of the alumni associations of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan with greater insight into the perceptions alumni have of the regional center and continuing education programming. It should also provide further insight into the process of perception

¹⁷Paul L. Dressel, Evaluation in Higher Education, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1961), p. 374.

formulation by alumni. In addition, information obtained from these data relating the factors of perception formulation to the alumni perceptions of a continuing education regional center should provide an opportunity to draw some conclusions about college alumni.

Further importance of the study should be derived from data obtained concerning expressed needs alumni have for continuing education program activities and a determination of which of the three universities might best provide the resources for each program area. In addition, information from these data might suggest specific target groups that should be considered in planning regional center activities. The perceptions on the part of the alumni concerning the program activities of a regional center possibly will either reinforce the director's value judgments and philosophy or will help to demonstrate how these subjective judgments may be modified to bring them into line with that of the alumni. The results of the survey should enlarge the base of information on which educational perceptions are founded.

Wilfred Shaw clearly stated the necessity of "bringing the whole idea of an educational policy directed toward the alumni into the open--to define it in acceptable terms and to correlate such scattered efforts as are already underway."¹⁸ This study should increase the educator's knowledge of alumni education through his efforts to provide continuing education programs for college alumni.

¹⁸ Shaw, op. cit., p. 107.

Definition of Terms

Alumnus is defined as any person who has received a baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degree from Michigan State University, Western Michigan University or the University of Michigan.

Regional Center refers to the combination of personnel services and physical facilities provided jointly in Grand Rapids by Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, and the University of Michigan to keep the universities in close contact with the needs, interests, problems and concerns of the people, and through which the universities channel their resources to the citizens of that geographical area.

College experience refers to selected factors in the background of college alumni as related to the institutions included in this study.

Center participation refers to prior experiences college alumni have had with the regional center in Grand Rapids.

Educational needs refers to the educational needs of college alumni that might be served by the regional center.

Perception. For the purpose of this investigation, perception refers to the process of making a cognitive statement based on past experience and need about the program activities of the regional center.¹⁹

¹⁹Based upon a definition of perceptions in: Howard S. Bartley, Principles of Perception, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), pp. 1-22.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations are related to the specific nature of the population included in the study, the limited number of college alumni from which the sample was drawn, and the limitations of the questionnaire as a data-gathering instrument.

The population for the study is limited to a sample of college alumni of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan who currently live in four selected counties in Southwestern Michigan which are serviced by the inter-university regional center located in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Two factors, (i.e. experience and need) related to how people perceive have been selected for use in this study. It is not the intent of this study to include other factors that also influence perception.

Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters.

Chapter I. Introduction

Introduction to and statement of the purpose of the study. The assumptions, significance and limitations of the study are presented along with the definition of terms.

Chapter II. Review of Related Literature and the Theoretical Basis for the Study

Historical and philosophical background of extension education and alumni education and the theoretical basis for the selected factors related to perception are reviewed.

Chapter III. Research Design

Describes the methodology used in the study including the research design, description of the instrument, sample selection procedures, and the analysis process.

Chapter IV. Presentation and Analysis of Findings

Presents and describes the analysis of the perceptions college alumni have of a regional center and the significant factors related to alumni perceptions.

Chapter V. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Relates the major findings, conclusions that can be made, and recommendations for future program activity.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review selected research and literature related to the following three areas: (1) the historical and philosophical background of extension education, (2) the historical and philosophical background of alumni education, and (3) selected factors that relate to perception as a theoretical base for the study, i.e., experience and need. The historical and philosophical development of extension education and alumni education are included in the literature review to provide the reader with sufficient background for understanding the setting for the study.

It appears there has been little research reported that investigates the functions of a university-sponsored regional center and the literature discloses no studies dealing either directly or indirectly with perceptions of such a center by college alumni or the general population. Despite the dearth of significant research concerning the perceptions held by college alumni of a regional center, it is a basic assumption behind this study that alumni perceptions of the Center will be significantly related to college experience, experience gained by participation in Center programs, perceived educational needs and selected personal factors of the alumni.

With this premise in mind, the third section of this chapter pertaining to perception and selected factors has been divided into three subsections; i.e., experience, participation and need. However, due to the lack of studies in the literature concerning college experience of alumni, their participation in regional center programs and their perceived needs, the literature review will discuss experience, participation and need as related to adult education participants generally. This includes: (1) studies which show the relationship between educational experience and continuing education participation, (2) studies that attempt to establish a relationship between social and personal factors and participation, (3) a survey which shows patterns of adult education participation, and (4) studies that infer need as a motivation to participation.

Extension Education

Robert J. Blakely has stated:

....resources for knowledge, the throbbing tumultuous vulgar world of the adult community is where this knowledge is most needed. The university is the supreme exemplification of a faith in reason. The free man in the free society is the person faced with the sharpest challenge to translate reason into action. Here--between the university and the adult learner--is a natural relationship.²⁰

The relationship to which Blakely refers, between the university and the adult community, has had an exciting and, at times, a turbulent growth pattern.

Historically, higher adult education in America can be traced to

²⁰ Robert J. Blakely, Adult Education in a Free Society, (Toronto, Canada, Guardian Bird Publications, 1958), p. 94.

the early 1800's when several eastern colleges provided public lecture series. During the latter part of the 19th Century when universities grew rapidly in both size and patronage, those based upon the Jacksonian concept of education carried forth the idea of extending the boundaries of knowledge to the people. Morton alludes to the fact:

...that universities, particularly in the midwest were unshackled by tradition, filled with energetic people eager for education. Passage of the Morrill Act by Congress in 1862 gave these states millions of acres of public land for endowment of their universities. The growth of many of these institutions, with their peculiar sensitiveness to the public interest and their direct responsiveness to the public will, into distinguished centers of learning and research has had an enormous influence on all American universities.²¹

The growth of the universities during this period of time and the idea of diffusing knowledge through society led to what is now called university extension. Grattan states it very eloquently when he says, "the roots of a rationale for university extension are to be found in the rationale of the place of a university in a democratic society."²²

Discussing this growth period Grattan further states that:

...American college teachers had been making their knowledge available directly to the people at large, chiefly in the form of single lectures, for a long time before they heard of university extension. As early as 1816, a professor at what is now Rutgers in New Jersey had offered lectures in science, the popular-science lectures of Silliman of Yale, beginning in the 1830's, and Columbia in the 1830's, Harvard as early as 1840, Michigan State in 1855, Kansas State in 1868, Minnesota in 1881, and Wisconsin in 1885 had begun experiments along the same general lines, not always with much success. In 1876, President Daniel Coit Gilman made planned lecture series for

²¹ John R. Morton, University Extension in the United States, (Birmingham, Alabama, University of Alabama Press, 1953), p. 4.

²² C. Hartley Grattan, In Quest of Knowledge, (New York: Association Press, 1955), p. 183.

the 'educated public' including specifically art students, teachers, lawyers, physicians, clergymen, bankers and businessmen, an integral part of the system of instruction at Johns Hopkins. . . University extension provided for lectures in series on a single subject matter and gave opportunity to impose disciplines like occasional essays and reports and final examinations.²³

During this same period of time, the Chautauqua movement, founded by methodist Bishop John Heyl Vincent in 1874, deeply influenced the development of extension in America.²⁴ A noted authority has termed this movement the beginnings of the Americanization of university extension.²⁵ Of particular importance was the influence that Chautauqua had on William Rainey Harper. Dr. Harper had been on the Chautauqua staff for fourteen years. When he became president of the University of Chicago he provided education in the United States with strong support by creating the extension service as one of the University's five principal divisions. The plan of extension teaching that President Harper developed at the University of Chicago was distinctive in three respects. It established a formal permanent division of the University, second, it integrated its activity with that of other divisions of the University; and third, it offered college courses for credit by mail and in extension classes.²⁶ It was Harper's

²³ Ibid, p. 185.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 166.

²⁵ Creese, op. cit., p. 38.

²⁶ Ibid, p. 44.

intent that the University of Chicago provide for the large numbers of people unable to attend regular classes on the campus, but whom he knew could profit from the facilities of the University.

Shortly after Harper's action at Chicago, the Wisconsin idea of university extension was established by University of Wisconsin President Charles Van Hise, who said:

...The broadest ideal of service demands that the university as the best fitted instrument, shall take up the problems of carrying out knowledge to the people. It is apparent that this work is one of enormous magnitude and not inferior in importance or in opportunity to the functions of the university earlier recognized--those of instruction and research. The crux of the matter is that it is our aim to take out the knowledge, whether the people ask for it or not. It strikes me that in education, we ought at least to be as careful as are the brewing interests in the state, and therefore we are not going to wait for the people to come to us, we are going to take our goods to them. We are going out to the people.²⁷

Since that time many institutions have followed the Wisconsin model in developing their own extension programs. By 1914 thirty state universities had an organized extension division with a permanent director or committee. Reflecting the growth of extension education and its general acceptance, an extension association, the National University Extension Association was formed in 1915. The group consisted of twenty-two colleges and universities and met at the University of Wisconsin in tribute to the role of extension at Wisconsin. In the years that have followed, extension education has been characterized by growth in the numbers of institutions active in higher adult education, in the diversity

²⁷ Charles Van Hise, "The University Extension Functions in the Modern University," NUEA Proceedings, 1915, pp. 7-24.

of its offerings and in the number of students enrolled in college and university programs. Morton has pointed out "this feeling of responsibility on the part of institutions of higher education resulted in 30 to 50 million people utilizing one or more university extension or evening college services and approximately two million taking part in organized and continuing adult university instructional programs in 1951-52."²⁸ Thus, it would appear that the outreach of the modern university has contributed significantly to its growth and support from its constituency, but the path to obtaining acceptance and to define the service role of the University has been long and arduous, and the struggle continues.

American universities have had three major functions--teaching, research and public service. Generally, the teaching and research functions have been closely allied while the service function was considered to hold a minor role in the total operation of a university. However, in today's complex technological society, the service function has become one of increasing importance, both to the university and the community it serves.

This notion is supported in the 1967 Annual Report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching which states:

...what would appear to be desirable now, where needed, is the modernization of the university's governance to take account of all three functions in which the typical institution is engaged today--teaching, research and public service. Such a process would have the salutary effect of focusing the entire academic community's thought on the function of public service and perhaps lead to a redefinition of the meaning of the university in today's world.²⁹

²⁸ Morton, op. cit., p. 87.

²⁹ "The University at the Service of Society," 1966-67 Annual Report (New York: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1967), p. 13.

The National Association of State Universities further delineated the role of the state university by issuing the following policy statement:

The State university should guide as well as reflect the plans and aspirations of the people of the State from which it derives its support. The citizens of the State have every right to expect their university to bring all of its resources in teaching, research, and public service to the solution of their problems. Only in this manner can the largest number of deserving citizens receive effective higher education.

The State university, in addition to educating the youth of the State, must be concerned with adult and continuing education in all of its ramifications. Degree credit courses, formally organized programs designed for vocational and professional training, retraining and 'refresher' courses, special programs to aid in the solution of business, industrial, agricultural, and labor problems--all these are normal functions of a State educational institution. When private and church colleges render such valuable services, and often they do, they render them because they choose to present such opportunities in certain areas. The State university is responsible for offering such services in all areas--to the public that provides its support.³⁰

A study by Burch suggests, that the service function has pretty generally been accepted as part of the University responsibility, although with some marginal overtones.³¹ Overcoming marginality, identifying and strengthening the role of extension education in institutions of higher education is a significant challenge for university adult educators. Interaction between the people and the university is supported by Morton who stated:

...The pattern of University Extension in the U.S. has generally developed as a result of demands made on universities by their supporters. The great vitality of this movement stems from the fact that it has always been primarily concerned with

³⁰ As quoted in Survey: Extramural Courses for Academic Credit. The Extension Service, the University of Michigan, 1964, p. 96.

³¹ Burch, op. cit., p. 11.

assistance to people attempting to resolve some of the real problems of life, problems about which they were enough concerned to be trying to do something themselves and with which they genuinely wanted assistance. It seems probable that readjustments in University programs to enable more extensive adult use of university resources have only begun. There are many reasons for this prospect. One of the most important is that adults looking for education seek leaders whom they can accept. A very large proportion of such leaders in the U.S. today are associated with universities. Thus, from the point of view of an adult seeking education, probably his greatest opportunity is to find ways in which he can use the resources of universities. Conversely, from the point of view of universities, a new, and perhaps their greatest, opportunity for service is offered by the finding of ways to organize their programs so that their resources can and actually will be used extensively by adults. It is adults who are engaged in making the decisions and taking the actions on which the welfare of this country, and to an increasing extent the world depends.³²

This notion suggests it is imperative that providing educational services and programs to mature adults in their respective communities be implemented as one of the major functions of the modern university in order that research findings, the discovery of laboratory experimentation, and the theories developed by the academic scholar, can be communicated from the campus resources and brought to bear upon the problems of pollution, industry, labor, agriculture, transportation, human relations and so forth. Blended with the world of practical experience, the university resources can increase the technical, social, political, economic and moral progress of our society. Once the role of extension education is firmly established, universities can serve their clientele in various ways and at different levels. It is apparent that in our time which so manifests change and complexity, we are witnessing the emergence of

³² Morton, op. cit., p. 131.

education as a vital and dominant institution of our society. According to Houle, "education is the best way to develop the countless potentialities for growth which everyone possesses."³³ This suggests extension education needs to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of people, and that the continuing educator must first determine who his clients are, and which of their problems and needs he has the resources to serve.

When this task has been accomplished, the adult educator can then assist in the utilization of university resources through extension education to meet the educational needs of people. If we accept the premise that progress is the result of human effort, continuing education of adults should increase the possibilities of achieving maximum use of the human resources of our society.

Alumni Education

The beginning of alumni education has been credited to President Hopkins of Dartmouth College when he stated in his inaugural address in 1916

...In urging that the alumni make a special effort to have their relations with the college based on continuing intimacy of contact I do not forget that a share of the responsibility for developing the alumni movement aright belongs to the college....If the college, then, has conviction that its influence is worth seeking at the expense of four vital years in the formative period of life, is it not logically compelled to search for some method of giving access to this influence to its graduates in their subsequent years! The college has no less an opportunity to be of service to its

³³ Cyril O. Houle, Continuing Your Education, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 7.

³⁴ Fredrick Harbison and Charles A. Meyers, Education, Manpower and Economic Growth, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 13.

men in their old age than in their youth, if only it can establish the procedure by which it can periodically throughout their lives give them the opportunity to replenish their intellectual reserves....It at least seems clear that the formal educational contacts between the college and its graduates should not stop at the end of four years, never in any form to be revived.³⁵

Eight days after the Hopkins address, President Alexander Merklejohn of Amherst College made a similar plea in which he decried the lack of thought given the important subject of the relationship between the college and its graduates. Speaking at the 150th anniversary exercises of Rutgers College, he said:

...The real test of a graduate's loyalty is that of membership in a college community. If the college has given itself up to the pursuit of knowledge and appreciation philosophic, literary, scientific, humanistic, no man who has ceased from that pursuit is in any genuine sense a member of the college community. I sometimes think that the only real test of our teaching is that of the extent to which pupils continue to study our subjects after they leave us.

...I am dreaming of the college community as a body of thousands of men-teachers, graduates, undergraduates--all of whom are engaged in the same intellectual operation, in the same great enterprise of the mind.³⁶

Dean Ernst E. McMahon of Rutgers University in his definitive work on alumni education reports that "Amherst seems to have been the first college in which an educational program was developed by an alumni organization."³⁷ Not only was the Amherst program the first one organized through an alumni association, but it was also the first continuing

³⁵As quoted by Shaw, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

³⁶Rutgers College, The Celebration of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of its Founding as Queens College (New Brunswick: Rutgers College, 1917), pp. 118-21.

³⁷Ernst E. McMahon, New Directions for Alumni Education for the College Graduate, (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1960), p. 7.

education program for alumni identified as part of the adult education movement rather than solely as a device to keep the alumni in closer touch with the alma mater.³⁸

Alexander G. Rutheven, following his election to the presidency of the University of Michigan in 1929 expressed his concern for alumni education when he stated:

...If the University can be of assistance to alumni by continuing their education, it is admittedly under some obligation to provide this service, since--as generations of educators have been informing graduating classes--their education is not complete and they are graduating into, not out of, the university.³⁹

Over the past half century numerous institutions have developed formats for alumni programs. Dartmouth, Ohio State, Michigan, Syracuse, Lafayette, Amherst, Wisconsin, Yale, and others have attempted to provide services for their graduates. The Bureau of Alumni Relations at Michigan and Syracuse in cooperation with their Extension Services provided reading lists for alumni use as one method of continued contact and service.⁴⁰ Vassar developed "the Alumnae House," and Lafayette "the Alumni College."⁴¹ Other institutions held alumni days and alumni university programs. Southwestern University at Memphis, which opens its alumni education programs to alumni of other colleges, is credited with the purpose of wishing to stir, challenge, and thrill its alumni by an educational experience.⁴²

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ As quoted by Shaw, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

⁴⁰ Ralph Beals, Aspects of Post-Collegiate Education, (New York: American Association for Adult Education, 1935), pp. 1-2.

⁴¹ McMahon, op. cit., p. 4.

⁴² Alfred O. Canon, "A New Obligation to Alumni," American Alumni Council News, Volume 25, No. 4., 1958, p. 12.

The Boston University discussion series stemmed from a group desire for "intellectual stimulation".⁴³

Even though many institutions have shown an interest in alumni education, the fact remains, however, that consistent well-developed alumni programs appear to be scarce. Dean McMahon supports the conclusion that alumni education as a serious objective of universities is a remarkably scarce commodity in our academic market place. He points out that only one-tenth of the eight hundred members of the American Council on Education even claim to be involved in any form of continuing education for their alumni.⁴⁴

The first national survey of alumni education programs was made in 1928, and the most recent before McMahon's work, two in 1956 and 1957, showed little change, in terms of percentage, over the participation reported in the 1928 survey. On the 1956 survey, sent to 700 members of the American Council, McMahon reports:

...Only 267 institutions replied. Of these 72 reported current or past programs of continuing education for alumni, and 195 reported that they did not have and had never had such a program. Of the seventy-two with a current or past history of alumni educational work, forty-four rated their efforts as successful and sixteen as unsuccessful.⁴⁵

What the above results actually mean in terms of participation is not clear...about six percent of the Council's membership are still engaged in the work, and two percent have withdrawn. That this is less than an adequate, desirable, proportion of participating institutions appears to

⁴³Eric W. Carlson, "An Experiment in Alumni Group Discussion," Adult Education, Volume 9, No. 3, 1959, p. 173.

⁴⁴McMahon, op.cit., p. 3.

⁴⁵Ibid, p. 13.

be self-evident. As McMahon states, "It seems safe to conclude...that relatively few college or university alumni are significantly touched by continuing education programs for alumni."⁴⁶

The most recent data on alumni education are scarcely more encouraging. The 1967 survey of the American Alumni Council received responses from 672 of a membership presumed to be about 800. Of these, 476 claimed to sponsor programs of continuing education. However, that included courses of every description other than regular classes, extension, seminars, short courses, etc. Of the total, only 72 indicated that their courses were considered as part of an alumni college, and only 133 of the 476 were co-sponsored by the alumni association.⁴⁷ The results of these studies indicate that unfortunately, far too often the returning graduate is either not provided the opportunity to pursue further study with his alma mater or his contact is superficial at best, usually in conjunction with an athletic event. It would appear that the education of the university graduate is often terminated at a point in time when he is assuming a responsible role in society. Continued lack of contact with the university and the educational process will lead to obsolescence with little, if any awareness of the essentiality of continuing alumni education, as one element in the continuing education process. To stress the need for such efforts, McMahon states:

...It must be admitted that leaders in American thought have repeatedly stressed the need for increased participation in

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 14.

⁴⁷ 1967 Survey on Continuing Education (Washington, D.C.: American Alumni Council, 1967), p. 1.

the public life of the nation by better informed citizens.... College alumni are a significant fraction of the total citizenry, and the current activity of approximately one hundred universities in encouraging an informed awareness of current public problems through the provision of educational programs - no matter how limited - for their alumni may be a major contribution to American life. Ultimately, alumni education may become the solution to the problem of stimulating the participation of college alumnus in civic and political activities, with such programs customary in all colleges. Their origin, development, and trends merit attention.⁴⁸

Further evidence of the need for institutions of higher education to become more aware of the need for increased alumni education was manifested in the report of the 1956 Shoreham Conference on Continuing Education for Alumni which made the following statement and affirmations:

...Education is a cornerstone of a free society, and on the colleges and universities of this nation--and their alumni--much of the responsibility for leadership of that society depends. The growth of that leadership in quality and quantity is of immediate and crucial importance.

- I. therefore,...this conference affirms that the continuing education of the adult is a major responsibility of this nation's colleges and universities, and that each institution must accept an obligation for the continuing education of its alumni as a vital part of that responsibility.
- II. This conference calls upon the administrations and faculties of the colleges and universities, upon their alumni associations, and upon the individual alumni of the nation to recognize this responsibility in their purposes and actions.
- III. This conference recommends that the...nation's colleges and universities engage in programs of continuing education for their alumni, considering these programs as part of a long-range commitment that begins with the student on the campus.
- IV. This conference asserts its conviction that programs of continuing education developed for alumni should be characterized by the same seriousness in intent and purpose, and quality in content and performance, that are found in regular curricula.

⁴⁸ McMahon, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

- V. This conference believes that the curriculum and its teaching should be designed to further the desire for, and the process of, continuous education.⁴⁹

It seems evident that alumni are an identifiable and accessible audience for continuing education programs and that they represent a tremendous human resource that needs to be developed. Odiorne indicates that the "Alumni of the University of Michigan now number over 200,000 and the rate of depreciation of the total investment made in them in the past exceeds the total expenditures in turning out today's graduate who will shortly become obsolete unless he is given more extensive doses than we have seen in the past."⁵⁰ The continuing education of these alumni and like others is now made imperative by the pace of discovery and the obsolescence of knowledge, and the need to interpret the new and ever changing conditions around us.

One has only to consider the new knowledge that practicing doctors, architects, engineers, teachers, physicists, chemists, economists, or psychologists must acquire to keep abreast of their fields, to recognize the necessity for continued learning. Calkins emphasized the importance of this point when he stated:

...No branch of higher education is more neglected today than the re-education of the educated. And no neglected branch of education is more important at this time to the future of this country. Quite properly we devote great effort to the preparation

⁴⁹ Robert J. Ahrens, Continuing Education for Alumni, (Washington, D.C.: The American Alumni Council, 1958), p. 1.

⁵⁰ George S. Odiorne, "Adult Education in the Multiversity," "Unpublished Monograph, University of Michigan, 1968, p. 3.

of youth for their lives and careers and for the future of our society. Quite properly also we devote great effort to research, to wrest the secrets of nature from her and to untangle the skeins of human behavior for the advancement of knowledge for the benefit of man. This vast research effort, importantly, even if incidentally, tends to make the preparation of youth more reliable for specialized achievements but it is often at the expense of broad over-all preparation for the changing conditions of life, and it has the additional effect of rendering this specialized preparation obsolete as soon as possible. Please understand me. I do not deplore these enterprises. I accept them and applaud them. But I do think that the time has come for our educational institutions to give greater thought to how they may offset the damage this system does to the living generation of adults who are managing things for some time to come. I speak not only for the present generation of adults, but for all generations who find themselves, as we do, in an era of rapid change. That company promises to include most of the adult population of this country and of the world for the foreseeable future. Such a company is not of negligible importance."⁵¹

The need for continuing education for alumni seems apparent. It is hopeful that many institutions not now concerned with providing a continuous program of education for their graduates will move in this direction in the near future; and those colleges and universities now engaged in a continuing alumni education program will continue to nurture its growth and development. It would seem further desirable if institutions of higher learning would enter into a consortium arrangement to provide alumni education. MacCarthy indicated that:

...already there are small beginnings in the area of inter-institutional cooperation and reciprocity which may be the key to future successful programs of continuing education. It would seem feasible and desirable to suggest that on a nationwide basis colleges and universities unite in working arrangements whereby distant alumni may be integrated into local programs of other universities much as undergraduates

⁵¹ Robert D. Calkins, "New Tasks for our Universities", National University Extension Association Proceedings, 1962, p. 23.

currently transfer from one institution to another. We must find appropriate sources of education at locations that are accessible and, therefore, interinstitutional cooperation and reciprocity may be the key to the future success of such a program.⁵²

A possible model for implementing such a plan already exists in the state of Michigan. As discussed in the previous chapter the University Center now established in Grand Rapids by Michigan State University, the University of Michigan and Western Michigan University provides an excellent opportunity for the development of a continuing alumni education program for graduates living in the Grand Rapids area. It would appear that extension education and alumni education could be blended together in a functional way to carry out MacCarthy's suggestions for continuing alumni education.

It should be mentioned that universities do attempt to meet the educational needs of their alumni by offering various continuing education programs. These programs are not necessarily organized by alumni offices, but are the regular continuing education programs of professional schools and Extension Services. The point is made however that universities cannot continue to avoid the responsibility of concerning themselves with the continuing education of their alumni. They should be concerned with alumni needs for continuing education and provide the means to meet them. They should also make an effort to increase alumni awareness and level of understanding of the overall extension functions of the University and the specific educational programs that are, or

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Alan MacCarthy, "Call to Cooperation," National University Extension Association Proceedings, 1967, p. 98.

could be, made available to the alumni community. Diekoff expressed his hopes for the future of alumni education most eloquently when he stated:

...When the urban university fully recognizes that college graduates however clearly stamped "A.B.", have not mastered for a lifetime the sum of human wisdom and that not all of them have lost their appetite for learning, it will establish through its evening college an "Alumni University." When it finds the right way to do this, the stimulating way to work with those to whom not the future but the present is entrusted, its activities will "tend much to increase learning and civility" in its community. It will provide for college graduates as well as for other current citizens opportunities for an occasional personal renaissance. The renaissance of custodians of the present could be the renaissance of America. As naive as Gulliver, I expect them to do it. I confidently expect alumni associations the country over to insist that their Alma Maters treat their members as adults, credit them with intellectual interests, recognize their learning readiness, afford them opportunities to poke their minds into renewed activity, to keep up to date in their specialized knowledge, to restore their culture to the level of their twentieth year, and to revive the social conscience with which they voted in their first elections. And I expect the evening colleges of urban universities to respond to their pressure. For these, to use Gulliver's phrase, are the reformations "plainly deducible from the precepts delivered."⁵³

Theoretical Bases of Perception as Defined in this Study

The adult educator has a vital role to play in the task of strengthening and promoting the concept of continuous life-long learning. It seems evident in our presently changing and complex society, the traditional formal schooling of yesteryear is not sufficient to provide man with the intellectual skills required to satisfy his needs and desires, therefore continuing education should be related to the life-long processes

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John S. Diekhoff, "The Alumni University," The Journal of Higher Education, Volume 28, October, 1957, pp. 360-361.

of human development and the satisfaction of human needs. In a sense, continuing education can be defined in terms of human development and its relationship to human need. Professional adult educators should search for ways to respond to the changing complex needs of people and to do so within the framework of their total growth and development. Both as individuals and as contributors to the larger society the programs adult educators develop and operate must translate into action the idea of fulfilling human needs.

Lawrence K. Frank explains it this way:

...the adult educator needs to be more aware of individuality, to respect its expression by persons, as essential to valid communication and productive relationships. Adult educators should be especially responsive to each person and solicitous of that individual's way of thinking.⁵⁴

While this study is not directly concerned with either the needs of adults, or their growth and development as such, these are factors that must be considered if adult educators are to be sensitive and responsive to adults. This study attempts to deal with a specific segment of the adult society, college alumni, to examine the perceptions they have of the functions of an interuniversity regional center charged with providing continuing education services. It is also concerned with selected factors that relate to how college alumni will formulate their perceptions of the Center.

Perception is a term with various meanings. Bartley quotes several dictionary definitions as follows:

(1) perception is any act or process of knowing objects, facts, or truths, whether by sense experience or by thought; awareness of objects; consciousness. (2) Reference of sensation to an

⁵⁴ Lawrence K. Frank, "Introduction" Psychological Needs of Adults, A Symposium by Gardner Murphy & Raymond Kuhlen, Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1955, p. 2.

external object. (3) an immediate or intuitive cognition or judgement; an insight analogous to sense perception in respect of immediacy and the feeling of certainty accompanying it, and often implying nice observation, or subtle discrimination.⁵⁵

These definitions of the common usage of the term "perception" illustrate its diverse meaning. The literature in the field of psychology provides an even greater range of definitions several of which are presented here to provide the reader with examples of the broad usage of the term. James defines perception as "Consciousness of particular material things present to sense."⁵⁶ Seashore states that "sensation and perception together constitute sensory experience."⁵⁷ Boring, Langfeld, and Weld in Foundations of Psychology state, "perception is the first event in the chain which leads from stimulus to action," also, "that perception is the experience of objects and events which are here, now," and, "perception is always a response to some change or difference in the environment."⁵⁸

It is not the intent of this study to deal with each of these definitions, but to relate to perception in the sense that the perceptual field in which a person functions determines his behavior. The definition used as a theoretical base for this study as stated by Combs is as follows:

⁵⁵ Bartley, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

⁵⁶ William James, Principles of Psychology, (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1892), p. 76.

⁵⁷ Carl Seashore, Introduction to Psychology, (New York: The Mac-Millan Company, 1924), p. 85.

⁵⁸ Edwin G. Boring, Herbert S. Langfeld, and Harry P. Weld, Foundations of Psychology, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1948), p. 216.

...People do not behave according to the facts as others see them, they behave according to the facts as they see them.... These personal meanings which govern behavior the psychologist calls perceptions.⁵⁹

Combs further states that:

...all behavior, without exception, is completely determined by, and pertinent to, the perceptual field of the behaving organism....⁶⁰

Many theories have been advanced relative to certain aspects of perceiving. Allport in his Theories of Perception and the Concept of Structure⁶¹ lists thirteen separate theories. From a review of the literature of the theories of perception, the writer has selected three major theories of perception as particularly relevant to this study, namely transactional theory, Gestalt theory and the directive-state theory.

Transactional Theory

The transactional theory defines perception as the "process by which a particular person, from his particular behavioral center, attributes significances to his immediate environmental situation."⁶² The following constructs explicate this definition:

1. The facts of perception always present themselves through concrete individuals dealing with concrete situations.

⁵⁹ Arthur W. Combs and Donald Snygg, Individual Behavior, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 17.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 20.

⁶¹ Floyd Allport, Theories of Perception and the Concept of Structure, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1955), p. 15.

⁶² William P. Ittelson and Hadley Cantril, Perception: A Transactional Approach, (New York: Random House, 1954), quoted in Perceptions, Its Relation to Educational Administration, ed. Daniel E. Griffiths, (Columbus, Ohio: University Council for Educational Administration) p. 2.

2. Perceiving is always done by a particular person from his own unique position in space and time and with his own combination of experiences and needs.
3. Each of us, through perceiving, creates for himself his own psychological environment by attributing certain aspects of his experience.⁶³

Transactional theory suggests that past experiences play an important role in perceiving and also gives a central place to the directionality of the perceiver and looks upon perception as a guide to action. In this study experience will be investigated as one factor related to how college alumni perceive a regional center.

Gestalt Theory

Gestalt psychologists have dealt with the problems of individual behavior utilizing the "phenomenological" approach to psychology. This approach seeks to understand the behavior of the individual from his own point of view therefore Gestaltists discuss a perceived situation in relation to the individual's perceptual field. Combs states, "By the perceptual field, we mean the entire universe, including himself, as it is experienced by the individual at the instant of action."⁶⁴ Combs indicates,

...although the content and form of organization vary from individual to individual and from time to time, the perceptual field always has direction, it is always organized and meaningful..Our perceptions are never masses of meaningless and unrelated stimuli....at any given time, the field of a given individual is organized with reference to his need and the activity by which he is trying to satisfy his need at the time.⁶⁵

⁶³ Ibid, p. 86.

⁶⁴ Combs, op. cit., p. 20.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 23-24.

Heule suggests that need will be expressed in terms of how one perceives the situation since "expression is an integral part of the perceptual process."⁶⁶ The Gestaltists further believe that "what is perceived is what we have learned to perceive as a result of our past experiences."⁶⁷ For the purpose of this study past experience and need will be included as factors related to perception. In relation to the Gestalt theory, this study seeks to learn how things "seem" to the individual from his frame of reference; or, more specifically, how do college alumni see the regional center from their individual points of view.

Directive-State Theory

The directive-state theory of perception developed by Bruner and Postman⁶⁸ is one of the earliest forms of social psychology's contribution to perception. Bartley states that according to this theory:

...perception is based upon two sharply contrasting factors: the structural and the behavioral.... The second set, or the behavioral determinants, stem from higher-level processes, those having to do with other features of psychological activity. These processes carry the effects of past experience in general and include the organism's needs, tensions, value systems, and biases.*⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Mary Heule (Ed.), Documents of Gestalt Psychology (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), p. 312.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 85.

⁶⁸ B.S. Bruner and L. Postman, "Symbolic Value as an Organizing Factor in Perception" Journal of Social Psychology, 1948, p. 203, Volume 27.

⁶⁹ Bartley, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

* (Tensions, value systems, biases and punishment are not investigated as influencing factors in this study.)

In further discussion of social perception, particularly as it pertains to the directive-state theory, Allport suggests that need determines, within limits, what a subject will perceive,⁷⁰ conceptually, what experiences will be manifested in his perceptions. He will interact with reality based on his experiences. Thus, an individual's perceptions will be related to his needs and what he has experienced.

Areas of Agreement

The three theories of perception described; transactional, Gestalt, and directive-state, suggest some agreement concerning the factors that seem to influence how a person perceives. The transactional theory places major emphasis on the experiences one has had that create his psychological environment, and suggests that present perceptual experiences involve a total complex of significances. All previous experiences have been similarly composed. Therefore, all previous experiences will be brought to the present experiential occasion and play a major role in determining how the occasion is experienced. Transaction will take place in that one will externalize his perceptions based on his needs and will direct his actions accordingly.

The Gestaltist, like the transactionalist, stresses the importance of one's experience to the process of perceiving. This theory also recognizes the importance of the individual's needs as an influencing factor in perception, and agrees with the transactional theory that perception has direction. Directive-state theory, in agreement with both the Gestalt

⁷⁰ Allport, op. cit., p. 78.

and transactional theories, emphasizes the influence experience and need have on perceiving.

Selected Factors Related to Perception

Three perceptual theories which appear to have relevance for this study have been discussed. From these three theories two factors that influence how people perceive, namely, experience and need, have been extracted based on the following criteria: 1) commonality among the three aforementioned theories, 2) all are measurable, 3) data can be obtained, 4) all can be analyzed, and 5) they will contribute to a better understanding of perception.

The two factors, experience and need, in the following paragraphs are: a) described in general terms, and b) are supported by additional statements from the literature in terms of how they relate to perception.

1. Experience

Generally, personal experience provides the individual with a frame of reference for perceiving, or as Combs indicates, "What is perceived is what we have learned to perceive as a result of our previous experiences...."⁷¹

Commenting further on experience, Combs states, "the perceptions possible to any individual will be limited, in part, by the individual's direct experience of the environmental factors to which he has been exposed."⁷²

⁷¹ Combs, op. cit., p. 88.

⁷² Ibid., p. 83.

2. Need

Need implies the necessity for something. In reference to need, Trow states:

The person "wants or needs things and conditions that are in the environment with which he has become acquainted, and which he knows has potentialities for satisfying him."⁷³

Further relationship between how one perceives and his needs is stated by Combs:

...man is an insatiably striving organism forever seeking the maintenance and enhancement of the self....His perceptions enable him to be aware and to behave in ways which lead to the satisfaction of his fundamental need. We would expect, then, that an individual's needs would have profound effects on his perceptions, and this is exactly what proves to be so.⁷⁴

Frank has stated, "The adult educator needs to become more aware of individuality, to respect its expression by persons, as essential to valid communication and productive relationships."⁷⁵ This suggests the adult educator must be aware of the concerns of potential program participants. For the person who has not done so in the past participation in continuing education programs requires a change in his behavior. To bring about such a change in the individual's behavior, it has been stated it is necessary to change that person's perceptual field. To accomplish this task will require the adult educator to be knowledgeable of the factors that are related to the formulation of an individual's perceptual field.

⁷³ William C. Trow, Psychology in Teaching and Learning, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1960), p. 286.

⁷⁴ Combs, op. cit., p. 54.

⁷⁵ Frank, op. cit., p. 2.

Further Delineation of Experience and Need as Factors Related to Perception

The psychological literature reviewed provides the theoretical basis for this study that experience and need are related to the formulation of one's perceptions. It is necessary, however, to further delineate experience and need as factors in how a person perceives as related to this study. All of the college alumni sampled will have had college experience at one of the three institutions involved in this study; or perhaps at two of the universities, or possibly all three. Since the purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions college alumni have of a regional center, the specific deduction from perceptual theory, is that college experience which alumni have had, and their experiences with the regional center will influence their perceptions of that center. In addition, whatever perceived needs college alumni have for continuing their education, and particularly those needs they feel the center might provide, will serve as an influencing factor on their perceptions.

Experience, Need, Participation and Adult Education Participants

The literature reveals little information on college experience, participation, and needs as related to college alumni. However, the literature does report a number of studies that examine the known relationship that exists between experience, participation, need, and adult education participants. The research studies reported and literature reviewed is for the purpose of extrapolating those relevant findings that could be applied (generally) to college alumni in relation to the influence that experience, participation, need, and personal factors might possibly have on their perceptions. In this study specific attention is not given to each of the findings reported, but descriptions are

presented to provide the reader with background information.

Experience and Adult Education Participants

The three universities that sponsor the regional center have a substantial number of alumni living in the geographical area serviced by the Center. These college alumni have been exposed to and given the opportunity for a college education. However, it would appear that many of these alumni are apathetic to the process of continuing their education. According to Ecklund:

...the crucial education of Americans is thus effectively terminated just as they reach the most critical and responsible phase of life, just as they become voting citizens, professional workers and aspiring parents. They approach the most vital responsibilities of their lives with an education which will shortly become obsolete and with little if any awareness of the essentiality of continuing their education if they are to achieve an optimum degree of their potential.⁷⁶

Presumably, the college student develops some notion toward continuing education while in his undergraduate years; but, it is conceivable he may not give the concept of life-long learning any consideration at all. Ideally, universities would build into a student's curriculum experiences that would provide the opportunity for exposure to, and understanding of this concept.

Dewey expressed the notion, "that the educational experience should provide the individual with attitudes and desires that will lead him to continue his learning experience."⁷⁷ From this theoretical notion Brown

⁷⁶ Lowell R. Ecklund, "The Alumni University--Education's New Frontier," Adult Education, Spring 1961, p. 6.

⁷⁷ John Dewey, Experience and Education, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1938), p. 122.

postulated the hypothesis, "that the extent and quality of continuing education of the college alumnus has a significant, positive relationship to the quality of his undergraduate collegiate experience."⁷⁸ Brown selected two groups of alumni on the basis of their collegiate experience. The alumni in one of the groups were presumed to have had an average type of undergraduate college experience. The other group was made up of alumni whose undergraduate college experience was presumed to be superior to that of the average alumnus. The study involved ranking of over 800 colleges and universities according to the number of scholars they had produced from 1946 to 1951. The alumni from the two groups were selected in a random manner, but in such a way as to have an equal number of men and women in each sample. Distribution according to age was arranged; also alumni were matched according to the curriculum pursued during college. Conclusions drawn from the study were as follows:

1. Both the qualitative and the quantitative dimensions of continuing education of college alumni are significantly related to a high quality of collegiate education.
2. Some evidence was produced that a close relationship exists between the quality of educational experience in college and the quality and extent of educational life that follows college.
3. The older alumni as a group were more actively involved in educational activities than were the younger.
4. Comparisons made between older alumni and younger alumni on the quality of their educational experience showed no consistent trend favoring either group.

⁷⁸ Alan M. Brown, "College Experience and Continuing Education Activity," The Continuing Learner, ed. Daniel Soloman, (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1964), p. 41.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 42-43.

5. Women as a group were more actively engaged in educational pursuits than men.

6. Women ranked higher than men on the quality of experience.⁸⁰

These findings would lead one to expect that the collegiate experience of college alumni would have not only an effect on their knowledge of and participation in continuing education activities, but since knowledge and experience influence perceptions, they would also influence the perceptions college alumni would have of the educational enterprise offering such programs. According to Kelley:

...Perception and its resulting reality is definitely related to wholes. We extract meaning from our surroundings as a whole. This meaning is as broad as life itself.⁸¹

This appears to be related to the Gestalt theory of wholeness and the possibility that the whole of one's college experience relates to the perceptions one makes. That the level of education achieved by an individual will influence his future educational activity has been well documented. Johnstone's study reports, "that the results show convincingly that the more education one has, the more likely it is that one will engage in additional learning experiences."⁸² For purposes of this study this suggests that a possible relationship exists between the level of education a person achieves and the knowledge or perception one has of an educational institution or the opportunities they provide. Further

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

⁸¹ Earl C. Kelley, Education For What is Real, (New York: Harper and Row, 1947), p. 64.

⁸² John W.C. Johnstone and Raymond J. Rivera, Volunteers for Learning, (Chicago: The Aldine Publishing Company, 1965), p. 96.

evidence was reported by Seaman and Schroeder with their conclusion that there is a positive relationship between a person's level of education and the extent to which an individual participates in educative behavior.⁸³

The three perceptual theories described earlier in this chapter, i.e. transactional, Gestalt and directive-state theory all support the effect of past experience on perception. This suggests that the college experience alumni have had will influence their perceptions of a continuing education center sponsored by their alma mater. This premise further suggests that universities should take advantage of the influence they exert on the college student to instill a desire and concern for continuing their education upon graduation. Brown has pointed out that,

...If it is true that certain kinds of collegiate education are productive of a higher level of continuing education for the individual, institutions of higher learning committed to promoting continuing education for their alumni should examine and evaluate their education purpose.⁸⁴

Participation and Adult Education Participants

A second factor that relates to the perceptions college alumni will formulate of a regional center is the pattern of experience they have had in the past with the center. Educators, particularly adult educators, use the term participation in reference to involvement in

⁸³ Don F. Seaman and Wayne L. Schroeder, "The Relationship Between Extent of Educative Behavior by Adults and Their Attitude Toward Continuing Education," Adult Education Journal, Volume XX, No. 2, 1970, p. 104.

⁸⁴ Brown, op. cit., p. 54.

events, programs, or activities whose primary purpose is educational in nature. Douglass has suggested that participation has certain universal properties. Among these are:

1. There is a quantitative dimension to participation.
2. There is a qualitative dimension to participation.
3. The act of participation is usually a means toward an end.⁸⁵

These declarations have particular relevance for this study in reference to participation by college alumni in the programs and activities offered by the Center. For college alumni to express how well they think a regional center is performing its functions calls for a qualitative judgment, and for alumni to reveal the number of experiences they have had at a center relates to the quantitative dimension of participation. In addition, participation is usually considered an instrument for satisfying a goal which a person deems desirable.

Generally, the first experiences adults have with continuing education are typically job-related ones.⁸⁶ Since American society has been traditionally a work-oriented society, participation in work related education is generally accepted by the American adult. This suggests that those alumni who have participated in programs at the University Center, did so because of their jobs or professional careers, and would further suggest that alumni would participate in center program offerings to perpetuate job-related or professional growth, or to satisfy a need. This

⁸⁵ Mohammad Douglass, "Some Perspectives on the Phenomenon of Participation," Adult Education Journal, Volume XX, No. 2, 1970, pp. 90-91.

⁸⁶ John W.C. Johnstone, "Adult Uses of Education: Fact or Forecast," Sociological Background of Adult Education, (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1964), p. 114.

study seeks to determine the anticipated participation level of alumni in reference to not only job and professionally related areas, but for other educational program areas as well.

An interesting study by Love presented findings and implications germane to the participation of adults in educational activities. Love employed motivation research through depth interviews to determine the psychological steps an individual experiences before making the decision to pursue educational courses. The findings reported the need for the existence of certain conditions, among which were the following:

1. The individual has to know of a specific course offering.
2. The individual attention must focus on a definite institution of learning in terms of its prestige and general clientele.⁸⁷

The results of Love's study seem to suggest that college alumni would participate in programs if they were aware of program offerings that could aid them in resolving a problem. It further suggests that the attention of the alumnus must be focused on one of the three universities supporting the center if he is to participate in program activity. One might suspect this would be particularly true of professional school alumni who often appear to have a close relationship with their alma mater.

It is assumed that adults continue to enroll in adult education classes because doing so results in the achievement of desired satisfactions by the adult learner. As indicated by Houle⁸⁸ and Sheffield,⁸⁹ the

⁸⁷ Robert Love, "The Use of Motivation Research to Determine Interest in Adult College-Level Training," Educational Record, 32:217-218, July, 1953.

⁸⁸ Cyril O. Houle, "Who Stays and Why?" Adult Education, 14:225-233, Summer, 1964.

⁸⁹ Sherman B. Sheffield, "The Orientations of Adult Continuing Learners" The Continuing Learner, Daniel Lokman, (ed.) (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1964), p. 2.

specific satisfactions or combinations of satisfactions that influence continuing education by adults vary substantially from person to person. Whatever the satisfactions, those who achieve them at a high level would be expected to persist in adult education to a greater extent than those who achieve fewer satisfactions. While the author's study does not deal with satisfaction levels directly the results of these studies suggest that if college alumni have taken courses or participated in programs offered by a center, their perceptions of how well a center is doing its job might be related to the level of satisfaction they gained from their experiences.

One of the most consistent findings in educational participation research is the relatively high association between participation and level of formal education. Douglass, in a study collaborating with Gwenna Moss, attempted to look at factors associated with participation within groups of low and high educational levels.⁹⁰

The factors relevant to Douglass's study were background factors such as; sex, age, employment status, level of occupation, level of income, and marital status. It was concluded that differences in participation cannot be accounted for by a common set of factors.

Wiegand made a study to determine factors related to participation in continuing education among a selected group of graduate engineers.⁹¹

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Mohammad Douglass and Gwenna Moss, "Differential Participation Patterns of Adults of Low and High Educational Attainment," Adult Education, 28:247-259, Summer, 1968.

⁹¹

Richard Wiegand, "Factors Related to Participation in Continuing Education Among A Selected Group of Graduate Engineers," (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Florida State University, 1966).

The study attempted to determine the extent of participation in continuing education over a sixteen-year period among those in the sample, and to determine relationships between participation and specific characteristics of the participants. Characteristics of participants were categorized into: 1) educational background, 2) job-related factors, 3) geographical factors and 4) personal factors. Participation was studied from the point of view of three major types of activity: 1) course work, 2) professional activities and 3) self-directed learning. Results showed significant relationships between participation in formal credit work and fifteen of the twenty-four variables or characteristics. Specifically, the significant factors that are relevant for the writer's study are as follows:

1. Year of graduation--participation steadily increased from oldest classes to more recent ones.
2. College proximity--e.g., 45.7 percent who were near a college participated while 35.2 percent who were not participated.
3. Marital status--e.g., 66.7 percent of single persons participated while 39.9 percent of married persons participated.
4. Age--e.g., 56.3 percent of the under-thirty group participated with steadily decreasing rates in each higher age group.

In this study it is anticipated there will be a relationship between alumni participation in program activity they believe the center should be offering and recency of degree, marital status and age. Neither college- nor center-proximity were tested in this study; however, Wiegand's study suggests that those alumni living in closest proximity to the center will make greater use of its services than those alumni living farther away. Verner states that "accessibility and proximity to educational programs appear to influence participation; therefore, residents of rural areas

participate less in formally organized programs.⁹² The assumption can be made that proximity, particularly as related to the regional center, might possibly influence the perceptions alumni have of a center, and perhaps should be studied in future research.

Probably one of the more extensive research efforts related to participation in adult education was the study of the educational pursuits of American adults by Johnstone and Rivera, conducted in 1962.⁹³ Their report, Volunteers for Learning, presents findings of the National Opinion Research Center's on-going inquiry into the nature of adult education in America.

The study had as its central focus the educational experiences of the American population following termination of regular full-time attendance at a school or college. The organization of the investigation involved four distinct phases of inquiry.

1. The task of providing a general description of the nature and scope of adult participation in formal and informal educational pursuits of all kinds.
2. An examination of the social and social psychological factors which help explain whatever patterns of educational behavior were observed in the first phase of the study.
3. Same analytic considerations as Phase II, but with attention focused specifically on young people between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four.
4. The nature of facilities for adult education in "typical urban centers."

⁹² Coolie Verner and John S. Mayberry, Jr., "The Nature of Adult Participation," Adult Education, (Washington: Adult Education Association of the United States, 1965), p. 13.

⁹³ Johnstone and Rivera, pp. XXV and XXVI of general introduction.

These four phases of inquiry represent a unified and broadly based study of activities and sentiments of the American public concerning adult education. Except for the final phase of the study, the investigation was national in its focus.

The study was developed chiefly around a national sample survey involving three stages. The first stage, designed to yield basic information on adult education activity, was carried out by means of household screening interviews in which a responsible adult reported on the educational activities of all members of the household. A probability sample of 13,293 households was drawn for this stage of the study.

The second and third stages of the survey design focused on more intensive information concerning educational experiences. Here they used personal interviews of approximately one hour's length taken with subsamples of individuals drawn from the original sample of households. The fourth phase of the study took form as a separate field operation, consisting in itself of two distinct stages. First, a stage in which inventories of educational facilities were taken in four middle-sized cities, and second, a phase in which random samples of adults were interviewed in two of these four centers. The principal findings are presented in response to specific questions asked in the study:

1. How many adults engage in educational activities after they terminate their formal schooling?
 - a. The answer hinges on the definition one applies to educational activity.
 - b. As defined in this study, approximately 25 million adults are active in one or another form of learning during a twelve-month period.
 - c. Fifteen percent or more than seventeen million persons were enrolled in courses on a part-time basis.

- d. Twenty-five million were fulltime students.
 - e. Close to nine million engaged in independent study.
 - f. Sixty-one percent of all adults interviewed had been involved in some form of learning activity, as defined by this study, sometime in their adult lives.
2. What types of subjects do adults study?
- a. Studies were primarily non-credit with the subject matter overwhelmingly non-academic.
 - b. Thirty-three percent of learning activities were vocational, twenty percent were recreational, twelve percent were academic and three percent current events.
 - c. The emphasis is on practical applied knowledge and skills rather than theoretical or philosophical concerns.
3. Where do adults go to take courses?
- a. Fifty-six percent were outside of formal educational institutions.
 - b. In terms of overall number, more adults had studied in churches and synagogues than in any other type of institution.
4. What are adult education participants like?
- a. They are younger than the average American adult with a median age of 36.5.
 - b. Men and women are about equally divided.
 - c. They are better educated than the average adult with an average of 12.2 years of school.
 - d. They consist mostly of white-collar or blue-collar workers with median family income \$1,200 higher than average.
 - e. The majority live in large urban areas, particularly in the suburbs.
5. How do family responsibilities affect rates of learning activity?
- a. Older men and women were virtually identical in their rates.
 - b. Young mothers were less involved than non-mothers.

- c. Young fathers were more involved than non-fathers mainly due to the emphasis on vocational training.
 - d. Young fathers were more involved than young mothers.
6. Why do adults take courses?
- a. Younger adults more often take courses for job-centered reasons.
 - b. Older persons more likely take courses simply for general knowledge.
 - c. Leisure-centered reasons are also prevalent but the importance varies with different age groups.
 - d. Women enroll more often in response to home and family life and leisure-time interests.
 - e. In addition, women are more likely to take course to meet new and interesting people.
 - f. Some take courses simply to escape daily routine.
7. What factors are associated with the persistence of learning interest during adult life?
- a. Learning interest fell off continuously in each older age group and the rate was an accelerating one.
 - b. The effect of education on learning was equally dramatic with a sharp difference between those with little education and those who had attended sixteen years or more.
 - c. Parents' educational attainment also influenced positively the interest of the person.⁹⁴

Specific attention is not given in this study to the findings of Johnstone's national survey; however, the results provide important background information concerning the participation patterns of American adults in adult education.

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 1-17.

Studies that deal more specifically with university extension participants reveal similar findings. Participants attending programs offered by extensions are extremely varied in their characteristics. The range in age is from the late teens to the seventies with a heavy concentration in the twenties and thirties.⁹⁵

Morton's study of extension participants found that most of the users of university extension services were men and women of mature age. The median age for the nation as a whole was 34 years.⁹⁶ It was also found that men outnumber women and that the participants in university extension are considerably better educated than the average of the total population.⁹⁷ The largest single occupational category was that of teachers, with workers from business and industry only slightly less numerous.⁹⁸

While participation in adult education activities has been a problem of significant proportions for some time the necessity for professional refurbishing of adults of all ages, sexes, and occupations, and the pressures of automation are causing older adults of both sexes and citizens from various work orientations to increase their participation in adult education. It appears from the studies that have been made of the different variables related to participation in continuing education programs that the emphasis has been mostly on the personal and

⁹⁵ Verner, op. cit., p. 10.

⁹⁶ Morton, op. cit., p. 88.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 89.

social components. Kreitlow, in his review of adult education research areas needing attention, states, "while the concern for the problem of participation and for the values to accrue from the resolution of this problem are emphasized in the literature, actual participation studies have not often gone beyond the mere enumeration of gross participation."⁹⁹ A basic question that can be asked is, why do people participate?

Need and Adult Education Participation

From a review of the literature it would appear that the satisfaction of basic needs is the motivating force for participation in continuing education programs. In this study, it is expected that there is a relationship between the perceptions held by college alumni of the regional Center and their educational needs. This suggests that alumni will perceive the Center differently if they have educational needs they think the Center can or should satisfy, than if they do not. Since research in adult education supports the notion of a relationship between level of education and participation, it can be suggested that the more highly educated an individual is, the greater the possibility that he will seek personal improvement through education. Therefore, it appears that college alumni as a group should be interested in pursuing additional education dependent upon their individual needs. Bergevin has concluded that: "an effective program of adult education should consider

⁹⁹ Burton W. Kreitlow, Relating Adult Education to Other Disciplines, (Cooperative Research Project No. E-012; Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1964), p. 73.

the needs and related interests of the adult learner and attempt to discover and meet his real needs as well as the needs of his social order."¹⁰⁰ A number of models have emerged from adult education research in reference to the needs of adults. According to Douglass:

...one of the most widely used approaches is the familiar need satisfaction model. This model simply contends that all people have some basic needs which they must satisfy. Therefore, they tend to be attracted toward and feel more involved in activities which they see as having good chances of satisfying their needs. An individual's decision to participate or not will, thus, depend upon whether the sponsoring agency is able to provide him with opportunities which he sees as making a contribution toward satisfying one or more of his personal needs.¹⁰¹

One can speculate from this model that if college alumni have needs which they must satisfy, their participation in center activities, and also their perceptions of center activities, will be dependent upon whether they feel the center can provide the programs and activities necessary to satisfy their needs.

Wientge developed a model for the analysis of continuing education for adults to determine logical areas of need for additional offerings.¹⁰² Basically, it focuses on the development of the adult life cycle separated into ten-year periods. A description follows:

...Twenties and under--this group contains the young adults who work fulltime. Many are married. Continuing education is a vehicle for vocational improvement with this group. Finding a mate, home and a job is a major undertaking.

¹⁰⁰Paul Bergevin, A Philosophy for Adult Education, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1967), p. 141.

¹⁰¹Douglass, op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁰²King M. Wientge, "A Model for the Analysis of Continuing Education for Adults," Adult Education, Volume XVI, No. 4, Summer, 1966.

Thirties--Members of this decade compose the largest percentage of adult students enrolled in degree or certificate credit courses. If they have already completed a formal educational program they will attend refresher and upgrading programs. Their focus is on job and home improvement and on family growth.

Forties--Adults in the forties are more likely to engage in a variety of continuing education pursuits as recognized status activities to aid in the maintenance and enhancement of their life roles. In the Rogerian sense there is movement in the direction of self-actualization.

Fifties--The fifties for most adults is the age of acceptance of a certain status quo. The goals and activities are oriented toward holding on and achieving continued recognition while at the same time thoughts creep ahead to the demands of the next decade. Continuing education activities in this decade are more likely to be concerned with such things as world affairs and community planning, and the arts and humanities.

Sixties--In this decade adults exhibit increasing concern with matters of planning for successful career termination and the transformation into retirement. This group is increasing in numbers. Little is known about optimal continuing education for them. Government medical programs will serve to add to physical longevity. An important function for continuing education may well be to add to intellectual longevity.

Seventy-plus--Living in retirement is the main preoccupation for adults in this decade. How to participate in retirement activities that are rewarding and stimulating is a major concern.

For the adult educator or regional center director planning educational programs for college alumni, utilizing Wientge's model should be helpful in analyzing the needs of adults based on a decade development scale. The model also suggests the concerns adults have at various age levels that may affect their perceptions of their educational needs. Perceived educational needs of college alumni are investigated in this study.

The system of needs developed by Maslow is also constructed along developmental lines and helps to explain some of the changes that take place in behavior between birth and maturity. According to Maslow, all human needs can be classified under the following headings:

...Physiological needs. The needs that must be satisfied if the biological processes of the organism are to be maintained. These needs naturally assume a certain priority, inasmuch as the very existence of the organism depends on their satisfaction.

Safety needs. The needs to protect the organism against the dangers of the environment are second only to the physiological needs. The individual needs, furthermore, to feel some degree of security--to feel some kind of assurance that he will be protected from danger and that his physiological processes will be maintained.

Love and attention. The need to share some kind of close, emotional satisfying relationship with another person is an important one during adult years. During the early years of development, the emphasis is on receiving, rather than giving, love and attention.

Esteem needs. These are the socialized needs--the need for self-respect, self-esteem, and the esteem of others, as well as the need to feel useful and necessary to others.

Needs for self-actualization. These include man's desire for self-fulfillment--that is, his need to realize his best potentials and to achieve the ideals and aims he has set for himself.¹⁰³

It is interesting to note that the needs in Maslow's list are arranged in ascending order from the most primitive to the most socialized and from the most simple to the most complex. Maslow's need hierarchy enables us to understand the nature of human needs; and it suggests that based upon transactional theory the individual will perceive from his particular behavioral center the significant factors in his environmental situation. The models reviewed stress the importance for the adult educator to concern himself with the needs of his clientele in relation to a variety of developmental and environmental factors. However, many psychological variables are involved when an individual is concerned with

¹⁰³ Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, (New York: Harper and Row, 1954), pp. 82-85.

satisfying personal needs.

Several studies reveiwed are based on the assumption that adults enroll because doing so results in achieving satisfaction of needs. The following studies illustrate that needs vary from study to study with no consistent use of any specific theory.

Houle studied a group of twenty-two adults who were described as continuing learners. This was the only characteristic they had in common.¹⁰⁴ Otherwise they varied considerably in sex, race, age, national origin, social status, religion, marital condition and level of formal education. Houle identified three sub-groups: 1) goal-oriented--those who use education as a means of accomplishing fairly clear-cut objectives; 2) activity-oriented--those who take part because they find in the circumstances of learning a meaning which has no necessary connection; and 3) learning-oriented--those who seek knowledge for its own sake.¹⁰⁵

The fulfillment of needs is the implied rationale for the attendance for each group. For example, the reasons given for attending by the goal-oriented group were to get ahead on the job, to fulfill personal goals, or to obtain information that would help in a specific situation. The activity-oriented person gave reasons unrelated to the course content, but fulfillment of personal needs was implied. However, the learning-oriented person attended because of a desire to know and to choose and

¹⁰⁴ Cyril Houle, The Inquiring Mind, (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), p. 13.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 15-16.

make decisions in terms of potential for growth.¹⁰⁶

Sheffield, using Houle's concepts of learning orientations, tested the validity of the hypothesis that there is a direct relationship between the extent to which continuing education conference participants engage in adult education and the degree to which they are characterized by one of the orientations.¹⁰⁷ The results provided evidence for partially accepting the hypothesis. A positive relationship was found between the extent to which the learning and the personal-goal orientations are held and the extent to which adults participate in learning activities, but no significant relationship was found between the other orientations and the extent of learning undertaken. The individual orientations that emerged were: 1) learning orientation, 2) sociability orientation, 3) personal-goal orientation, 4) societal-goal orientation and 5) need-fulfillment orientation. The fulfillment of needs is implied in each of these orientations.

In a study conducted by Dobbs of self-perceived needs of adults in a declining and in a non-declining community, comparisons were made with a view toward determining how these data could be used in initiating a program which will meet the educational needs of adults in both communities.¹⁰⁸ Evidence was provided in the findings of this study that adults in both the declining and non-declining community aspired to a

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 16-25.

¹⁰⁷ Sheffield, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁰⁸ Ralph C. Dobbs, "Self-Perceived Educational Need of Adults," Adult Education, Volume XVI, No. 2, Winter, 1966.

more rewarding life than they now have. The most frequently-expressed dominant aim of adults interviewed was of an economic nature; however twenty percent of those interviewed expressed their dominant aim to be of an educational nature.

These findings complement the generally accepted principle suggested by Smith and McKinley,¹⁰⁹ McClusky,¹¹⁰ and Essert,¹¹¹ that apathy and lack of participation can be overcome if continuing education programs are directed toward the interests and needs of the people adult education wants to attract. Since need basically determines what persons will perceive and how they will behave, it is necessary in developing programs in adult education to stimulate an individual's desire for continued learning throughout life. The perceptions a person holds of an educational enterprise will be related to the needs he has and the possibilities for satisfying such needs. In addition such needs will influence his perceptions of continuing education and what continuing education can do for him. Hopefully, his need or level of interest will motivate him toward continuing education action.

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M.R. Smith and John McKinley, "An Institutional Approach to Adult Education in the Community," Adult Education, 6:25-26, Autumn, 1955.

110

Howard Y. McClusky, "Community Influences and Adult Learning," Adult Education, 8:103-105, Winter, 1958.

111

Paul L. Essert, Creative Leadership, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), p. 224.

Summary of Related Literature

This chapter reviews studies and literature relevant to this investigation. Three general topics were surveyed: namely, the historical and philosophical background of extension education, the historical and philosophical background of alumni education, and perception as a theoretical bases for this study.

The literature relating the historical and philosophical background of extension education and alumni education was reviewed to trace the development of both facets of education, and to illustrate the need for each phase--not as separate entities--but as a combined area of concern for the adult educator, and particularly for the adult educator involved in higher adult education. It was suggested that a model for implementing extension education directed toward a specific segment of the population--college alumni--exists in the regional center concept of higher continuing education.

Alumni perception of a regional center was identified as the purpose for the study. From the theories of perception, three theories were reviewed as being relevant to this particular investigation; namely, directive-state, Gestalt, and transactional. The factors extracted from perceptual theories that relate to how one perceives were experience and need. It was established that both college experience and center participation would be used as relevant forms of experience, and perceived educational needs as a representative of need. The final phase of the review concentrated on research studies and literature concerned with experience, participation and need, and their relationship to adult education participants.

The literature suggests that one's college experience, level of education, recency of degree and certain demographic factors are related to participation in adult education activities. It further suggests that participation is largely based on educational needs. Since a regional center provides continuing education activities, it can be inferred that experience and need will likewise influence one's perception of a regional center.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions college alumni have of a continuing education regional center as related to factors influencing their perceptions; namely, experience and need. Experience and need will be investigated in terms of the college experience of college alumni, their center participation, and their perceived educational needs.

A secondary purpose is to compare the perceptions of the regional center held by college alumni on the basis of alumni from the three institutions involved in the study.

Sample

This study used a systematic random sample drawn from a restricted universe. The universe of possible respondents was defined as college alumni of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan living in four selected counties in Southwestern Michigan, i.e., Kent, Ionia, Allegan, and Ottawa. The universe was selected because it provided the most feasible approach to investigating alumni perceptions of the regional center located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, since the four counties selected are all served by the three institutions

sponsoring the Center.

In the present study the sampling unit was defined as any alumnus of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, and the University of Michigan. A systematic random sample, stratified by institution, of 5 percent of the total population for each institution was selected from mailing lists provided by the three universities. A twenty percent over-run was instituted to allow for estimated loss due to inaccurate mailing lists provided by the university alumni offices. Thus, a common fraction of 1/20th was applied to the total universe less the twenty percent over-run. This procedure called for the selection of every seventeenth name from the lists. A random start was then selected from numbers one to seventeen. A total of 1,050 questionnaires was sent to the sampling unit. Individual university questionnaires mailed were as follows:

1. Western Michigan University -- 301
2. Michigan State University -- 357
3. The University of Michigan -- 392

A response rate of 60 percent was anticipated, or approximately 525 responses. Permission to administer the sample was obtained from interviews with the directors of continuing education at the three universities, the alumni directors and the directors of the regional center in Grand Rapids.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire approach taken in this study was selected as the most feasible method of obtaining alumni perceptions of a regional

center. It is recognized that mailed questionnaires are notorious for their low rate of response, but because funds were not available to attempt large scale interviews, and because it was anticipated that the rate of response for college alumni would be greater than a questionnaire sent to the general population the mailed survey technique was chosen. It was also believed the questionnaire method would provide for the most factual response, thereby reducing bias on the part of the respondents. Seltiz indicates that a "major advantage of questionnaires is that respondents may have greater confidence in their anonymity, and thus feel freer to express views they fear might be disapproved."¹¹² Further support for the use of the questionnaire technique comes from Good who states:

...the questionnaire normally comes into use where one cannot really see personally all of the people from whom responses are desired, or where there is no particular reason to see them personally....the questionnaire is an important instrument for gathering information from widely scattered sources. In addition, it can be said that questionnaire inquiries are adapted both to gathering facts and to gathering opinions and attitudes and have a wide range of applications.¹¹³

It should be pointed out that the survey technique used in this study provides only one method for gathering data for administrative decision-making in policy and program formulation.

The instrument used was a fixed-alternative questionnaire prepared by the writer consisting of four parts. Questionnaire items were

¹¹² Claire Seltiz, Research Methods in Social Relations, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), p. 240.

¹¹³ Carter V. Good, A.S. Barr and Douglas E. Scates, The Methodology of Educational Research, (New York: Appleton Century-Crofts, Inc., 1941), p. 325.

selected after a review of the literature and discussions with advisors, alumni regional directors and continuing education directors. Revisions were made after each of these discussions and the final instrument was perused by advisors, the regional center directors and the continuing education directors. Prior to distribution several alumni were asked to respond to the questionnaire items and a Michigan State University graduate class provided a pre-test by having the instrument administered to them in a role-playing situation. As a result of the pre-test several changes were made in the wording of the questionnaire for clarification purposes. The purpose of the instrument was to gather data that would identify the perceptions college alumni have of the continuing education functions of a regional center. Additional data was to be obtained on selected factors related to alumni perceptions.

Part A provided a face sheet to collect data concerning the demographic characteristics of the respondents. These included: age, sex, marital status, income level and occupation or profession. The next section of Part A referred to college experience of the alumni, their participation in Center programs, and their perceived educational needs. Questionnaire items used to measure college experience of alumni included: institution attended, educational level, and recency of degree.

Center participation by alumni was measured by the number of experiences, types of experiences and recency of experiences. Perceived educational needs were measured by alumni need for further credit, counseling, home and family living programs, professional growth programs, public affairs programs, liberal education programs, cultural experiences, and experiences in social, political and economic issues.

All of the questions were of the multiple-choice type. This form was selected as the most appropriate for this segment of the instrument. Moser indicates that this type of question is preferable by stating, "if the range of answers to a question is limited and well established, pre-coding is generally to be preferred."¹¹⁴

The remaining six pages of the instrument were of an inventory, check-list type to determine the perceptions college alumni have of the regional center. Part B included a list of credit graduate programs, Part C was comprised of non-credit programs, and Part D of related activities. These program activities were listed on the questionnaire in random order. The respondents were requested to check each item on the basis of their knowledge of the Center's functions; how well they think the Center is performing these functions; what program activities they believe the Center should be offering; and if they would attend these programs were they to be offered. The reason for choosing this form of question was that it provided for greater uniformity of response along the specific dimensions in which the investigator was interested. Responses will not range over nearly so wide an area as with an open-ended question.¹¹⁵ It can be stated that the inventory type question is more simply and accurately coded since the coding is in reality done by the

¹¹⁴ E.A. Moser, Survey Methods in Social Investigation, (London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1958), p. 230.

¹¹⁵ Bernard S. Phillips, Social Research, Strategy and Tactics, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1966), p. 117.

respondent rather than some person far removed from him. The coder is only responsible for transferring the coding of a category from the questionnaire to the code sheet. Finally, the inventory check-list type of question was selected because of the limited writing required and its ease and speed for the respondent.

Study Questions

College alumni of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, and the University of Michigan living in the vicinity of Grand Rapids, Michigan are potential users of continuing education programs offered by an educational enterprise known as a regional center. Information is lacking in terms of how much the alumni of the three universities know about the Center. The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions these college alumni have of the inter-university regional center; and to study selected factors related to alumni perceptions. Therefore this study seeks to provide answers in the following areas:

A. Perceptions by college alumni of an inter-university regional center.

1. What do alumni think the Center is doing?
2. How well do alumni think the Center is doing?
3. What do alumni think the Center should be doing?
4. Will alumni participate in the activities they think the Center should be doing?

B. Factors related to perception.

How are the following selected factors related to alumni perceptions of the Center?

1. College experience -- What is the profile of college experience which characterizes college alumni, i.e., institution attended, educational level, educational major, recency of degree?

2. Center participation -- What is the pattern of experience which college alumni have in reference to the Center, i.e., number of experiences, types of experiences, recency of experience?
3. Educational needs -- What is the profile of educational needs of college alumni that might be provided by the Center, i.e., further credit, counseling, home and family living, professional growth, public affairs, liberal education, cultural experience, experiences in social, political and economic issues?
4. General demographic information -- What is the profile of general demographic information of college alumni, i.e., age, sex, marital status, income level, occupation or profession?

The general questions stated above lead to the formulation of the following sixteen operational questions for study.

1. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and college experience?
2. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and Center participation?
3. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?
4. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and general demographic factors?
5. Is there a significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and college experience?
6. Is there a significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and Center participation?
7. Is there a significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?
8. Is there a significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and general demographic factors?
9. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and college experience?
10. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and Center participation?

11. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?
12. Is there a significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and general demographic factors?
13. Is there a significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and college experience?
14. Is there a significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and Center participation?
15. Is there a significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?
16. Is there a significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and general demographic factors?

Data Collection Procedures

As reported previously, the sampling unit utilized in this study were the college alumni of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan living in four selected counties in Southwestern Michigan. A questionnaire and covering letter (see Appendix A) and self-addressed stamped envelope were mailed to randomly selected college alumni on March 6, 1970. Questionnaires were number coded so non-respondents could be identified. Also a different color code was utilized to identify the responses for each institution. The color scheme used follows:

1. Michigan State University -- green
2. The University of Michigan -- blue
3. Western Michigan University -- yellow

The covering letter used in the mailing was prepared on University Center stationary displaying the seal of each institution. The content of the letter mailed to each alumnus sampled was the same except for two pre-determined differences. Each regional center director's signature was affixed to those letters going to the alumni from his institution. The writer's name was included on all letters. The second difference in the letter related to the positioning of the name of each institution in the lead paragraph where all three universities were named. Each university was listed first on the letter being sent to its alumni. The mailing was distributed in envelopes supplied by each of the three universities. Envelopes were marked as follows:

1. Michigan State University - Continuing Education Service
2. The University of Michigan - Extension Service
3. Western Michigan University - Division of Field Services

The return stamped envelopes were addressed to be returned to the University Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Upon retrieval, the instruments were coded for both general purpose and university identification as follows:

1. The University of Michigan -- 1,001, 1,002, etc.
2. Michigan State University -- 2,001, 2,002, etc.
3. Western Michigan University -- 3,001, 3,002, etc.

Because of the nationwide postal strike that occurred shortly after the questionnaires were mailed, a decision was made to delay sending follow-up post cards until March 27, 1970. The postal strike possibly had an effect upon the response rate of the questionnaires. Follow-up cards were then mailed to the non-respondents with April 10, 1970 established

as the termination date for all responses.

Table 1 shows the survey population and sample.

TABLE 1
SURVEY POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Institutions	Alumni	Sample	Returns	Actual Sampling Fraction
University of Michigan	6664	392	129	$\frac{1}{51}$
Michigan State University	6069	357	155	$\frac{1}{43}$
Western Michigan University	5117	301	154	$\frac{1}{33}$
Totals	17,850	1,050	438	$\frac{1}{41}$

Responses to the questionnaire were coded for keypunching and computer processing.

Methods of Analysis

The data were first analyzed by obtaining a frequency profile of population characteristics and alumni perceptions. These data formed the basis for a descriptive analysis of credit programs, non-credit programs, and related activities in terms of the total alumni respondents, and by institution. A comparative analysis of alumni perceptions by institution was also done.

A test for significant relationships between alumni perceptions of what the Center is doing and the factors related to perception was performed. The chi-square test of significance was used because of the

discrete nature of the data (know - don't know). Siegel states, "when the data of research consist of frequencies in discrete categories, the chi-square test may be used to determine the significance of differences between two independent groups. The measurement involved may be as weak as nominal scaling."¹¹⁶

Alumni perceptions of how successful Center programs are; what programs the Center should be offering; and if alumni would participate in such programs were tested against factors related to perception for significant relationships utilizing stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. Initially, an attempt was made to analyze the data by individual responses with the program areas. However, it was found that the data were insufficient for this approach. A further attempt was made to classify the items in the program areas by topics and once again the data were insufficient for this procedure. These conditions caused the investigator to establish a single index for each perception concept, namely; how successful Center programs are; what programs the Center should be offering; and if alumni would participate in such programs as related to each of the program areas. These indices were then summed over all program areas to give twelve criterion variables. These variables were tested against factors related to perception as predictor variables. Sterling and Pollack suggest that:

...stepwise multiple regression may be valuable in the analysis of multivariate data with variables that are measured by numbers for which an underlying continuous scale can be assumed....We may even want to do this when the discrete variables do not permit the assumption of an underlying

¹¹⁶ Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics For The Behavioral Sciences, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1956), p. 104.

continuous scale. Although this procedure might violate the basic assumptions on which correlations are computed, it may offer the investigator many useful hints about the relative importance of variables in a file.¹¹⁷

The question pertaining to alumni perceptions of "how successful center programs are," definitely present variables with an underlying continuous nature (excellent, fair, poor). Using the recommendation of Sterling and Pollack, stepwise multiple regression analysis was applied.

For the questions on alumni perceptions of programs that "should be offered" and "participation," it might be argued that the variables measured are not continuous, (definitely should be, might be, definitely should not be). However, as suggested by Sterling and Pollack, stepwise regression analysis was used to extract the greatest amount of valuable information.

¹¹⁷ Theodore D. Sterling and Seymour V. Pollack, Introduction to Statistical Data Processing, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 459.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

In this chapter the findings of the study are presented in descriptive and analytical terms.

The descriptive analysis looks at the population by institutions in terms of its demographic characteristics, college experience, Center participation and perceived educational needs. Also described are alumni perceptions of Center programs by institution and a comparative analysis of alumni perceptions of selected programs by institution.

The statistical analysis is presented as related to the questions for the study. Included, also, is a review of the significant factors influencing alumni perceptions.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents by Institution

Data were gathered on the characteristics of: age, sex, marital status, income level, and occupation or profession.

Age groupings on the basis of 10-year intervals were established. The data revealed a modal age range of 30-39 years for the total respondents. It is interesting to note the modal age range for the University of Michigan respondents fall into the 40-49 year classification. The data reveal that both Western Michigan and Michigan State had a younger population responding to the instrument than the University of Michigan;

conversly, the University of Michigan had a larger number of alumni in the 60-and-over age bracket than either Western Michigan or Michigan State. Table 2 shows the age distribution of the respondents.*

Table 3 shows the sex distribution of the respondents by institutions. The total result indicates that males constituted 65.1 percent of the respondents and females 33.8 percent. This represents almost a 2-to-1 ratio. However, in the case of the respondents from Western Michigan the difference was less with 38.3 percent of the responses from women and 59.1 percent from men. Both the University of Michigan and Western Michigan had almost the same frequency of male respondents; however, twenty-one more females were included in the Western Michigan alumni group.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their marital status. As reported in Table 4, 78.5 percent of all respondents are married. Of the Michigan State graduates, 83.2 percent were married and 13.5 percent were single. This compared to 73.6 percent married and 22.5 percent single from the University of Michigan, and 77.9 percent married and 17.5 percent single from Western Michigan University.

The respondents current income levels are reported in Table 5 which shows a modal income level of between \$10,000 and \$14,999 for all respondents. Several interesting features concerning these results are worthy of mention.

The modal percentage for respondents from each university and the total modal percentage for all respondents was consistent at the 35 percent level in the \$10,000 to \$14,999 classification. At the \$6,000 to \$9,999

* For purposes of abbreviation in the Tables, Western Michigan University, Michigan State University, and the University of Michigan will be referred to as WMU, MSU, and U-M.

TABLE 2

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Age Ranges	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
21 - 29	13	10.0	40	25.8	41	26.6	94	21.5
30 - 39	24	18.6	46	29.7	45	29.2	115	26.3
40 - 49	38	29.5	38	24.5	33	21.4	109	24.9
50 - 59	24	18.6	19	12.3	14	9.1	57	13.0
60 & over	30	23.3	12	7.7	21	13.6	63	14.4
Totals	129	100.0	155	100.0	154	100.0	438	100.0

TABLE 3

SEX DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Sex	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	90	69.8	104	67.1	91	59.1	285	65.1
Female	38	29.5	51	32.9	59	38.3	148	33.8
Totals	128	99.3	155	100.0	150	97.4	433	98.9

TABLE 4

MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Marital Status	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single	29	22.5	21	13.5	27	17.5	77	17.6
Married	95	73.6	129	83.2	120	77.9	344	78.5
Widow or Widower	0	0.0	2	1.3	6	3.9	8	1.8
Divorced	2	1.6	2	1.3	1	0.6	5	1.1
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	126	97.7	154	99.3	154	100.0	434	99.0

income level, 31.2 percent were from Western Michigan, 23.9 percent from Michigan State and only 12.4 percent from the University of Michigan. At the other end of the income scale in the \$25,000 and over category, 15.5 percent of the respondents were from the University of Michigan as compared to 7.1 percent from Michigan State and 5.8 percent from Western Michigan. The data revealed that the alumni in the sample from Michigan State and the University of Michigan generally have a higher level of income than the Western Michigan graduates.

Table 6 classifies the respondents by institution according to their occupation or profession. (The findings show professionals represented 67.6 percent of all graduates.) It is interesting to note that 76.7 percent of the University of Michigan graduates were in the profession classification compared to 58.1 percent of the Michigan State alumni. However, in the manager and housewife categories, Michigan State respondents were 13.5 percent and 11.6 percent respectively, whereas the University of Michigan graduates in the same two categories were 7.0 percent and 3.9 percent and Western Michigan responses were 6.5 percent in both. Percentages in the other classifications were similar for each institution.

College Experience of Alumni by Institution

The respondents were requested to indicate the educational degrees they had attained and the institutions from which they were received. The coding of this question did not provide information about schools for respondents with multiple degrees. When a person had a degree from more than one of the institutions involved in this study, they were coded as part of the sample from the university where their name appeared on the

TABLE 5

INCOME LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Income Level	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
\$3000-5,999	7	5.4	6	3.9	13	8.4	26	5.9
6000-9,999	16	12.4	37	23.9	48	31.2	101	23.1
10,000-14,999	46	35.7	55	35.5	54	35.1	155	35.4
15,000-19,999	23	17.8	23	14.8	19	12.3	65	14.8
20,000-24,999	9	7.0	13	8.4	3	1.9	25	5.7
25,000 & over	20	15.5	11	7.1	9	5.8	40	9.1
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	121	93.8	145	93.6	146	94.7	412	94.0

TABLE 6

OCCUPATION OR PROFESSION OF RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Occupation or Profession	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professional	99	76.7	90	58.1	107	69.5	296	67.6
Manager or Proprietor	9	7.0	21	13.5	10	6.5	40	9.1
Clerical	2	1.6	4	2.6	2	1.3	8	1.8
Sales person	2	1.6	5	3.2	4	2.6	11	2.5
Housewife	5	3.9	18	11.6	10	6.5	33	7.5
Skilled worker or Foreman	2	1.6	3	1.9	1	0.6	6	1.4
Administrative	6	4.7	7	4.5	6	3.9	19	4.3
Other	1	0.8	5	3.2	13	8.4	19	4.3
Totals	126	97.9	153	98.7	153	99.3	432	98.5

mailing list. On the basis of this procedure the results are tabulated in Table 7. Of the Michigan State graduates, 65.2 percent and 70.8 percent of the Western Michigan graduates were recorded as having only a Bachelor's degree. In contrast, only 41.9 percent of the University of Michigan alumni were recorded as having only a Bachelor's degree from that institution. For those respondents recorded as only having Master's degrees from the participating institutions, the results are reversed with the University of Michigan alumni having 38.0 percent in that category and Michigan State and Western Michigan having 22.6 percent and 14.9 percent respectively. The only other category with an appreciable number of respondents is that representing both Bachelor's and Master's degrees. It is interesting to note that Western Michigan had 11.7 percent in this category whereas Michigan State had 6.5 percent and the University of Michigan 7.8 percent.

The length of time that had elapsed since graduates had received their highest degree was also analyzed. The modal period of time elapsed was less than five years for 31.3 percent of the alumni responding. Each of the remaining periods of time since the last degree was earned showed a continual decrease in the number of respondents in each category. However, some interesting institutional differences were observed. For example, the graduates of the University of Michigan numerically were in reverse order when compared to the respondents from Michigan State and Western Michigan. The University of Michigan graduates receiving their degree within the last five years constituted only 18.6 percent as compared to 34.2 percent of Michigan State graduates and 39.0 percent of Western Michigan graduates. At the other end of the continuum, 32.6 percent of the University of Michigan's graduates had received their degrees

TABLE 7

EDUCATIONAL DEGREES ATTAINED BY RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Degrees	U-M		MSU		WMU	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bachelor's	54	41.9	101	65.2	109	70.8
Master's	49	38.0	35	22.6	23	14.9
Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.)	0	0.0	4	2.6	0	0.0
Bachelor's and Master's	10	7.8	10	6.5	18	11.7
Bachelor's and Doctorate	4	3.1	2	1.3	0	0.0
Master's and Doctorate	3	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Educa. Specialists	0	0.0	2	1.3	1	0.6
Doctor of Medicine, Law, Dentistry or Vet. Med.	9	7.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Totals	129	100.0	154	99.5	151	98.0

over 20 years prior to the date of this study as compared to 20.6 percent from Michigan State and 8.4 percent for Western Michigan graduates. These results are shown in Table 8.

Center Participation of Respondents by Institution

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had participated in programs or activities offered by the regional center in Grand Rapids. Table 9 illustrates that 41.5 percent of all alumni sampled for this study responded that they had participated and 55.0 percent gave a no response. Institutional differences were quite varied. For example, 43.4 percent of the University of Michigan graduates, and 49.5 percent of the Western Michigan alumni had participated in Center programs or activities, whereas only 31.6 percent of the Michigan State alumni responded in the affirmative. An interesting finding is that only Western Michigan had more graduates that had participated in Center programs than those that had not participated among those that responded.

For those alumni who had participated in Center programs or activities in the past, the respondents were asked to identify the types of Center experiences they had engaged in. Table 10 shows that 35.6 percent of all alumni with Center experience had participated in credit courses, with considerably fewer alumni indicating experiences in other activities offered by the Center. The results also suggest more University of Michigan graduates had participated in non-credit courses than the alumni from Michigan State or Western Michigan.

Results of the recency of alumni experiences in Center programs is given in Table 11. For the total group, 17.1 percent of those participating

TABLE 8

TIME ELAPSED SINCE RESPONDENTS LAST DEGREE BY INSTITUTION

Time Since Last Degree	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than five years	24	18.6	53	34.2	60	39.0	137	31.3
5 - 10 years	24	18.6	36	23.2	48	31.2	108	24.7
10 - 20 years	34	26.4	29	18.7	29	18.8	92	21.0
Over 20 years	42	32.6	32	20.6	13	8.4	87	19.9
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	124	96.2	150	96.7	150	97.4	424	96.9

TABLE 9

CENTER PARTICIPATION BY RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Center Participants	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	56	43.4	49	31.6	76	49.4	181	41.3
No	71	55.0	103	66.5	67	43.5	241	55.0
No Responses	2	1.6	3	1.9	11	7.1	16	3.7
Totals	129	100.0	155	100.0	154	100.0	438	100.0

TABLE 10

TYPES OF RESPONDENTS' CENTER EXPERIENCES BY INSTITUTION

Types of Center Experience	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Credit Courses	46	35.7	45	29.0	76	49.4	167	35.6
Non-Credit Courses	16	12.4	8	5.2	4	2.6	28	6.3
Conferences	3	2.3	4	2.6	2	1.3	9	2.1
Lectures	6	4.7	3	1.9	4	2.6	13	3.0
Counseling	12	9.3	7	4.5	13	8.4	33	7.4
Information only	2	1.6	4	2.6	3	1.9	9	2.0
Other	6	4.7	2	1.3	1	0.6	9	2.2

TABLE 11

REGENCY OF RESPONDENTS CENTER EXPERIENCES BY INSTITUTION

Recency of Experience	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Within Last Year	5	3.9	15	9.7	26	16.9	46	10.5
Within Last Five Years	21	16.3	22	14.2	32	20.8	75	17.1
Within Last Ten Years	18	14.0	10	6.5	10	6.5	38	8.7
Over Ten Years	13	10.1	5	3.2	9	5.8	27	6.2

in Center activities had done so within the last five years. Institutional differences are reflected in that 16.8 percent of Western Michigan graduates taking part in Center programs had participated within the last year as compared to 9.7 percent from Michigan State and 3.9 percent from the University of Michigan. However, in the period of participation "over 10 years ago," University of Michigan alumni accounted for 10.1 percent compared to 5.8 percent from Western Michigan.

Another factor analyzed in reference to alumni participation in Center programs was the number of programs graduates had attended. The modal range was five or more programs for all alumni and also for alumni on an institutional basis. Table 12 reveals that most alumni that have participated in Center activities have had more than one experience. It is interesting to note however, that more Western Michigan alumni have had only one experience at the Center than graduates from Michigan State and the University of Michigan.

Perceived Educational Needs of Alumni by Institution

Respondents were asked to express their perceived educational needs in seven program areas. Responses were scaled on the basis of "I definitely need." "I probably need," and "I definitely do not need." As shown in Table 13, program areas reflecting the greatest need for the total group were professional growth programs and courses for academic credit.

Cultural experiences and experiences in social, political and economic issues were in less demand. Home and family living and liberal education were perceived by the respondents as the program areas of least need.

TABLE 12

NUMBER OF PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED IN BY RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION

Number of Programs Participated In	U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
One	10	7.8	16	10.3	21	13.6	47	10.7
Two	13	10.1	7	4.5	13	8.4	33	7.5
Three or Four	8	6.2	7	4.5	17	11.0	32	7.3
Five or More	23	17.8	21	13.5	22	14.3	66	15.1

TABLE 13

RESPONDENTS PERCEIVED EDUCATIONAL NEEDS BY INSTITUTION

Perceived Educational Needs		U-M		MSU		WMU		Totals	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Academic Credit	Need	11	8.5	37	23.9	43	27.9	91	21.0
	Probably Need	26	20.2	31	20.0	39	25.3	96	21.8
	Do Not Need	52	40.3	43	27.7	31	20.1	126	29.3
Counseling	Need	3	2.3	7	4.5	14	9.1	24	5.3
	Probably Need	16	12.4	33	21.3	31	20.1	80	17.9
	Do Not Need	53	41.4	50	32.3	47	30.5	200	34.7
Home and Family Living	Need	0	0.0	6	3.9	9	5.8	15	3.2
	Probably Need	16	12.4	16	10.3	11	7.1	43	9.9
	Do Not Need	50	38.8	59	38.1	64	41.6	173	39.3
Professional Growth	Need	26	20.2	36	23.2	39	25.3	101	22.9
	Probably Need	57	44.2	68	43.9	67	43.5	192	43.9
	Do Not Need	25	19.4	21	13.5	22	14.3	68	15.7
Liberal Education	Need	1	0.8	10	6.5	8	5.2	19	4.1
	Probably Need	40	31.0	41	26.5	33	21.4	114	26.3
	Do Not Need	32	24.8	43	27.7	48	31.2	123	27.9
Cultural Experiences	Need	15	11.6	14	9.0	19	12.3	48	10.9
	Probably Need	47	36.4	47	30.3	41	26.6	135	31.0
	Do Not Need	26	20.2	37	23.9	39	25.3	102	23.1
Experiences in Need		11	8.5	14	9.0	22	14.3	47	10.6
Social, Political issues	Probably Need	41	31.8	56	36.1	45	29.2	142	32.3
	Do Not Need	28	21.7	30	19.4	34	22.1	92	21.0

On an institutional basis, the results differ on several items. For example, while only 8.5 percent of the University of Michigan graduates expressed a need for further academic credit, 23.9 percent and 27.9 percent of the Western Michigan and Michigan State alumni indicated they have such a need. In the area of counseling, 9.1 percent of Western Michigan graduates felt a need compared to 4.5 percent of Michigan State's alumni and 2.3 percent for the University of Michigan graduates. Further study of the information from this question suggested two interesting comments. In reference to counseling, 20.1 percent of the alumni from Western Michigan and 21.3 percent from Michigan State responded "probably need" as compared to 12.4 percent from the University of Michigan. The University of Michigan group was much more definite in expressing they did not have a need for counseling; 41.4 percent, as compared to 32.3 percent from Michigan State and 30.5 percent from Western Michigan.

Alumni Perceptions of Credit Programs

The three sections that follow describe the perceptions college alumni from Western Michigan University, Michigan State University and the University of Michigan have of the regional center in Grand Rapids, Michigan in reference to credit programs, non-credit programs, and related activities.

Descriptive tables are presented to show the percentage of responses for all alumni and by institution. Each table reflects what alumni think the Center does on the basis of programs offered or not offered; how successful programs are as indicated by excellent, fair, poor; what the Center should be doing; and if alumni would participate in such programs.

Comparative tables are presented to show the frequency of responses by institution in selected program areas.

Table 14 illustrates the perceptions of all respondents for credit programs. Education programs are indicated by 46.1 percent of the respondents as being offered by the Center. Following education, liberal arts, social work, and business administration are the program areas most often perceived as offered. Except for the program areas already mentioned better than 50 percent of all respondents don't know if the remaining program areas are offered. Only 0.5 percent of those responding did not believe education courses are available, and 16.0 percent failed to respond to that part of the question. The responses to the success of the programs offered were generally low. The same four program areas were mentioned most frequently by alumni as excellent.

All academic credit graduate programs "should be offered" according to at least some alumni. For all alumni responding, 59.5 percent thought education "should be offered," followed in rank order by business administration, social work, and liberal arts, and natural resources. The latter program area would appear to represent current national interest in ecology. The Health professions including medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, and dentistry were the program areas least mentioned that should be offered.

For all alumni responding, 38.2 percent indicated they would participate in education programs whereas 26.9 percent stated they would not participate. In addition, business administration, social work, liberal arts and natural resources were mentioned most frequently in terms of participation.

All other program areas had a larger number of alumni indicating they would not participate as compared to those alumni who stated they would participate. The areas of lowest response to "participation" were the health professions in addition to agriculture, architecture, engineering and home economics.

Table 15 shows the perceptions of University of Michigan alumni as related to credit programs. Education was identified by 45.0 percent of the University of Michigan graduates as being offered while no one responded negatively. Liberal arts, social work and business administration followed as program areas perceived as being offered by the Center.

The program areas thought to be the most successful were education, liberal arts, social work, business administration, and library science. These same program areas were also the areas most often mentioned as "should be offered." In addition, natural resources, public health, public administration, music, and nursing were most frequently suggested.

University of Michigan graduates generally did not respond favorably towards participation. In the program area of education for example, only 26.4 percent of the University of Michigan graduates stated they would take part and 41.8 percent indicated they would not. Respondents indicating as interest in participating in other program areas are fewer than those selecting education.

The Michigan State University alumni perceptions of the regional center are given in Table 16. More alumni selected education as being offered with liberal arts, social work, and business administration following in that order. The same four areas were designated by Michigan State graduates as excellent.

TABLE 15
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF CREDIT PROGRAMS

Program Areas	Alumni Perceptions												
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should & Might Be Offered	Should Not be Offered	No Response	Would Might Participate	Would Not Participate	No Response
Medicine	6.2	14.7	57.4	21.9	5.4	0.8	0.0	31.1	6.2	62.8	9.3	49.6	41.1
Vet. Med.	3.2	14.7	58.6	24.0	1.6	1.6	0.0	25.7	7.8	66.6	2.3	52.0	45.7
Hosp. Adm.	3.9	7.8	64.3	24.0	3.1	0.8	0.0	35.7	2.3	62.0	3.9	53.5	42.6
Bus. Adm.	21.7	1.6	58.1	18.6	13.2	8.5	0.0	46.5	0.8	52.7	17.1	45.7	34.1
Music	14.0	1.6	60.5	24.0	7.8	5.4	0.8	39.6	2.3	58.1	11.7	48.8	39.5
Arch.	7.7	3.1	63.6	25.6	2.3	5.4	0.0	35.0	3.0	62.0	5.5	52.8	41.9
Dent.	4.7	14.0	59.7	21.7	3.1	0.8	0.8	26.4	9.3	64.3	4.0	52.6	43.4
Pub. Hlth.	12.5	3.9	60.5	23.3	7.8	4.7	0.0	42.6	0.8	56.6	10.9	48.9	38.8
Educa.	45.0	0.0	42.6	12.4	27.1	14.0	3.9	49.5	1.6	48.9	26.4	41.8	31.8
Soc. Work	28.0	1.6	49.6	20.9	16.3	10.9	0.8	46.4	0.8	52.8	16.3	46.6	35.7
Lib. Arts	33.4	0.8	47.3	18.6	20.2	12.4	0.8	45.0	2.3	52.7	24.1	41.0	34.9
Engr.	9.7	9.3	59.7	21.7	5.4	3.1	0.8	36.4	3.1	60.5	10.2	47.3	41.1
Agriculture	3.2	8.5	65.9	22.5	1.6	0.8	0.8	31.7	3.9	64.4	3.1	52.0	45.0
Pub. Adm.	10.1	2.3	64.3	23.3	5.4	3.9	0.8	40.3	2.3	57.4	10.1	48.0	38.8
Pharm.	1.6	10.9	63.6	24.0	0.0	0.8	0.8	27.1	7.0	65.9	3.8	52.0	44.2
Law	6.2	7.8	63.6	22.5	5.4	0.0	0.8	31.7	7.0	61.3	11.7	47.2	41.1
Lib. Sci.	14.0	3.1	62.8	20.2	9.3	4.7	0.0	39.5	1.6	58.9	6.2	52.0	40.3
Nat. Res.	9.3	2.3	65.1	23.3	7.0	2.3	0.0	43.4	1.6	55.0	17.9	43.4	37.2
Nursing	3.1	9.3	63.1	24.0	2.3	0.8	0.0	38.0	4.7	57.3	4.7	52.7	39.5
Home Econ.	7.0	2.3	67.4	23.3	3.9	3.1	0.0	34.8	4.7	60.5	3.9	52.7	41.9

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF CREDIT PROGRAMS

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TABLE 17
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF CREDIT PROGRAMS

Program Areas	Alumni Perceptions												
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should & Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/Might Participate	Would Not Participate	No Response
Medicine	0.6	9.7	62.3	27.3	0.0	0.0	0.6	44.4	11.0	44.6	3.8	46.7	41.6
Vet. Med.	1.2	9.1	63.6	26.0	0.6	0.0	0.6	43.1	10.4	46.5	1.9	48.0	42.9
Hosp. Adm.	1.3	5.2	66.9	26.6	0.0	0.0	1.3	40.3	5.8	53.9	3.2	46.7	42.2
Bus. Adm.	24.0	1.3	50.6	24.0	12.3	11.7	0.0	56.3	0.6	43.1	24.0	29.8	37.7
Music	14.2	2.6	59.1	24.0	7.1	6.5	0.6	46.8	1.9	51.3	9.7	40.8	40.3
Arch.	3.8	5.8	64.3	26.0	0.6	2.6	0.6	44.2	5.2	50.6	7.8	44.8	38.3
Dent.	1.9	6.5	64.9	26.6	0.0	0.6	1.3	33.8	11.0	55.2	3.1	47.3	42.2
Pub. Hlth.	5.8	3.2	65.6	25.3	1.3	3.9	0.6	48.1	1.3	50.6	12.2	36.9	40.9
Education	48.7	1.3	36.4	13.6	28.6	19.5	0.6	63.7	0.6	35.7	46.7	17.4	28.6
Soc. Work	24.0	1.3	50.0	24.7	13.0	9.1	1.9	53.3	0.6	46.1	20.7	29.8	36.4
Lib. Arts	26.0	0.0	50.6	23.4	14.3	10.4	1.3	54.6	0.6	44.8	27.2	25.9	35.7
Engr.	7.7	3.9	62.3	26.0	1.9	5.2	0.6	44.8	3.2	52.0	7.7	42.8	40.3
Agriculture	3.2	5.2	64.3	27.3	1.3	0.0	1.9	40.9	5.2	53.9	4.5	45.5	40.9
Pub. Adm.	12.9	1.9	59.7	25.3	3.2	8.4	1.3	51.3	1.9	46.8	14.2	36.9	37.7
Pharm.	0.6	5.8	65.6	27.9	0.6	0.0	0.0	37.0	7.1	55.9	2.5	45.4	42.9
Law	3.2	5.2	64.9	26.6	1.3	1.3	0.6	42.9	6.5	50.6	14.9	36.9	39.6
Lib. Sci.	12.3	3.2	59.7	24.7	7.1	3.9	1.3	46.8	1.3	51.9	7.1	40.8	40.9
Nat. Res.	6.0	3.2	65.6	24.0	3.2	1.9	1.9	55.3	1.3	43.4	21.3	33.7	35.7
Nursing	5.1	3.9	64.3	26.6	1.9	1.9	1.3	43.5	3.9	52.6	1.2	46.7	41.6
Home Econ.	7.7	3.9	61.7	26.6	1.9	3.2	2.6	46.8	3.9	49.3	7.7	42.8	38.3

The program area most frequently mentioned by Michigan State alumni as "should be offered" was education--by 60.7 percent of the respondents. Again, education was followed closely by business administration, natural resources, social work, and public health. In addition, the program areas of home economics, public administration, engineering, nursing and music, and library science were highly rated. This seems to reflect the broader interest of Michigan State University in these subject areas.

Participation was identified most frequently for education, liberal arts, business administration, social work and natural resources. Further analysis of the data reveal that while Michigan State alumni ranked liberal arts tenth as a program area that "should be offered," they ranked it second in terms of participation, and the fewest number of alumni selected liberal arts as the program area they would not participate in, other than education.

An examination of the data in Table 17 for Western Michigan alumni reveal that education programs are perceived by 48.7 percent of the alumni studied as being offered. Liberal arts, social work, and business administration were next followed by music, public administration and library science. The four program areas: education, liberal arts, social work, and business administration were perceived as being the most successful.

In response to the question of program areas that "should be offered" 63.7 percent of Western Michigan alumni indicated education courses should be offered for credit. Second priority was given to business administration third was natural resources--followed by liberal arts and social work.

In terms of participation, Western Michigan alumni, with 46.7 percent responding indicated education as the program area in which they would participate. Liberal arts and business administration were the next categories in frequency of response, followed by natural resources, and social work. The areas indicating the largest frequency of "would not participate" occurred in the health professions.

In summarizing the data presented in the previous four tables related to the question of "what the Center is doing," the following comparisons by institution can be made.

Generally, the University of Michigan responses concerning the offerings of the regional center were consistent with the total alumni responses. When comparing Michigan State and University of Michigan alumni responses, Michigan State graduates had fewer people in the "don't know" category but more alumni that didn't respond to the question. Western Michigan graduates had more responses indicating they didn't know about program areas than the alumni of Michigan State and the University of Michigan. An interesting point is that 15.5 percent and 15.1 percent of the total respondents indicated that medicine and veterinary medicine respectively are not offered, when in fact Michigan State has conducted programs through the regional center in both areas. These figures differ from the University of Michigan alumni responses by only .05 percent.

Another interesting finding was that none of the Michigan State respondents indicated medicine is offered, when in fact Michigan State is the only one of the three institutions to offer programs in that discipline through the regional center.

Table 18 illustrates comparative responses by the alumni of the three universities in several selected program areas. These findings show that more Western Michigan alumni perceived the program area of education as being offered than their counterparts from Michigan State and the University of Michigan. Social work and liberal arts were selected by like numbers of people from all three universities. Fewer University of Michigan graduates chose business administration compared to Michigan State and Western Michigan alumni. In the area of public health, University of Michigan and Michigan State graduates were comparable with fewer Western Michigan alumni selecting that area. Differences were slight in the program area of music.

Comparison by institution of how successful alumni believe program areas are is shown in Table 19. Generally, Western Michigan graduates responded to the question of success of education programs more than the alumni of the other two institutions. The comparative analysis shows Michigan State alumni responding less favorably toward music compared to other alumni. However, in reference to education, Michigan State and Western Michigan graduates were generally more favorable than the University of Michigan alumni.

The results between institutions concerning the success of liberal arts programs were almost identical, but the program areas of public health and home economics reflected differences among institutions.

A summary of the program areas that "should be offered" suggests that more Western Michigan graduates believe programs should be offered than their counterparts from Michigan State and the University of Michigan. Michigan State responses were generally higher than the University of

TABLE 16
COMPARATIVE PERCEPTIONS BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
CREDIT PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS BEING OFFERED

Number
of
Alumni

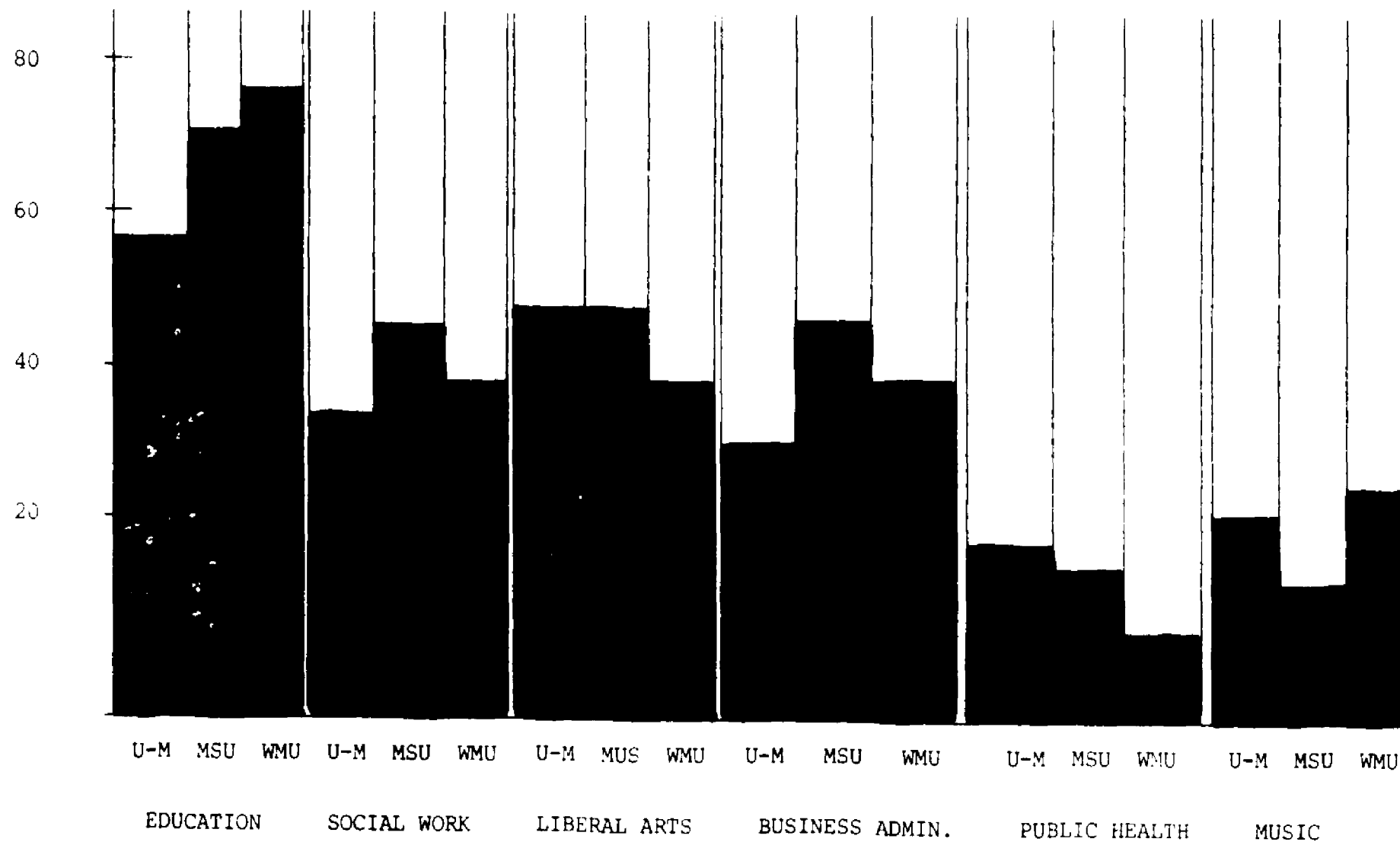
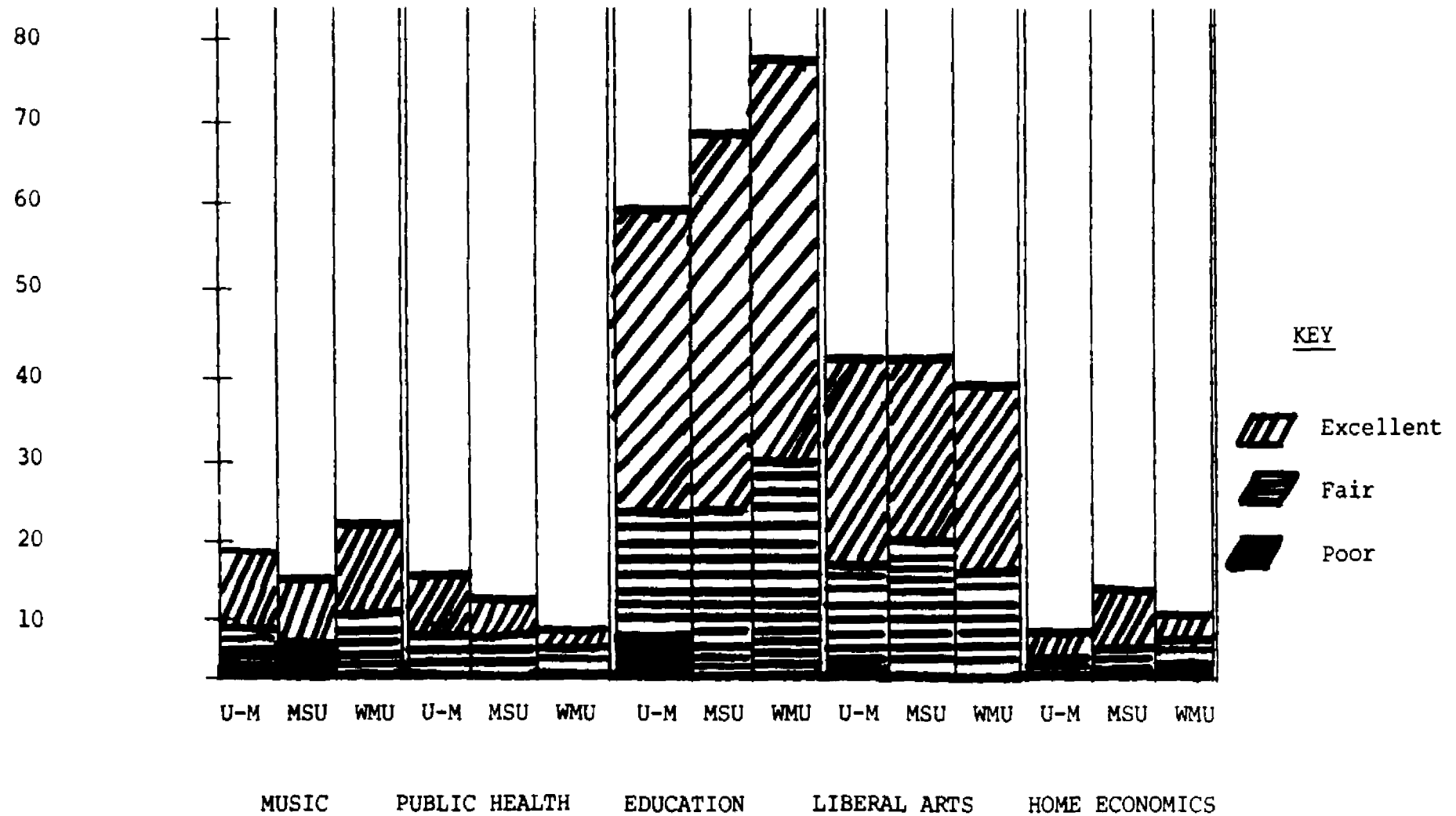


TABLE 19

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
CREDIT PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS BEING SUCCESSFUL

Number
of
Alumni



Michigan responses and the combined responses. Table 20 reflects the differences in perceptions in reference to selected programs that alumni indicate "should be offered" by the Center. Education was the area most frequently mentioned by all alumni. Selection of liberal arts was identical for Michigan State and Western Michigan graduates with considerably fewer University of Michigan responses. The number of persons suggesting home economics and engineering were similar by institution and in the same priority. In both program areas more Michigan State graduates indicated they should be offered, followed by Western Michigan and University of Michigan alumni.

An interesting comparison is observed in the field of law where more Western Michigan and Michigan State graduates suggested it should be offered than University of Michigan alumni, although the University of Michigan is the only one of the three universities with a school of law.

Other comparisons of interest are in the field of medicine where more Western Michigan graduates indicated it should be offered compared to the University of Michigan and Michigan State respondents. Also, in veterinary medicine a larger number of Western Michigan graduates indicated that veterinary medicine should be available than alumni from the University of Michigan and Michigan State.

The comparative responses by institution concerning participation in program areas that should be offered by the Center are shown in Table 21. The tabulations show that more than twice the number of Michigan State graduates indicated an interest in participating in business administration program than the University of Michigan alumni. A comparison in the field of education also indicates a numerical difference between

TABLE 20

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
CREDIT PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS SHOULD BE OFFERED

Number
Of
Alumni

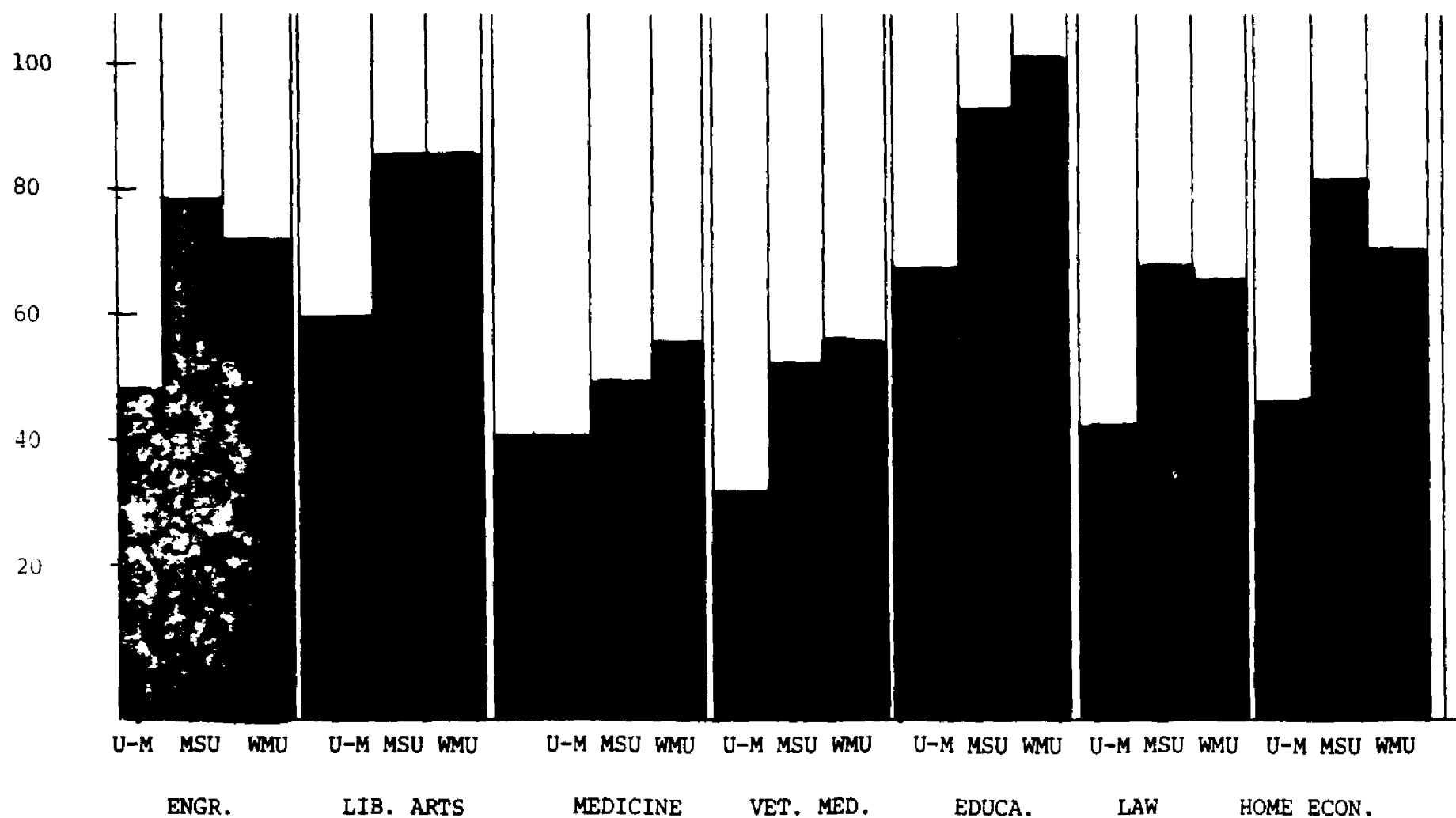
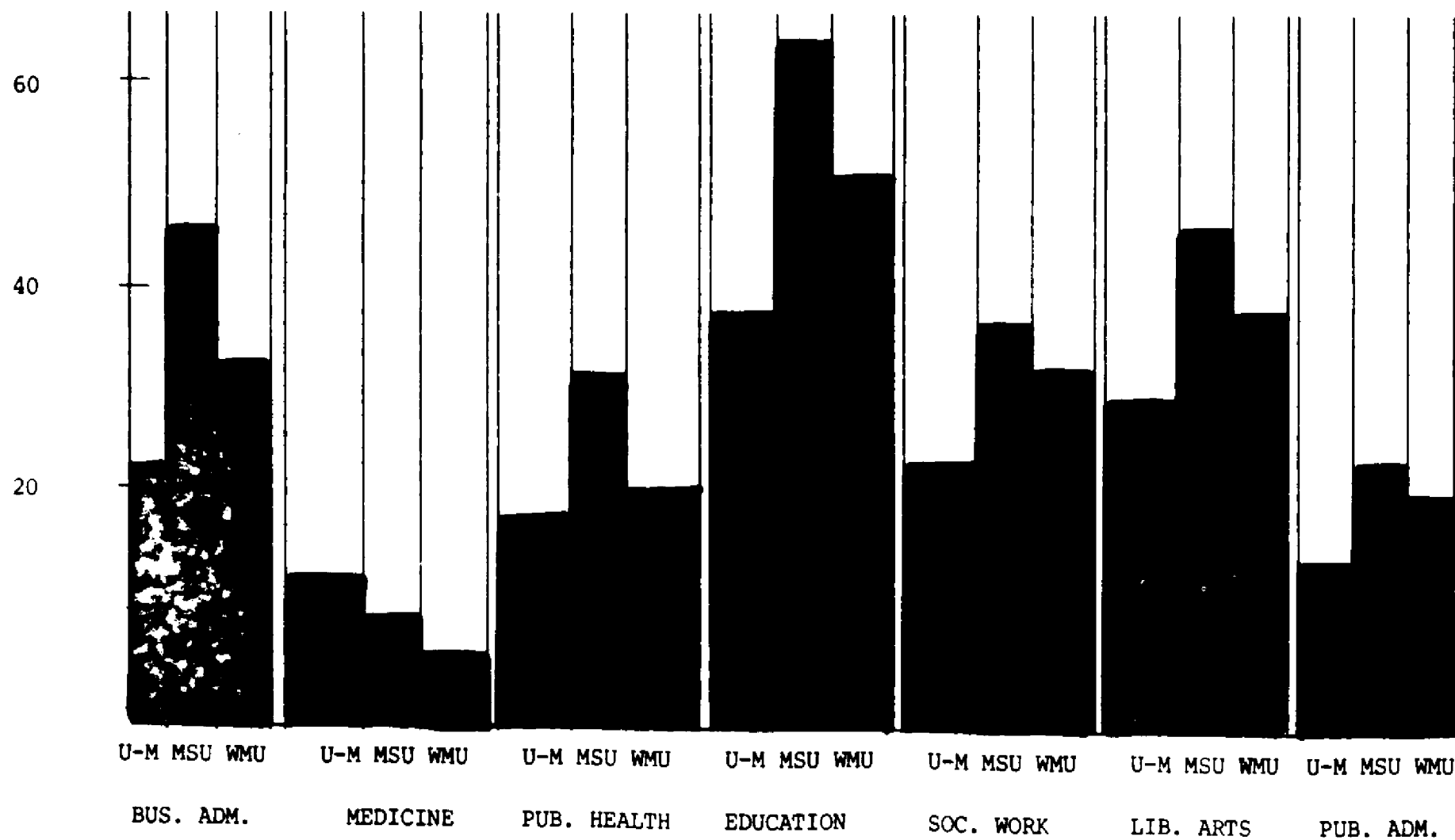


TABLE 21
COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED CREDIT
PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE THEY WOULD PARTICIPATE IN

Number
of
Alumni



Michigan State and the University of Michigan alumni. A total of 61 Michigan State alumni responded affirmatively to the question of participation as compared to 41 University of Michigan graduates. The Western Michigan alumni response level was between the other two institutions.

The Michigan State alumni responded with greater interest in participation in academic credit programs than the alumni from Western Michigan and the University of Michigan, with the exception of medicine where University of Michigan graduates responded more frequently than their counterparts from Michigan State and Western Michigan. Michigan State ranked first in all categories followed by Western Michigan and then the University of Michigan. Western Michigan graduates generally responded less frequently in the "would not participate" classification than the graduates from Michigan State or the University of Michigan.

Alumni Perceptions of Non-Credit Programs

In Table 22 the analysis of the data for non-credit program areas reveal a pattern of similarity between alumni perceptions of credit and non-credit programs, but also suggests several distinct differences. For example, the frequency of responses is considerably fewer in number for non-credit programs compared to credit programs, and particularly in the responses referring to what is offered by the Center, and the success of the programs. In addition, for all program areas presented on both the credit and non-credit lists the number of alumni indicating "don't know" is greater for the non-credit areas.

The compilation of all respondents shows education at 11.4 percent as having the highest percentage of alumni perceiving this non-credit

TABLE 22

TOTAL ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS

Program Areas	Alumni Perceptions												
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Medicine	1.3	7.1	65.3	26.3	1.1	0.0	0.2	21.2	13.0	65.8	6.0	40.1	50.0
Vet. Med.	0.2	6.8	66.0	26.9	0.2	0.0	0.0	20.0	12.1	67.9	3.0	42.3	52.1
Hosp. Admin.	1.4	4.1	68.0	26.5	0.7	0.7	0.0	25.8	8.4	65.8	4.8	41.8	50.7
Bus. Admin.	8.9	2.1	62.8	26.3	4.1	4.6	0.2	34.7	4.8	60.5	15.8	34.2	46.6
Music	4.4	2.3	66.9	26.5	2.1	2.3	0.0	34.9	3.7	61.4	12.1	37.5	47.7
Arch.	0.7	4.3	67.4	27.6	0.0	0.5	0.2	28.8	6.6	64.6	5.1	42.2	50.2
Dentistry	0.9	6.2	65.8	27.2	0.7	0.2	0.0	19.9	13.5	66.7	2.8	43.9	50.7
Public Health	2.9	2.1	67.6	27.4	1.8	1.1	0.0	32.6	4.1	63.2	10.9	37.0	48.6
Education	11.4	1.4	61.2	26.0	5.9	5.3	0.2	38.6	3.2	58.2	22.1	29.9	45.0
Social Work	8.0	1.6	63.7	26.5	4.8	3.0	0.2	34.3	4.1	61.6	14.0	34.4	47.7
Liberal Arts	7.9	1.6	63.9	26.7	4.1	3.4	0.2	33.6	3.2	63.2	14.4	33.6	49.3
Engineering	3.5	3.7	66.4	26.7	1.4	1.6	0.2	28.1	7.5	64.4	6.9	41.4	49.3
Agriculture	2.1	3.7	66.9	27.4	1.4	0.7	0.0	27.6	6.6	65.8	4.8	41.8	50.7
Pub. Admin.	3.4	2.5	67.4	26.7	0.9	2.5	0.0	30.2	5.7	64.2	8.7	37.7	50.0
Pharmacy	0.9	4.3	67.6	27.2	0.7	0.2	0.0	20.5	11.9	67.6	3.9	41.8	51.8
Law	1.8	3.9	67.1	27.2	0.7	1.1	0.0	26.6	9.4	63.9	10.7	37.9	48.6
Lib. Science	3.9	2.3	67.1	26.7	1.6	2.1	0.2	29.5	5.9	64.6	3.3	40.9	50.2
Nat. Resources	3.4	2.3	67.4	26.9	1.4	1.8	0.2	37.4	3.0	59.6	14.2	37.5	45.2
Nursing	1.6	3.7	67.4	27.4	0.7	0.9	0.0	28.8	5.9	65.3	3.7	42.7	50.2
Home Econ.	3.7	2.7	66.7	26.9	0.9	2.3	0.5	32.8	4.1	63.0	6.6	40.8	48.6
Creative Arts	7.0	0.9	65.5	26.5	3.4	3.4	0.2	40.8	2.1	57.1	19.6	32.5	43.6
Econ. Educa.	5.0	1.4	66.7	26.9	1.6	3.4	0.0	34.1	3.2	62.8	12.0	35.6	48.6
Comm. Devel.	4.8	1.1	67.1	27.2	2.1	2.3	0.2	39.7	2.3	58.0	18.1	32.4	45.2
Human Relations	5.3	1.4	66.2	27.2	1.4	3.4	0.5	45.4	1.8	52.8	26.6	29.7	40.0
Local, State, Nat.	5.1	1.6	66.9	26.5	1.4	3.0	0.7	41.4	2.3	56.2	23.2	31.2	43.2
Trade & Tech. Ed.	3.9	1.8	67.8	26.5	0.9	2.1	0.9	35.8	3.9	60.3	10.5	35.0	46.8
Rec. Educa.	2.9	2.3	68.3	26.5	0.9	1.8	0.2	38.2	3.2	58.5	17.1	33.1	45.7
Science Educa.	4.3	1.6	67.1	26.9	0.9	3.2	0.0	33.1	3.4	63.5	9.6	37.8	49.1
CEW	3.3	1.4	67.6	26.7	1.8	2.5	0.0	37.5	2.7	59.8	10.6	38.5	46.3
Aging	2.3	1.8	68.9	26.9	1.4	0.9	0.0	40.7	2.1	57.3	10.1	40.9	43.8

program area, business administration, social work, and liberal arts, followed in that order. Responses concerned with the success of these program areas were low compared to the total number of responses. The same program areas were most frequently mentioned in terms of success.

The frequency of responses increased and the pattern of response changed considerably in relation to the program areas that "should be offered." The results show human relations as the suggested program area having the most responses with 45.4 percent. Following in order were local, state, national and international affairs, creative arts, aging, community development, education, recreation education, and continuing education for women. Those areas most frequently mentioned as "should not be offered" were dentistry, medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, and law.

The analysis of the pattern of alumni participation followed a different ordering covering the same program areas. Human relations was mentioned first followed by local, state, national and international affairs, education, creative arts, and community development.

Table 23 shows that University of Michigan graduates, in response to the question of what the Center does offer, most frequently mentioned social work, liberal arts, education, creative arts, and music. More University of Michigan alumni responded "don't know" to this question than the composite totals for all alumni.

These same program areas were also those most frequently mentioned as successful by University of Michigan graduates.

An analysis of University of Michigan alumni responses to the question of what should be offered produced some differences in order of programs. Of the University of Michigan graduates 40.2 percent suggested

TABLE 23
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS

Program Areas	Alumni Perceptions												
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/ Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/ Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Medicine	3.1	8.5	66.7	21.7	3.1	0.0	0.0	23.3	8.5	68.2	7.0	48.8	44.2
Vet. Med.	0.8	7.8	66.7	24.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	19.4	8.5	72.1	0.0	51.2	48.8
Hosp. Admin.	2.3	3.9	70.5	23.3	2.3	0.0	0.0	27.2	5.4	67.4	3.9	51.1	45.0
Bus. Admin.	7.7	3.9	65.9	22.5	5.4	2.3	0.0	31.8	3.1	65.1	12.4	55.0	42.6
Music	8.6	2.3	66.7	22.5	4.7	3.9	0.0	33.4	0.8	65.8	11.7	44.1	44.2
Arch.	0.8	3.9	69.8	25.6	0.0	0.0	0.8	28.6	3.1	68.3	4.7	50.3	45.0
Dentistry	1.6	8.5	65.9	24.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	20.2	10.1	69.7	3.1	51.2	45.7
Public Health	3.9	2.3	69.0	24.8	3.1	0.8	0.0	29.4	1.6	69.0	10.1	44.9	45.0
Education	10.1	2.3	64.3	23.3	7.8	2.3	0.0	34.0	1.6	64.4	16.3	42.6	41.1
Social Work	10.9	2.3	64.3	22.5	9.3	1.6	0.0	33.3	1.6	65.1	9.4	47.2	42.6
Liberal Arts	10.9	2.3	63.6	23.3	7.8	3.1	0.0	31.0	1.6	67.4	13.9	41.9	44.2
Engineering	3.1	4.7	68.2	24.0	2.3	0.8	0.0	24.9	5.4	69.7	5.4	48.9	45.7
Agriculture	2.4	5.4	67.4	24.8	1.6	0.8	0.0	24.0	6.2	69.8	3.9	49.6	46.5
Pub. Admin.	5.4	1.6	69.8	23.3	3.1	2.3	0.0	28.7	2.3	69.0	5.5	51.2	46.5
Pharmacy	1.6	5.4	68.2	24.8	1.6	0.0	0.0	21.0	7.8	71.2	4.7	47.2	47.3
Law	2.4	4.7	68.2	24.8	1.6	0.8	0.8	24.0	8.5	67.5	8.1	47.7	44.2
Lib. Science	6.3	3.0	66.7	24.0	4.7	0.8	0.8	27.8	4.7	67.5	5.4	49.6	45.0
Nat. Resources	5.4	1.6	68.2	24.8	2.3	2.3	0.0	32.6	2.3	65.1	10.2	46.4	42.6
Nursing	2.3	4.7	68.2	24.8	2.3	0.0	0.0	28.0	3.9	68.1	3.9	49.6	45.7
Home Econ.	3.9	4.7	66.7	24.8	1.6	2.3	0.0	27.2	4.7	68.1	4.7	48.8	45.7
Creative Arts	9.3	0.8	66.7	23.3	6.2	3.1	0.0	38.0	0.0	62.0	20.2	37.1	41.9
Econ. Educa.	6.2	0.8	69.0	24.0	3.1	3.1	0.0	27.1	2.3	70.6	7.8	43.3	48.1
Comm. Devel.	6.2	1.6	68.2	24.0	3.1	2.3	0.8	33.3	1.6	65.1	15.6	58.2	44.2
Human Relations	5.4	2.3	67.4	24.8	2.3	3.1	0.0	40.2	1.6	58.2	23.3	37.9	38.0
Local, State, Nat.	4.7	3.1	68.2	24.0	3.1	1.6	0.0	33.3	2.3	64.4	18.7	37.8	41.9
Trade & Tech. Ed.	3.1	3.1	69.8	24.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	24.0	6.2	69.8	5.4	45.0	47.3
Rec. Educa.	3.9	3.1	69.8	23.3	2.3	1.6	0.0	28.7	4.7	66.6	9.4	54.3	45.7
Science Educa.	3.2	2.3	69.8	24.8	1.6	1.6	0.0	27.9	3.1	69.0	10.9	41.8	46.5
CEW	2.3	1.6	72.1	24.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	32.6	3.9	63.5	11.7	44.9	42.6
Aging	0.8	3.1	72.3	24.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	36.4	1.6	62.0	11.7	46.4	41.1

human relations programs should be offered. Following in sequence were creative arts, aging, education, music, social work, community development, and local, state, national and international affairs, the health professions, along with law and engineering, were the least frequently mentioned.

The program areas designated by University of Michigan alumni in which they would be most likely to participate were human relations, creative arts, local, state, national and international affairs, education, and community development.

Table 24 gives the results of Michigan State alumni response to the questionnaire for non-credit programs. Education, with responses of 13.0 percent, was mentioned most often, followed by social work, business administration, and creative arts. Education was the only program area having an appreciable percentage of responses indicating excellent. Social work, business administration, and science education had higher percentages of responses rating these program areas as fair, rather than excellent.

Fifty percent of the Michigan State alumni suggested human relations as a program area that should be offered. Other program areas most frequently mentioned were local, state, national and international affairs, community development, trade and technical education, and natural resources.

Michigan State alumni responded to the question on participation in the following manner: human relations was first followed by education, local, state, national and international affairs, and community development.

The analysis of the responses by Western Michigan alumni relative to their perceptions of non-credit programs are given in Table 25. Education

TABLE 24

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS

Program Areas	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Medicine	1.2	8.4	60.6	29.7	0.6	0.0	0.6	20.6	18.7	60.7	5.8	38.7	49.7
Vet. Med.	0.0	8.4	61.3	30.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.9	18.1	52.0	3.8	40.0	51.0
Hosp. Admin.	1.3	5.8	61.9	31.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	35.7	12.3	52.0	5.2	39.4	51.0
Bus. Admin.	9.7	1.3	58.1	31.0	3.2	6.5	0.0	38.0	5.2	56.8	16.4	32.3	46.5
Music	3.2	2.6	62.6	31.6	1.9	1.3	0.0	34.8	5.8	59.4	10.4	37.5	48.4
Arch.	0.6	5.8	61.9	31.6	0.0	0.6	0.0	31.6	8.4	60.0	4.5	40.7	50.3
Dentistry	1.2	6.5	60.6	31.6	0.0	0.6	0.0	30.6	17.4	52.0	1.3	47.6	51.0
Public Health	3.9	1.9	61.9	32.3	1.3	2.6	0.0	34.9	5.8	59.3	10.3	36.6	49.0
Education	13.0	0.6	56.1	30.3	6.5	6.5	0.0	40.7	4.5	54.8	24.2	25.8	45.8
Social Work	9.7	0.6	57.4	32.3	3.9	5.2	0.6	35.4	4.5	60.0	14.8	29.1	50.3
Liberal Arts	7.1	1.3	60.0	31.6	2.6	3.9	0.6	37.4	3.9	58.7	16.1	30.4	49.0
Engineering	3.9	3.2	61.3	31.6	1.3	2.6	0.0	31.7	9.0	59.3	7.8	39.3	49.0
Agriculture	3.2	3.2	61.3	32.3	1.9	1.3	0.0	31.0	7.1	61.9	5.1	40.6	50.3
Pub. Admin.	3.2	3.9	61.3	31.6	0.0	3.2	0.0	32.9	7.1	60.0	12.3	33.0	50.3
Pharmacy	0.6	4.5	63.2	31.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	30.6	16.8	62.6	1.9	42.0	51.6
Law	2.5	3.9	61.9	31.6	0.6	1.9	0.0	30.6	9.7	59.7	10.3	35.6	49.7
Lib. Science	3.8	1.9	63.2	31.0	0.6	3.2	0.0	32.3	5.8	61.9	3.2	40.6	51.6
Nat. Resources	3.2	3.2	62.6	31.0	0.6	2.6	0.0	41.9	3.2	54.9	18.1	34.9	43.9
Nursing	1.3	4.5	61.9	32.3	0.0	1.3	0.0	29.6	7.1	63.3	4.4	30.7	51.0
Home Econ.	5.2	1.3	61.9	31.0	1.3	3.9	0.6	36.1	3.9	60.0	7.1	39.4	49.0
Creative Arts	8.4	1.3	59.4	31.0	3.2	5.2	0.0	40.7	3.2	56.1	19.9	29.0	45.8
Econ. Educa.	6.5	1.9	60.0	31.6	1.3	5.2	0.0	37.4	3.9	58.7	14.8	31.0	49.0
Comm. Devel.	6.5	0.6	61.9	31.0	2.6	3.9	0.0	44.5	2.6	52.9	22.2	28.3	43.9
Human Relations	7.0	0.6	60.6	31.6	1.9	4.5	0.6	50.0	1.9	39.1	30.3	26.4	39.4
Local, State, Nat.	6.4	0.6	62.6	30.3	1.3	4.5	0.6	47.1	2.6	50.3	23.8	29.0	41.3
Trade & Tech. Ed.	4.1	1.9	62.6	30.3	1.9	1.9	1.3	42.0	3.2	54.8	13.6	36.1	44.5
Rec. Educa.	3.1	1.3	64.5	31.0	0.6	1.9	0.6	40.6	3.2	56.2	17.5	31.0	46.5
Science Educa.	5.1	1.3	61.9	31.0	0.6	4.5	0.0	37.4	2.6	60.0	9.6	37.5	42.7
CEW	7.8	0.6	61.3	30.3	3.9	3.9	0.0	39.3	2.6	58.1	11.7	36.1	47.1
Aging	5.2	1.3	63.9	29.7	2.6	2.6	0.0	40.6	2.6	56.8	7.7	40.7	45.8

TABLE 25

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS

Program Areas	Alumni Perceptions															
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response	Would/Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Medicine	0.0	4.5	68.8	26.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.8	11.0	68.2	5.1	36.2	55.2			
Vet. Med.	0.0	4.5	70.1	25.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.8	9.1	70.1	4.4	37.0	55.8			
Hosp. Admin.	0.6	2.6	72.1	24.7	0.0	0.6	0.0	24.7	7.1	68.2	5.1	36.3	55.2			
Bus. Admin.	9.0	1.3	64.9	24.7	3.9	4.5	0.6	33.8	5.8	60.4	16.9	27.2	50.0			
Music	1.9	1.9	71.4	24.7	0.0	1.9	0.0	36.4	3.9	59.7	12.3	31.7	50.0			
Arch.	0.6	3.2	70.8	25.3	0.0	0.6	0.0	36.0	7.8	66.2	5.8	37.0	54.5			
Dentistry	0.0	3.9	70.8	25.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.9	12.3	68.8	13.6	38.9	54.5			
Public Health	1.3	1.9	72.1	24.7	1.3	0.0	0.0	33.2	4.5	62.3	12.3	31.1	51.3			
Education	11.0	1.3	63.6	24.0	3.9	6.5	0.6	40.3	3.2	56.5	25.3	23.3	47.4			
Social Work	3.8	1.9	69.5	24.0	1.9	1.9	0.0	34.8	5.8	59.4	16.8	28.5	49.4			
Liberal Arts	5.8	1.3	68.2	24.7	2.6	3.2	0.0	40.8	3.9	55.3	12.9	29.8	53.9			
Engineering	2.5	3.2	70.1	24.0	0.6	1.3	0.6	37.3	7.8	64.9	7.1	36.9	52.6			
Agriculture	0.6	2.6	72.1	24.7	0.6	0.0	0.0	27.3	6.5	66.2	5.1	37.0	54.5			
Pub. Admin.	1.9	1.9	71.4	24.7	0.0	1.9	0.0	28.6	7.1	64.3	7.7	34.1	52.6			
Pharmacy	0.6	3.2	71.4	24.7	0.0	0.6	0.0	19.9	10.4	69.7	5.1	36.3	55.8			
Law	0.6	3.2	71.4	24.7	0.0	1.9	0.0	26.0	9.7	64.3	11.5	33.7	51.3			
Lib. Science	1.9	1.9	71.4	24.7	0.0	0.6	0.0	28.0	7.1	64.9	7.1	35.7	53.2			
Nat. Resources	1.9	1.9	71.4	24.7	1.3	1.3	0.0	37.1	3.2	59.7	13.5	33.7	48.7			
Nursing	1.3	1.7	72.1	24.7	0.0	0.6	0.0	28.6	6.5	64.9	2.5	38.9	53.2			
Home Econ.	1.2	2.6	71.4	24.7	0.0	1.9	0.6	34.5	3.9	61.6	7.6	35.7	50.6			
Creative Arts	3.2	0.6	70.8	24.7	1.3	1.9	0.0	43.5	2.6	53.9	17.1	31.8	42.9			
Econ. Educa.	2.5	1.3	71.4	24.7	0.6	1.9	0.0	36.4	3.2	60.4	12.2	33.7	48.7			
Comm. Devel.	1.2	1.3	71.4	26.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	40.3	2.6	57.1	14.8	31.1	47.4			
Human Relations	3.2	1.3	70.8	24.7	0.0	2.6	0.6	46.2	1.9	51.9	25.2	25.2	42.2			
Local, State, Nat.	3.9	1.3	70.1	24.7	0.0	2.6	1.3	42.9	1.9	55.2	20.7	28.1	46.1			
Trade & Tech. Ed.	3.2	0.6	71.4	24.7	0.6	1.3	1.3	39.6	2.6	57.8	11.7	33.8	48.7			
Rec. Educa.	1.9	2.6	70.8	24.7	0.0	1.9	0.0	44.2	1.9	53.9	23.3	25.9	44.8			
Science Educa.	3.8	1.3	70.1	24.7	0.6	3.2	0.0	33.2	4.5	62.3	8.3	34.9	52.6			
CEW	2.6	1.9	70.1	25.3	1.3	1.3	0.0	39.7	1.9	58.4	8.5	35.6	48.7			
Aging	0.6	1.3	72.1	26.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	44.2	1.9	53.9	11.0	36.2	44.2			

and business administration were most often mentioned as being offered. These two program areas were also perceived as most successful by Western Michigan graduates.

Human relations was suggested most often by Western Michigan alumni as the program area that should be offered with 46.2 percent responding. Following in order of frequency of response were aging, creative arts, local, state, national, and international affairs, education, and community development.

Education, 25.3 percent, and human relations, 25.2 percent, were the two program areas most often mentioned in response to the question concerning participation. Recreation education and local, state, national, and international affairs followed in that order.

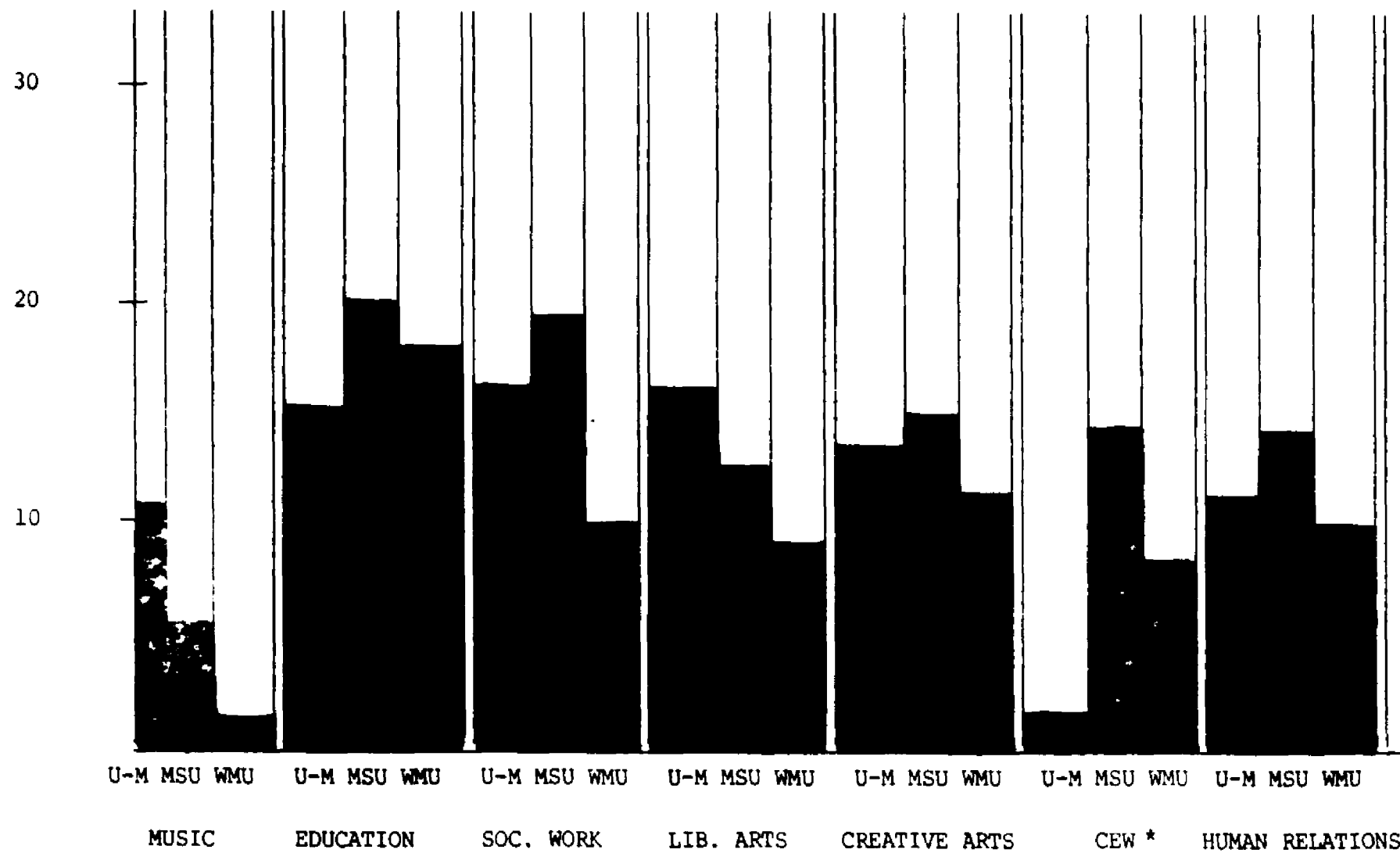
The following four tables are presented to provide the reader with a comparative analysis of alumni responses by institution of selected non-credit program areas. Table 26 illustrates respondent perceptions of non-credit programs being offered by the Center.

Responses were considerably fewer than for credit programs. Western Michigan graduates responded "don't know" more frequently than either Michigan State or the University of Michigan graduates. University of Michigan alumni indicated music and liberal arts as being offered more frequently than Michigan State or Western Michigan. Michigan State graduates mentioned education, social work, creative arts, continuing education for women and human relations more often than the others. Both Western Michigan and the University of Michigan respondents gave low response frequencies to continuing education for women.

TABLE 26

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS BEING OFFERED

Number
of
Alumni



* Continuing Education for Women.

Responses shown in Table 27 are related to alumni perceptions concerning the success of non-credit programs. Alumni generally responded poorly to the question of success. Michigan State and Western Michigan alumni gave a fair response more frequently to education programs than University of Michigan graduates, and also had a larger number of responses to the question. The University of Michigan alumni responses for social work show more excellent responses than from the other two institutions. Responses for creative arts were quite similar to the responses for social work, both in terms of numbers of responses and rank-order by institution. The University of Michigan alumni were more favorable toward liberal arts in comparison to Michigan State and Western Michigan graduates.

The findings shown in Table 28 relate to "what programs should be offered" and show several differences between Western Michigan alumni and those from Michigan State and the University of Michigan. The alumni of all three institutions selected human relations most frequently as the non-credit program area that should be offered. Western Michigan and the University of Michigan graduates chose aging as the second largest category; however, Michigan State alumni selected trade and technical education in the second position. The University of Michigan alumni responses for the same category were less than half of Michigan State responses.

Similarities in proportion and rank-order among institutions are noted for economic education, trade and technical education, liberal arts, human relations and natural resources. The same number of Western Michigan and Michigan State alumni selected education as a non-credit program that should be offered; however, more Western Michigan graduates

TABLE 27

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED NON-
CREDIT PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS BEING SUCCESSFUL

Number
Of
Alumni

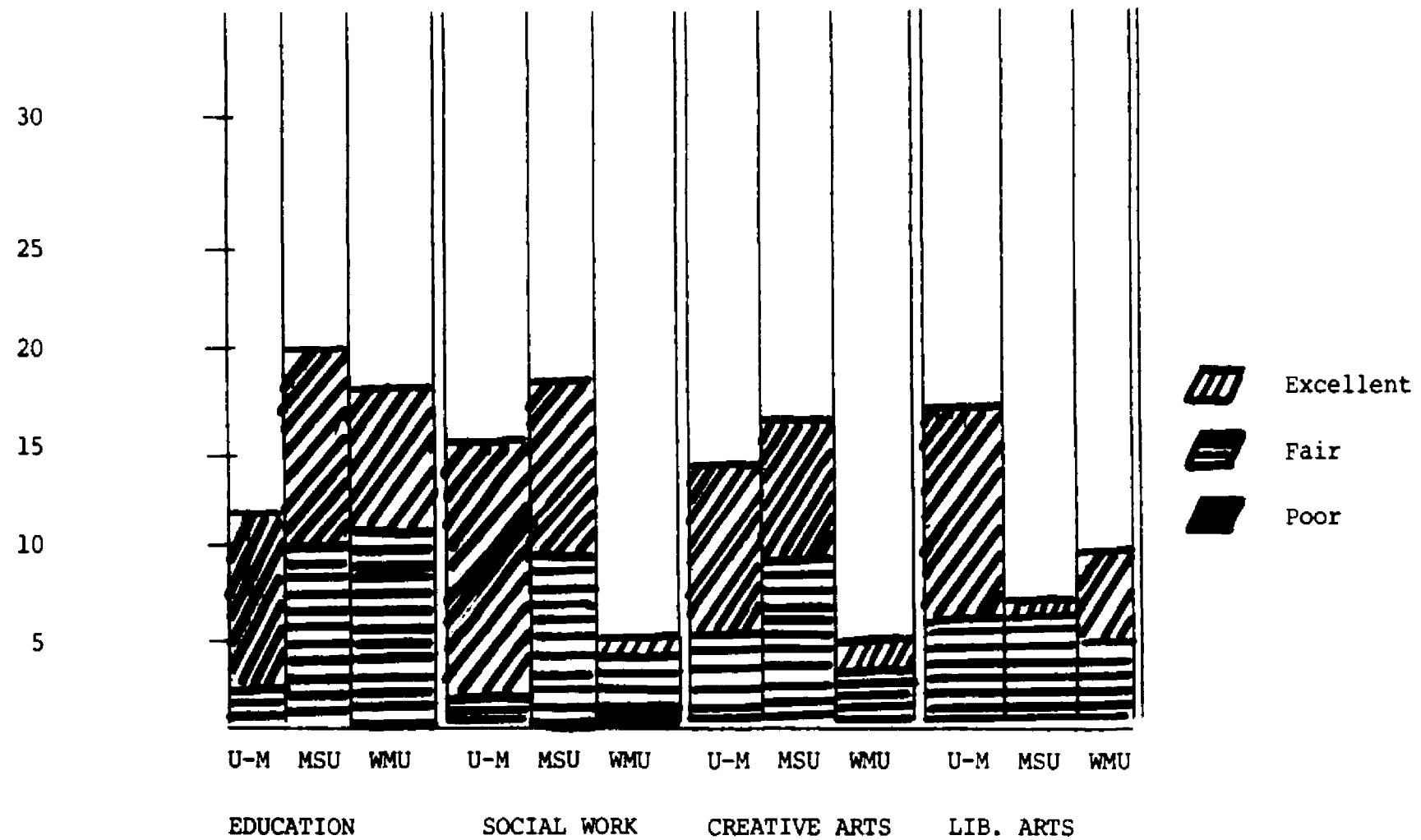
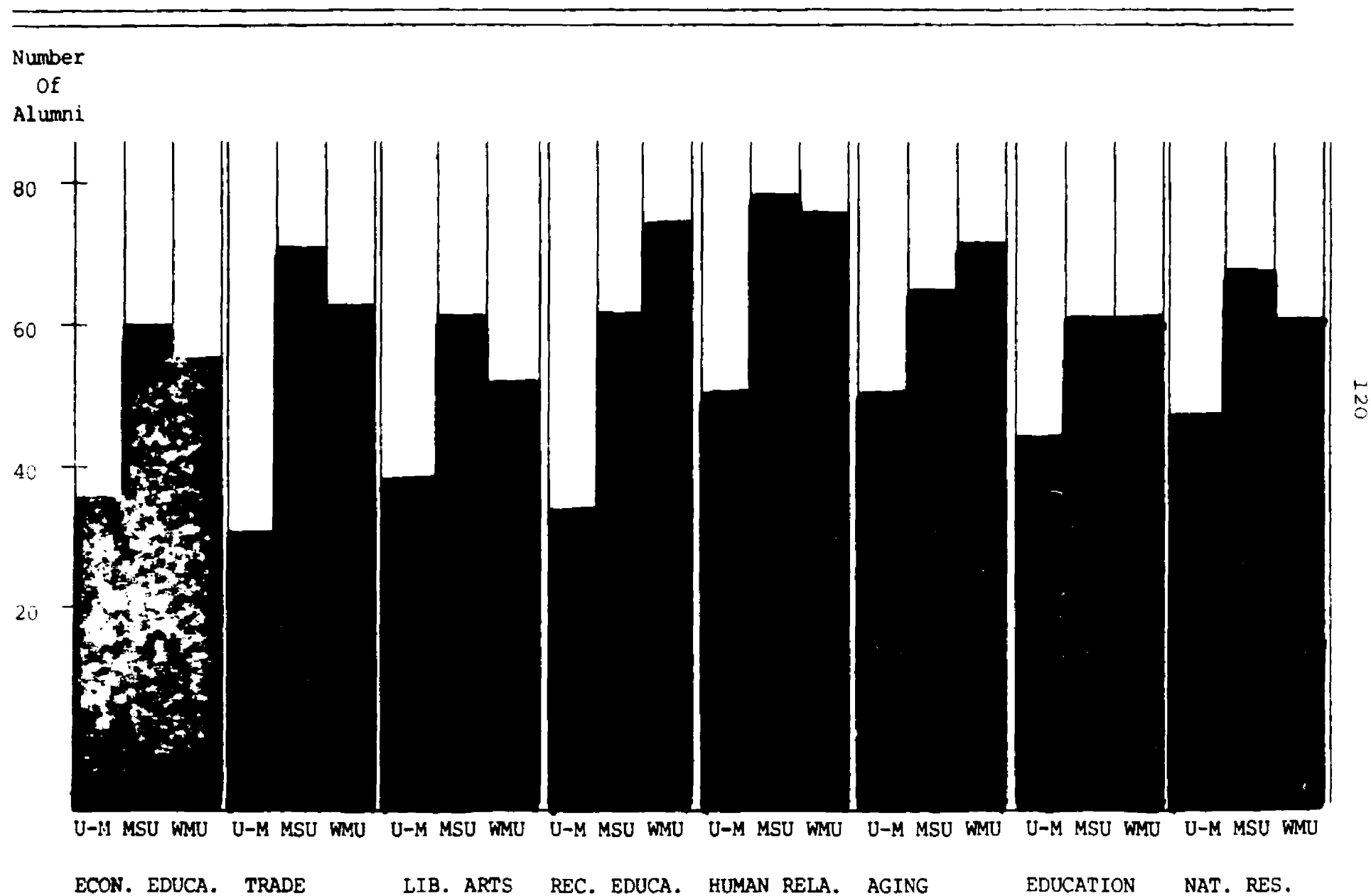


TABLE 28
COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED NON-CREDIT
PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS SHOULD BE OFFERED



chose aging than the alumni of Michigan State and the University of Michigan.

Responses pertaining to program participation are shown in Table 29. The University of Michigan graduates were less willing to participate in all program areas as compared to alumni from Michigan State and Western Michigan. Community development, human relations and natural resources were similar in both proportion and rank-order for all three universities. However, Western Michigan graduates selected education and social work more frequently than Michigan State and the University of Michigan alumni. The same number of respondents from Michigan State and Western Michigan mentioned recreation education.

Alumni Perceptions of Related Activities

Respondents were also asked to indicate their perceptions of related activities as performed by the Center. The results appear to show a better overall understanding by alumni of the Center's functions in these activities than in the academic credit and non-credit program areas. Several exceptions are noted in the program areas of education, social work, and liberal arts which constitute the major emphasis of the Center programming. Table 30 shows that the alumni of all three universities mentioned admission and counseling, and information services, most frequently as being offered by the Center followed by conferences.

In terms of the success of the related activities, the same three classifications were most frequently rated excellent and fair.

The responses to the question of "what should be offered" by all alumni were all close to the 50 percent level. Most often suggested were

TABLE 29
COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED NON-CREDIT
PROGRAMS ALUMNI PERCEIVE THEY WOULD PARTICIPATE IN

Number
Of
Alumni

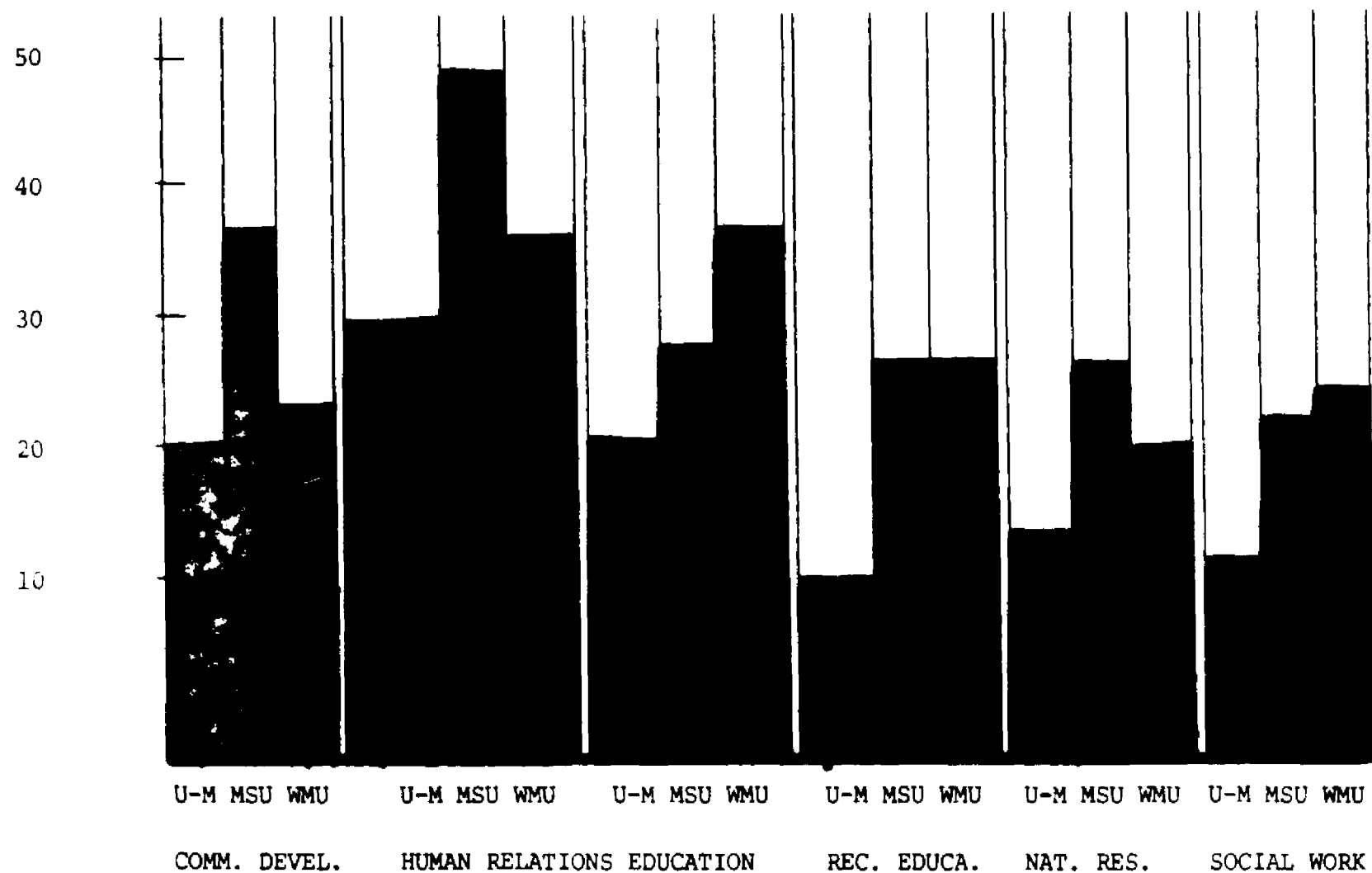


TABLE 30

TOTAL ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF RELATED ACTIVITIES

Related Activities	Alumni Perceptions												
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Admissions & Counseling	32.9	0.2	45.0	21.9	13.7	15.8	3.4	51.0	0.9	48.1	33.3	21.4	37.7
Consultive Servs.	11.6	1.6	60.3	26.5	3.4	7.3	0.9	47.9	0.9	51.1	29.0	27.1	40.6
Information Servs.	27.6	0.5	47.5	24.4	12.8	12.1	2.7	49.1	0.9	50.0	31.7	25.3	40.0
T.V. & Radio	8.9	5.5	60.3	25.3	4.3	3.0	1.6	45.5	3.0	44.1	26.9	26.7	43.6
Conferences	20.6	1.1	53.7	24.7	10.5	9.6	0.5	46.2	0.7	43.1	46.3	17.2	34.2
Independent Study	10.0	3.4	61.6	26.9	4.1	3.0	0.9	49.7	1.6	48.7	34.0	24.2	39.3
Tele-lectures	4.2	4.1	64.6	27.2	1.4	2.1	0.7	43.6	3.2	53.2	29.3	26.0	43.2
Lectures	11.8	1.6	59.6	26.9	4.8	6.8	0.2	48.4	0.9	50.7	36.6	19.2	41.6
Concerts	6.8	5.0	60.7	27.2	3.9	2.5	0.7	44.3	2.1	53.6	31.6	21.7	43.8
Films	5.7	3.7	62.6	28.1	3.0	2.5	0.2	46.1	1.1	53.6	32.8	20.7	43.8

admission and counseling, 51.0 percent, followed by independent study, information services, and lectures. Possible participation by all alumni combined shows conferences, lectures and independent study, in that order.

Table 31 illustrates the responses by University of Michigan alumni in reference to their perceptions of Center-related activities.

Those activities mentioned most often by the University of Michigan graduates as being offered were admissions and counseling, information services and conferences. In terms of success the same three areas were selected. For the related activities that "should be offered," these three were again chosen, joined by lectures.

Participation in conferences was selected by 42.6 percent of the alumni as the related activity they would most likely participate in. Less frequently mentioned in rank order were concerts, films and tele-lectures.

Table 32 shows the Michigan State responses in reference to related activities. The related activities perceived most often as "being offered" were admission and counseling, information services and conferences.

The same three activities were selected by 12.9 percent of the respondents as being excellent. After these three related activities, there is a sharp drop in response. In addition, each of the aforementioned activities were rated fair more frequently than any of the others.

Conferences were perceived by 57.4 percent of the respondents as an activity that "should be offered," followed by films, admission and counseling, independent study and consulting services.

Michigan State alumni responded to the question of participation with 48.4 percent indicating conferences as the related activity they would attend. Lectures were next followed by independent study.

TABLE 31

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF RELATED ACTIVITIES

Alumni Perceptions Related Activities	Offered				Excellent			Fair			Poor			Should/ Might Be Offered			Should Not Be Offered			No Response			Would/ Might Part.			Would Not Part.			No Response		
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/ Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/ Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response																		
Admissions & Counseling	30.2	0.8	49.6	19.4	14.7	13.2	2.3	48.8	1.6	49.6	28.7	39.5	31.8																		
Consultative Servs.	11.6	2.3	60.5	25.6	5.4	4.7	1.6	45.7	0.8	53.5	23.4	41.7	34.9																		
Information Servs.	26.3	0.8	51.2	21.7	16.3	6.2	3.9	48.1	0.8	51.1	28.0	38.7	33.3																		
T.V. & Radio	10.8	4.7	61.2	23.3	7.8	2.3	0.8	41.8	3.1	55.1	31.1	33.2	35.7																		
Conferences	17.9	2.3	55.8	24.0	12.4	4.7	0.8	51.9	0.8	47.3	42.6	27.2	30.2																		
Independent Study	10.9	5.4	59.7	24.0	7.0	3.1	0.8	44.1	1.6	54.3	31.1	33.2	35.7																		
Tele-lectures	3.9	6.2	65.1	24.8	3.1	0.8	0.0	44.1	3.9	52.0	33.3	34.1	32.6																		
Lectures	13.2	2.3	60.5	24.0	9.3	3.9	0.0	49.6	0.8	49.6	31.4	36.8	31.8																		
Concerts	8.5	5.4	60.5	25.6	7.8	0.8	0.0	45.0	2.3	52.7	34.9	30.2	34.9																		
Films	7.0	5.4	61.2	26.4	4.7	2.3	0.0	42.6	0.8	56.6	34.2	28.6	37.2																		

TABLE 32

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF RELATED ACTIVITIES

Alumni Perceptions Related Activities	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/ Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/ Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Admissions & Counseling	34.8	0.0	43.9	21.3	12.9	18.7	3.2	52.3	1.3	46.4	38.0	22.9	37.4
Consultive Servs.	12.3	1.3	61.3	25.2	1.3	9.7	1.3	49.0	1.3	49.7	34.2	23.3	41.3
Information Servs.	27.7	0.0	46.5	25.8	12.9	12.9	1.9	47.7	1.3	51.0	34.8	21.9	42.6
T.V. & Radio	6.8	7.1	60.0	24.5	3.2	3.2	1.9	43.9	3.2	52.9	28.3	26.4	45.2
Conferences	24.5	0.6	51.6	23.2	12.9	11.6	0.0	57.4	1.3	41.3	48.4	14.9	34.8
Independent Study	7.7	1.9	63.2	27.1	3.2	3.9	0.6	52.2	2.6	45.2	36.1	23.9	38.7
Tele-lectures	5.1	3.9	65.2	25.8	0.6	3.9	0.6	46.5	3.2	50.3	30.9	23.8	44.5
Lectures	12.9	1.3	59.4	26.5	3.2	9.7	0.0	47.8	1.9	50.3	36.7	16.8	44.5
Concerts	5.7	7.1	60.6	26.5	1.9	3.2	0.6	43.8	2.6	53.6	32.9	19.4	47.1
Films	4.5	4.5	63.9	27.1	3.2	1.3	0.0	55.2	1.3	43.5	32.8	18.7	47.7

Related activities as indicated by Western Michigan alumni are shown in Table 33. Again admissions and counseling, information services, and conferences, were the activities most often selected.

The same three areas were most often selected in terms of success, should be offered and participation. Independent study and lectures were also frequently mentioned.

Tables 34 - 37 are presented to show response differences by institution of alumni perceptions for selected related activities.

Table 34 shows selected activities alumni perceive "to be offered" by the Center. Admissions and counseling, followed by conferences were the activities most frequently mentioned by Michigan State, Western Michigan and the University of Michigan alumni. The proportional differences between the three universities are quite similar. The University of Michigan graduates mentioned independent study more often than the other alumni, while Michigan State alumni indicated lectures more frequently than Western Michigan or the University of Michigan graduates. The success of related activities as perceived by alumni is reported in Table 35. Some interesting differences emerge in several of the activities; for example, more of the University of Michigan alumni perceived information services as "poor" than any of the other activities rated. Michigan State graduates divided their rating of the same category equally between "fair" and "excellent." Western Michigan alumni, on the other hand, had a greater number of persons indicating information services were "fair," rather than "excellent."

The University of Michigan graduates gave an "excellent" rating more frequently to lectures than the alumni from Michigan State and

TABLE 33

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS OF RELATED ACTIVITIES

Alumni Perceptions Related Activities													
	Offered	Not Offered	Don't Know	No Response	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Should/ Might Be Offered	Should Not Be Offered	No Response	Would/ Might Part.	Would Not Part.	No Response
Admissions & Counseling	34.1	0.0	41.2	24.7	13.6	14.9	4.5	51.3	0.0	48.7	32.4	17.4	42.9
Consultive Servs.	11.0	1.3	59.1	28.6	3.9	7.1	0.0	48.8	0.6	50.6	28.5	18.7	44.8
Information Servs.	28.5	0.6	45.5	25.5	9.7	16.2	2.6	51.3	0.6	48.1	31.8	17.5	42.9
T.V. & Radio	7.7	4.5	59.9	27.9	2.6	3.2	1.9	42.9	2.6	54.5	22.0	21.3	48.7
Conferences	18.9	0.6	53.9	26.6	6.5	11.7	0.6	58.5	0.0	41.5	47.3	10.9	37.0
Independent Study	5.8	3.3	61.7	29.2	2.6	1.9	1.3	52.0	0.6	47.4	34.4	16.7	42.9
Tele-lectures	3.3	2.6	63.6	30.5	0.6	1.3	1.3	40.3	2.6	57.1	23.9	21.4	50.6
Lectures	9.7	1.3	59.1	29.9	2.6	6.5	0.6	48.0	0.0	52.0	33.0	14.3	46.8
Concerts	7.2	2.6	61.0	29.2	2.6	3.2	1.3	44.1	1.3	54.6	27.2	16.9	48.1
Films	3.9	1.3	62.3	30.5	1.3	3.9	0.6	47.4	1.3	51.3	31.7	16.2	45.5

TABLE 34

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
RELATED ACTIVITIES ALUMNI PERCEIVE "AS BEING OFFERED"

Number
Of
Alumni

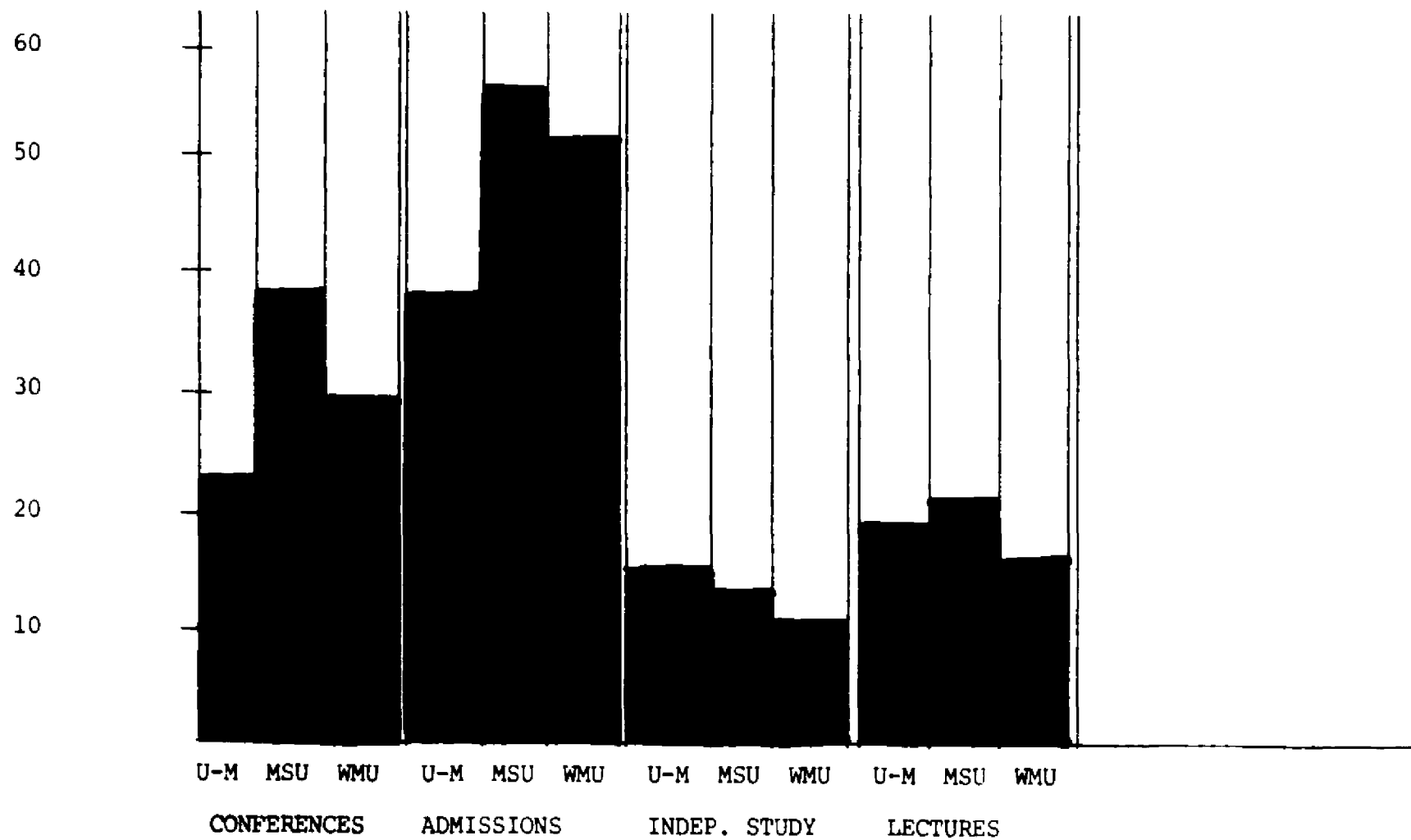
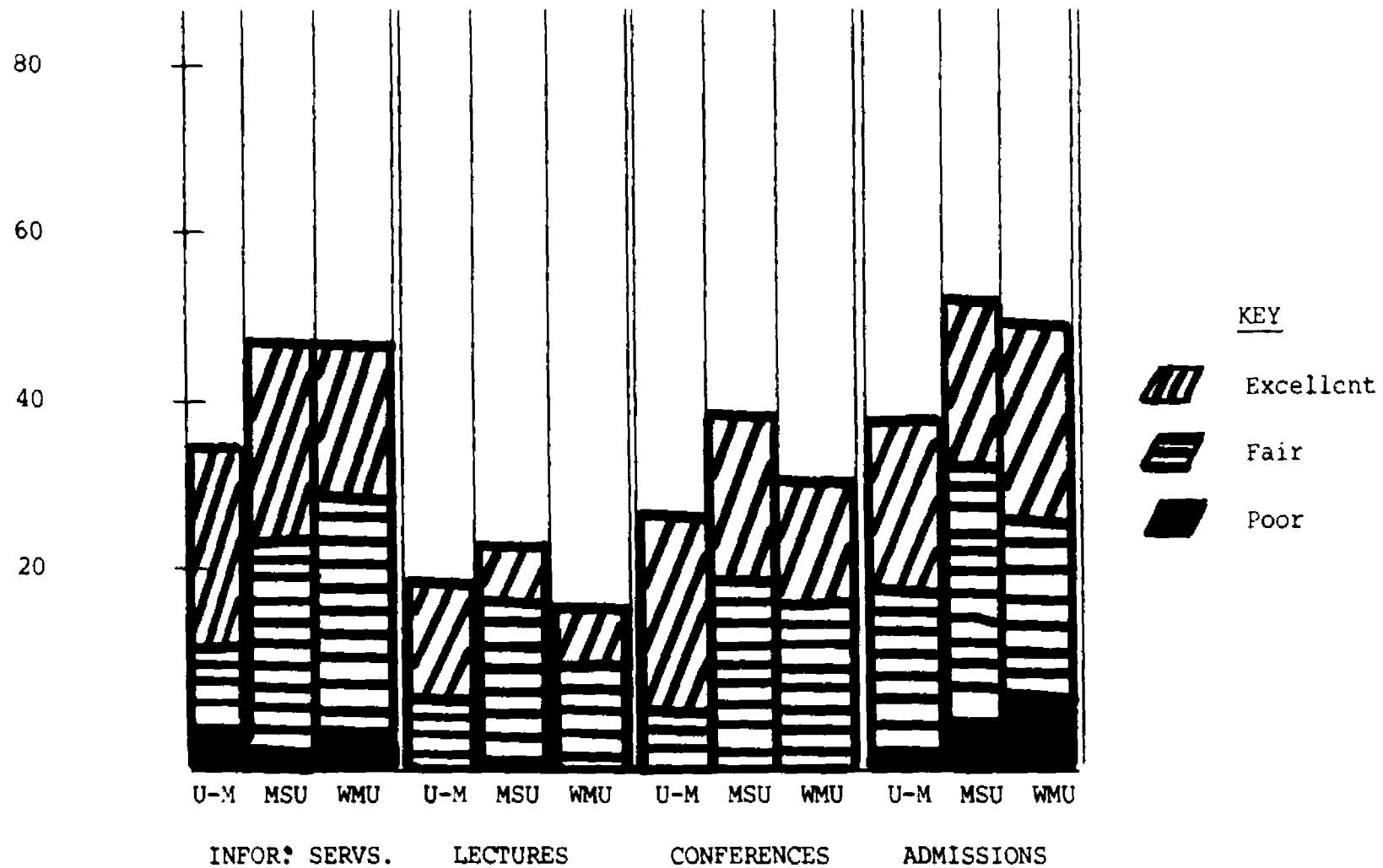


TABLE 35

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTIONS OF SELECTED
RELATED ACTIVITIES ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS BEING "SUCCESSFUL"

Number
of
Alumni



Western Michigan. A "fair" rating is more often suggested for lectures by the alumni from these two institutions.

Michigan State graduates divided their responses for conferences evenly between "excellent and fair;" the University of Michigan alumni had more "excellent" responses for this same category than "fair" responses, whereas Western Michigan graduates responses were reversed.

Admissions and counseling had the largest number of "poor" ratings, mainly from Michigan State and Western Michigan graduates. All three alumni groups rated admissions and counseling as "excellent" and "fair" in approximately the same proportions.

Table 36 presents a comparative analysis of alumni perceptions, by institution, of selected related activities "that should be offered" by the Center.

The findings show an interesting response pattern for all three universities. The alumni from Michigan State and Western Michigan had almost identical response frequencies for all of the four activities illustrated. Also, the University of Michigan graduates responses were proportionally fewer in number than Michigan State and Western Michigan responses for each activity. Conferences were mentioned most often by all three alumni groups as an activity that "should be offered," followed by admissions and counseling, independent study and lectures.

Comparative alumni responses by institution of selected related activities in reference to participation are illustrated in Table 37.

Conferences were the activity most alumni indicated they would be likely to participate in. Michigan State graduates had the highest frequency in this category, followed closely by Western Michigan alumni

TABLE 36
COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
RELATED ACTIVITIES ALUMNI PERCEIVE AS "SHOULD BE OFFERED"

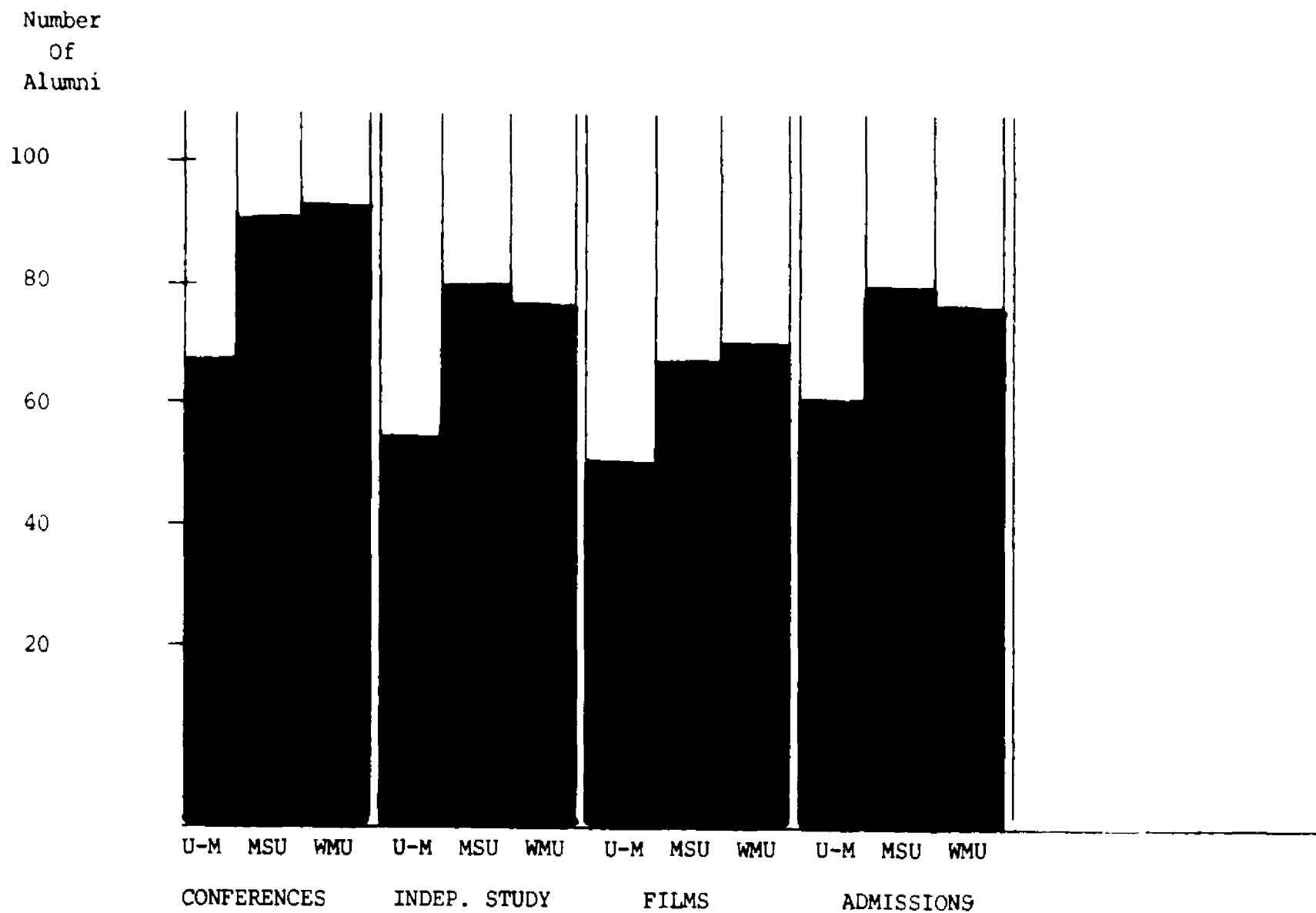
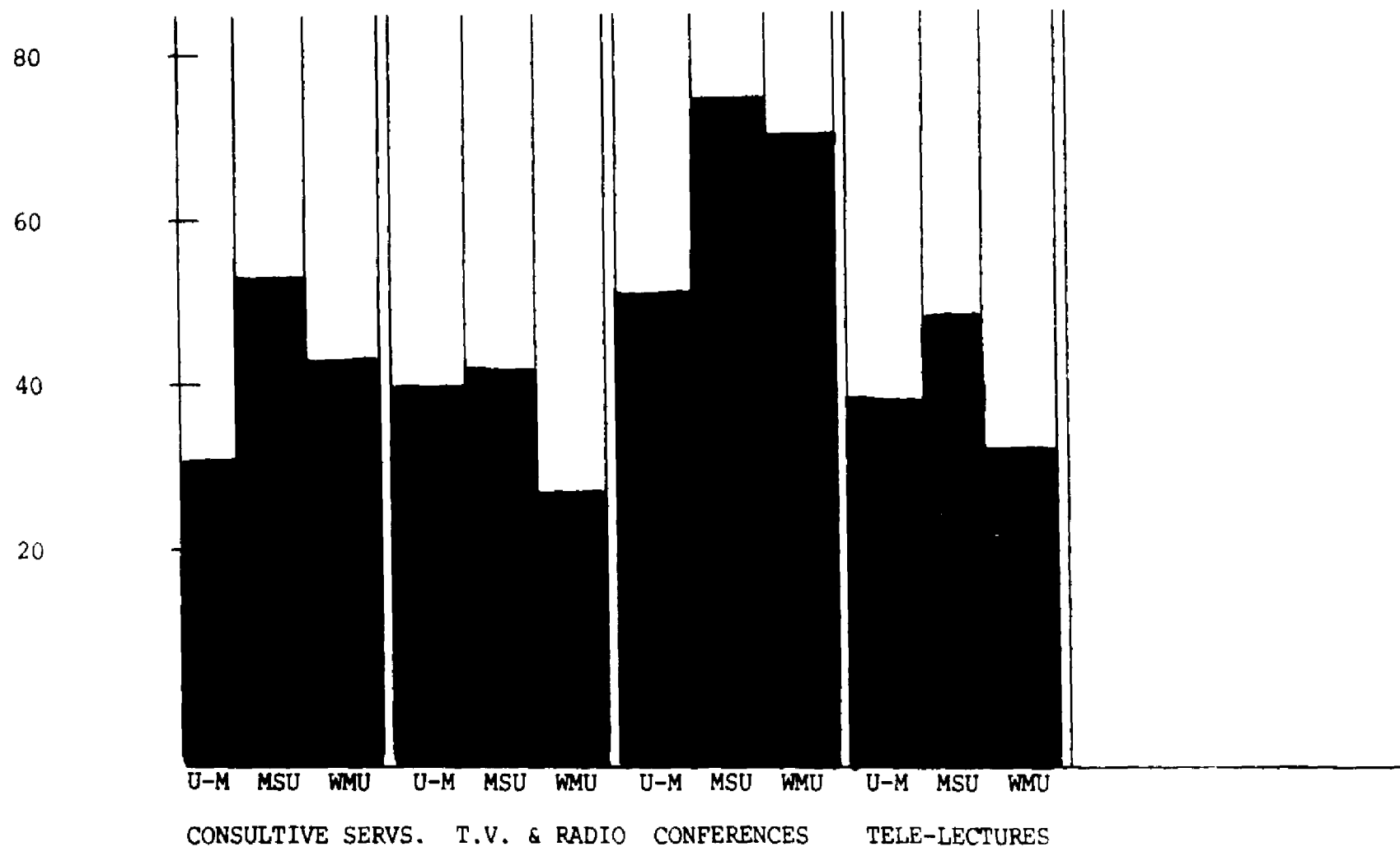


TABLE 37

COMPARATIVE RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION OF SELECTED
RELATED ACTIVITIES ALUMNI PERCEIVE "THEY WOULD PARTICIPATE IN"

Number
Of
Alumni



and the University of Michigan graduates. The University of Michigan alumni indicated they would participate in T.V. and radio activities and tele-lectures more than they would participate in consultative services to the community. However, Michigan State and Western Michigan alumni selected consultative services more frequently than T.V. and radio activities and tele-lectures. The Michigan State alumni gave a greater indication of their participation in Center activities than Western Michigan graduates, who in turn responded with greater frequency than the University of Michigan alumni.

Statistical Analysis of Data

Based on the assumption that factors exist which relate to how college alumni perceive the continuing education activities of a regional center, sixteen questions were formulated for investigation and tested in terms of the descriptive data obtained from each respondent. The general factors studied were experience and need.

A chi-square test of significance was used for the questions concerning alumni perceptions of what the Center is doing in relation to college experience, Center participation, educational needs and demographic factors. Tables 38 - 41, referring to the first four questions, show the results for the total alumni only. None of the factors tested were significant when measured by institution.

Questions five through sixteen were tested using a step-wise regression analysis to determine which predictors, if any, were significant factors in alumni perceptions of the regional center. In each discussion, a related variable is one which adds .5 percent to the predicted variance.

This relationship is considered significant at the .05 level in the regression equation when the value of the F test applied is greater than 3.84 (DF = 1,438). Tables 42 - 53 are presented to show the independent variables that were significant factors in alumni perceptions of Center program areas.

Question 1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and college experience?

College experience was measured by institution attended, educational level, education major and recency of degree.

An analysis of the data in Table 38 indicates the only significant relationship was recency of degree as related to the total alumni perceptions of non-credit programs.

Question 2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and Center participation?

Factors used as measures to test the question were Center participation, number of experiences, recency of experiences, and types of experiences including credit programs, non-credit programs, conferences, lectures, counseling and information services.

As shown in Table 39, there appears to be a significant relationship between Center participation across all respondents for all program areas. In addition, conferences as a specific type of experience was significantly related to credit programs and related activities.

Question 3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

TABLE 38

WHAT THE CENTER IS DOING - COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

	Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency of Degree	Major Field
Total Alumni	Credit					
	Non-Credit				35.33 DF = 15	
	Related Activities					
	Total Program					

TABLE 39

WHAT THE CENTER IS DOING - CENTER PARTICIPATION

	Factors Programs	Center Part.	No. of Exp's.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Experience
				Credit	Non- Credit	Confs.	Lectures	Counseling	Info. Servs.	
Total Alumni	Credit	39.38 DF = 8				11.00 DF=4				
	Non-Credit	59.66 DF = 10								
	Related Activities	12.5 DF=6				9.48 DF=3				
	Total Program	20.41 DF=10								

Educational needs tested for significance were further credit, counseling, home and family living, professional growth, liberal education, cultural experiences and social, political and economic issues.

Table 40 shows that counseling emerged as a significant factor in relation to credit programs for the total alumni. This is the only significant factor related to the question.

Question 4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and general demographic factors?

Demographic factors used in testing for significance were age, sex, marital status, income level, and occupation or profession.

As shown in Table 41, only marital status was a significant factor and only in reference to related activities.

Question 5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and college experience?

The question was tested against the following factors: institution attended, educational level, educational major, and recency of degree. Table 42 shows the factors tested for the total alumni and by institution, with alumni perceptions of success for all program areas of the Center. Significant factors that appeared in the total alumni responses were a degree from Western Michigan in perceiving non-credit programs, and a degree from Michigan State in perceiving related activities. When the University of Michigan alumni perceptions are analyzed separately, a degree from the University of Michigan is the only significant factor. Recency of degree was a significant factor for Michigan State alumni in relation to credit programs. Both non-credit programs and the sum of all activities were influenced by a degree from Michigan State at a

TABLE 40

WHAT THE CENTER IS DOING - EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Total Alumni	Factors Programs	Credit	Counseling	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social, Political Economic Issues
	Credit		10.16 DP=4					
	Non-Credit							
	Related Activities							
	Total Program							

TABLE 41

WHAT THE CENTER IS DOING - DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

	Factors Programs	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupation or Profession
Total Alumni	Credit					
	Non-Credit					
	Related Activities			24.0 DF=9		
	Total Program					

TABLE 42

PROGRAM SUCCESS - COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

TOTAL ALUMNI						MSU ALUMNI					
Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency of Degree	Major Field	Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency of Degree	Major Field
Credit				*		Credit	*		*	X	
Non-Credit			X			Non-Credit	X				
Related Activities	X					Related Activities		*	*	*	
Sum of all Programs						Sum of all Programs	X	*		*	*
U-M ALUMNI						WMU ALUMNI					
Credit		*		*		Credit			*		*
Non-Credit	*		*	*		Non-Credit					
Related Activities	*	*				Related Activities					*
Sum of all Programs		X				Sum of all Programs					*

NOTE: X-indicates F 3.84

*-related factor

significant level.

The findings show several factors related to Western Michigan alumni perceptions, but none were significant.

Question 6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well alumni think the Center is doing and Center participation?

Factors used to test the question were: Center participation, number of experiences, recency of experiences, and types of experience including credit, non-credit, conferences, lectures, and counseling.

The data as revealed in Table 43 shows that Center participation was a significant factor in total alumni perceptions as well as on an institutional basis for all program areas with one exception. The exception occurred in Western Michigan alumni perceptions of non-credit programs where Center participation was a related factor, but not significant.

The number of experiences alumni had with the Center was significant for Western Michigan alumni perceptions of non-credit programs and the sum of all program areas.

When recency of experience is considered, several interesting differences among respondents appear. For example, when all alumni are grouped, recency of experience is a significant factor in their perceptions of all program areas; however, when the same variable is measured for the University of Michigan alumni only, it does not appear as a significant factor.

For Michigan State graduates, recency of experience emerges as a factor in the perception of credit programs and the sum of all programs. However, for Western Michigan alumni, the recency of their experiences is

TABLE 43

PROGRAM SUCCESS - CENTER PARTICIPATION

TOTAL ALUMNI										MSU ALUMNI									
Factors Programs	Center Part.	No. of Exp's.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Exp.	Factors Programs	Center Part.	No. of Exp's.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Exp.
			Credit	Non- Credit	Confs.	Lecture	Counsel- ing	Informa- tion					Credit	Non- Credit	Confs.	Lecture	Counsel- ing	Informa- tion	
Credit	X								X	Credit	X						*		X
Non-Credit	X				*	*	*		X	Non-Credit	X	*			X	X	X		
Related Activities	X							X	X	Related Activities	X		X	*	*	*		*	
Sum of all Programs	X								X	Sum of all Programs	X								X
U-M ALUMNI										WMU ALUMNI									
Credit	X		X	*					*	Credit	X	*		*			*		X
Non-Credit	X		X	X	*			*		Non-Credit	X	X			X	*			X
Related Activities	X		X					X		Related Activities	X	*		*		X			X
Sum of all Programs	X		X	*		*				Sum of all Programs	X	X		*	X		*		X

NOTE: X - indicates F 、 3.84

* - related factor

significant for all programs. An analysis of the data regarding types of experiences reveal considerable differences between institutions. For the total alumni, only information services was a significant factor in perceiving the success of related activities.

Significant factors emerging in the University of Michigan responses were experience in credit courses which influenced their perception of credit programs. Experiences in both credit and non-credit programs were significant in perceiving non-credit programs. For related activities, credit courses and counseling were significant. When all programs were considered, only credit courses were significant.

Michigan State alumni had a different pattern of factors influencing their perceptions. When perceiving non-credit programs, conferences, lectures and counseling emerged as significant. Also, credit program experience affected their perceptions of related activities.

For Western Michigan alumni, conferences were a significant factor in perceiving non-credit programs. Lectures emerged as significant in viewing related activities and conferences appeared again in Western Michigan graduates perceptions of all program areas.

Question 7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

Educational needs tested for significance were further credit, counseling, home and family living, professional growth, liberal education, cultural experiences, social, political, and economic issues.

Table 44 shows perceptions of all alumni of related activities were influenced by a need for further credit, home and family living programs, and cultural experiences. Considering the sum of all programs,

TABLE 44

PROGRAM SUCCESS - EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

TOTAL ALUMNI								MSU ALUMNI							
Factors Programs	Credit	Counsel- ing	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social Political Econ. Issues	Factors Programs	Credit	Counsel- ing	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social Political Econ. Issues
Credit	X							Credit	X		*			*	
Non-Credit	X	*					*	Non-Credit	X						X
Related Activities	X		X			X		Related Activities	*		X		*	*	*
Sum of all Programs	X						X	Sum of all Programs	X		X			*	*
U-M ALUMNI								WMU ALUMNI							
Credit		*			*			Credit				*			
Non-Credit		*					*	Non-Credit	*	*	*	X	X	*	
Related Activities	*	*		*		*		Related Activities		*	*	*			*
Sum of all Programs	*	*			*		*	Sum of all Programs				*			

NOTE: X - indicates F < 3.84

* - related factor

need for further credit and social, political and economic issues were significant factors for total alumni perceptions. This latter factor appears to reflect current increased awareness and concern for societal issues. None of the educational need factors were significant in terms of University of Michigan alumni perceptions of program success.

Michigan State alumni were influenced by need for further credit in perceiving the success of credit, non-credit and the sum of all programs. Home and family living was a significant factor in their perceptions of related activities and the sum of all programs. Social, political and economic issues emerged as significant in reference to non-credit programs.

Professional growth and liberal education were significant factors for Western Michigan alumni perceptions of non-credit program success.

Question 8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well alumni think the Center is doing and general demographic factors?

Demographic factors tested were age, sex, marital status, income level, and occupation or profession.

Results of alumni perceptions of credit program success are shown in Table 45. Age and sex were significant factors when all alumni are grouped. Sex appears as the only significant factor in reference to related activities. For the perceptions of all program areas, both age and sex again appear as significant factors.

None of the general demographic factors studied were significant in the University of Michigan alumni perceptions of program success.

Michigan State alumni perceptions were influenced only by sex in reference to related activities. However, Western Michigan graduates followed the pattern of the total alumni responses except that age was

TABLE 45
PROGRAM SUCCESS - DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

TOTAL ALUMNI						MSU ALUMNI					
Factors Program	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupa. or Prof.	Factors Program	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupa. or Prof.
Credit	X	X				Credit			*		
Non-Credit		*				Non-Credit	*	*		*	
Related Activities	*	X				Related Activities		X		*	
Sum of all Programs	X	X				Sum of all Programs		*		*	
U-M ALUMNI						WMU ALUMNI					
Credit		*				Credit	X	X		*	
Non-Credit		*	*	*	*	Non-Credit					
Related Activities		*	*			Related Activities	X	*			
Sum of all Programs		*				Sum of all Programs	X	X			

NOTE: X - indicates F = 3.84
* - related factor

substituted for sex as a significant factor in perceiving related activities.

Question 9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and college experience?

Factors used to measure college experience were institution attended, educational level, educational major and recency of degree. Table 46 shows that for the total of all alumni, none of the factors tested were significant or appear to be related. When considered on an institutional basis, none of the factors measured were significant, however, many factors did emerge as related. It would appear that the random manner in which the factors studied entered into the total alumni perceptions caused them to counteract one another.

Question 10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what the alumni think the Center "should be doing" and Center related experience?

Factors considered were Center participation, number of experiences, recency of experience and types of experiences, including credit courses, non-credit courses, conferences, lectures, counseling and information services.

Table 47 shows that for all alumni, Center participation was a significant factor in perceiving credit programs, non-credit programs, and total programs. Lectures and information services were significant factors in perceiving non-credit programs only, and recency of degree influenced the total alumni group's perception of related activities.

Only conferences emerged as a significant factor in the University of Michigan alumni perceptions, occurring for both non-credit programs and in perceiving total programs.

TABLE 46

WHAT THE CENTER SHOULD BE DOING - COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

TOTAL ALUMNI						MSU ALUMNI					
Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency Degree	Major Field	Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency Degree	Major Field
Credit						Credit					
Non-Credit						Non-Credit	*	*	*		
Related Activities						Related Activities	*	*		*	*
Sum of all Programs						Sum of all Programs	*	*			
U-M ALUMNI						WMU ALUMNI					
Credit			*			Credit	*		*	*	
Non-Credit	*		*		*	Non-Credit					*
Related Activities	*			*	*	Related Activities	*	*			
Sum of all Programs			*		*	Sum of all Programs					*

NOTE: X - indicates F 3.84

* - related factor

TABLE 47

WHAT THE CENTER SHOULD BE DOING - CENTER PARTICIPATION

TOTAL ALUMNI										MSU ALUMNI									
Factors Programs	Center Part.	No. of Exp's.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Experience	Factors Programs	Center Part.	No. of Exps.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Experience
			Credit	Non- Credit	Conf.	Lecture	Counsel- ing	Informa- tion					Credit	Non- Credit	Conf.	Lecture	Counsel- ing	Informa- tion	
Credit	X									Credit	*	*							*
Non-Credit	X					X		X		Non-Credit	*	*	*						
Related Activities	*			*					X	Related Activities	*							*	
Sum of all Programs	X									Sum of all Programs	X	*				*			
U-M ALUMNI										WMU ALUMNI									
Credit				*	*	*		*		Credit	*		X			X			*
Non-Credit	*			*	X		*			Non-Credit		X		*		*	*		
Related Activities	*		*		*	*		*	*	Related Activities	*		*						
Sum of all Programs	*				X	*	*	*	*	Sum of all Programs	*	*	X	*		*			

NOTE: X - indicates F < 3.84

* - related factor

Michigan State graduates were influenced by Center participation in their perceptions of total programs only. Western Michigan alumni perceptions of credit programs show that experiences in credit programs and lectures were significant factors. The number of experiences were significant in perceiving non-credit programs and experiences in credit programs were significant in Western Michigan alumni perceptions of the total programs.

Question 11. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

Academic credit, counseling, home and family living programs, professional growth, liberal education, cultural experiences, and experiences in social, political and economic issues were the variables tested. The results are reported in Table 48.

Whereas, the need for further academic credit was significant for all alumni in their perceptions of all program areas, further credit influenced only University of Michigan and Michigan State alumni perceptions of related activities, and the sum of all programs. For Western Michigan alumni, this factor only entered into total credit and total program perceptions. Professional growth is most predominant as a significant factor entering into all perceptions of the total group, as well as on an institutional basis except for Michigan State alumni credit perceptions.

Educational need for counseling enters into the perceptions for all groups of credit programs except for Western Michigan alumni. counseling influenced the total alumni combined in their perceptions of total programs and the University of Michigan alumni in non-credit and

TABLE 48

WHAT THE CENTER SHOULD BE DOING - EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

TOTAL ALUMNI								MSU ALUMNI							
Factors Programs	Credit	Counsel- ing	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social Political Econ. Issues	Factors Programs	Credit	Counsel- ing	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social Political Econ. Issues
Credit	X	X		X				Credit	*	X	*				
Non-Credit	X		X	X			*	Non-Credit	*			X	*	*	
Related Activities	X			X				Related Activities	X		*	X		*	
Sum of all Programs	X	X	*	X		*		Sum of all Programs	X	*	*	X			
U-M ALUMNI								WMU ALUMNI							
Credit	*	X	*	X		X		Credit	X			X		*	
Non-Credit	*	X	*			X	*	Non-Credit			*	X			
Related Activities	X	*		X		*		Related Activities	*		X	X			
Sum of all Programs	X	X	*	X		X		Sum of all Programs	X		X	X			

NOTE: X - indicates F 3.84

* - related factor

total programs.

A need for home and family living programs influenced non-credit perceptions for the total group and Western Michigan alumni perceptions of related activities and total programs.

It is a striking observation that a need for cultural experiences emerges only as a significant factor for University of Michigan alumni perceptions. These being in reference to credit, non-credit and the total of all programs.

Question 12. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and general demographic factors?

Demographic factors used in testing for significance were age, sex, marital status, income level, and occupation or profession. For all alumni, as well as on an institutional basis, age was the only significant factor in reference to this question. Age occurred however as a significant factor in relation to different program areas by institution.

Age was significant for Michigan State alumni perceptions for all program areas. For Western Michigan and the total alumni, age was significant for all program areas except non-credit programs. And for the University of Michigan alumni, age was significant only where related activities were concerned. Table 49 presents the data related to question 12.

Question 13. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in programs they think the Center should be offering and college experience?

College experience was measured by a degree from Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, Western Michigan University,

TABLE 49

WHAT THE CENTER SHOULD BE DOING - DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

TOTAL ALUMNI						MSU ALUMNI					
Factors Program	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupa. or Prof.	Factors Program	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupa. or Prof.
Credit	X					Credit	X		*		
Non-Credit	*					Non-Credit	X		*		
Related Activities	X			*		Related Activities	X			*	
Sum of all Programs	X					Sum of all Programs	X		*		
U-M ALUMNI						WMU ALUMNI					
Credit	*	*				Credit	X				*
Non-Credit		*	*			Non-Credit	*	*	*		
Related Activities	X	*		*		Related Activities	X	*		*	
Sum of all Programs	*	*				Sum of all Programs	X	*	*	*	

NOTE: X - indicates $F < 3.84$

* - related factor

recency of degree and major undergraduate field.

An analysis of the data as shown in Table 50 for all alumni reveal a relationship between a degree from Michigan State and alumni perceptions of related activities, and the sum of all programs. The latter was also significantly related to recency of degree.

Interestingly, a degree from Michigan State influenced University of Michigan alumni perceptions of credit, non-credit and total programs. Both credit and the total of all programs were also influenced by recency of degree for this group.

Recency of degree was the only significant factor in relation to Michigan State alumni perceptions, occurring in reference to non-credit, related activities and total programs.

Western Michigan alumni perceptions were influenced by their undergraduate major. This factor appeared as significant in Western Michigan alumni perceptions of non-credit, related activities and total programs.

Question 14. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in programs they think the Center should be offering and Center participation?

Factors included in Center-related experience were Center participation, number of experiences, recency of experience and types of experiences including credit and non-credit courses, conferences, lectures, counseling, and information services.

As shown in Table 51, for the combined alumni, Center participation was a significant factor in perceiving credit programs and the sum of all programs. Experience in credit courses was also significant in perceiving credit programs. In addition, recency of degree was

TABLE 50
PARTICIPATION - COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

TOTAL ALUMNI						MSU ALUMNI					
Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency Degree	Major Field	Factors Programs	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Recency Degree	Major Field
Credit		*				Credit	*			*	*
Non-Credit				*		Non-Credit			*	X	
Related Activities	X					Related Activities		*		X	*
Sum of all Programs	X			X		Sum of all Programs				X	*
U-M ALUMNI						WMU ALUMNI					
Credit	X		*	X		Credit			*		
Non-Credit	X	*		*	*	Non-Credit			*		X
Related Activities	*				*	Related Activities			*		X
Sum of all Programs	X	*	*	X		Sum of all Programs			*		X

NOTE: X - indicates F. 3.84
* - related factor

TABLE 51

PARTICIPATION - CENTER PARTICIPATION

TOTAL ALUMNI										MSU ALUMNI									
Factors Programs	Center part.	No. of Exp's.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Experience	Factors Programs	Center part.	No. of Exp.	Types of Experiences						Recency of Experience
			Credit	Non- Credit	Confs.	Lecture	Counsel- ing	Informa- tion					Credit	Non- Credit	Confs.	Lecture	Counsel- ing	Informa- tion	
Credit	X		X							Credit		*	X					*	X
Non-Credit										Non-Credit	*					*			
Related Activities	*								X	Related Activities		*		*	*	*			
Sum of all Programs	X								X	Sum of all Programs					*				
U-M ALUMNI										WMU ALUMNI									
Credit	*		*			*				Credit	X	*							
Non-Credit	*							*	*	Non-Credit		*			*			*	
Related Activities					*				X	Related Activities	X							*	X
Sum of all Programs	*					*			X	Sum of all Programs	X	X	*						

NOTE: X - indicates F / 3.84

* - related factor

significant in reference to related activities and the sum of all programs. This same relationship held when University of Michigan alumni were analyzed separately.

Recency of degree was a significant factor in perceiving credit programs by Michigan State alumni, whereas it appeared significant for Western Michigan graduates only in reference to related activities. Center participation experience emerged as a significant factor for Western Michigan alumni in relation to credit programs, related activities and the sum of all programs.

Question 15. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in programs they think the Center should be offering and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

Educational needs included were need for further credit, counseling, home and family living programs, professional growth programs, liberal education programs, cultural experiences and experiences in social, political and economic issues.

Table 52 shows home and family living programs as a significant factor in the total alumni perceptions of all program areas. Cultural experiences were significant in reference to related activities.

Counseling appears as a significant factor for the University of Michigan alumni perceptions of related activities and the sum of all programs. Cultural experiences were significant for the University of Michigan alumni in reference to related activities.

Perception of related activities and the sum of all programs for Michigan State alumni are significantly related to home and family living programs and need for further academic credit. A need for home and family living programs was also significant in Western Michigan

TABLE 52
PARTICIPATION - EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

TOTAL ALUMNI								MSU ALUMNI							
Factors Programs	Credit	Counsel- ing	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social Political Econ. Issues	Factors Programs	Credit	Counsel- ing	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Liberal Educa.	Cultural Exp's.	Social Political Econ. Issues
Credit			X					Credit		*	*	*	*		*
Non-Credit			X					Non-Credit	*		*	*	*		
Related Activities	*		X			X		Related Activities	X		X	*			
Sum of all Programs			X				*	Sum of all Programs	X		X		*		
U-M ALUMNI								WMU ALUMNI							
Credit	*	*			*			Credit			X	*			*
Non-Credit		*	*		*			Non-Credit		*					
Related Activities	*	X				X	*	Related Activities			X	*			
Sum of all Programs	*	X				*		Sum of all Programs			X			*	

NOTE: X - indicates $F < 3.84$
* - related factor

alumni perceptions of credit programs, related activities and the sum of all programs.

It is an interesting observation that a need for home and family living programs were expressed by Michigan State and Western Michigan alumni only.

Question 16. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in programs they think the Center should be offering and general demographic factors?

Demographic factors included were age, sex, marital status, income level, and occupation or profession.

An analysis of the data as illustrated in Table 53 shows for all alumni, age was a significant factor in their perceptions of credit programs and related activities.

Differences are evident when these data are analyzed by institution. Age was a significant factor in the University of Michigan alumni perceptions of related activities, but for Michigan State graduates, age was significantly related to their perceptions of credit courses. Sex only correlated with non-credit programs for the University of Michigan alumni.

None of the demographic variables tested were significantly related to program perceptions by Western Michigan alumni.

TABLE 53

PARTICIPATION - DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

TOTAL ALUMNI						MSU ALUMNI					
Factors Program	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupa. or Prof.	Factors Program	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Income Level	Occupa. or Prof.
Credit	X					Credit	X	*			*
Non-Credit						Non-Credit					*
Related Activities	X					Related Activities					
Sum of all Programs	*					Sum of all Programs					*
U-M ALUMNI						WMU ALUMNI					
Credit	*			*		Credit					
Non-Credit		X				Non-Credit			*		*
Related Activities	X		*		*	Related Activities		*			
Sum of all Programs		*				Sum of all Programs					

NOTE: X - indicates F 3.84

* - related factor

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate college alumni perceptions of a continuing education regional center as related to factors influencing their perceptions--namely, experience and need.

More specifically the study:

1. Has examined the perceptions of college alumni from the three universities sponsoring the regional center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in reference to what program activities the alumni think the Center offers; how successful Center programs are; what programs college alumni think should be offered by the Center; and if college alumni would participate in such offerings.
2. Has examined the relationship between college alumni perceptions and the factors influencing their perceptions; i.e., experience and need. The specific factors influencing perception investigated in this study were college experience, Center participation, perceived educational needs and selected demographic characteristics.

Demographic factors significantly related to alumni perceptions of the regional center were the school attended, age and sex. School attended was significantly related to alumni expression of possible participation. Age was significant in alumni perceiving the success of

credit programs, what should be offered in credit programs and related activities. Sex was related to alumni perception of program success in credit programs and related activities.

College experience has a diverse relationship to alumni perceptions. Time since last degree and undergraduate major seem to influence intent to participate in regional center programs.

Center participation by alumni is the strongest factor of all variables studied influencing alumni perceptions. Recency of the experience is significant in alumni perceptions of intent to participate. Other factors appear to influence alumni perceptions, but only in a random pattern.

Perceived educational needs present a more regular pattern with academic credit home and family living and professional growth programs all having a significant relationship with alumni perceptions.

Conclusions Related To The Sixteen Operational Questions For The Study

Question 1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and college experience?

No significance relationship is evident except for time since last degree earned in relation to non-credit programs.

Question 2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and Center participation?

A significant relationship appears between Center participation and all program areas, also conferences were significantly related to credit programs and related activities.

Question 3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by the alumni?

No significant relationship exists between what alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni except a need for counseling in relation to credit programs.

Question 4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center is doing and general demographic factors?

Marital status was a significant factor in alumni perceptions of what the Center is doing in related activities.

Question 5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and college experience?

The significant factors were a degree from Michigan State in reference to related activities and a degree from Western Michigan in relation to non-credit programs.

Question 6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and Center participation?

A yes response is evidenced by the fact that Center participation and the recency of participation were significant factors for all program areas. In addition, experience with lectures influenced alumni perceptions of non-credit programs and information services correlated with perception of related activities.

Question 7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

A need for academic credit programs influenced alumni perceptions of how well the Center is doing in all program areas. In specific areas, home and family living programs and cultural experiences influenced

perceptions of related activities. A need for political, social and economic issues programs influenced non-credit programs and total program areas.

Question 8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between how well the alumni think the Center is doing and general demographic factors?

Only age and sex were significant in reference to credit programs and total programs, and sex was also significant in terms of related activities.

Question 9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and college experience?

No significance is evident.

Question 10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and Center participation?

Center participation was significant in perceiving credit and non-credit programs and related activities. Lectures and conferences were also significant in reference to non-credit programs. In addition, recency of experience was significant in perceiving related activities.

Question 11. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

A need for further academic credit and professional growth programs were significant in all program areas. Counseling was significant in perceiving non-credit and total programs, and a need for home and family living programs significantly affected alumni perception of non-credit programs.

Question 12. Is there a statistically significant relationship between what alumni think the Center should be doing and general demographic factors?

Age was the only demographic factor significant. This was true for all program areas.

Question 13. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and college experience?

A degree from Michigan State was significant in perceiving related activities and total programs. Also influencing perceptions of total programs was the time since last degree.

Question 14. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and Center participation?

Center participation was significant for perception of credit and total programs. Perceptions of credit programs were influenced by participation in credit programs, and recency of experience influenced related activities and the perceptions of total programs.

Question 15. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and educational needs as perceived by alumni?

Home and family living programs were significantly related to all perception elements. In addition, a need for cultural experiences influenced perceptions of related activities.

Question 16. Is there a statistically significant relationship between alumni participation in activities they think the Center should be doing and general demographic factors?

School attended is significant in regard to all program areas. Age is also significant in terms of credit programs and non-related activities.

General Conclusions

General conclusions that can be extracted from the study are as follows:

1. Essentially, college alumni of the three sponsoring institutions involved in this study don't know what is being offered by the regional center as evidenced by the large number of no responses and "don't know" responses.
2. For college alumni to know what is being offered by the Center, it is important that they have participated in Center programs.
3. Alumni know more about what is offered in credit than non-credit programs, and evidently know more about related activities than either credit or non-credit programs.
4. For those alumni who think they know what the Center is doing, do so on the basis of their participation at the Center and the recency of that experience.
5. To determine the perceptions college alumni have of a regional center, one must be concerned with the age of college alumni, the school they attended and their sex.
6. Western Michigan alumni had a larger number of females responding to the study than the respondents from the other two institutions. This apparently was influenced by Western Michigan's emphasis on teacher training and the large number of women in that field.
7. Center participation as an experience factor was significant because of the large number of education courses offered for teachers by the Center. This fact suggests an explanation for Western Michigan

respondents having more experience in Center programs than alumni from Michigan State or the University of Michigan.

8. A greater number of graduate degrees received at the University of Michigan might explain why Michigan alumni were more concerned with cultural programs than academic credit.
9. A greater number of undergraduate degrees received at Michigan State and Western Michigan as compared to graduate degrees from the University of Michigan might indicate the relative emphasis on undergraduate and graduate education by these institutions.
10. The median age for Michigan State and Western Michigan alumni was approximately 35 years, whereas, for the University of Michigan graduates the median age was over 40 years. This finding is also possibly influenced by the difference in emphasis on undergraduate and graduate education at the three universities.
11. Graduates from Michigan State are apparently influenced by their need for academic credit programs more than Western Michigan or the University of Michigan alumni. Whereas, graduates from the University of Michigan seem to be influenced by an expressed need for counseling and Western Michigan graduates by an expressed need for home and family living programs.
13. Since recency of Center experience was an important factor in alumni perceptions of the Center, it should be noted that Michigan State and Western Michigan alumni had more recent experience at the Center than the University of Michigan graduates. The fact that the University of Michigan initiated the Center might explain why University of Michigan alumni experiences have occurred over a longer period of time.

14. Alumni perceptions of intent to participate are related to their undergraduate major and time elapsed since last degree.
15. The pattern of participation responses by the University of Michigan were consistently lower than those of the other two institutions. Two possible reasons are suggested. One is the fewer respondents from the University of Michigan. Secondly, as was noted earlier, a greater proportion of the University of Michigan graduates are older and have a higher educational degree level therefore their interest in participation may be less than the alumni from Michigan State or Western Michigan.
16. Conferences as an activity of the Center are highly rated in terms of what is offered and the quality of the programs. Also alumni express a strong interest in participation in such an activity.
17. Admissions and counseling and information services appear consistently throughout the study as related factors to alumni perceptions. It is suggested that this occurs because of the personal interaction of these activities between the Center and the individual.
18. The influence of past Center experience and perceived educational needs on alumni perceptions of the regional center programs and activities is consistent with the theoretical basis for this study.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for the consideration of those persons responsible for regional center programs and activities.

1. The three universities sponsoring the regional center should assume a greater responsibility in meeting the continuing educational needs of alumni as determined by this study.
2. For alumni to know more about the Center and its functions, it is necessary for the Center to have more alumni participate in its programs.
3. Since admissions and counseling and information services were related factors in alumni perceptions of the Center, it is recommended these activities be utilized as major foci to implement recommendation number one.
4. There is a need for an expanded program of credit offerings in education, business administration, social work, liberal arts, and natural resources.
5. More extensive offerings of non-credit programs are recommended in the following areas: human relations; local, state, and national affairs, creative arts, aging, community development, education, continuing education for women, natural resources, and social, economic and political issues.
6. Perceived educational needs by alumni indicate greater emphasis should be placed on professional growth programs. Also consideration should be given to providing programs in home and family living for Western Michigan alumni and cultural experiences for the University of Michigan graduates.
7. In view of the popularity of conferences as a function of the regional center, it is suggested this type of short-term learning experience be expanded. Seminars, workshops and other informal types of non-credit instruction should be increased to meet the demand for advanced education not directed to the goal of a higher degree.

8. It is recommended that lectures, independent study, concerts and films be increased for the alumni of all three universities.
9. It would appear that increased cooperation and coordination between the alumni associations of the three universities and the regional center could result in increased alumni participation in Center programs.
10. Frequent communication to the alumni of the three universities involved in this study is recommended to increase alumni awareness and knowledge of the Center, its functions, and the continuing education opportunities it provides.
11. In reference to recommendation number ten, since time elapsed since last degree relates to alumni perceptions of non-credit programs, it is suggested recent graduates particularly be informed of non-credit programs conducted by the Center.
12. Since recency of Center experience was significant in alumni perceptions of intent to participate in Center programs this suggests frequent communication between the Center and recent participants is desirable.
13. For an inter-university regional center such as the one analyzed in this study, it is suggested the regional directors of the sponsoring institutions make a determination in conjunction with their respective faculty departments, which of the three universities could best provide the program areas that have been recommended for expansion.

Implications For Further Research

This study suggested a number of questions and areas in which additional research is warranted.

1. This study needs to be replicated in relation to another inter-university regional center and geographic areas.
2. A more definitive study needs to be carried out regarding relationship between universities or colleges attended, level of degrees obtained from each school and perceptions of Center-related activities.
3. This study deliberately avoided the question of accuracy of alumni perceptions. This issue should be investigated to give a more complete picture of alumni perceptions.
4. The proximity of college alumni to the regional center was not tested in this study. Since proximity to a college has been investigated by others and found to be a factor in adult education participation, this suggests perceptions formulated by college alumni of a continuing education center are possibly influenced by proximity to that center. This question should be analyzed to measure relative influence on alumni perceptions.
5. This study attempted to determine the intensity of need college alumni have for educational programs. Also, intent to participate in such programs was measured. However, the investigation did not include a correlation between these two factors. A study correlating intensity of need as expressed by respondents with degree of intended participation should be analyzed.

6. Reliable instruments to determine the perceptions of college alumni are very difficult to design. The instrument used in this study was not completely adequate for the task. There is a need for a continuing effort to develop valid and reliable instruments to measure alumni perceptions of a continuing education center.
7. Finally, further research should take into consideration the limitations of this study. These included the limited nature of the sample, the limited number of the sample, the use of a questionnaire for gathering data, and the limited number of factors related to perception used in this study.

Concluding Statement

It is important to the success of an inter-university continuing education center that the college alumni of the sponsoring institutions know what is available to them. The regional center directors and the alumni directors should be concerned with expanding information to, and participation by, those college alumni not now being reached by the Center. The continuation of alumni education is necessary for the graduates of Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan to achieve successful living and professional growth. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will be of value to the continuing education administrators who are responsible for developing and implementing programs for alumni, and for the researcher who has a desire to pursue this area of alumni perceptions further.

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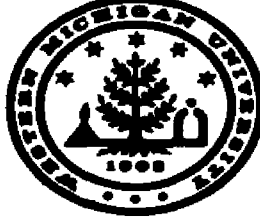
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APPENDIX A

**Questionnaire,
Accompanying Letter
and
Follow-Up Post Card**



UNIVERSITY CENTER

105 Division Avenue, North
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49502
3/70

Dear Alumnus or Alumna:

The enclosed questionnaire is concerned with the perceptions college alumni have of an Inter-University regional center and is part of a study being carried on cooperatively by Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan. As you may know, the three universities cooperate in the operation of a University Center in Grand Rapids.

The study is specifically interested in learning what you think the University Center is doing in terms of its total operation; how well you think the University Center is doing; what you think the University Center should be doing; and if you would participate in the programs you think the University Center should be offering. We are also interested in obtaining some general information about you as a graduate of one of the three universities. The results of the study should help to provide the regional directors and alumni directors of the three universities with more insight into the perceptions college alumni have of the regional center.

The success of this study is totally dependent on your cooperation. You have been selected to participate in this study on the basis of a random sample and your response is of great importance if we are to advance the knowledge of how our alumni feel about the University Center. It will require only a few minutes of your time to fill out the questionnaire. We will appreciate your completing the questionnaire and returning it to us within the next few days. A stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

We can assure you the replies will be treated confidentially. In appreciation of your participation, a summary of results will be made available to you upon request.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Regional Director

Survey Director

QHG:dg

Enclosure: Questionnaire

PART A

We are interested in learning about you as a college alumnus or alumna. The following questions are for general information. Please check the appropriate responses.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <u>Age</u></p> <p>a. 21 - 29 _____</p> <p>b. 30 - 39 _____</p> <p>c. 40 - 49 _____</p> <p>d. 50 - 59 _____</p> <p>e. 60 and over _____</p> | <p>2. <u>Sex</u></p> <p>a. Male _____</p> <p>b. Female _____</p> |
| <p>3. <u>Marital Status</u></p> <p>a. Single _____</p> <p>b. Married _____</p> <p>c. Widow or widower _____</p> <p>d. Divorced _____</p> | <p>4. <u>Income Level</u></p> <p>a. \$3,000 - \$5,999 _____</p> <p>b. \$6,000 - \$9,999 _____</p> <p>c. \$10,000 - \$14,999 _____</p> <p>d. \$15,000 - \$19,999 _____</p> <p>e. \$20,000 - \$24,999 _____</p> <p>f. \$25,000 and over _____</p> |
| <p>5. <u>Occupation or Profession</u></p> <p>a. Professional _____</p> <p>b. Manager or Proprietor _____</p> <p>c. Clerical _____</p> <p>d. Sales person _____</p> | <p>e. Housewife _____</p> <p>f. Skilled worker or foreman _____</p> <p>g. Administrative _____</p> <p>h. Other (specify) _____</p> <p>_____</p> |

The following questions refer to your college experience. Please check the appropriate response.

6. Degrees earned from the following institutions, i.e., B.A. (or B.S.), M.A. (or M.S.), Ph.D. (or Ed.D.).
- Michigan State University _____
- The University of Michigan _____
- Western Michigan University _____

- Within last five years _____
5 - 10 years _____
10 - 20 years _____
Over 20 years _____

-*

The following questions refer to your Center participation experience. Please check the appropriate response.

- a. Yes _____ No _____
 ↓ Not Sure _____

↓

- a. Credit courses _____
- b. Non-credit courses _____
- c. Conferences _____
- d. Lectures _____
- e. Counseling _____
- f. Obtained information only _____
- g. Other (specify) _____

- a. Within last year _____
b. Within last 5 years _____
c. Within last 10 years _____
e. Over 10 years ago _____

- One _____
- Two _____
- Three or more _____
- Five or more _____

The following question refers to the educational needs you have that might possibly be provided for by University Center. Please check the item (s) which are most indicative of your educational needs.

13.

	I definitely need	I probably need	I definitely do not need
a. Further academic credit			
b. Counseling _____			
c. Home & Family living programs _____			
d. Professional growth programs _____			
e. Liberal education programs _____			
f. Cultural experiences programs _____			
g. Experiences in social, political & economic issues _____			

PART B

Academic Credit Graduate Programs

14.

Please check (✓) the program areas which, to the best of your knowledge, are offered for graduate credit by the University Center, and how successful you think the programs are.

	Offered			Not Offered	Do Not Know
	Excellent	Fair	Poor		
1. Medicine _____					
2. Veterinary Medicine _____					
3. Hospital Administration _____					
4. Business Administration _____					
5. Music _____					
6. Architecture _____					
7. Dentistry _____					
8. Public Health _____					
9. Education _____					
10. Social Work _____					
11. Liberal Arts & Sciences _____					
12. Engineering _____					
13. Agriculture _____					
14. Public Administration _____					
15. Pharmacy _____					
16. Law _____					
17. Library Science _____					
18. Natural Resources _____					
19. Nursing _____					
20. Home Economics _____					

RT B

Academic Credit Graduate Programs

15.

Please check (✓) the program areas which, to the best of your knowledge, you think should be offered for academic credit by the University Center, and if you would participate were the programs to be offered.

	Should be offered			Participation		
	Program Definitely Should be Offered	Program Might be Offered	Program Definitely Should not Be Offered	I Definitely Would Par- ticipate	I Possibly Might Participate	I Definitely Would not Participate
Medicine _____						
Veterinary Medicine _____						
Hospital Administration _____						
Business Administration _____						
Music _____						
Architecture _____						
Dentistry _____						
Public Health _____						
Education _____						
Social Work _____						
Liberal Arts & Sciences _____						
Engineering _____						
Agriculture _____						
Public Administration _____						
Pharmacy _____						
Law _____						
Library Science _____						
Natural Resources _____						
Nursing _____						
Home Economics _____						

PART C**Non-Credit Programs**

16.

Please check (✓) the program areas which, to the best of your knowledge, are offered for non-credit by the University Center, and how successful you think the programs are.

	Offered			Not Offered	Do Not Know
	Excellent	Fair	Poor		
1. Medicine _____					
2. Veterinary Medicine _____					
3. Hospital Administration _____					
4. Business Administration _____					
5. Music _____					
6. Architecture _____					
7. Dentistry _____					
8. Public Health _____					
9. Education _____					
10. Social Work _____					
11. Liberal Arts & Sciences _____					
12. Engineering _____					
13. Agriculture _____					
14. Public Administration _____					
15. Pharmacy _____					
16. Law _____					
17. Library Science _____					
18. Natural Resources _____					
19. Nursing _____					
20. Home Economics _____					
21. Creative Arts _____					
22. Economic Education _____					
23. Community Development _____					
24. Human Relations & Leadership Training _____					
25. Local, State, National & International Affairs _____					
26. Trade & Technical Education _____					
27. Recreation Education _____					
28. Science Education _____					
29. Continuing Education for Women _____					
30. Education for Aging _____					
31. Other _____					

T C

Non-Credit Programs

7.

Please check (✓) the program areas which, to the best of your knowledge, you think should be offered for non-credit by the University Center, and if you would participate were the programs to be offered.

	Should be offered			Participate		
	Program Definitely Should be Offered	Program Might be Offered	Program Definitely Should not Be Offered	I Definitely Would Participate	I Possibly Might Participate	I Definitely Would not Participate
Medicine						
Veterinary Medicine						
Hospital Admin.						
Business Admin.						
Music						
Architecture						
Dentistry						
Public Health						
Education						
Social Work						
Liberal Arts & Sci.						
Engineering						
Agriculture						
Public Admin.						
Pharmacy						
Law						
Library Science						
Natural Resources						
Nursing						
Home Economics						
Creative Arts						
Economic Education						
Community Development						
Human Relations & Leadership Training						
Local, State, Nat'l. & Internat'l. Affairs						
Trade & Tech. Educa.						
Recreation Education						
Science Education						
Continuing Educa. for Women						
Education for Aging						
Other						

PART D**Related Activities**

18.

Please check (✓) the activities which, to the best of your knowledge, are offered by the University Center, and how successful you think the activities are.

	Offered			Not	Do Not
	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Offered	Know
1. Admission & Counseling Services					
2. Consultative Services to the Community					
3. Information Services about the University					
4. T. V. and radio programs					
5. Conference, Seminars & Workshops					
6. Independent Study courses					
7. Tele-lectures					
8. Lectures					
9. Concerts					
10. Films					
11. Other					

ART D**Related Activities**

19.

Please check (✓) the activities which, to the best of your knowledge, you think should be offered by the University Center, and if you would participate were the programs to be offered.

	Should be Offered			Participate		
	Program Definitely Should be Offered	Program Might be Offered	Program Definitely Should not Be Offered	I Definitely Would Participate	I Possibly Might Participate	I Definitely Would not Participate
Admission & Counseling Services _____						
Consultative Services to the Community _____						
Information Services about the University _____						
T. V. & radio programs _____						
Conferences, Seminars & Workshops _____						
Independent Study courses _____						
Tele-lectures _____						
Lectures _____						
Concerts _____						
Films _____						
Other _____						

Thank you for your cooperation.

Follow-Up Post Card

PLEASE

March 26, 1970

Two weeks ago you received a questionnaire in relation to a study of the University Center in Grand Rapids. As of March 26, I have not received your completed questionnaire.

The information from this study will be of value in planning continuing education programs for alumni and in addition will be of substantial assistance in completing my doctoral degree requirements.

Please take the few minutes necessary to fill out the questionnaire and return it to the University Center. If you have misplaced the questionnaire, please call the Center in Grand Rapids at 458-1322 for another copy.

Thank you.

Quentin H. Gessner

APPENDIX B

Summary Table of Significant Factors Related to Alumni Perceptions

X - Significant factors tested using
multiple regression analysis.

TABLE 54

* - Related factor.

SIGNIFICANT FACTORS RELATED TO ALUMNI PERCEPTIONS

Factors Programs	DEMOGRAPHIC					COLLEGE EXPERIENCE		CENTER EXPERIENCE							EXPRESSED NEEDS													
	School	Age	Sex	Marital Stat.	Income Level	Profession	MSU Degree	U-M Degree	WMU Degree	Time Since Last Degree	Major Field	Center Part.	Credit	Non-Credit	Conferences	Lectures	Counseling	Informa. Sers.	Recency of Exp.	No. of Progs. Part. In	Academic	Counseling	Home & Family Living	Prof. Growth	Lib. Arts	Cultural	Social, Poli- tical, Econ.	
Is Doing																												
Quest. 14a												X			X							X						
Quest. 16a										X		X																
Quest. 18a				X								X			X													
Sum of 14- 16-18a*												X																
*=Significance tested using chi-square																												
How Well																												
Quest. 14b		X	X							*		X							X			X						
Quest. 16b			*						X			X		*	X	*			X			X	*				X	
Quest. 18b		*	X				X					X						X	X			X				X		
Sum of 14- 16-18b		X	X									X							X			X					X	
Should Do																												
Quest. 15a		X										X									X	X		X				
Quest. 17a												X				X		X			X		X	X		*		
Quest. 19a		X			*							*		*					X		X			X				
Sum of 15- 17-19a		X										X							X		X	X	*	X		*		
Would Part.																												
Quest. 15b	X	X					*					X	X										X					
Quest. 17b	X									*													X					
Quest. 19b	X	X					X					*							X		*		X			X		
Sum of 15-																												