A DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS IN U. S. HISTORY CLASSES AT A COMPREHENSIVE TWO-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
December, 1991

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PREFACE

One of the most difficult aspects of this study has been the philosophical struggle involved with defining "success" in U.S. history classes. Success in academic pursuits is, in reality, a construct emerging out of the value system of the one making the judgment. It is an arbitrary designation that says nearly as much about values as about ability. In a subjective sense, it could be argued that a student who is true to self and self's values is successful, no matter how that student may be measured by those with different value systems. It must be recognized that, in a sense, the very designation of success is biased or "loaded" and that many different measures of success could be enunciated. However, in education we have long accepted the need for some less subjective measure of progress than "everyone doing that which is right in his own eyes." Therefore, there is underlying this study an assumption that success in academia--if it is to be defined at all--must be defined by arbitrarily set standards that can never reflect the interests or cultural aspirations and values of all groups. What we are really asking when we evaluate "success" is to what extent a given student has either consciously or unconsciously chosen to be motivated by a particular value

system and then how well that student performs given that motivation. This study is not an attempt to ride rough-shod over the culture of a harshly abused and sadly neglected minority group; it is an effort to look at the reality of the struggle of living in two cultures and to describe some individuals who are part of one and have learned to compete effectively in the other.

I wish to offer particular thanks to my advisor, Dr. Thomas Karman, for his guidance not only in the mechanics of this study but in his insight in regard to the philosophical and ethical issues. He and my committee--Dr. David Webster, Dr.Russell Dobson, Dr. John Gardiner and Dr. Adriene Hyle--have consistently assisted me in my quest to maintain a balanced sensitivity to the culture of the people about whom I am writing and for whom I have the greatest personal regard.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

For many years, the focus of attention in the area of minority higher education was on the problem of equal access. Minorities were historically denied the opportunity for any higher education at all, or they were allowed a limited curriculum of higher education in separate, inferior settings. Minority students in the past were admitted to institutions of higher education in small numbers and with extensive social restrictions. The goal of higher education in relation to minorities--if there was a conscious goal--was the provision of a track that was separate but "equal"--at least in name. This was not only allowed but defended as the best route for minorities in view of their supposed "mental limitations" that made a different type of education (vocational?) preferable for them. The law promoted and protected this approach to higher education.

However, with the advent of an aggressive civil rights movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the issue of access to the same education by minorities came to the fore. While change came at different rates in different parts of the country and in different schools--and in many cases,

still has not come--by the 1970s, legal barriers to higher education of minorities had generally fallen by the wayside.

Community colleges have played an important role in the provision of minority access. Because of their open nature, their proximity to a variety of centers of population, and their reasonable cost, community colleges have helped make it possible for a great many minorities--particularly those in the middle and lower middle classes--to have the opportunity to participate in higher education.

A new area of concern in regard to inequality in minority higher education has emerged in the past 10 to 15 years--that is the question of whether being in the same school and even the same classes means that educational opportunities are equal. Statistics show that access does not necessarily guarantee education. Due to cultural, environmental, economic, and social factors, in the past 10 years the percentage of most minorities attending and graduating from institutions of higher education has actually decreased (United States Department of Education, 1988). Considerable attention has been given to this issue, with much of the research focusing on the question of retention and attrition. The debate revolves around why minority students enter at a lower rate than non-minority students and why they graduate at a lower rate than non-minorities.

In most of the research and debate on the question of minority education and success of minorities in higher

education, the attention has been directed toward blacks and hispanics. Probably due to their large representation in the urban centers of America, these groups have been the focus of numerous studies and projects designed to diagnose and correct faults in academic preparation, curriculum design, administrative structure and instructional methods that may contribute to the higher failure rate of these minority groups in higher education.

Another minority group has historically been excluded (intentionally or unintentionally) from American higher education, and it has been discriminated against when included. This forgotten American minority has struggled with prejudice, segregation, and all kinds of oppression from the earliest days of United States History. American Indians, like other minority groups, have a serious problem in regard to their success in higher education. They have a high non-entry rate and a much higher failure rate than the population at large. A disproportionately small part of the attention on minority education has been given to the problems faced by American Indian students. Community colleges are providing access to these students. But are they providing an equal (or adequate) education?

Background

One factor seriously impacting the development of American Indian education in the United States is the Euro-centric view that has dominated thinking and writing about

education--that is, that education of American Indians did not begin until Europeans were here to do it.[1] Noley asserts that modern problems with American Indian education could be ameliorated by educators studying pre-Columbian Indian education and applying the lessons to be learned there to contemporary systems.

A related problem--also Euro-centric in nature--is that Euro-Americans tend to see one unified American Indian culture instead of the numerous, unique and varied cultures that actually exist. It is suggested by some authorities (Noley, Cornell) that this approach is not only short-sighted and racist, but that it of necessity "screens out" some of the possible solutions to the problems American Indian students have in higher education by assuming that all Indian attitudes, culture, and problems are the same.

One recurring theme in the literature relating to the development of Indian Education in America is that the U.S. Government policy in regard to education of Native Americans has had behind it a conscious and insidious goal: the destruction of tribal identity and the elimination of the Indian "problem" by total assimilation of the Indian into white society. (Scott, Cornell, Stuart, Josephy) Hoxie explains that there has historically been an American

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[1]An understanding of the historical development of Indian education in the United States is essential to really appreciate the place and plight of the American Indian in higher education today. Appendix A includes a treatment of a number of helpful resources on the history of Indian education.

mindset that has equated the Western, European culture with "civilization" and the American Indian culture with "savagism". The very domination of the "frontier" concept in the thought of the European "invaders" implies that the "wilderness" and the aborigines that were a part of it were bad things that were to be overcome, conquered, or pushed back.

This approach to the question of Indian culture resulted in education being employed very early and very consistently as a tool of government policy. Dartmouth College was involved in educating Indians for assimilation as early as 1780 (Weeks,The American Indian Experience). The goal of this education was to make the Indian as "white" as possible (Josephy), to destroy his self-respect and cultural identity and pride, and to absorb him into the European culture. Weeks reports a "catechism" that Indian students were required to memorize and write repeatedly in a number of the government- sponsored schools they attended.

Question: To what race do we all belong?
Answer: The Human race.

Question: How many classes belong to this race?
Answer: There are [four] large classes belonging to the Human race.

Question: Which are the first?
Answer: The white people are the strongest.

Question: Which are the next?
Answer: The Mongolians or yellows.

Question: The next?
Answer: The Ethiopians or blacks.

Question: Next?

> Answer: The Americans or reds.
>
> Question: Tell me something of white people.
> Answer: The Caucasian is away ahead of all of the other races--he thought more than any other race, he thought that somebody must [have] made the earth, and if the white people did not find that out, nobody would never (sic) know it--it is God who made the world.

Some researchers assert that while this type of instruction had the effect of destroying cultural identity and self-respect, its real, ultimate purpose was to destroy the tribes as political entities so the land they held title to could be taken (Weeks, Scott).

Whatever the ultimate purpose, most of the literature asserts that education was used as a tool to try to accomplish the government policy of assimilation of Indians into white society. In this process, three basic types of government schools for Indians were developed, largely through the denominational missionaries working with the Indians in their reservation settings (Weeks, Stuart). The first was the reservation day school, close to the family and tribe. This was followed and largely supplanted by the reservation boarding school, touted as more efficient and cost-effective as well as more effective in eliminating cultural influence. Finally there was the off-reservation boarding school that promised even more isolation from tribal and family influence and greater assimilation (Weeks, Stuart). By 1920, about 85% of the American Indian students were attending off-reservation boarding schools (Stuart).

The superintendents of these schools presented a litany of complaints about the Indian students that sounds very similar to those made today by higher education instructors of American Indian students. Those complaints included excessive absences, inattention, lack of participation in educational activities, and parental interference with the program (Stuart).

During the New Deal era of the 1930's, the U.S. Government briefly took a different approach to the education of American Indian students. For a time, tribal identity was once again acceptable, perhaps even encouraged to some extent (Weeks). At the same time, however, efforts at assimilation continued, with the placing of Indian students in the public schools becoming government policy, in an effort to hasten their integration into society. In 1934, the Johnson-O'Malley Act authorized paying the public schools to take American Indian students (Stuart).

After World War II, official American policy again aimed at elimination of the tribes, through a plan called Termination and Relocation (Weeks). This new thrust toward assimilation also resulted in a new emphasis on involving Indians in higher education. American Indian college graduates were virtually non-existent prior to 1945, and the government moved to alter this fact by the provision of a variety of federal grants funding post-secondary education for qualified individual Indian students (Stuart). In 1952, those grants--administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs

(BIA)--were supporting 56 Indian students in post-secondary education. By 1972 that number had grown to 12,000. In recent years, many of those grants have gone to students in community colleges (Stuart).

A movement that has received much attention in the literature in the past 25 years is the effort by the tribes to take unto themselves control of the education of their children, first in elementary and secondary schools, and then--after about 1969 or 1970--in post-secondary education. An important outgrowth of this movement is the founding and development of a number of tribal community colleges that are organized to provide the education needed to encourage and support economic advancement and still preserve Indian cultural identity and values (Oppelt, Baughman, Whitman).

The latest figures indicate that there are 93,000 American Indians involved in higher education in America today, up 19.2% since 1978. Eighty-seven percent are in public institutions, with 54% being enrolled in 2-year institutions (up 16% since 1978) (Reeves). Only Hispanic students have a higher percentage enrolled in two year institutions (54.6%). Hispanic and Indian percentages are even more significant when compared to Asian (39.4%), Black (38.3%) and White (34.1%) enrollments in two year colleges (Evangelauf). These figures, along with other research that indicates that 2/3 of community college students are first generation college attenders and that 40% of community college enrollees are minority students, demonstrate the

role of community college in providing access to under-represented populations (Baughman). But these figures say nothing about the quality of education these students receive or their academic performance in higher education.

Studies consistently point to American Indians as the least educated American minority. Only 55% of Indian students graduate from high school, compared to 83% of white students (Wright). College graduation rates show an even greater disparity. Caucasian students graduate from college at a 23% rate, while Indian students only manage a 6% graduation rate as compared to 12% of the black population (Klienfield, Wright). While this figure is up from the 1960's, when only about 3% of American Indians were graduating from college (Josephy), the rate of increase in graduates seen in the 1970's has leveled out in the 1980's. (Klienfield) According to sources quoted by William Griffin (1981), the attrition rate of American Indians in universities may be as high as 97%.

One problem addressed in the literature involves assessment of Indian academic performance. Some researchers believe that most of the various standardized measures used are culturally inappropriate for Native Americans. Tonemah writes that Indian students are under-identified as gifted and talented because the normal tests do not measure the kinds of talents in which American Indians excel. Teeter makes similar assertions concerning I Q testing, and both Tonemah and Teeter insist that new, culturally specific

tests need to be developed before Indian academic performance can be measured accurately. Hurlburt also speaks to the problem of measuring Indian academic performance by "white" standards and asserts that striving to those kinds of standards causes Indian students to lose their "Indianness" and their language, which are foundational to cultural identity.

A number of researchers deal with the problems of retention among Indian students (Anderson, Tippeconnic, Pauls, Owston, Klienfield, and Hardin) and offer a variety of suggestions for improvement, including more culturally Indian subject matter, more local or tribal control of institutions such as preparatory schools, more attention to culturally sensitive counseling of students, and higher standards and accountability in educational institutions.

The Problem

The research reported here involves a project at a community college in Oklahoma. Located within commuting distance of one of the few major metropolitan areas in the state, this college is a comprehensive two-year institution with a enrollment headcount of approximately 3,500 students. The students enrolled there have a broad range of ability. One of the responsibilities of community colleges in Oklahoma is to remediate those students whose high school preparation is inadequate for college. The faculty is, therefore, used to working with students with traditional

learning problems, such as poor reading skills, weak writing skills and limited exposure to basic knowledge areas. However, informal interviews with faculty and administration indicate that the American Indians in the student body seem to be having a variety of learning problems and may not fit into the category of students with "traditional" learning problems.

The student body of the institution under study is approximately 11% American Indian. This is the highest percentage of Indian enrollment at any community college in the state and one of the highest in any institution of higher education in Oklahoma. The Indian students enrolled at this school are largely from the 5 tribes that have populated Northeastern Oklahoma for the past 100 years, sometimes referred to as the "civilized tribes": Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole. These tribes are not reservation tribes, which means that the students have, for the most part, grown up living very much in two worlds. According to admissions counselors, many of the American Indian students are first-generation college attenders, and many have poor academic backgrounds.

This research was initiated when it became apparent that these students were doing poorly in U.S. History courses. Their attendance was erratic and class participation was nearly non-existent. Instructors noted that they received very few, if any, responses to questions asked of the Indian students in class, and the students were

rarely reported to look the instructor in the eye. Test performance was extremely low and students seemed to avoid direct contact with instructors. Attrition was high and, among those retained, achievement was often low. At the same time, there are American Indian students in the history classes who are very successful academically. The tendency among faculty is to think of the unsuccessful students when they think of American Indian students.

Most of the limited amount of research about American Indian students in higher education has focused on this point of view. It has either been a comparison of Indian students to non-Indian students (with a view to determining why the Indian students are not as "good") or studies of dropouts to determine why they dropped out or failed. Most of the research describes "what is" in the realm of Indian education and attempts to analyze why it is. There is virtually nothing that takes the view of describing what could be in American Indian participation in higher education by describing the successes rather than the failures.

Research Question

If American Indian community college students are successful in U.S. history classes, what personal, academic, family, and cultural characteristics do they manifest?

To answer this question a research project was proposed to select a group of American Indian students who are successful in U.S.history according to a given definition and to describe their personal, academic, family, and cultural characteristics. Specific characteristics studied included:

Personal Characteristics

- -Age
- -Gender
- -Marital status

Academic Characteristics

- -High school GPA
- -Overall college GPA
- -SAT/ACT scores
- -GPA in history courses
- -Full time or part time status
- -Number of hours enrolled
- -Number of hours passed
- -Number graduating
- -Feelings about the study of U.S. history
- -Reaction to instructional methods used in U.S. history
- -Perception of instructors' treatment of Indian issues

-Perception of textbook treatment of Indian issues

-High school or GED diploma

-Location of high school graduated from

-Size of high school

-Number and type of previous history classes

Family Characteristics

-Type and amount of financial assistance

-Moral support from family

-Precedent in family for higher education

Cultural Characteristics

-Identification with tribe/Indian culture

-Degree of Indian blood

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the literature must cover several general topics for the purpose of this study: 1)studies of academic achievement among American Indian students in higher education; 2)studies of retention and attrition among American Indians in higher education; and 3)studies of factors specifically related to retention and success in higher education by American Indian students.

Indian Student Achievement

The first area for examination in the literature is Native American academic performance in higher education. There are a number of articles and studies that look at the topic in a general way. One useful introduction to the question of Indian academic performance is a study by John Wittstruck of the higher education system in the state of Missouri and that state's efforts to measure academic achievement among all minorities, Indians included. The study includes a great many statistics on enrollment, attrition and retention, and degree completion among minorities in Missouri colleges and universities, and shows that Indian students are entering, staying, and completing college at a much lower rate that other minority groups.

A number of other studies that do much the same thing

on a national level that Wittstruck did in Missouri have also been examined. Some of the most helpful include "Objectives for Indian Education: Tribal Leaders Shape Goals" (1990) by Peter West, "The Forgotten Half" (1989) by David Whitman, "Current Indian Education Issues" (1981) by John W. Tippeconnic, and "Student Rank on College Exams" (1990) by Grayson Noley. These studies all came to conclusions similar to Wittstruck's, without making any concrete suggestions as to why Indian students tended to compare negatively to non-Indians in the areas examined (entrance, attrition and retention, and graduation from higher education).

A very useful synopsis of the condition of American Indian education in general is found in Stuck in the Horizon, a special report edited by Sandra Reeves in 1989. Along with a brief historic overview, the work presents an extensive statistical summary of the condition of Indian Education and the cultural factors that impact the Indian view of education.

There are a number of purely statistical studies available that deal with the academic performance of American Indian students in higher education. One interesting study dealing with minority education in community colleges is Ethnic Minorities in Two-Year Colleges (1979) by Sandra Edwards and Miriam Beckwith. This work does extensive comparison of Indian students with other minorities, by region and state. Of special interest is the

comparison of amounts of financial aid received by the various minorities.

A similar study that focuses only on Indian students is one published by the United States Department of the Interior in 1979, entitled Statistics Concerning Indian Education. This study quantifies Indian students by type of school, degree of Indian blood, and region.

A third statistical study, one that includes a number of helpful charts and graphs, is The American Indian in Higher Education: 1975-76 to 1984-85 (1987), published by the Center for Education Statistics and edited by Judith Fries. The study not only looks at Indian enrollment, retention, and degrees granted, but also examines numbers and qualifications of Indian faculty and financing of institutions that educate Indian students.

Several of the studies of Indian academic achievement involve comparisons of Indian performance with various non-Indian groups. Two of the most useful are "1988 Enrollments of Racial Groups" (1990) by Jean Evangelauf and Minorities in American Higher Education (1982) by Alexander Astin. Evangelauf has done a statistical study of the condition of minorities in higher education in 1988. According to its findings, the number of American Indian students in college rose 3.3% from 1986 to 1988, to a total of 93,000. Fifty-one percent of the Indians in college were attending a two year college, while 34.1% of the whites and 38.3% of the blacks were in two year schools.

Astin's study looked at the representation of minorities in higher education by degree level and field. The study further attempts to assess educational progress of minorities, identify factors that hinder or facilitate progress, and formulate recommendations for increasing the number of minorities who enter and complete higher education programs. The investigator used data from Current Population Surveys, the U.S. Census, and the Surveys of Minority Populations by the Office of Civil Rights and National Center for Educational Statistics, and the data collected by the Higher Education Research Institute. The findings of the research as pertains to American Indians indicated that they were the only ethnic group that enters college at a lower rate than whites, in respect to the number of each group that graduates from high school. Other statistics revealed by the study include:

-16% of Native Americans who enter college earn a bachelor degree in four years, as compared to 34% of the whites entering college.

-39% of the Native Americans who enter college eventually earn a bachelor degree.

-48% of the Indians who enter graduate school drop out.

-American Indians were the only group not increasing the percentage earning bachelor degrees over the years included in the study.

-Parents' income was a factor in completion of a college degree for all minorities, but not for

whites.

-American Indians were the only group for whom the quality of the college did not relate to the percentage of completions.

The recommendations of the investigator focused on the importance of grouping potential transfer students in community colleges to encourage completion, improving articulation, provision of more remediation, and more financial aid. Further, the study recommends the development of a new definition of equal access, in light of its conclusion that Indian students have access to community colleges but not particularly to universities.

Another group of studies of American Indian students focuses on comparisons of various groups of Indians or comparisons within groups of Indians:

--"Indian Students' Study Habits and Attitudes"(1981) by Thomas M. Sawyer- This brief look at study habits of American Indian students points out great differences between male and female students and concludes that the differences in success are more related to the rural background of Indian students than to their Indian identity.

--"The Tribal Controlled Colleges in the 1980's: Higher Education's Best Kept Secret"(1984) by Norman Oppelt- This study is a description of the development and nature of the 16 Indian controlled community colleges founded between 1968 and 1978. The goals of those colleges were, in order of priority: 1) vocational education; 2)transfer education;

3)transmission of the Indian culture; 4)service to the tribe. The study found that the average enrollment of the institutions was 257, with women outnumbering men 5 to 1. This is a interesting figure in light of figures elsewhere that indicate that the typical Indian student is male. The typical student in this study of Indian Community Colleges is in the late 20's or early 30's, female, parent of 2 children, working, possessor of poor academic preparation, and with a poverty level income. The study also determined that students in these Indian controlled schools had a lower attrition rate that Indian students in white colleges. Further, the study showed that transfers from these Indian schools to Universities had a significantly higher retention rate than Indian students in general in the university population.

--"Indian Control of Indian Education"(1985) by Bryan Cummins- This study of Indian students in both white schools and Indian schools attempts to determine what factors are related to higher retention. The only firm conclusions drawn are that Indian students in Indian language schools and Indian controlled schools have higher retention rates than Indian students in White schools.

-<u>The Forgotten Minority: Native Americans in Higher Education</u> (1989) by Robert Wells- This study was based upon a mail survey to students at 33 two- and four-year colleges with at least 4 percent American Indian enrollment. The study concluded that graduation rates have improved slightly

among Indian students during the 1980's, but that retention and graduation rates remain "disturbingly low." According to this research, 27.3 percent of American Indian college students entering college earn degrees, while more than half drop out in their freshman year. The average financial aid package for the American Indian student was $1,531, which is $3,000 short of the $5,400 average cost per year of higher education.

A final area of investigation in regard to Indian educational achievement that is addressed in the literature is the question of research issues in Indian education. Fromboise and Plake in "Toward Meeting the Research Needs of American Indians"(1983) take a look at research about American Indians with a view toward determining the extent to which it is done by Indians. They conclude non-Indian investigators frequently "focus their findings on negative outcomes that are grounded in non-Indian interpretations or theoretical frameworks, approach research questions with perspectives unfamiliar to Indian respondents, and limit full Indian cooperation and participation."

Another author dealing with research issues is Stuart Tonemah. In "Assessing American Indian Gifted and Talented Students' Abilities"(1987) he has put together an excellent summary of current research on the topic of American Indian education, including suggestions of areas for additional research. Along with the summary of research in general, there is an extensive bibliography of documents and journal

articles listed in the ERIC database that relate to the topic of American Indian education.

These studies of academic achievement were useful in the study at hand to help define the problems that exist in the area of Indian performance in higher education and to help shape an awareness that research on Indians in higher education tends to be "problem centered" and, indeed, negative in approach. That awareness guided the development of the approach taken here: to describe the successful student rather than to dwell on those that are failing.

Retention

The next important area of review is the literature dealing with retention among Indian students in higher education. Much of the research in the field of American Indian education has focused on this question of attrition and retention. The tendency has been to examine the weaknesses of American Indian students and to describe characteristics consistent with failure and dropping out or the differences between those who persist and those who drop out. There are several retention studies that are representative of those examined in this research. A general look at retention issues that has application to the study at hand is "Student Attrition Research: Implications

for Retention Strategies" by John Gardiner and Ali Nazari-Robati. This summary of much of the current thinking on retention and attrition is thorough and well written, and concludes that retention is not only good for the students, it is in the best interest of the institution as well.

There are two general retention studies that are particularly pertinent to the issue of Indian retention. The first is "Application of a Conceptual Model of College Withdrawal to Disadvantaged Students at College Level" by Richard Fox. This study attempts to apply a conceptual model of college withdrawal developed in 1975 specifically to minority college students to determine to what extent there are differences in application among people of different racial backgrounds. This study took place in a 4-year urban commuter setting and involved a pilot study to refine terms and test the instrument, followed by the study itself. The investigator did extensive correlations of the numerous variables considered. The data suggest that the dimensions of academic disadvantage are considerably more serious in relation to retention chances than other factors. Academic integration, and several of its constituent measures, were clearly the most important correlates of freshman year retention. Social integration was definitely overshadowed by academic integration.

A second general retention study was done by Carlette Hardin and reported in "Access to Higher Education: Who Belongs?"(1988). This study of retention determines that

there are six categories of developmental students that are at risk for failure in higher education. They are:

-the poor chooser
-the returning adult
-the student with academic or physical weakness that was unidentified in high school
-the student who completed his/her secondary education in a foreign country
-the student with a physical or learning disability
-the student lacking in goals

The author concludes that "if we know that a student has no chance of earning a college degree, then we are certainly doing the student an injustice by allowing him or her to enter the university." The author additionally asserts that there are certain assumptions which may be made about all developmental students.

-they are underprepared, not incapable
-the reasons for their underpreparation are complex and usually not the student's fault
-they can overcome deficiencies if remediated
-social and personal development is also usually needed

Several retention studies deal more explicitly with American Indian students. Dennis Falk and Larry Aitken reported a study they did in this area in an article

entitled "Promoting Retention Among American Indian College Students"(1984). This study of Indian students and former students in higher education isolated five factors promoting retention:

-family support
-academic preparation
-institutional commitment to assisting Indian students
-availability of financial aid
-type and degree of personal motivation

The author points out that 83% of the attriting students in the study said that they would like to return to school if the conditions were right. Financial considerations were most often cited as the reason for leaving school.

Walter Patton and Everett Edington report an important retention study among Indian students in their article "Factors Related to the Persistence of Indian Students at College Level"(1973). The purpose of this study was to identify factors which were related to persistence in higher education. The study covered the period beginning with fall 1967 through spring 1971, with a total of 449 Indian students at the University of New Mexico and 227 students at New Mexico State University. A random sample of 30% of those students was used. Among the factors determined to be the most significant were college GPA, ACT, high school size, and the student's age. It is interesting that the same factors generally did not show up at both Universities.

The only factor universally high in importance was GPA.

Another useful study of retention among Indian students is one done by Daniel Edwards and Larry Smith, and reported in "Higher Education and the American Indian Student." This study is a description of the situation of American Indian students in higher education, including a look at reasons for attrition. The primary reasons found were:

1. lack of financial resources
2. lack of interest
3. family background

The study includes a brief profile of the typical Indian College student (as of 1981).

> "...he is somewhat older than his fellow students. He is more likely to be a male than female. He is usually unmarried and his pre-college education experiences have usually included a greater variety of schools and more frequent changes in schools attended."

The study further finds that the Indian college student is more likely than the non-Indian to have older brothers and sisters but less likely to have older siblings who have graduated from college. One particularly interesting point is that the Indian students were found to tend to major in business, education and engineering.

Wilbur Scott reports a retention study at the University of Oklahoma in "Attachment to Indian Culture and the 'Difficult Situation': A Study of American Indian College Students"(1986). Scott researched factors relating

to failure of Native Americans at OU in the fall of 1975. The study included data from the school's cumulative files on the students and a 10-item Likert scale that was supposed to measure attachment to the Indian culture. Among the conclusions of the study are the assertion that the two best predictors of success among Native American college students are the ACT score and the GPA. The study also concludes that "being Indian reduces chances of success" in college. A significant weakness of the study is its lack of clear definition of "success." It appears that success is defined as not dropping out of college.[2]

Another study of retention among Indian students was done by Graham Hurlburt and associates. The report of the research, "A Comparison of Academic, Career, and Social Patterns of American Indian Students"(1983), indicates the study looked at attitude differences between Indian students in locally controlled reservation schools and those in white majority residential schools removed from the home and reservation setting. Two specific groups of Indian students were studied. The first was a group of 50 Cree students attending a residential school with 400 white students. The second group was composed of 60 Cree students attending a locally controlled Indian school on a Cree reservation. The students were given a survey that questioned them in regard to sex, age, school preference, job preference, travel,

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[2]This definition is clearly quite broad and tends to be negative in approach.

reading, TV, and included a Rotter's Internal/External Locus of Control Scale. Comparisons were made of academic performance, vocational experience and goals, and social preferences. The results of the study indicate that students in the locally controlled school had higher GPA's, were more positive in their attitudes toward their school, and held educational aspirations. Other variables showed very little difference between the groups.

A final retention study is one done by Leigh Jeanotte, entitled "A Study of the Contributing Factors Relating to Why American Indian Students Drop Out of or Graduate From Educational Programs at the University of North Dakota"(1982). This study was done among the Indian students at the University of North Dakota to determine factors contributing to attrition and retention. The research was in survey form. The researchers assert that the gender of the student had no impact on completion of degree; older students tended to stay in school and graduate; dropouts tended to be single; degree of Indian blood appears to have no influence on retention or attrition. Leading predictors of persistence included high school GPA and ACT scores.

All of the retention studies have in common the negative point of view previously mentioned that begins with failure and asks "how do we prevent this." While there are clearly helpful ideas to be found in this approach, a more positive approach is desirable. However, many of the factors addressed in these studies served to aid

in the design of the survey instrument and helped in the refining of the list of specific characteristics to be examined. For example, many of the studies reviewed emphasized gender, age, family support, academic preparation, and interest or motivation as primary factors in retention. The current study attempted to look at the connection between those factors and success, and generally found that some connection existed.

"Success" Factors

The final area of review is literature dealing with specific factors related to success among Indian college students. One group of studies and articles focuses on cultural factors that impact Indian educational success. Jeannie Newell and Merry Tyon, in "The Silent Minority: Working With Traditional American Indian Students in Cooperative Education Programs"(1989), indicate that their studies and interviews reinforce commonly held views that Indian students who are "traditional" in their cultural identity have difficulty working in a typical higher education setting. They discuss issues of self-image, understanding of the concept of time, and the Indian view of interaction with "superiors" and people of honor. Newell and Tyon insist that students who learn to deny these

aspects of their culture tend to be more successful. The Hurlburt study previously mentioned looks at similar issues and draws some of the same conclusions regarding cultural factors impacting higher education success.

Young Yun Kim and Philip Lujan have presented findings in this area in an unpublished report of research at the University of Oklahoma (1990). This research study looks at the psychological impact of being Indian in a predominantly white culture and assesses the level of social interaction and communication skills reached by the subjects of the study. The researchers conducted extensive interviews with 180 American Indians in the state of Oklahoma. The initial findings show that urban Indians have the fewest problems dealing with white culture, while rural Indians are less accepting of cultural differences. Respondents with better communication skills were determined to be more accepting of the influence of both cultures in their lives. Of particular interest to the issue of Indian education in Oklahoma is the finding that Oklahoma Indians are more accepting of the predominant social structure than Indians who live on reservations or in more isolated Indian communities.

A final study in the area of cultural factors in Indian student success is "Transformation and School Success: The Politics and Culture of Educational Achievement" (1987) by Frederick Erickson. This qualitative study provides various explanations for low school achievement of minority

students, including cultural differences between teacher and student and low motivation of students because of cynicism regarding their chances in the labor market. The investigators used interviews of students to gather and analyze what the perceptions of those students were about the factors related to their motivation. One interesting point in the study's conclusions is that while success and failure in school is usually equated to learning or not learning, learning is actually ubiquitous to the human experience throughout the life cycle. That is, failure in school does not necessarily mean an inability to learn.

A second group of publications dealing with "success" looks at the institutional factors that impact Indian success in higher education. A common theme in these studies is that instructional technique or approach has a significant influence on the success or lack of success of the Indian student. For example, William Griffin, in "Things Instructors Do To Demotivate Indian Students"(1981) investigated the kinds of things instructors do in class to harm the motivation of American Indian students. The study involved a survey of a sample of the students at the Nebraska Community College during the Fall of 1980. The survey showed that at least 70% of the students indicated that each of the following 10 instructor practices hurt their motivation:

1. Talking down to or ridiculing students
2. Showing disinterest in students and

their views

3. Asking for questions but never answering them
4. Failing to return assignments promptly
5. Using concepts the students have never heard of
6. Playing favorites
7. Grading unfairly
8. Coming to class late
9. Using lecture method exclusively
10. Coming to class unprepared

In general, the study concludes that fairness, preparation, variety of instruction, and sensitivity on the part of instructors are major factors in the motivation of Native American students.

Nancy Robianski-Carriuolo, in "Learning Styles and Minority Students" (1989), draws strong correlations between student success and teaching that stresses individualization based on learning style.

Another instructional issue is attendance. Michael Immerman, in "The Relationship Between Attendance and Performance in a Remedial Mathematics Program with American Indian Adults" (1982) addressed this concern. This investigation looked at the relationship between students' daily attendance and mathematics classroom performance. It involved the study of American Indian adults in a remedial mathematics program at the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic

Institute. Conclusions were that there was a high degree of connection between the two variables. This finding may also have application to U.S. history.

Another area in which the institution may impact student success is the selection of textbooks. There are several studies that purport to show that biases exist in history textbooks that repulse Indian students, that harm their self-image, or that otherwise make it difficult for them to accept the books as a helpful authority. One such study is "The Treatment of the American Indian in U.S. History Texts" (1977) by Charles Swanson. In this study, researchers assembled 53 history texts and examined them on the basis of their discussion of a number of events and issues to discover whether texts have changed through recent years in regard to the depiction of historical Indian-White relations. The textbooks covered years from 1961 to 1972. The study concluded that there has been little change in the negative image painted of American Indians in history texts, that the texts tend to cover only the negative incidents, that words chosen to describe American Indians are pejorative, and that these tendencies encourage chauvinism and prejudice in majority students and a negative self-image in American Indian students.

A second text book study examined was Feathers, Tomahawks, and Tipis: A Study of Stereotyped "Indian" Imagery in Children's Picture Books (1979) by Robert Moore and Arlene Hirshcfelder. This research was an analysis of

75 books in which non-native people or animals were role-playing as Indians. The study attempted to look at the image projected to young readers of what the American Indian is like. In general, the results indicate that the books studied reflect a biased, culturally "centristic" view that, intentionally or unintentionally, could create or reinforce prejudice and racism in readers. This study has implications in relation to the self-image of Indian students as well and may impact our understanding of how Indian students progress in school.

Finally, The Council on Interracial Books published a helpful study in 1979 entitled Stereotypes, Distortions, and Omissions in U.S. History Textbooks. This is a study of U.S. history textbooks in regard to their treatment of various minority groups, with one section in particular devoted to the Native American. The researchers found that the 13 texts examined tended to either ignore the contributions of Native Americans to U.S.History altogether or to include them in one of three forms: "great" individuals, "contributors" and "protestors." The texts all had some degree of Eurocentric perspective and assumed the acceptance of the values endogenous to European society.

These sources, while focusing on culture and institutional blocks to success, also helped bring into focus the positive relationship between those factors and success.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The project included four general parts which were undertaken sequentially. Those parts are as follows:

1. Gathering Base-line Data
2. Selection of the Study Group
3. Design and Testing of Survey Instrument and Interview Protocol
4. Gathering of Data by Survey and Interview

Part One: Gathering Base-line Data

Part one of the project involved gathering "baseline" data about the achievement of the Indian students at the college, particularly in U.S. History. The purpose of this general data gathering was to understand as much as possible about the total group of American Indian students enrolled in the institution and to make possible the selection of the study group of successful students. The baseline data for this project was gleaned from school records available in the database containing all students' academic and personal records. The files of Native American students enrolled in the college in the semester under study were accessed and numerous "sorts" were done using typical data base search methods. The intention was to draw out raw figures on

American Indian students to use in selecting the students who are "successful" and in refining the definition of success. The kinds of information extracted included:

-gender

-age

-tribal affiliation

-SAT/ACT score

-number of hours completed

-number of hours enrolled

-GPA

-GPA by subject

-full time/part time status

-number and percentage of Indians enrolled in history

-grades earned by Indian students in history

Using this data, the general population was then further narrowed to include only those Native American students enrolled in the college during the semester under study who have at some time enrolled in a U.S. history class.

Part Two: Selection of Study Group

The next step was to narrow the general population even further to have available a specific study population of American Indian students enrolled in the semester in question who had at some time been "successful" in U.S. history. This is the group that will be described as the

final product of the study. The data retrieved in Part One was helpful (along with the literature review) in determining what measures of success to use in selecting the "successful" students to describe in the study, and in actually making those selections.

A workable definition of "success" was essential. There are several possible measures of success/failure in the courses these students have taken. The most obvious--and most easily obtained--is the cumulative GPA. Another possible measure of success in college classes is graduation. National studies show that only 27.3% of American Indian students entering college earn degrees, and 50% drop out in their first year (Wells, 1988). An analysis of the numbers graduating from the college should indicate something about their success. The history students who actually graduate could be defined as the "successful" students. Like overall GPA, this measure has the limitation of not dealing with history courses in a focused way.

Since this institution does not have a high number of graduates in any given year, a more telling measure of success might be the number of students completing their 60th hour of course work in a given semester. Studies of Indian success/failure in higher education indicate that approximately two-thirds of Indian students entering higher education institutions drop out. Therefore, the completion of 60 or more hours at a community college would seem to indicate a reasonable degree of perseverance and success and

thus could be the defining factor, though it is more a measure of overall success than specifically success in history.

Another possible measure of success is the percentage of courses passed, or the passing of a particular course or courses by a student. This measure could certainly be influenced by an institution's approach to assessment and placement, by the school's philosophy of remediation within given courses, and by the rigor or lack of rigor in the courses themselves; therefore, it should not be seen as a useful comparison to other institutions. However, since all students in this study are within one school and are thus subject to the same policies, a look at passing grades should clearly say something about the success of the students.

A final possibility is GPA in history. Students with an average of "B" (2.5 or better) in history might clearly be viewed as successful. This was determined to be the most useful and appropriate measure of success in U.S. History for the purposes of this study. Based on the results of the general computer analysis described above, it was determined that an appropriately large group of "successful" American Indian history students would be available if "success," for the purpose of this discrimination, was defined as earning a "B" or better in one U.S. history course. A total of 34% of the American Indian students met this criterion, making a population of 129 students (118

female and 11 male) who were "successful" in U.S. history. Of the 129 students sent the survey, 87 were returned and usable (85 female and 2 male).

Part Three: Design and Testing of Survey Instrument and Interview Protocol

Based on the data from the literature review and the part one data retrieval, a survey instrument and an interview protocol were designed for the data gathering portion of the project. A small sample of students who had taken U.S. history but who were not enrolled during the semester being studied were administered the instrument and underwent the interview process to discover any problems that might exist. This pilot testing allowed for "fine tuning" the instrument and protocol before settling on their final forms. The intent was to be certain that students understood all the questions and that the questions were not culturally insensitive in content or expression.

The interviews were structured to follow the general format of the survey, with the interviewer moving from topic to topic in the same order as the topics appeared in that document. However, questions were asked in an open-ended fashion, in order to provide opportunity for the students to freely express themselves without excessive outside direction intruding. As a result, each interview proceeded

differently, as the personality and interests of the student dictated. All topics addressed by the survey were touched upon in each interview, but the extent of coverage was to a large degree determined by the students. This course was followed intentionally as a response to research discussed in the literature review that indicated that American Indian students often are inhibited or made otherwise uncomfortable by rigid structure or direction imposed on them by those they percieve as authority figures.

All interviews were taped (with each student's knowledge) and transcripts were later prepared from the tapes for use in analysis. For the purpose of reporting on the interviews, responses to questions and student initiated comments were aggregated into obvious categories based upon the characteristics mentioned in the research question.

Part Four: Gather Data

The next step was to gather and correlate data of a type not available in the school computers. This was done by way of a mail survey and interviews. The study included a survey of all of the students enrolled in the college who had identified themselves as American Indian and were selected as "successful" based on the criteria refined in

Part One of the project. The survey was mailed to these students. Many of the questions on the survey addressed issues raised in the review of the literature. Each student was sent the survey, a stamped return envelope and an instruction sheet. The survey was accompanied by a letter from the American Indian Program counselor asking that students complete the form and return it. The size of the population surveyed was determined by the definition of success selected.

Approximately two weeks after the survey went out, a follow-up letter was sent, reminding students to send in the survey. One week after that letter, a phone call was attempted to each non-responding Indian student.

A small sample of the students responding to the questionnaire was then selected to be interviewed by the researcher in an attempt to elicit more detailed descriptions of the "successful" students than the survey could reveal. The sample was randomly selected by gender from among the study population, which consisted of those American Indian students responding to the survey who were also "successful" by definition. The selection by gender was deemed necessary since the number of males in the study group was so small that a totally random selection did not include <u>any</u> males. Therefore, from among the 118 females, 10 were randomly selected and from among the 11 males, one was selected. The interviews were semi-structured, following the general outline of the survey but with

encouragement given the students to express themselves freely in regard to their attitudes toward their higher education experience and especially their experience in U.S. history.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The goal of this study was to describe American Indian students who were successful in U.S. history classes in terms of their personal, academic, family and cultural characteristics. The methods used in gathering data were explained in Chapter III[3], as was the process using early findings to arrive at a working definition of "success."[4]

Personal Characteristics

The first component of the research question addressed here is a description of the personal characteristics of successful Indian students. The student files revealed that for the semester studied, the college enrolled a total of 3,425 students, 381 of whom indicated on enrollment forms

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[3]Data used are for the most recently completed semester at the time the research was done--that is, the fall, 1990 semester.

[4]As was discussed in the chapter on Mehtodology, several possible definitions of "success" were considered and discarded for a various reasons. Among the rejected definitions of "success" were 1)cumulative college GPA, 2)graduation, 3)completion of 60 hours of college work, 4)percentage of students failing one or more courses, 5)perseverance in a specific course. A brief treatment of data found in regard to each of these possible success definitions is found in Appendix 1. Ultimately, it was determined that actual graded performance in the course in question--U.S. history--was the most useful measure of success.

that they were of American Indian heritage. Thus, for that particular semester, Native Americans comprised 11.13% of the enrollment. Of that number, 109 (28.6%) were male and 272 (71.4%) were female. This compared to non-Indian figures of 1073 males (35%) and 1971 females (65%).

Females had a considerably higher success rate than males and were much more likely to return the survey.[5] This was something of a surprise, since the literature that was reviewed showed little conclusive indication that women were more successful. The ages of respondents ranged from 18 to 46, with an average of 30. More sophomores responded to the survey than freshmen.[6] Most of the successful students responding were born in the state of Oklahoma, with the majority still residing in the county of their birth.[7] Nearly 2/3 of the responders were from small families (2 or fewer siblings) and 3/4 were married.[8] The personal characteristics of the students interviewed had a number of features in common with the total group of successful

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[5]While 28% of the Indian students in the college were male, only 8.5% of the successful Indian students were male. Of the successful students responding to the survey, 98% were female and 2% were male.

[6]57% of the responders were classified as sophomores and 43% as freshmen.

[7]86% were born in Oklahoma, with 60% still residing in their birth county.

[8]38% of the responders came from families that included 3 or more siblings besides themselves; 62% were from families with 2 or fewer additional children; 76 % said they were currently married.

students.[9]

Most of the students identified themselves as at least part Cherokee (82% or 71 students), with the remaining group spread among 8 other tribes. Degree of Indian blood among these students ranged from 4/4 to 1/64. It should be emphasized here that one of the major problems with the entire process undertaken in this study is that degree of Indian blood and, indeed, identity as an Indian, are strictly self-reported. It is entirely possible that had the reporting been other than self-reporting or had the population been restricted to persons of, say, 1/4 or more Indian blood, the results would have been different.

Academic Characteristics

A second part of the research question dealt with the academic characteristics of the successful Indian students. The American Indian students in the study were about evenly divided between full time (12 hours or more) and part time (less than 12 hours)--44 full time (51%) and 43 part time (49%). On the other hand, full time non-Indians comprised only 37% of the non-Indian headcount. Hence, a much higher percentage of the successful American Indian students

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[9]Seven of the eleven students interviewed are "older" or non-traditional students. Their ages range from 25 to 38 with an average of 31. The remaining four students ranged from 18 to 21, with an average age of 19. Six of the students were married, while seven are parents. These proportions are almost identical to those among all successful students responding to the survey.

enrolled were enrolled as full time students.

Not only did a higher proportion of American Indian students enroll full time, but on the average they took more hours per semester than did non-Indian students. Full time Indian students averaged 13.94 credit hours per semester, while full time non-Indian students averaged 13.81 hours; part time Indian students averaged 5.68 hours, and non-Indians (part time) averaged 5.16 hours. Overall (full time and part time combined) Indian students averaged 9.93 hours per semester, and non-Indian students averaged 8.39 hours per semester.

Among the academic characteristics examined was ACT score. One of the standard predictors of college success is the ACT composite score.[10] The average composite score for Indians at this institution was 15.05 and for non-Indians, 16.5. This shows a difference of nearly 1.5 points, a much broader difference than one might expect based on national figures, which indicate a national difference of .5 points between Indian scores and higher, non-Indian scores (Grayson, 1990). According to this predictor, for one reason or another, the Indian students should not do as well in college as the non-Indians. Another academic issue addressed was the size and type of high school attended. The successful students predominately

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[10]Of the students enrolled in this institution in the fall of 1990, 944 (27.6%) had an ACT score on file. 36.2% of the Indians had taken the test, while 26.5% of the non-Indians had a score.

attended high scools with enrollments of 500 or less, and most attended one high school for their entire four years of secondary education.[11] Less than 1% of the students attended BIA high schools; about 2% attended non-BIA private schools. The rest (97%) attended public schools. The average high school GPA reported by these students was 3.0 and the overall college GPA for the group was 3.4. Full time status was reported by 56% of the responding students.

Pre-college preparation in history was another academic characteristic looked at. The students who were successful in college history reported considerable participation in high school history courses. Nearly 90% of those responding had taken 2 or more history classes in high school; over half had taken 3 or more. The most commonly taken high school history course was Oklahoma History, and the least common was modern U.S. history.[12] Performance in the high school courses appears to have been adequate, with over 90% of the students reporting grades in their high school history courses of "C" or better. There seems to be a strong relationship between greater high school preparation in history and success in college history.

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[11]21% attended high schools of 200 or fewer students; 46% attended high schools of 201 to 500 in enrollment; 14% attended high schools of 500 to 1000; and 19% attended high schools of over 1000.

[12]The four courses mentioned most often as those taken in high school (along with the percentage of students reporting taking them) were: Oklahoma history (77.6%); world history (69.5%); early U.S. history (44.7%); and modern U.S. history (23.5%).

It is interesting and ironic, then, to note that though the students earned passing grades in their high school history classes, they consistently reported that their high school history courses inadequately prepared them for college (82%). It is also of interest that despite Oklahoma History being the most often taken high school history course, students repeatedly and strongly reported that the Native American experience was covered little or none in their education (72%), that the Native American experience was "probably" or "definitely" not covered adequately(68%), and that they were "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with the treatment of the Native American in their history classes(62%). A significant number (38%) perceived textbook treatment of the American Indian to be "negative" or "very negative."

Another academic issue addressed by the survey was the approach to history taken in the class. The literature suggests that Indian students not only have a difficult time dealing with the rigidity of class schedules and deadlines but also have a hard time grasping (or identifying with) history as a progression of "events" (see Martin, 1987). Students responding to the survey consistently (94%) reported satisfaction with the teaching methods they encountered in history classes, no matter what they perceived those methods to be--e.g., lecture, discussion, group work, video presentation. It is interesting however that they also consistently (87%) said the classes could be

improved by changes in methods. The most commonly suggested change was "more discussion" (42%), followed by "more outside speakers" (32%) and "more hands-on projects (29%)." The preference for these methods over traditional lecture and reading assignments is wholly in keeping with other research regarding learning styles of American Indian students (Tyon and Newell, 1988). It is apparent that Indian students did not feel free to criticize the methods they were presented with--another cultural trait (Tyon and Newell, 1988)--yet they felt that other methods would be more beneficial to them. Sixty-eight of the students (78%) said that the most difficult part of the history classes they took was the regular reading assignments. Thirteen (15%) reported that attending to video presentations was the most difficult aspect of the courses.

One observation that came out repeatedly in the written comments on the survey (as well as in the interviews) was that the instructor was the key factor in determining how the students felt about the history courses and how much they felt they learned.

A summary of findings of the survey in the area of academic characteristics shows that the successful students

-attended one small high school for most of their secondary education;

-were successful there in history and in their other course work;

-have had considerable exposure to history in high

school;

-nevertheless, continue to feel insecure about their preparation;

-insist that the instructor is the most important aspect of the learning formula in a history classroom;

-consistently hesitate to criticize their teachers in any way;

-express concern that reading is the most difficult part of college history courses.

The interviews tended to reinforce the findings of the mail survey in regard to academic characteristics, with one notable exception. Even when given the opportunity to express themselves freely, without judgment, most of the interviewed students resisted criticizing their prior preparation for college level U.S. history. One student said, "If I wasn't prepared I guess it was really my own fault...They tried to teach me but I just wasn't all that interested...I sort of had to start from scratch, but that was my doing." The one criticism these students offered was expressed in the comment that several made that the history teachers they had experienced in high school had generally been coaches who "didn't really care about teaching history and didn't make it very interesting."

When asked whether they had felt that U.S. history classes, instructors or books had been biased against them because they were American Indian, the students generally indicated that while such discrimination probably exists,

they had not experienced it. These successful students did not perceive themselves as a persecuted minority in their school experience. All the students reported having close friendships with non-Indian students and being well accepted by other students and teachers. As indicated earlier, most of the students interviewed expressed their feeling that the instructor in the history class was the most important factor in determining how much they learned and how they felt in general about the subject matter. Several shared anecdotes about history teachers who "got the students excited about history" as well as stories about "coaches who don't care about history or teaching and are only interested in their sports."

Three of the students interviewed pointed out that they believed the biggest disparity in preparation American Indian students face is one that exists as a result of the rural background of the majority of Indian students. As one student phrased it, "I think the main reason [Indian students] don't do as well in college...is that most go to little [high schools] in little towns that can't afford all the benefits that big city schools provide."

Family Characteristics

The study also looked at family characteristics of the Indian students who were successful in U.S. history. Much

of the literature cited a perceived difference in Indian and white communities in terms of family commitment to formal education and rewards and incentive to complete degrees: in essence, according to those reports the community support for a higher education is lacking in Indian communities. The successful students studied here tended to have parents who had not attended college and siblings who had not graduated from college.[13] The students reported strong moral support from their families for the higher education effort they were engaged in, but very few reported any financial assistance from families.[14] An important finding of the interviews in the area of family characteristics was that the families of the successful students tended to be divided in the way they thought about education and life in general. All of the students interviewed expressed in some way an awareness that they perceived a difference between what one of them called "thinking Indian and thinking White." While they indicated various degrees of pride in

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[13]Nearly 29% of the responding students reported that their mothers attended college, while 15% reported that they graduated from college. 22% of the students reported that their fathers attended college, with 11% reporting they had graduated. 53% of the students reported that at least one sibling had attended college, and 28% had one or more sibling who had been graduated from college. Our findings show that 84% of our successful Indian students had no parent who had graduated from college. Nearly 72% had no sibling who had earned a college degree of any kind (including an associate degree).

[14]Over 91% reported that their families were "happy" or "very happy" about their attending college. Only 2% said that parents were helping pay for college; however, it must be remembered that the average age of the students responding was 30.

their heritage and various levels of involvement in tribal activities, all eleven insisted that they don't "think Indian." Often this assertion was accompanied by comparisons to grandparents or older relatives who were more traditional in view. Even those students who were extremely active in tribal activities and traditional Indian religious ritual insisted that, while they held to those traditions, they also thought differently than their "elders" in regard to education and goals. One of these students expressed it this way:

"The older ones see education as something they [white society] are trying to do to us...I see it as an opportunity I need to take advantage of to be what I want to be. I used to sit around and blame others for me not going anywhere...Now I'm back in school and I'm going to make something of myself. Nobody can do it for me and nobody but me can stop me. The first time I went to college I didn't care and resented the teachers...Now I really want to learn and get prepared to have my own business."

Ten of the eleven students said that they had a high level of encouragement from family for their efforts to get an education. Parents were reported as most influential and/or supportive. In some cases grandparents were seen as somewhat less enthusiastic. Students were asked to describe what family meant to them. Six of the eleven interviewees described the nuclear family traditionally identified with white culture, with father, mother, and one

or more children. This group included all of the students identified elsewhere in the study as having no cultural ties to their heritage.

The other five students depicted an extended family, more consistent with Indian culture, including grandparents, uncles and aunts, inlaws, etc. In discussing this issue, several of the students indicated that they believed that Indians in rural communities tended to have a stronger identification with their extended families, while Indians residing in cities tended to lose that identity and instead focus on the immediate family. The one outspoken exception to that "rule" was the 4/4 male Cherokee student who lived in a city and made a "real effort to stay involved with [his] family," meaning the extended family. When asked what he meant by staying involved, he described a regimen of gathering on family land once or twice monthly for "stomp dances," at least once monthly for religious ceremonies, and at least once or twice a year for a major religious "festival" where family members sought spiritual guidance for the year to come and "take medicine" to purify themselves from their failings in the year past.

Cultural Characteristics

The fourth aspect of the research question dealt with the cultural characteristics of the successful students. There was an attempt to try to determine how "culturally

Indian" a particular student was and to correlate that determination with his/her success or failure. The questions on the survey designed to accomplish this purpose asked about degree of Indian heritage, tribal identification, and participation in tribal and cultural activities. Since approximately 96% of the responding students were identified as Cherokee (or some degree of Cherokee), it was not statistically possible to extract a relationship between tribe and participation or heritage. Furthermore, there was no obvious relationship between any of these factors and academic performance. 52% of the successful students indicated that they did not participate in tribal activities. There was no correlation between degree of Indian heritage and tribal participation, with one exception: all successful students who claimed a 4/4 Indian heritage also indicated extensive participation in tribal activities.

The interviews gave further insight into the cultural characteristics of the successful students. Several of the students interviewed were not raised in Indian families. Four of the students interviewed were adopted, three of them by white families. Another student was living with her natural parents who, although Indian, indicated that they were totally "Anglicized" and not only did not participate in tribal activities but did not really "see themselves as Indians at all." Although these students were genetically Indian--ranging from 7/8 to 1/2 Indian blood--, they were

not culturally Indian in any way. Each expressed in some way the feeling they had in studying the history of American Indians that they were "on the outside, not really connected to those people." These students tended to express some "sympathy" for American Indians in society but no real identification with them. Two indicated that in recent years they had had some reawakening of interest in their heritage, but not all were proud to be Indian. One of these students reported that when classmates in grade school or high school asked her about her racial make-up (due to her appearance), she sometimes told them she was "Mexican instead of Indian, since Indians have such a low reputation around this area."

Another group among those interviewed were successful Indian students who had been raised by their natural parents and who had had some degree of connection with their Indian heritage but did not see themselves as "culturally Indian." Six of the eleven students interviewed fit into this category. In degree of Indian heritage, they ranged from 1/8 to 5/8. All reported at least "some" participation in tribal activities. This participation generally amounted to attendance at pow-wow or stomp-dance activities once or twice a year. One of these students reported taking some leadership in these activities, having learned to speak her tribal language and to "sign" certain ceremonies at pow-wows. In general these students have fewer of the typical physical characteristics identified with American Indians, a

number having blond hair and blue eyes, and therefore they reported that few of their friends or teachers had any idea that they had Indian heritage unless they volunteered the information. One of these students reported that she was actually discriminated against at Indian activities because she "looked white instead of Indian." The discrimination took the form of challenges to her right to attend and/or participate in certain of the "closed" rites.

A third "group" actually consisted of one student. He was unique in several ways. He was the only male interviewed. He was the only 4/4 Indian interviewed. Of the students interviewed, he was the one with the most extensive participation in tribal activities. He was also one of the most highly motivated of the students interviewed. This student was 31 years old and was a returning student in higher education. Immediately after being graduated from high school, he attended a post-secondary "Vo-Tech" school in which the student body was approximately 60% American Indian. He reported that he was more interested in socializing than learning and found it necessary to drop out due to failing grades. Since then he has married, had two children and has become successful as a supervisor in a small business in the city in which he lives. This success has motivated him to desire to own and manage his own business. He has returned to college to gain the knowledge and skills he believes he will need to be effective in that role. He is extremely committed to

learning all he can. He works part time and receives some financial aid. This young man is probably the most motivated of the students interviewed. He is also the most "culturally Indian," participating not only in regular family and tribal "stomp dances" but also in American Indian religious ritual and in various large scale pow-wow activities.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This research project was designed to make possible a description of the "typical" American Indian student in U.S. history classes in a comprehensive two-year college in Oklahoma. It involved a search of the institution's data base of all students to glean general information about all the American Indian students in the college, a mail survey of American Indian students identified as "successful" by the definition chosen for the study, and interviews of a sample of the successful students responding to the survey. The results of these three data-gathering processes give a fairly thorough picture of the successful American Indian U.S.history student.

In the student body of 3500 students, 11% (385) were American Indian. Of the Indian students, 34% (129) had completed U.S. history with a grade of "B" or better and were identified as "successful." All of this group of successful students were surveyed, with a total of 87 surveys returned and usable. Eleven students were randomly selected to be interviewed in a semi-structured format. Four types of charcteristics were looked at: personal, academic, family, and cultural.

In personal characteristics, it was found that 28% (108) of the Indians in the student body were male, 8.5% (11) of the successful Indian group were male, and 2% (2) of those who responded to the survey were male. One male was interviewed. Of the students responding to the survey, 86% (75) were born in Oklahoma and 60% (52) were still living in the county of their birth. Eighty-two percent (71) identified themselves as Cherokee, with degree of Indian blood ranging from 1/64 to 4/4. These successful students were predominately from families of two or fewer siblings and 76% (66) were married. Their average age was 30.

51% (44) of the successful Indian students were full time, and those full time Indian students were enrolled in an average of nearly 14 credit hours per semester. The successful students had an average ACT composite score of just over 15. Of this group, 67% (58) had attended a high school with an enrollment under 500. 90% (78) of these students had earned a "C" or better in at least 2 high school history courses, yet 82% (71) said they were inadequately prepared for college history.

70% (68) of the responding successful Indian students had no parent who had attended college and 85% (74) had no parent who had graduated from college. The students reported a high level of moral support from families for their effort to get a higher education, but very few reported any financial aid from families.

The interviews in particular showed a clear feeling on

the part of the students that they were successful because they "don't think Indian." Few of them reported any heavy involvement or identification with their cultural heritage.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Research

An effort was made to develop a composite description of the successful Indian student in U.S. history at this institution. That student is first of all female. She is 30 years old, probably married and is most likely a full time student. Full time or not, she is certainly enrolled in more hours than her non-Indian counterpart. This student is from a family that is not particularly tied to "traditional" Indian values, though there is probably a grandparent or other person in the extended family who is much more committed to the "old ways." Therefore, her family is generally supportive of her effort to get an education, despite the likelihood that no one in the immediate family has yet been graduated from an institution of higher learning. Though they support her goals, her family, including extended family, is largely unable to assist her financially, so she is paying for her education with a combination of grants, loans, scholarships and her own work and savings.

The successful student is probably a high school graduate (as opposed to a GED holder) and had a B average in high school. She attended the same high school, a small

public school in a rural community, for the entire four years, and she feels that the school adequately prepared her for college. She was more likely than her non-Indian class mates to have taken the ACT and to have earned an average score slightly below that of successful non-Indian students.

As a college student, she has continued to perform well, with a strong B average in all courses, including history. She is satisfied with the methods used to instruct her history classes (primarily lecture) and for the most part feels the material is presented in a balanced, objective manner.

The successful Indian student is not especially involved in tribal activities, although she occasionally participates. Indeed, though she identifies herself as "Indian," she is not culturally Indian to any great degree, openly expressing her belief that she does not "think Indian." She has seen little, if any, discrimination due to her race.

The most significant conclusion drawn from this research is that three important factors appear to impact the success of American Indian students in college U.S. history classes. The greatest single factor related to that success may well be gender. A second very important factor appears to be a conscious commitment to a specific, long term goal that is perceived to be enabled by a higher education. The third strong factor that seems to accompany success is the individual's belief about self (however that

belief may have been engendered) that he/she does not "think Indian."

Beyond the composite description, a few other conclusions can be ventured. One is that gender is clearly related to the success of American Indian students in U.S. history at this institution. Further research on the role of gender in academic success of Indians would seem to be called for.

Another conclusion is that the students clearly perceive that there is a difference between the way Indians think and the way non-Indians think.

An additional conclusion that should be drawn from this study is that the results would quite possibly be much different if the process of defining "Indian" had been handled differently. All of these students were self-identified as American Indian, and there was no restriction or guidance as to degree of Indian blood. Had the study been limited to students with more than, say, 1/4 Indian heritage, there might have been a much different outcome. Further study with this issue in mind would be helpful in clarifying factors pertaining to successful American Indian student.

The study raises some additional cultural questions that merit further investigation. For example, do Indians from different tribes respond to higher education differently? What is the impact of being raised by natural parents as opposed to adopted parents? Does being raised in

a city as opposed to a rural setting have as much importance as the students interviewed asserted? What are the differences between successful reservation and successful non-reservation Indians? Fianlly, this study has not even scratched the surface of the very important question of what these successful students do after community college. All of these questions and many more need to be addressed.

Much attention is given in research to the failure of American Indian students in higher education. Suggestions are offered to remediate the tragic situation. But higher education leaders must not lose sight of the fact that there are many successful American Indian students in colleges around the country. Attention to the characteristics of those who are already successful may help teachers of Indian students--both in college and in preparatory schools--better work with the students they have in the cultural environment in which they find them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LITERATURE ON THE HISTORY OF INDIAN EDUCATION

A number of good general histories are available about Indian history that deal thoroughly with the issue of education, and specifically higher education. Phillip Weeks has written two of the best sources available: Farewell, My Nation: The American Indian and the United States (1990) and The American Indian Experience (1988). Both works not only give a thorough general sense of the character of the relationship of the American Indian people with the dominant white society, but also deal in some detail with the educational experience of Native Americans in specific. A work of similar scope and quality is Indians in American History (1988) by Frederick Hoxie. Hoxie focuses a little more on tying the Indian saga into the mainstream of American History throughout his narrative, but he covers Indian education at about the same level as Weeks.

A pair of historical works that are general but more focused than those already mentioned are The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence (1988) by Stephen Cornell and Red Power: The American Indian's Fight for Freedom (1971), written by Alvin M. Josephy. These books emphasize the struggle by American Indians for self determination and political power, an issue which has had significant impact on approaches to Indian Education.

A final general history is one edited by Calvin Martin (The American Indian and the Problem of History) which deals not so much with the history of Indians as with the Indian view of history. It is a very important work and one which is foundational to an understanding of Indian education.

There are several good historical studies available that look specifically at Indian education. Thomas Thompson has edited a useful work entitled The Schooling of Native America (1978). Thompson has included an especially helpful chronology of events in the history of American Indian education, as well as an excellent bibliography of books and periodicals relating to the topic. A second, similar history of Indian education is American Indian Education (1946) by Evelyn C. Adams. Though the work obviously does not deal with more recent events and issues, it does an fine job giving a sense of the role of the U.S. government in the development of Indian education. Adams also stresses the relationship between Indian education and Indian economic progress. The work includes a thorough bibliography, limited in usefulness only by the early date of publication.

A more recent look at the history of Indian education is found in Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928 (1977), by Margaret Connell Szasz. Szasz details the significant evolution in U.S. policy toward American Indians since the Great Depression and takes a focused look at the impact of that policy change on the nature, structure, and efficacy of Indian education.

The book includes a very thorough bibliography that picks up where earlier ones leave off and covers much of what was published through 1976.

Besides the general history works that deal with American Indian education, there are some that take a more regional approach to the history of Indian education. William Griffin has done a brief review of Indian higher education in Nebraska in "What is a Nebraska Indian Community College?" (1982). While Griffin focuses on one institution, the piece makes clear the kinds of issues that are of concern in Indian education in a state such as Nebraska. Peter Schmidt takes a similar approach in "Dispute Over Indian Education in Minnesota" (1989), here focusing on one particular issue but touching a whole range of educational concerns of American Indians in his state.

Recent study on Indian education and achievement among Indian students in higher education has found a major focus on one particular historical issue: that of "control" of educational institutions. Considerable work has been done in documenting the changes through the years of policy and practice in regard to control of Indian schools with a view toward determining what impact controlling their own schools has had on the outcomes of Indian education. Much of the work has been published in Canadian journals, particularly the Canadian Journal of Native Education. Several articles in that publication provide pieces of the total picture of the evolution of the control issue: "Indian Control of

Indian Education" (1983), by Iris Yuzdepski; "The Case for Band Controlled Schools" (1984), by Syd Pauls; "Indian Control of Indian Education: A Burkian Interpretation" (1985), by Bryan Cummins; and "Tribally Controlled Community Colleges" (1987), by Bobby Wright. These articles all deal to some extent with the question of control of Indian education in general, with the historical development of the current practices, and with studies comparing the students in both types of situations to draw conclusions about which system produces better educational outcomes. The studies tend to be rather informal and seem to be aimed at proving the point that tribal control is superior.

One useful article in this area is a piece by Norman T. Oppelt entitled "The Tribally Controlled Colleges in the 1980's: Higher Education's Best Kept Secret" (1984). This research focuses more specifically on United States institutions and Indian Tribes. While its primary point is that educators and the public know very little about the existence of tribally controlled schools, the article also includes a brief discussion of the advantages of tribal control.

APPENDIX B

A DISCUSSION OF DEFINITIONS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There are several possible measures of success/failure in the courses these students have taken. The most obvious--and most easily obtained--is the cumulative GPA. The college grades student performance on a 4.0 scale, with 4 points given for a grade of "A" in a class of one credit hour. The average cumulative GPA for all students at this institution was 2.59. Non-Indians had a GPA of 2.62, while Indian students showed a GPA of 2.38, which was approximately 9% lower than that of the non-Indians. These figures would seem to indicate less success in classes.

Another possible measure of success in college classes is graduation. National studies show that only 27.3% of American Indian students entering college earn degrees, and that over 50% drop out in their first year (Wells, 1988). An analysis of the numbers graduating from the study institution should indicate something about their success.

Because of the nature of this school's mission and due to its location (among other factors), the school has a relatively low number of graduates. A look at records back to 1985 (when such records were first computerized) showed a total of 1,684 graduates in 5

years. Of that number 1502 (89%) were non-Indians and 182(11%) were American Indian. Therefore, though the number of Indian graduates at the school seems low, the strong correlation between this percentage and the proportion of the student body comprised of Indians (11.13%) would indicate that by the measure of percentage of graduates, Indian students are about as successful as non-Indian students.

Since the institution under study does not have a high number of graduates in any given year, a more telling measure of success might be the number of students completing their 60th hour of course work in a given semester. Studies of Indian success/failure in higher education indicate that approximately two-thirds of Indian students entering higher education institutions drop out. Therefore, the completion of 60 or more hours at a community college would seem to indicate a reasonable degree of perseverance and success. In the fall of 1990 (the semester from which most of the data in this study is drawn) 419 students completed their 60th college credit hour. Of that group, 46(11%) were American Indian and 373(89%) were non-Indian. Once again, it is interesting to note that these proportions are altogether consistent with the proportion of Indians to non-Indians in the student body at large, which could be an indication of a rate of success of Indian students roughly equivalent to that of

non-Indian students.

A third possible measure of success is the percentage of students failing one or more courses. This figure could certainly be influenced by an institution's approach to assessment and placement, by the school's philosophy of remediation within given courses, and by the rigor or lack of rigor in the courses themselves; therefore, it should not be seen as a useful comparison to other institutions. However, since both Indian and non-Indian students within the school are subject to the same policies, a look at failing grades should clearly say something about relative success of the two groups. In the semester under study, 6.8% of the American Indian students failed one or more classes. On the other hand, only 4.4% of the non-Indian students failed courses. By this measure, Indian students would seem to be less successful.

Often, students avoid failing a course by dropping out of that course. In the fall of 1990, one course was dropped by 16.4% of the American Indian students, while 18.8% of the non-Indians dropped one course. Two courses were dropped by 7% of the Indians and by 6.8% of the non-Indians. Three courses were dropped by 6.5% of the Indian students and by 3% of the non-Indian students. Four courses were dropped by 7% of the Indian students and by 2.6% of the non-Indian students. In

addition, 7% of the Indian students enrolled full time dropped all their classes, and 5.6% of the non-Indian students in the same situation took similar action. While dropping a course is not a clear indication of failure, logic would indicate that in at least some of the cases, there is a connection.

APPENDIX C

GENERAL FINDINGS ABOUT ALL INDIAN STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE

In the fall of 1990, there were 643 students enrolled in U.S. History classes at the college. Two hundred-one (31%) were enrolled in the "early" half of history--up to 1865. The "late" half--since 1865--had an enrollment of 442 (69%).

Twenty-four percent of the Indian students attending the college were enrolled in a history class; 19% of the non-Indian students were in history. American Indian students made up 17% of those enrolled in early U.S. history, 13% of those in the late half.

And how did the Indian students perform in history classes, as compared to the non-Indian students? 17.5% of the Indian students earned an "A," while 31.9% of the non-Indians earned that grade. "B's" were earned by 16.5% of the Indians and by 22.5% of the non-Indians. A grade of "C" was earned by 17% of the Indians and by 14% of the non-Indians. Four percent of both groups earned "D's" in history, and "F's" were earned by 3% of the Indians and by .5% of the non-Indians. 40% of the Indian students dropped history, while 22.8% of the non-

Indian students dropped.

The average grade of the Indian students who completed the history class was 2.66 on a 4 point scale. Non-Indian students completing the course averaged 2.94. This grade difference is consistent with the overall GPA difference observed between Indian and non-Indian students, but when one considers the high number of Indians dropping history, it would appear to confirm the perception that American Indian students do not do as well as non-Indians in college work in general and in U.S. history in particular.

APPENDIX D

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

1. Age

2. Sex
   A.__Male
   B.__Female

3. Classification
   A.__ 1st Semester Freshman
   B.__ 2nd Semester Freshman
   C.__ 1st Semester Sophomore
   D.__ 2nd Semester Sophomore
   E.__ Other
   (Explain)_____

4. State and county of birth.
   _____

5. State and county where you now live.
   _____

6. Tribal affiliation._____

7. Approximate degree of American Indian Heritage._____

8. How much do you participate in tribal activities?
   A.__much
   B.__some
   C.__a little
   D.__none

9. From what High School did you graduate?_____

9A. Which of the following phrases best describes the high school you graduated from?
   A.___It was a public high school
   B.___It was a Bureau of Indian Affairs school
   C.___It was a non-BIA private school

10. Approximately how many students attended the high school you graduated from?
   A.___Less than 100
   B.___101-200

C.___201-500
D.___501-1000
E.___1001-2000
F.___Over 2000

11. How many high schools did you attend from 9th grade to 12th grade?
A.__1
B.__2
C.__3
D.__4
E.__5 or more

12. How many High School history courses did you take?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3
E.__4 or more

13. Which of the following High School history courses did you take? (check all that apply)
A.__ U.S.History from Discovery to the Present
B.__ U.S.History from Discovery to the Civil War Period
C.__ U.S.History from the Civil War Period to the Present
D.__ World History
E.__ Oklahoma History
F.__ Other (please explain)_____

14. In which of the following High School history courses did you earn a grade of "C" or better?
A.__ U.S.History from Discovery to the Present
B.__ U.S.History from Discovery to the Civil War Period
C.__ U.S.History from the Civil War Period to the Present
D.__ World History
E.__ Oklahoma History
F.__ Other (please explain)_____

15. Did you take a Geography course in High School?
A.__Yes
B.__No

16. What was your grade average in High School?
A.__A
B.__B
C.__C
D.__D

17. How many college credit hours have you taken before this semester?

A.__0-9
B.__10-15
C.__16-21
D.__22-30
E.__more than 30

18. How many college credit hours have you passed before this semester?
A.__0-9
B.__10-15
C.__16-21
D.__22-30
E.__more than 30

19. In how many college credit hours have you earned a grade of "C" or better?
A.__0-9
B.__10-15
C.__16-21
D.__22-30
E.__more than 30

20. Did your mother attend college?
A.__Yes
B.__No

21. Did your mother graduate from college?
A.__Yes
B.__No

22. If your mother graduated from college, what is the highest degree she attained?
A.__Associate Degree (Jr. College)
B.__Bachelor Degree (4 Year College)
C.__Master Degree (Graduate School)
D.__Specialist Degree
E.__Doctoral Degree

23. Did your father attend college?
A.__Yes
B.__No

24. Did your father graduate from college?
A.__Yes
B.__No

25. If your father graduated from college, what is the highest degree he attained?
A.__Associate Degree (Jr. College)
B.__Bachelor Degree (4 Year College)

C.__Master Degree (Graduate School)
D.__Specialist Degree
E.__Doctoral Degree

26. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3
E.__4 or more

27. How many of your brothers and sisters have attended college?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3
E.__4 or more

28. How many of your brothers and sisters have graduated from college?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3
E.__4 or more

29. How are you paying for your college education (check all that apply)?
A.__Parents are paying
B.__I work
C.__Savings
D.__Grant
E.__Scholarship
F.__Loan
G.__Other (please explain)_____

30. How does your family feel about your attending college?
A.__they are very happy about it
B.__they are happy about it
C.__they think it is OK
D.__they are unhappy about it
E.__they are very unhappy about it

31. How many college history classes have you taken before this semester?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3

E.__4 or more

32. How many college history classes have you passed before this semester?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3
E.__4 or more

33. How many college history classes are you taking this semester?
A.__0
B.__1
C.__2
D.__3
E.__4 or more

34. Which college history classes have you taken before this semester?
A.__U.S.History to 1865
B.__U.S.History from 1865
C.__Recent U.S.History
D.__English History
E.__World History/World Civilization
F.__European History
G.__Oklahoma History
H.__Other (please explain)_____

_____

35. In which college history classes did you earn a "C" or better?
A.__U.S.History to 1865
B.__U.S.History from 1865
C.__Recent U.S.History
D.__English History
E.__World History/World Civilization
F.__European History
G.__Oklahoma History
H.__Other (please explain)_____

_____

36. How would you describe the method of teaching the U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__All Lecture
B.__Mostly Lecture

C.__Lecture and Discussion
D.__Mostly Discussion
E.__Mostly Video Presentations
F.__Other (Please explain)_____

37. How did you feel about the teaching methods used in the U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__I liked the methods very much
B.__I liked the Methods
C.__The methods were OK
D.__I disliked the methods
E.__I disliked the methods very much

38. Which of the following best describes the impact on your learning of the methods of teaching used in U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__The methods helped me learn
B.__The methods did not help or hurt my learning
C.__The methods hurt my learning

39. Which of the following activities did you consider to be the most difficult for you in the U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__Listening to lecture and taking notes
B.__Studying the Textbook and assigned reading
C.__Preparing for and taking the tests
D.__Coming to class regularly
E.__Participating in class discussion
F.__Other (please explain)_____

40. What methods or activities do you believe would have helped you learn more in the U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__More lecture
B.__More discussion
C.__More audio-visual presentations
D.__More writing
F.__More outside speakers
G.__Other (please explain)_____

41. How much was the Native American experience and history dealt with in the U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__A lot
B.__Some
C.__A little
D.__None

42. Do you believe the Native American experience and history was adequately covered in the U.S.History classes you have taken?

A.__Definitely Yes
B.__Probably Yes
C.__Not Sure
D.__Probably No
E.__Definitely No

43. In what periods of U.S.History was the Native American experience and history covered in the U.S.History classes you have taken? (check all that apply)
A.__Exploration and colonization period
B.__1800's before the Civil War
C.__1800's after the Civil War
D.__Early 1900's
E.__Recent 1900's
F.__It was not covered

44. In what periods of U.S.History was the Native American experience and history covered <u>adequately</u> in the U.S.History classes you have taken?
A.__Exploration and colonization period
B.__1800's before the Civil War
C.__1800's after the Civil War
D.__Early 1900's
E.__Recent 1900's
F.__It was not covered

45. How would you describe the attitude of U.S.History textbooks you have read toward the Native American?
A.__Very positive
B.__Positive
C.__neutral
D.__Negative
E.__Very negative
F.__I don't know

46. How would you describe the attitude of U.S.History teachers you have had toward the Native American experience and history?
A.__Very positive
B.__Positive
C.__neutral
D.__Negative
E.__Very negative
F.__I don't know

47. How do you feel about the treatment of the subject of the Native American in U.S.History classes that you have taken?
A.__Very satisfied
B.__Satisfied
C.__Not sure
D.__Dissatisfied
E.__Very dissatisfied

48. Do you think U.S.History should be required of all students?
A.__Definitely Yes
B.__Probably yes
C.__Not sure
D.__Probably no
E.__Definitely no

--Please briefly explain your answer to the above question. If you answered "yes", why? If you answered "no", why not?

49. Do you think the topics covered in U.S.History classes should be changed?
A.__Definitely Yes
B.__Probably yes
C.__Not sure
D.__Probably no
E.__Definitely no

--If you answered "yes" to #49, please briefly explain how the topics should be changed.

50. Do you think the methods used to teach U.S. History should be changed?
A.__Definitely Yes
B.__Probably yes
C.__Not sure
D.__Probably no
E.__Definitely no

--If you answered "yes" to #50, please briefly explain how the methods should be changed.

51. As you think about your feelings toward U.S.History classes, list 3 to 5 describing words that tell how <u>you feel</u> about those classes.

-
-
-
-
-

52. What would you like this researcher to know about the U.S.History classes you have taken? (Use the back or other paper if necessary)

53. What is your approximate Grade Point Average for all classes?

___A
___B
___C
___D
___F

54. What is your approximate Grade Point Average for all history classes you have taken?

___A
___B
___C
___D
___F

VITA

Gary E. Thompson

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS IN U.S. HISTORY CLASSES AT A COMPREHENSIVE TWO-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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