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Factors that influence transfer students' success in Iowa State University's journalism and communication program

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Factors that influence transfer students' success in Iowa State University's journalism and communication program

by

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the demographic and academic profiles of students who transferred to the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University. The three-part questionnaire sent out in an e-mail census of all transfer students in the School by the end of AY 2005-2006 also assessed the level of preparation they received in their basic reporting and writing course, their satisfaction with the academic climate in the Greenlee School in particular and Iowa State in general, and identified what factors influenced their success at a four-year undergraduate program as measured by their GPA. The electronic questionnaire was sent to 147 transfer students. The response rate was 32.65%.

The results show that journalism and mass communication transfer students were relatively young (average age is 22 years old), mostly Caucasian females who were single and had no children. They came from all over Iowa, but mainly attended the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) before coming to ISU, and had an annual income of less than $20,000 per year. Over 60 percent of them took the basic reporting and writing class at Iowa State, about a third had high school media experience, and close to half were involved in college media. Their average grade point average was 2.85.

Those who took basic reporting and writing outside ISU rated their experience more favorably than those who took the course at the Greenlee School. The largest variance in the evaluations of the course was in the areas of computer and problem-solving skills acquisition.

The transfer students indicate they are well adjusted to Iowa State socially and academically, and were satisfied with the amount of faculty contact, quality of instruction, and their overall experience in the Greenlee School.

The variables that had a significant positive influence on their GPA had to do with their perception of the social and academic climate in the Greenlee School. Specifically, these were the level and kind of interaction they have had with other students and the ease with which they made friends. Experiencing a grade dip during their first semester at ISU and the opportunities to meet as many people as they would like significantly deflated their GPA. The level of interaction with other students within the university as a whole significantly contributed to an increase in GPA, but the community service opportunities on campus was found to be a significant negative predictor of GPA.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Today's job market is fierce. It is especially competitive for new graduates in the field of journalism and mass communication thousands of which turn out every year all over the US eager for that first job. The extent of the competition has many new graduates wondering if they have been adequately trained and if they have an edge over the competition. Many colleges and universities share these concerns and wonder if their curriculum is challenging and focused enough to ensure their students' success. The Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University is no exception.

The Greenlee School assesses its academic programs guided by its mission statement articulated in the beginning of its Governance Document (Greenlee School, 2005), to wit:

The Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication is committed to a philosophy that draws its goals from the larger purpose of a land grant university as well as its accrediting organization, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Communication (ACEJMC). The School strives to serve the students, the university, professional communicators, and the general public of Iowa, the nation, and the world through teaching, scholarship, service and professional outreach activities that:

1. *educate students for careers in the journalism and communication profession;*
2. *promote an understanding and appreciation of the First Amendment and the role of journalism and communication in all societies;*
3. *foster scholarship that contributes to the building of theory and helps to improve journalism and communication performance;*
4. *emphasize communication in an increasingly diverse and multicultural world;*
5. *increase accountability and ethical performance; and*
6. *contribute to increased communication effectiveness in a fast-changing technological society (Greenlee School, 2005).*

This mission statement encapsulates a promise to do its best to prepare students to become successful journalism and communication practitioners and scholars.

The Greenlee School maintains strict requirements for admitting undergraduate students to its programs. The first prerequisite is a score of 26 or higher on the American College Test (ACT) English examination, or a score of 590 on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) verbal exam. Otherwise, applicants must pass an English Usage Test (EUT) administered by the School to incoming majors.

The EUT tests competency in basic English language skills, such as grammar, punctuation, word use, and spelling. The test consists of 80 multiple-choice items of which students must correctly answer 56 to pass. Students in the two majors the School offers, journalism and mass communication and advertising, have four opportunities to pass the test. Once they register for Jl MC 110, the undergraduate orientation class, they earn three additional times to satisfactorily take the EUT. All other students, including minors, will have three opportunities to pass the EUT (Greenlee School, 2005).

In order to become a journalism and mass communication or advertising major, a student must also successfully complete Jl MC 201, Basic Reporting and Writing for the Mass Media, a class that all Greenlee majors must pass with a grade of a C+ or higher.

According to the 2005-2007 Iowa State University catalog of undergraduate and graduate programs, Jl MC 201 entails "generating story ideas, exercising news judgment, and gathering information via interviews, observation and documentary sources to produce news and informational material for the mass media. Emphasis is placed on the understanding and analysis of the principles of good writing" (p. 275). In short, the basic reporting and writing course teaches reporting and writing skills necessary to communicate effectively using the print, broadcast, and online media (Langager, 2003). According to Jan Lavile, a basic reporting and writing course lecturer, the course is demanding, rigorous and rewarding, with many in-class

deadlines. Indeed, basic reporting and writing are skills that are mandatory in all subsequent journalism and advertising courses.

Ken Sidey, who teaches a section of the basic reporting and writing class, highlighted the core values and competencies he wants to instill in his students:

1. ***History/role of professionals and institutions:*** *demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communication;*

2. ***First Amendment and ethic:*** *Understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice; work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;*

3. ***Theory:*** *Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;*

4. ***Research and evaluation:*** *Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communication professions in which they will work;*

5. ***Diversity:*** *Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications;*

6. ***Work ethically****: Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;*

7. ***Critical evaluation:*** *Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;*

8. ***Writing:*** *Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communication professions, audiences and purposes they serve;*

9. ***Numbers and statistics****: Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;*

10. ***Tools and technology****: Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communication professions in which they will work;*

11. ***Visual communication:*** *Conceptualize, prepare or select appropriate methods to convey information in visual form, whether as a complement or supplement to words.*

Although the School prefers its majors to experience the basic reporting and writing course at Iowa State, the course can be taken at other Iowa colleges and universities. Basic reporting and writing credits from educational institutions outside of Iowa State are then transferred to the

Greenlee School under what is known as the Articulation Agreement. This cooperative agreement facilitates the transfer of students from other institutions to Iowa State University. Because of such an agreement, a student is assured that courses completed at other institutions will transfer and satisfy specified degree requirements at ISU (ISU Admissions Website, 2005).

There are a number of educational institutions offering basic writing and reporting classes and because of this, School administrators are concerned about the extent to which students' exposure to the skills and concepts taught in this course are consistent across the state and whether transfer students are adequately prepared to succeed in the upper-level courses of four-year journalism and mass communication programs. What fuels this concern is the intermittent observation that transfer students who experienced the basic reporting and writing class elsewhere lack basic training in grammar, punctuation, word usage, and spelling.

This study attempts to assist in determining whether there is consistency in the skills being taught as part of the basic reporting and writing class at Iowa State and at other colleges and universities as specified in the Articulation Agreement. Are there educational units that consistently score low?

Finally, this study aims to gain insight as to the transfer students' assessment of their level of preparation for four-year journalism programs and their experience at Iowa State in general. What factors influence their success in Iowa State's journalism and advertising programs?

The findings of this study aim to help Iowa educational institutions to streamline the concepts and skills expected to be taught in basic reporting and writing classes across the state. The results are expected to provide insights as to how the college experience can be made

meaningful to transfer students who are often non-traditional students aspiring for journalism and advertising careers.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic success in four-year institutions has been one of the important standards for assessing the achievement of community college transfer students. Studies (e.g., Moumouris, 1997; Underwood, 1999) agree that community college grade point averages are good predictors of transfer students' academic performance at senior institutions. Egemba (1997), for example, found that the community college grade point average has the strongest influence on a transfer student receiving a bachelor's degree. Boswell (1992) in a North Carolina study found that community college transfer students earned significantly higher grade point averages than did "native" students. In Boswell's study (1992), the academic performance of community college transfer students in upper division course work was found to be at par with "native" students.

Community Colleges

These results can be explained by the fact that community colleges and other two-year institutions have experienced tremendous growth over the past decade. They make up over one quarter of all post-secondary institutions; they have been described as the fastest growing area in higher education (Pascarella, 1999). Enrollment at community colleges is increasing at a rate of 32% compared to only 23% annually at four-year colleges and universities (Pascarella, 1999). Clearly, community colleges in the United States are attracting the majority of first-year higher education students. Because most of these students plan to transfer to four-year colleges or universities, it is important that higher education professionals be aware of these students' characteristics and needs (Rhine, Milligan, & Nelson, 2000).

The environment that students encounter at community colleges tends to differ significantly from that of four-year institutions. Community colleges foster an atmosphere that aids students in developing the skills they will need to succeed at four-year institutions and

beyond (Piland, 1995). There are many positive factors that enhance student learning and development at community colleges. For example, their small class sizes provide students the opportunity for individualized attention from faculty members (Piland, 1995). In addition, community colleges tend to focus on faculty members' accessibility and interpersonal teaching skills rather than on research and publication, thus creating an outstanding level of instruction (Piland, 1995).

Most college students find financing their education to be a crucial issue, and community colleges provide an economical means to pursue higher education. Indeed, two-year colleges are considered the most cost-effective way to begin one's pursuit of a bachelor's degree (Pascarella, 1999).

Finally, an important characteristic of community colleges is the safe haven they provide for students to explore their educational goals. While students pursue their associate's degree, they are able to determine whether a bachelor's degree is a realistic goal (Pascarella, 1999). Community college students can use their time to begin their career exploration process, causing them to experience less career indecision or uncertainty once they enter a four-year institution. This clarification of academic and career goals is one factor affecting student's attendance patterns at community colleges (Rhine, Milligan, & Nelson, 2000).

Most first-year community college students initially plan to later attend a four-year college or university. However, some may decide later that it is neither realistic nor necessary to pursue a bachelor's degree. Additionally, community college students often stop and restart their studies as they pursue their associate's degree (Fredrickson, 1998). This sometimes erratic enrollment pattern, combined with the exploration of academic goals, may be the reasons why students at community colleges are 20% to 30% more likely to decide against pursuing a

bachelor's degree than students who begin their college careers at four-year institutions (Pascarella, 1999).

Constraints Faced by Transfer Students

Students who attend community colleges tend to differ in many social aspects from students at four-year colleges and universities. These differences are noted to affect student academic persistence and academic patterns. Of these, student age may be the most obvious difference. Community college students often are older than traditional students who enter college directly from high school (Pascarella, 1999). Piland (1995) notes that students transferring from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities ranged from age 16 to 49; the mean age when transferring ranged from 22 to 26 (Fredrickson, 1998; Piland, 1995). The majority of students are 30 years old, instead of the traditional 22 years old, when they complete their bachelor's degree (Piland, 1995). This discrepancy may in part be due to sporadic enrollment, with the typical community college student skipping semesters, even for years at a time (Rhine, Milligan, & Nelson, 2000).

Although age may be the most visible social difference, there are other factors that differentiate these two types of students. Community college students are often from working-class backgrounds that necessitate their working full-time or part-time while they attend college (Pascarella, 1999). The time pressures of work limit the coursework they complete each semester. There is a great chance that community college students are non-residents who must pay their own living expenses and are more likely to be non-white and first-generation higher education students than their counterparts at four-year institutions (Pascarella, 1999). As a result of these financial and cultural factors, community college students often have difficulty balancing their coursework with the demands of work and family obligations (Fredrickson,

1998). Students who transfer into the Greenlee programs at Iowa State are not immune to these financial challenges.

Community college students who plan to transfer to a four-year college or university face a variety of obstacles in their academic pursuits. Community college academic achievement is a reliable indicator of a student's potential for earning a bachelors degree (Pascarella, Smart, & Ethington, 1986). Additionally, student academic success as demonstrated by grade point average and the completion of the maximum amount of transferable credit hours at a community college predict student persistence in completing a bachelor's degree (Piland, 1995). Achieving these is the first obstacle transfer students face.

The majority of transfer students does not complete community college coursework in two years and, therefore, are unable to complete a bachelor's degree in four years (Piland, 1995). There are a variety of reasons why students extend the time it takes to complete their degree programs. First, they may delay entering a two-year college following high school (Piland, 1995). Second, community college students typically alternate between part-time and full-time enrollment. On average, community college students often complete fewer than 15 credit hours each semester (Piland, 1995). Third, students may change or even reverse their academic and career paths during their stay at the community college (Fredrickson, 1998). Finally, before enrolling at a four-year college or university, students may also choose to delay a year or more because of social demands. Only one-third of community college students go directly to four-year institutions. However, a study of North Carolina community college students pursuing associate's degrees reported that 95% transferred to a four-year college or university within four years of attending a community college (Fredrickson, 1998). Once students transfer to a four-year institution, they generally complete their degree in a timely manner (Piland, 1995).

As mentioned earlier, students at community colleges initially are less likely than their counterparts at four-year institutions to pursue a bachelor's degree (Pascarella, 1986). Additionally, transfer students may encounter faculty members and administrators at four-year institutions that view transfer students as "academically suspect" (Cejda, 1997). Transferring credits to a four-year college or university is another academic obstacle many community college students face (Glass & Bunn, 1998). The more transfer credits are accepted by four-year institutions, the greater the likelihood of matriculation (Eimers & Mullen, 1997). Because of this, articulation agreements between community colleges and four-year institutions are very important to transfer students and administrators. These agreements allow students to transfer academic credits from one institution to another more smoothly (Smith, Opp, Armstrong, Stewart, & Isaacson, 1999).

Student academic progress is also most likely to be impeded by administrative obstacles to transferring and other social concerns. These obstacles and concerns, not the lack of academic preparation, prevent students from completing a full class load each semester and thus graduate in four years. The successful integration of a student's academic goals and social pressures may be the determining factor in student persistence (Pascarella, et al., 1986).

Student Motivation

Once students have transferred to a four-year college or institution, there are other factors that enable transfer students to succeed in attaining their bachelor's degree. The student's motivation and personal empowerment are critical characteristics they must employ under the new environment.

Student motivation naturally has to do with their desire to participate in the learning process. But it also concerns the reasons or goals that underlie their involvement or non-

involvement in academic activities. Students may be equally motivated to perform well, but the sources of their motivation may differ (Lumsden, 1994).

A student who is *intrinsically* motivated undertakes an activity for its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or feelings of accomplishment it evokes (Lepper, 1988). An *extrinsically* motivated student performs in order to obtain some reward or to avoid some punishment external to the activity itself, such as good grades or instructor approval (Lepper, 1988).

Motivation to learn is defined as the acknowledgment of the meaningfulness, value and benefits of the academic tasks regardless of whether these tasks are intrinsically interesting (Marshall, 1987). Motivation to learn is also characterized by long-term, quality involvement in learning and a commitment to the process of learning (Ames, 1990).

According to Brophy (1987), motivation to learn is a competence acquired through general experience but stimulated most directly through modeling, communication of expectations, and direct instruction or socialization by significant others (especially parents and instructors). When students are reared in an environment that nurtures a sense of self-worth, competence, autonomy, and self-efficacy, they are more apt to accept the risks inherent in learning. Conversely, when students do not view themselves as basically competent and able, their freedom to engage in academically challenging pursuits and capacity to tolerate and cope with failure are greatly diminished (Lumsden, 1994).

Developmental changes constitute one more strand in the motivation web. For example, although younger students tend to maintain high expectations for success even in the face of repeated failure, older students do not. Younger students tend to view effort as uniformly positive; older students may view it as a double-edged sword (Ames, 1990). To them, failure

following high effort appears to carry more negative implications, especially for their self-concept of ability, than failure that results from minimal or no effort (Lumsden, 1994).

Unfortunately, there is no single magical formula for motivating students. Many factors affect a student's motivation to work and to learn. These include interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as patience and persistence (Bligh, 1971; Sass, 1989).

According to Lucas (1990), teaching situations that enhance students' self-motivation and encourage students to become self-motivated independent learners usually:

- Give frequent, early, positive feedback that supports students' belief that they can succeed.
- Ensure opportunities for students' success by assigning tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult.
- Help students find personal meaning and value in the material.
- Create an atmosphere that is open and positive.
- Help students feel they are valued members of a learning community.

Research has also shown that good every day teaching practices can do more to counter student apathy than special efforts to attack motivation directly. Most students respond positively to a well-organized course taught by an enthusiastic instructor who has a genuine interest in students and what they learn. Thus, activities that promote learning will also enhance students' motivation (Ericksen, 1978).

Sass (1989) found that students in 20 separate classes asked to reach a consensus on what characteristics contribute to high motivation selected the following as major contributors:

1. Instructor's enthusiasm
2. Relevance of the material
3. Organization of the course
4. Appropriate difficulty level of the material

5. Active involvement of students
6. Variety
7. Rapport between teacher and students
8. Use of appropriate, concrete, and understandable examples

There are many components involved in the success of a transfer student to a senior institution. Initially, persistence plays an enormous role due to the many obstacles they run into even at the community college level. Once the student has transferred to the senior institution, he/she has to be empowered and motivated to excel, in this case, specifically in journalism programs.

Theoretical Framework

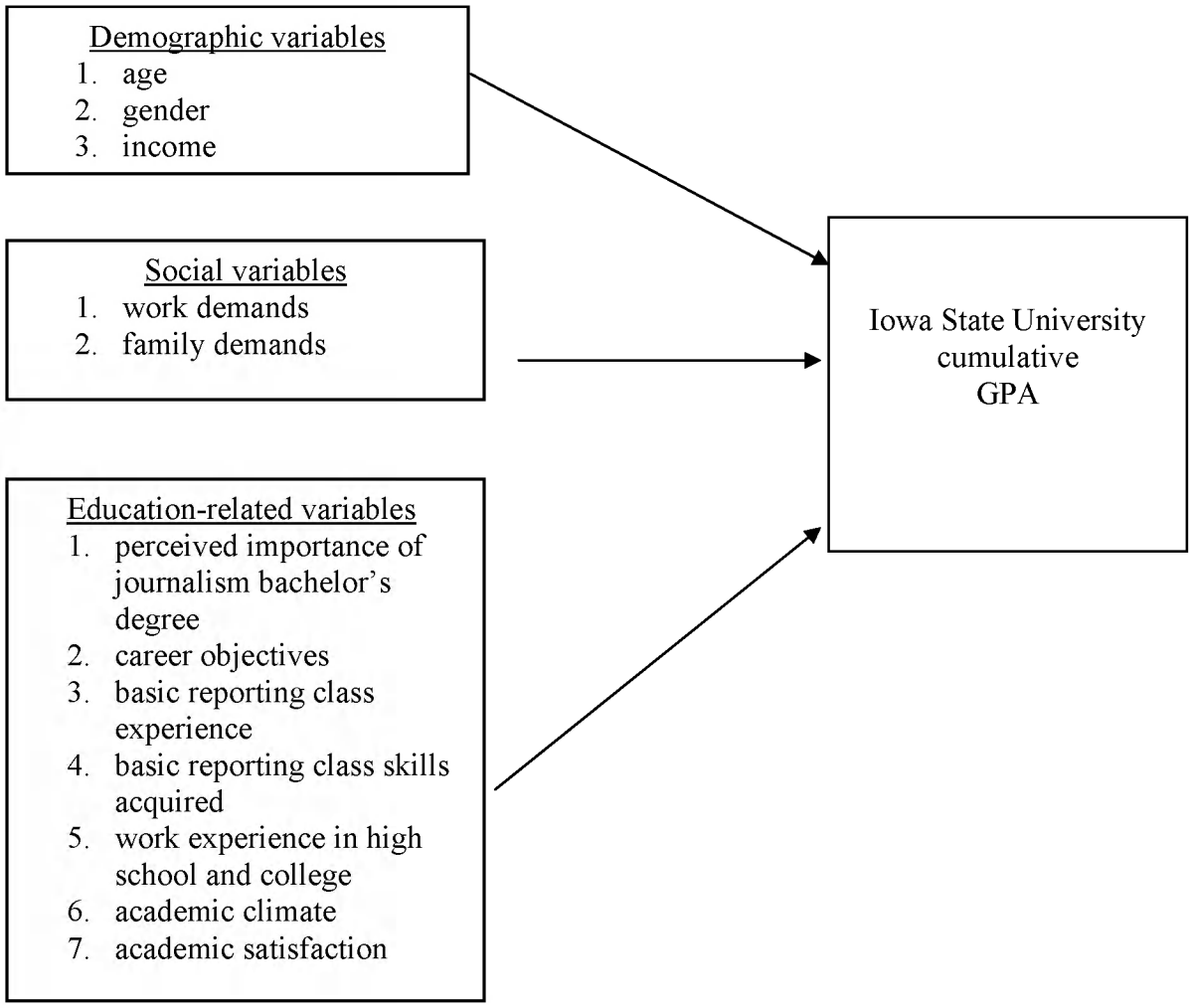
Considering the variety of factors that might influence a transfer students' success in journalism programs at senior institutions, a grounded theory is proposed. In this study, this grounded theory will aid in examining how several independent variables affect academic success in four-year institutions.

Grounded theory is a method that has been used extensively across a variety of disciplines. The basic tenet of this approach is that a theory must emerge from the data, or that a theory must be grounded in the data. Hence, the approach is inductive rather than deductive (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). "The grounded theory approach is a research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.24). The intent is to develop an account of a phenomenon that identifies the major constructs or categories in grounded theory terms, their relationships, and the context and process, thus providing a theory of the phenomenon that is much more than a descriptive account (Becker, 1993). Grounded theory research attempts to see the underlying or latent pattern of data, in this case the factors that affect academic transfer students' success in four-year journalism programs.

The crucial dependent variable in this study is the transfer students' cumulative grade point average at Iowa State. Are they being adequately trained in the community college classes, especially in the screening course, basic reporting and writing? The demands of journalism degree programs on any student are challenging. Upper-level journalism courses require a great deal of critical thinking, perhaps even more so than similar courses in other disciplines. Students need to be assertive in gathering information and cross-checking what information sources claim as facts. Students also need to be able to situate the topics they report in terms of the broader historical perspective and what is going on so far in terms of that particular topic. Due to the challenging nature of four-year journalism programs, how can community colleges and other institutions enhance their basic reporting and writing courses to prepare transfer students' for higher-level journalism courses at Iowa State University? What are the other factors that impact transfer students' success at a four-year institution such as Iowa State?

The foregoing literature has identified the factors that may have a bearing on how transfer students perform in Iowa State's journalism and advertising programs. These are: work and family demands, financial pressures, perceived importance of a journalism bachelor's degree, their career objectives, their age, gender, income, their basic reporting and writing course experience and preparation in community colleges, their journalism work experience in high school and college, and their reported level of academic satisfaction and perceived academic climate. These 12 independent variables are hypothesized to influence their cumulative journalism GPA, the dependent measure in this study. The hypothesized path of influence is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Factors hypothesized to affect ISU transfer students' cumulative journalism and communication GPA



Research Questions

Considering the foregoing literature; this study asks:

RQ1: What are the demographic and academic characteristics of Greenlee School transfer students?

RQ2: How do the transfer students evaluate their experience with the basic writing and reporting course?

RQ3: How satisfied are the transfer students with the academic climate in the Greenlee School and at Iowa State?

RQ4: What factors influence the transfer students' cumulative grade point average (GPA) at Iowa State?

RQ5: Which of these independent variables are the strongest predictors of transfer students' GPA?

Each potential antecedent variable was tested for their influence on cumulative journalism and communication GPA at Iowa State. Then, the combined influence of the 12 variables was ascertained.

The answers to these research questions are intended to predict which independent variables affect the transfer students' GPA, the measure of academic success in this study. The crucial independent variable of interest is the kind of preparation these transfer students received from two-year institutions that subsequently affect how successfully they perform at the Greenlee School.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The Research Design

To gather data for this study, an analytical e-mail survey was conducted. This approach allows the collection of data from current transfer students in the Greenlee School undergraduate program. In an analytical approach, two or more variables are usually examined to investigate research questions or test research hypotheses (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003). The results allow researchers to examine the "interrelationships among variables and to develop explanatory inferences" (p. 167).

The electronic survey asked transfer students about their demographic characteristics, work and family demands, how they finance their four-year college education, their perception of the importance of a bachelor's degree in journalism and communication, the strength of their career objectives to practice in communication professions, and the basic reporting and writing course preparation they received from Iowa State or other institutions, their journalism work experience in high school and college and their perceived level of academic satisfaction and academic climate. The questionnaire also included questions that inquired about the preparation they received in the basic reporting and writing course they took, and the extent to which they find their experience in the Greenlee School at Iowa State satisfactory. The objective is to discern which of factors significantly predict their cumulative GPA at Iowa State, the study's dependent measure.

Up to five waves of survey questionnaires were sent to Greenlee School transfer students in one-week intervals to guarantee a high response rate. Those who did not return their questionnaires at the end of the fifth week were contacted by telephone to encourage them to

participate in the survey. For studies of this size, a 30% response rate was anticipated with sustained mailing.

Sampling

All students who transferred to Iowa State's journalism and advertising programs over the last two years (2004-2006) make up this study's sample.

The sampling time frame covered two complete years (including Fall 2004, Spring 2005, Fall 2005, and Spring 2006) for a total of 147 current transfer students (ISU Office of the Registrar, 2006).

Relevant Variables and their Measurement

This study asks the following research questions and poses the following hypotheses.

RQ1: What are the demographic and academic characteristics of Greenlee School transfer students? This question aims to establish a demographic and academic profile of Greenlee School transfer students to aid in advising efforts.

The *demographic characteristics* are: (1) permanent home residence while at Iowa State University, (2) age, (3) gender, (4) income, (5) marital status (whether single/divorced or married), (6) children, including how many, (7) number of hours spent at work per week.

The *academic factors* include (1) source of educational financing, (2) perceived importance of a bachelor's degree in journalism and communication, (3) career objectives, (4) their basic reporting and writing course experience, (5) their basic reporting and writing course skills acquired, (6) journalism work experience in high school and college, and (7) academic satisfaction and climate.

The permanent place of *residence* refers to the student's home county, if from Iowa. This question was asked in an open ended way.

To get a sense of their *financial resources,* students were asked how many hours they work per week while in school. The students also were asked where and how they get their college funds in an open-ended way. This includes the amount of financial aid they received last academic year from all possible sources.

The *importance they place on a bachelor's degree* is operationally defined as the transfer students' response to a five-point Likert scale item, where 5 is "very important," 3 is "neutral," and 1 is "not important at all."

Career objective refers to the desired career responsibilities they envision for themselves when they become journalism and mass communication practitioners and professionals. This open-ended question asked: What is your career goal after your undergraduate program?

Prior *journalism work experience in high school and college* refers to work experience gained while in school, such as working at a school newspaper or school radio station during high school or college. The question was coded 1 for yes and 2 for no.

RQ2: How do the transfer students evaluate their experience with the basic writing and reporting course? The *basic reporting and writing course experience* is the students' perception of the quality of preparation in the course they received from the two-year institution(s) they attended. It was measured by their responses to the following five-point Likert scale items where 1 means "strongly disagree," and 5 means "strongly agree:" (1) The course developed my critical and analytical thinking skills, (2) The course considerably developed my writing and reporting skills, (3) Overall, the course was intellectually challenging, (4) The course prepared me for the academic standards of the Greenlee School journalism and communication programs, (5) The course taught me the laws and ethics of the communication profession, and (6) The course taught me how to research and gather facts and data for the stories I wrote. The answers to these items

were summed and averaged to serve as the measure of general basic reporting and writing experience. The reliability of this composite index was determined by computing for the Cronbach's alpha.

The *skills acquired in the basic reporting and writing course* was ascertained by asking the extent to which the respondents' basic reporting and writing course experience inculcated in them the following skills: (1) computer and other technology-related skills, (2) mathematical and statistical skills, (3) visual communication skills, (4) problem-solving skills, (5) research and data gathering skills, and (6) writing and reporting skills. The responses range from 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree." Again, the student-respondents' answers to these items were summed and averaged as a measure of general skills acquired. The reliability of this index was determined by computing for the Cronbach's alpha of this composite index.

RQ3: How satisfied are the transfer students with the academic climate in the Greenlee School and at Iowa State? *Academic climate* refers to the general learning environment transfer students' experience at Iowa State in general and in the Greenlee School in particular. This was measured with 12 Liker-type items aimed at assessing the quality of the learning environment they have experienced so far at Iowa State and the Greenlee School. The responses ranged from 1 to 5 where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree." These 12 items are: (1) Adjusting to the academic standards and expectations at Greenlee has been easy, (2) Adjusting to the social environment at Greenlee has been easy, (3) I often feel overwhelmed by the size of the School's student body. (4) Upon transferring, I felt alienated at Greenlee, (5) I am very involved in activities at the Greenlee School, (6) The Greenlee School's large classes intimidate me, (7) It is easy to find my way around campus, (8) I experienced a dip in grades and overall GPA during

my first semester at ISU, (9) It is easy to make friends at the Greenlee School, (10) I am meeting as many people and making as many friends as I would like at ISU, (11) I feel more comfortable making friends with transfer students than non-transfer students, and (12) There is a sense of competition among students at ISU that is not found in community colleges. The students' answers to these items were summed and averaged as a measure of perceived academic climate. The reliability of this index was determined by computing for the Cronbach's alpha.

Academic satisfaction is the reported level of satisfaction regarding several aspects of campus life. These Likert scale items asked the extent to which respondents agree with 13 items using a response range of 1 to 5 where 1 means "very dissatisfied" and 5 means "very satisfied." These 12 items were: (1) A sense of belonging in the Greenlee School, (2) Overall quality of instruction, (3) A sense of community on campus, (4) Academic advising, (6) Student housing, (7) Financial aid services, (8) Amount of contact with faculty, (9) Opportunities for community service, (10) cumulative Job placement services for students. (11) Interaction with other students, (12) Ethnic/racial diversity of the faculty and students, and (13) Overall experience in the Greenlee School so far. As with the three previous predictor variables, the students' answers to these items were averaged as a measure of academic satisfaction. The reliability of this index was determined by computing for the Cronbach's alpha.

The dependent variable in this study is *success in the Greenlee School undergraduate programs,* and is measured in terms of the cumulative GPA at Iowa State University as shown in their transcript of records.

RQ4: What factors influence the transfer students' grade point average (GPA)? This general research question is broken down into the following hypotheses and the statistical test pertinent to each (Figure 2):

Figure 2. Hypotheses and statistical tests

Hypothesis number	Hypothesis	Statistical Test
H1	GPA will differ by place of residence.	ANOVA
H2	GPA is related to age.	correlation
H3	GPA will differ by gender.	Independent samples t-test on means
H4	GPA is related to income.	correlation
H5	GPA varies by number of hours allocated to work.	correlation
H6	GPA is related to perceived importance of B.S. degree.	correlation
H7	GPA will differ by career objectives.	ANOVA
H8	GPA is related to perception of the basic reporting class skills acquired and experience.	correlation
H9	GPA is related to high school journalism experience.	Independent samples t-test on means
H10	GPA is related to college journalism experience.	Independent samples t-test on means
H11	GPA is related to perceived conduciveness of the academic climate.	correlation
H12	GPA is related to perception of academic satisfaction.	correlation

RQ5: Which of these independent variables are the strongest predictors of transfer students' GPA?

This research question was answered using a multiple regression test, a parametric technique used to analyze the influence of two or more independent variables on a single (criterion) variable. Multiple regression analysis serves to predict the contribution of each independent or predictor variable on the variance or changes in the dependent variable of concern. The primary goal is to develop a formula that accounts for, or explains, as much variance in the dependent variable as possible (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to provide benchmark data regarding the demographic and academic characteristics of college students who transferred to the Greenlee School from other institutions of higher learning. Another objective is to assist the Greenlee School in determining ways by which the concepts and skills taught in the basic reporting and writing classes offered at Iowa State University and other Iowa colleges and universities, especially the community colleges, can be made more consistent. It also attempts to assess the extent to which the journalism and mass communication experience in the Greenlee School and the academic climate at Iowa State in general are addressing the special needs and specific circumstances of transfer students. To attain these objectives, an electronic survey of students who transferred to the School was conducted to determine their level of preparation for the challenges they face in a four-year bachelor's degree program such as that offered at Iowa State.

At the end of AY 2005-2006, 768 students made up the Greenlee School undergraduate student body. Of these, 147 or 19.14% were transferees. The complete list of undergraduate transfer students in the Greenlee School taken from the Office of the Registrar constituted this study's sampling frame. A census of all transfer students was conducted from March to May 2006 using an electronically mailed questionnaire. After five waves of mailing, a total of 48 completed questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 32.65%. Such a response rate is considered decent by today's survey response standards that have been adversely affected by junk mails that are often commercial in nature.

Demographic and Academic Characteristics of Transfer Students

The first research question asks for the demographic and academic characteristics of Greenlee School transfer students to establish benchmark data and to assist in advising efforts.

Of the 48 student-respondents, 20 were male (41.7%) and 28 were female (58.3%) with an age range of 18 to 50 years (mean = 22.62). There were 43 Caucasians (89.6%), two African Americans (4.2%), one Asian/Pacific Islander, and another two who checked the "other" category. Only four were married (8.5%); only one student reported having children.

The majority of the student-respondents resided in apartments (51.1%), off-campus housing (21.3%) and residence halls (19.1%). The rest lived in fraternity or sorority houses (4.3%) and family residences (4.3%).

Most of the transfer students from Iowa hailed from Polk county (5), Pottawattamie and Scott (with three each), Madison, Linn, Boone, Story and Warren counties (with two each). The rest of the Iowans came from Marion, Marshall, Cedar, Muscatine, Dallas, Tarrant, Cass and Woodbury counties (one each). These counties are geographically scattered all over the state, suggesting that Iowa State is drawing not just students from counties close to Ames. Four reported transferring from a different state; one was an international student.

Most of the student-respondents (40.9%) reported that their parents earned more than $80,000 in 2005. Another 20.5% said their parents' annual income for the same year ranged from $40,000-$59,000; 15.9% said their parents fell within the $60,000-$79,000 income bracket. Close to 11.5% each said their parents' income last year ranged from $20,000-$39,000 and less than $20,000. These figures placed the parents' median income range at $60,000-$79,000.

The student respondents were then asked about their independent income earned last year. Most of them (91.7%, the median) reportedly earned less than $20,000. A little more than 4% each (4.2%) said they earned between $40,000-$59,000 in 2005. Another 4.2% earned more than $80,000. This suggests that the majority of transfer students do not have much income

while they attended classes at the Greenlee School. This may be due to the challenging nature of the curricula and the time it takes to achieve good grades.

Asked how many hours per week they worked while attending Iowa State, the students said they worked an average of 17.23 hours each week. As Table 1 shows, the majority (16.7%) said they worked 20 hours, 14.6% said they did not work at all, while another 14.6% worked 25 hours a week. A little more than eight percent (8.3%) said they worked ten hours each week; the same number of students worked 15 hours weekly. A little less than 6.5% each worked 18, 23 and 30 hours a week. Around 4.2% worked 14 hours weekly while attending school. With the average working hours of a little less than 18 hours per week, transfer students spent roughly half of their time on work. This implies that transfer students need time management skills so that earning independent income does not impinge too much on the time needed for academic activities.

Table 1. Number of hours spent working per week during college

Hours worked per week	Frequency	Percent
0	7	14.6
4	1	2.1
10	4	8.3
12	1	2.1
14	2	4.2
15	4	8.3
16	1	2.1
17	1	2.1
18	3	6.3
20	8	16.7
23	3	6.3
25	7	14.6
27	1	2.1
30	3	6.3
35	1	2.1
40	1	2.1

To get a better look at their available financial resources, the students were asked the sources of their college funding while at Iowa State. As listed in Table 2, the majority (11 students or 22.9%) availed of loans and scholarships, ten (20.8%) reported funding their college education using loans and by working part-time, nine (18.8%) said they relied exclusively on loans, and another nine (18.8%) said their college funding came exclusively from their parents. Seven students (14.6%) reported getting funds from loans and from their parents' support; two said their funding came from working part time or full time. This finding suggests that loans are the primary source of funding for transfer students although they also make use of other financial resources.

Table 2. Sources of funds for college education

Sources of college funding	Frequency	Percent
Loans	9	18.8
Parents	9	18.8
Loans and parents	7	14.6
Loans and work part time	10	20.8
Work part time	1	2.1
Work full time	1	2.1
Loans and scholarships	11	22.9

The student respondents were asked how much financial aid they received last school year. Responding in an open-ended way, 19 students (39.6%) said they received no financial aid at all, but 60.4% reported receiving some financial aid, with the average amount being $5,787.83 annually. A student reported receiving $26,000 last academic year, the highest figure registered. Of those who were successful in availing financial aid, the lowest amount received was $500. The responses outlined in Table 3 indicate that more than half of the transfer students are receiving some amount of financial assistance to defray college costs.

Table 3. Amount of financial aid received last academic year

Financial aid (in $)	Frequency	Percent
0	19	39.6
500	1	2.1
1,500	2	4.2
2,000	1	2.1
4,000	1	2.1
5,000	1	2.1
6,000	3	6.3
7,000	3	6.3
7,500	2	4.2
8,000	2	4.2
8,500	1	2.1
9,000	1	2.1
10,000	3	6.3
12,000	1	2.1
12,030	1	2.1
15,000	1	2.1
18,000	2	4.2
19,786	1	2.1
25,000	1	2.1
26,000	1	2.1

Asked what other colleges they had attended besides Iowa State, nine said they went to the Des Moines Area Community College or DMACC (18.9%), four attended the University of Iowa, three went to Northwest Missouri State, and another three went to the University of Northern Iowa before coming to Iowa State (Table 4). Two students attended Drake University while another two went to the Iowa Western Community College. Others were enrolled at Kirkwood, the Iowa Central Community College, Indian Hills Community College, University of Indiana, Marshalltown Community College, Montana State University, Western Iowa Tech, Central College, University of Kansas, St. Petersburg College, South Western Community College, Vincennes University, Universidad Metropolitana in Puerto Rico, Winona State

University, Simpson College, Scott Community College, Middle Tennessee State University, University of Nebraska, and Muscatine Community College. Most of the transferees were from DMACC, the University of Iowa, the University of Northern Iowa, and Southwest Missouri State. The rest came from universities and colleges within Iowa, from other states and from Puerto Rico.

Table 4. Other institutions attended

Other institutions	Frequency	Percent
Des Moines Area Community College	9	18.8
University of Iowa	4	8.3
University of Northern Iowa	3	6.3
Northwest Missouri State University	3	6.3
Drake University	2	4.2
Iowa Western Community College	2	4.2
Kirkwood Community College	1	2.1
Iowa Central Community College	1	2.1
Indian Hills Community College	1	2.1
Indiana University	1	2.1
Marshalltown Community College	1	2.1
Muscatine Community College	1	2.1
Millikin University	1	2.1
Montana State University	1	2.1
Middle Tennessee State University	1	2.1
Muscatine Community College	1	2.1
North Iowa Area Community College	1	2.1
Universidad Metropolitana in Puerto Rico	1	2.1
Scott Community College	1	2.1
Blackhawk College	1	2.1
Southwestern Community College	1	2.1
Simpson College	1	2.1
South Western Community College	1	2.1
Tulsa Community College	1	2.1
Central College	1	2.1
University of Kansas	1	2.1
University of Nebraska	1	2.1
Kirkwood Community College	1	2.1
Saint Petersburg College	1	2.1
Vincennes University	1	2.1
Western Iowa Tech	1	2.1
Winona State University	1	2.1

Most of them (41.7%) attended these academic institutions for a year. As Table 5 shows, the average stay in other colleges before transferring to Iowa State University was one to two years. The average length of time spent in other academic institutions was consistent with the two-year associate arts program required at community colleges.

Table 5. Years attended other colleges

Years attended	Frequency	Percent
1	20	41.7
2	19	39.6
3	6	12.5
4	1	2.1
9	1	2.1

How important is a bachelor's degree to them? Most of the respondents (70.8%) considered an undergraduate four-year degree "very important" (Table 6) in order to launch a career in the journalism and communication field. Ten said it was "somewhat important" (20.8%), one said it was "important," two were "neutral," and one said a bachelor's degree was "not important at all."

Table 6. Perceived importance of a bachelor's degree

Level of importance	Frequency	Percent
Very important	34	70.8
Important	1	2.1
Neutral	2	4.2
Somewhat important	10	20.8
Not important at all	1	2.1

The respondents were asked what their career goals were in an open-ended way. Fourteen (29.2%) were interested in working for television and broadcasting in general. Seven (14.6%) were looking forward to a career in advertising; six (12.5%) were eager for a career in public

relations. The rest were preparing for careers in design and photography, video production, newspapers, education and in managing their own media business. This finding suggests that broadcasting is considered as the most viable career path by most of the journalism and communication transfer students.

Of those who completed the questionnaire, 30 reported taking the basic reporting and writing course at Iowa State University; four (8.3%) said they took the course at DMACC (Table 7). The others took the same course at Marshalltown Community College, St. Peter Community College, Simpson College, the University of Nebraska, Indian Hills Community College and the University of Iowa. Seven respondents have yet to take the basic reporting and writing class. Of the 41 students who have already taken the basic writing and reporting class, over 70% did so at Iowa State.

Table 7. Where the basic writing and reporting course was taken

Institution	Frequency	Percent
Iowa State University	30	73.2
Des Moines Area Community College	4	9.8
Marshalltown Community College	1	2.4
St. Peter Community College	1	2.4
Simpson College	1	2.4
University of Nebraska	1	2.4
University of Iowa	2	4.9
Indian Hills Community College	1	2.4

Over half (29 or 60.4%) of the transferees surveyed had no high school media experience. However, they were almost evenly split regarding college media experience, with 23 (47.9%) saying they participated in the college media and 24 (50%) saying they have not had such an experience. This may be because working to earn some income is taking time away from the possibility of exploring and engaging in the high school and college media.

Experience with the Basic Reporting and Writing Course

The second research question asks the transfer students who have already taken the basic reporting and writing class to assess the skills they learned from and their general experience in that course. A summary of their evaluations are compared against the assessment of those who took JlMC 201, the basic writing and reporting course at Iowa State. Their comparative assessments are summarized in Table 8.

Those who took the basic writing and reporting course in other institutions. Of the 11 students who took the basic reporting and writing course at another institution, five strongly agreed with the statement that the course developed their critical and analytical thinking skills. Four students agreed and only one disagreed with the statement (mean = 4.18, Table 8). The majority of the transfer students who took this course outside of Iowa State, therefore, strongly approve of the value of the basic reporting and writing course in enhancing their critical and analytical thinking skills.

The same group of 11 students was asked if the course considerably developed their writing and reporting skills. Four strongly agreed with the statement, four agreed with it, two were neutral and one disagreed (mean= 4.00). These assessments suggest that majority of the transfer student was satisfied with the extent to which the basic reporting and writing course taken at another academic institution developed their writing and reporting skills.

Asked if they found the course intellectually challenging, only three of those who took basic writing and reporting in another institution strongly agreed with the statement, six students agreed with it, and two were neutral (mean = 4.09). Although none disagreed with the statement, the students did not evaluate this course as exemplary in terms of the overall intellectual

challenge it posed.

Then, the same group of transfer students was asked to assess if the course prepared them academically for the journalism and communication curriculum at the Greenlee School. Five strongly agreed with the statement while six agreed with it (mean = 4.45). Because no one was neutral or disagreed with the statement, it can be said that the majority of the transfer students strongly agreed that the basic reporting and writing course taken at another school prepared them academically for the challenges at the Greenlee School.

After giving general course assessments, the respondents were asked about specific concepts and skills learned. When asked to evaluate if their basic reporting course taught them the law and ethics of the communication profession, eight of those who took the class in another institution agreed, two were neutral and only one student disagreed (mean = 3.63). The responses suggest that most were in agreement that they received a solid grounding on journalism law and ethics in the basic reporting course taken at a different college or university.

Did the course teach them how to research and gather facts and data? Of the 11 students who took the basic course outside of Iowa State, only four students strongly agreed with this statement, six agreed and one disagreed (mean = 4.18). Although none strongly disagreed or were neutral about this statement, the responses suggest they agree with the assessment that the course developed in them research and data gathering skills.

Those who took the basic reporting and writing course at another institution were asked the extent to which the course taught them computer and other technology skills. Only one strongly agreed with this statement, three agreed, four students were neutral and three disagreed (mean = 3.18). These evaluations were the lowest so far, suggesting that students were more neutral about the course's performance in teaching them computer and other technology skills.

Did the course teach them math skills? Of the 11 students who took the class outside of Iowa State, only three agreed with this statement. Four were neutral, three disagreed, and one strongly disagreed that the course taught them math skills pertinent to journalistic reporting (mean = 2.81). This indicates that the transfer students' assessments fall within the neutral to disagree range that the course gave them enough exposure to math skills as they relate to basic reporting and writing.

What about visual communication skills? Only one student strongly agreed that the basic reporting course taken at another institution gave enough exposure to visual communication. Three agreed with the statement, six were neutral and one disagreed (mean = 3.36). These assessments were lukewarm, suggesting that students did not get as much exposure to visual communication and the development of skills related to the handling of images in the basic reporting and writing course taken at another institution.

Was the course effective in teaching them problem-solving skills? Of the 11 respondents who took the course in a different college or university, only two students strongly agreed with the statement. Seven agreed and two were neutral (mean = 4.00). The results imply that the course was effective in imparting problem-solving skills.

To what extent did the course developed their writing and reporting skills? Of the 11 students who responded, six strongly agreed that the course was effective in teaching writing and reporting and five agreed with the statement (mean = 4.54). The overwhelming response suggests that the course's main objectives of developing reporting and writing skills had been met.

Those who took the basic writing and reporting course in the Greenlee School. The 30 students who took the basic reporting and writing course at Iowa State were asked for their

general evaluations of the course. Asked if the course developed their critical and analytical thinking skills, five strongly agreed, 17 agreed, five were neutral and three disagreed with the statement (mean = 3.80). The mean of the responses suggests that the transfer students in general agree that Iowa State's basic reporting and writing course developed their critical and analytical thinking skills.

The same group of 30 transferees was asked whether the course indeed enhanced their writing and reporting skills. Of the 29 who responded, five strongly agreed with the statement, 19 (the majority) agreed with it, four were neutral and one disagreed. The mean of the answers (3.96) suggests that the transfer students agree that the course at Iowa State did develop their writing and reporting skills.

Did they find the course at Iowa State intellectually challenging? Of the 29 who responded, four strongly agreed with the statement, 15 agreed, seven were neutral and three disagreed. The mean of the responses (3.68) suggests that the transfer students in general agree that the course was intellectually challenging.

The students who took the basic reporting and writing course at Iowa State were asked if the course prepared them for the academic standards of upper-level Greenlee School courses. Of the 29 who responded, six strongly agreed with the statement, 11 students agreed with it, nine were neutral, two disagreed and only one strongly disagreed that the course was an appropriate training venue for the skills needed in the upper-level journalism courses. The mean of the responses (3.65) suggests that the transfer students tended to agree that the course indeed prepared for them for the academic challenges in the Greenlee program.

Asked about specific skills learned in the course, the students were asked if the course taught them the laws and ethics of the communication profession. Of the 29 students who

responded, three strongly agreed with the statement, 13 agreed, seven were neutral, five disagreed and one strongly disagreed. The mean of the students' responses (3.41) suggests that the transfer students were more close to neutral about how the course exposed them to journalism laws and ethics.

Did the course teach them how to research and gather facts and data for stories? Of the 29 students who responded, five strongly agreed that such was the case. Eighteen agreed with the statement, four were neutral and two disagreed (6.9%). In general, the responses suggest (mean = 3.89) that the transfer students definitely agree that the basic reporting and writing course taken at Iowa State taught them research and data gathering skills.

Was the course successful in teaching them computer and technology-related skills? Of those who took JlMC 201 at Iowa State, one strongly agreed with this statement. Six agreed with it, nine were neutral, nine disagreed and four strongly disagreed. Like those who took the course outside of the Greenlee School, the range of student responses (mean = 2.68) among those who took JlMC 201 fall within the range of neutral to disagree that the course taught computer and other technology-related skills.

What about mathematical and statistical skills? Of the 29 students who took the course at the Greenlee School, two students agreed with the statement, seven were neutral, 13 students disagreed and seven strongly disagreed that JlMC 201 taught them math and statistical skills related to writing and reporting. The mean of the responses (2.13) indicates that the transfer students disagree that JlMC 201 is a venue for the acquisition of mathematical and statistical skills as they relate to being good writers and reporters.

Was the course effective in inculcating visual communication skills? Of the 29 students, who responded, 10 agreed with the statement. Another 10 were neutral, eight disagreed, and only

one strongly disagreed with the statement. In general, the responses indicate (mean = 3.00) that the students were neutral about whether JlMC 201 taught them how to handle images related to their journalistic reports.

Did the course teach them problem solving skills? The mean of the responses (3.00) to this statement indicates that respondents were evenly split as to the value of JlMC 201 in teaching them problem solving skills. Of the 29 students that responded, eight agreed with the statement. Thirteen were neutral and eight disagreed. Considering the primacy of problem solving skills in the journalism profession, the equal number of students who agreed and disagreed with this statement should be a matter of concern for the Greenlee School.

How do they assess the course in terms of teaching them research skills? Of the group who took JlMC 201, an overwhelming majority (28 or 96.6%) strongly agreed with the statement; only one was neutral. This finding is a definite rating of approval—the course was particularly effective in enhancing research skills.

Were the student's writing and reporting skills considerably improved by taking the course? Of the 29 students that responded, nine strongly agreed with this assessment, 16 agreed with it and three were neutral. The mean (4.21) indicates that the transfer students agree that the basic reporting and writing course taken at Iowa State taught them writing and reporting skills.

To be able to compare how students who took their basic writing and reporting course at Iowa State and those who registered for the course in a different college or university rate the conceptual and specific skills they learned, their evaluations were placed side-by-side in Table 8. Table 8 lists the mean evaluation score for each Likert scale statement about the course reported by both groups. For each statement, the responses range from 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree."

Table 8. A comparison of general evaluations and assessment of specific skills learned in the basic writing and reporting course taken in other institutions and at Iowa State

The course	Other institutions (n=11)		ISU (n=29)	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev
1. developed my analytical skills.	4.18	.9816	3.80	.8481
2. developed my writing and reporting skills.	4.00	1.000	3.96	.6805
3. was intellectually challenging.	4.09	.7006	3.68	.8495
4. prepared me for academic challenges.	4.45	.5222	3.65	1.0098
5. taught me law and ethics.	3.63	.6742	3.41	1.0183
6. taught me how to gather data and facts.	4.18	.8739	3.89	.7720
7. taught me computer skills.	3.18	.9816	2.68	1.0408
8. taught me mathematical and statistical skills.	2.81	.9816	2.13	.8909
9. taught me visual communication skills.	3.36	.8090	3.00	.9027
10. taught me problem-solving skills.	4.00	.6325	3.00	.7698
11. taught me research and data gathering skills.	4.18	.7508	4.17	.4756
12. taught me writing and reporting skills.	4.54	.5222	4.17	.6299

Table 8 shows that students who took the basic writing and reporting course at a different institution of higher learning (outside of the Greenlee School) consistently evaluated the course higher than those who took the equivalent course at Iowa State. These differences become obvious especially in terms of the students' assessments of the course's value in teaching them analytical skills, the extent to which the students found the course intellectually challenging, their evaluation of whether the course prepared them for the rigors of upper-level classes, whether the course taught them data-gathering and fact-finding skills, and the extent to which the course taught them mathematical and statistical acumen, computer skills, problem solving ability, reporting and writing skills. This suggests that more attention paid to students in the relatively smaller classes offered by community colleges is paying off in terms of higher

perceived value and more favorable course assessments by students who took basic writing and reporting in their campuses. Using transfer student assessments as the sole criterion, therefore, there is no basis for the Greenlee School concern that transfer students are ill-prepared for the upper-level requirements of its four-year programs.

Academic Climate

Research Question 3 asks for a closer examination of the transfer students' overall experience at Iowa State. To answer this research question, the respondents were asked how they perceive the academic climate in the Greenlee School in particular and at Iowa State in general. Of these 12 items, seven items asked specifically asked about their evaluations of the academic climate in the Greenlee School. A summary of the transferees' assessments of these 12 items is shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Transfer students' assessment of the academic climate in the Greenlee School and Iowa State (N = 48)

Items	Mean	Std. dev.
Greenlee School climate		
1. Adjusting to the academic standards of the Greenlee School was easy	3.81	.8513
2. Adjusting to the social environment at Greenlee was easy.	4.02	.6992
3. I am often overwhelmed by the size of the Greenlee School's student body.	1.91	.7250
4. I felt very much alienated in the Greenlee School.	2.29	1.0587
5. I try to be involved in the activities in the Greenlee School	2.81	.9641
6. I find the large classes in the Greenlee School very intimidating.	1.97	.8297
7. It is easy to make friends at the Greenlee School.	3.27	1.0788
ISU climate		
8. It is very easy to find one's way around the campus.	4.02	.9205
9. I experienced a dip in grades and overall GPA during my first semester at Iowa State.	2.54	1.4427
10. I am able to meet as many people as I would like at Iowa State.	3.29	1.0151
11. I am more comfortable making friends with transfer students than non-transfer students.	2.47	.9512
12. There is a keen sense of competition at Iowa State.	2.78	.9310

The range of responses was 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 "means strongly agree." Items number 3, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 12 were reverse-coded for consistency.

Did they find it easy to adjust to the academic standards of the Greenlee School? Of the 48 students who responded, nine (18.8%) strongly agreed, 26 (54.2%) agreed, nine (18.8%) were neutral, three disagreed and only one strongly disagreed that adjusting to the academic standards and expectations at Greenlee was easy (mean=3.81, Table 9). The majority of the responses, therefore, fall within the range of agree to strongly agree.

Asked if adjusting to the social environment at Greenlee was easy, 39 (81.2%) strongly agreed with the statement. Eight (16.7%) were neutral and only one disagreed. The mean of the responses (4.02) suggests that the transfer students definitely agree that adjusting to the academic standards and expectations at Greenlee was easy for them (Table 9).

An item inquired if they were often overwhelmed by the size of the Greenlee School's student body. Only one agreed with this statement, eight (16.7%) were neutral, 25 (52.1%) disagreed and 14 (29.2%) strongly disagreed with this item (mean=1.91). Therefore, the responses indicate that the transfer students did not think that the size of the School's student body was overwhelming.

Did they feel alienated when they transferred to the Greenlee School? Only two strongly agreed with this statement, six (12.5%) agreed, another six were neutral, but half (24 or 50 %) disagreed and ten (20.8%) strongly disagreed with this item. The mean of the responses (2.29) suggests that the transfer students mostly disagreed that they felt alienated at the Greenlee School upon transferring.

Was it easy to get involved in student activities at the Greenlee School? Only three strongly agreed with this statement, another nine (18.8%) agreed and 14 (29.2%) said they were neutral. Most of the students, however (20 or 41.7%), disagreed while only two strongly disagreed. In general, the mean of the responses (2.81) suggests that the transfer students were

fairly neutral regarding their perception of the extent to which they find it easy to get involved in Greenlee School activities.

Did the class sizes at the Greenlee School intimidate them? Only two students agreed with this statement, nine were neutral (19.6%), but the majority (21 or 45.7% disagreed. Another 14 (30.4%) strongly disagreed that they were intimidated by the relatively large School class sizes.

The majority of the respondents (19 or 39.6%) agreed it was easy to make friends at the Greenlee School. Another four strongly agreed with the statement. Fifteen (31.3%) were neutral, while ten (20.8%) either disagreed to strongly disagreed with this item. The mean of the answers (3.27) suggests that the transfer students were mostly neutral about whether or not it was easy to make friends at the Greenlee School.

The student transferees were also asked the extent to which they agree with the five statements regarding the academic climate within Iowa State in general. Asked if they thought it was easy to find their way around campus, most (23 or 47.9%) strongly agreed with the statement. Seven (14.6%) were neutral, and only three disagreed with it.

Did they experience a dip in grades and overall GPA during their first semester at Iowa State? Most (17 or 35.4%) agreed with this statement, 12 (25%) disagreed and another 16 (33.3%) strongly disagreed with this suggestion. The mean of the answers (2.54) implies that the majority did not experience a considerable grade dip when they transferred to Iowa State although over a third reported having received lower grades.

More than half of the transferees (26 or 54.2%) responded favorably to the statement that they were meeting as many people and making as many friends as they would like at Iowa State. Eleven (20%) students were neutral, while another disagreed to strongly disagreed with this

statement. However, the mean of the responses (3.29) suggests that the transfer students were mostly neutral about whether they were meeting as many people as they would like, indicating students' tendency to focus their attention and associations within the ambit of the discipline.

The transfer students were asked if they were more comfortable making friends with transfer students than non-transfer students. One strongly agreed with this statement, four students agreed, and the majority (21 or 43.8%) was neutral. Thirteen students (16.7%) disagreed and nine strongly disagreed with the statement (18.8%). The mean of the responses (2.47) suggests that the transfer students were neutral or disagree that they were more comfortable making friends with transfer students than their non-transfer counterparts.

The student respondents were then asked the extent to which they perceive a strong sense of competition at Iowa State. Of the 47 who responded, only one strongly agreed with the statement, nine (19.1%) agreed, but a clear majoring (20 students or 42.6%) were. Another 13 (27.7%) disagreed and four strongly disagreed with this suggestion (8.5%). The mean of the responses (2.78) placed the students' assessment about the level of competition at Iowa State between neutral to disagree.

Academic Satisfaction

To determine their level of satisfaction with their stay so far at Iowa State, all respondents were asked the extent to which they agree with 12 statements regarding their experience in the Greenlee School in particular and at Iowa State in general. Of these 12 items, seven asked specifically about their evaluations of their level of satisfaction with the Greenlee School; five items were exclusive to the ISU climate in general. A summary of the transferees' assessments of these 12 items is shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Transfer students' assessment of academic satisfaction in the Greenlee School in particular and Iowa State in general (N = 47)

Items	Mean	Std. dev.
Satisfaction with the Greenlee School		
1. I get a sense of belonging in the Greenlee School.	3.54	.8495
2. I am satisfied with the quality of instruction at the Greenlee School.	3.66	.8588
3. I am satisfied with the academic advising at the Greenlee School.	3.66	1.0176
4. I am satisfied with the amount of faculty contact at Greenlee.	3.79	.7426
5. I am satisfied with the level of student interaction at the Greenlee School.	3.64	.7576
6. I am satisfied with the ethnic diversity at the Greenlee School.	3.35	.9998
7. I am satisfied with my overall experience at the Greenlee School.	3.91	.7672
Satisfaction with Iowa State		
8. I find a sense of community at Iowa State.	3.63	.7640
9. I am satisfied with the student housing at Iowa State.	3.25	.6664
10. I am satisfied with the amount of financial aid I received.	3.08	.8500
11. I am satisfied with the opportunities for community service at Iowa State.	3.25	.5698
12. I am satisfied with the job placement opportunities at Iowa State.	3.12	.8240

The range of responses was 1 to 5, where 1 means "very dissatisfied," 3 means "neutral" and 5 means "very satisfied."

The study respondents were asked if they feel a sense of belonging in the Greenlee School. Of the 47 who responded, five (10.4%) said they agree that they developed a sense of belonging in the Greenlee School. Twenty-one (43.8%) agreed, 18 were neutral (37.5%), three disagreed and only one strongly disagreed with this statement. The mean of the answers (3.54) suggests that most transfer students rate their sense of belonging in the School at the middle range, from neutral to agree.

How do they find the quality of instruction at the Greenlee School? Of the 48 students who responded to this questionnaire segment, six (12.5%) reported being very satisfied. The vast majority, 26 or 54.2%, were satisfied with the School's quality of instruction. Ten (10.8%) were neutral and six (12.5%) were dissatisfied. Again, the mean of the responses (3.66) suggests a middling rating, with transfer students rating the quality of instruction in the School from neutral

to satisfied.

How about their satisfaction with academic advising at the Greenlee School? Nine (18.8%) of the 48 students that responded report being very satisfied with the kind of academic advising they received in the School. Most of them (22 or 45.8%) were satisfied, 11 (22.9%) were neutral on the issue while three were dissatisfied and two were very dissatisfied. The mean of the responses (3.79) suggests that the transfer students were basically satisfied with the academic advising at the Greenlee School.

Asked the extent to which they were satisfied with the amount of faculty contact at the Greenlee School, seven of the 48 who responded to this line of questioning (14.6%) report being very satisfied. The bulk of the responses (26 or 54.2%) fall under satisfied. Thirteen students (27.1%) were neutral on this statement, and two were dissatisfied. With the average of the responses at 3.79, it can be said that the transfer students were satisfied with the level of faculty contact they experienced in the Greenlee School.

How satisfied were they with the level of student interaction at the Greenlee School? Two claim they were very satisfied with this aspect of academic life at Greenlee; most of them (32 or 66.7%) were satisfied with the level of interaction they experienced in the School. Ten (20.8%) were neutral, and three were dissatisfied. Only one reported being very dissatisfied with the extent of student interaction experienced in the School. The mean of the answers (3.64) implies that the transfer students found the level of interaction with other students in the School neutral to satisfactory.

The transfer students were also reported neutral to satisfied ratings regarding the ethnic diversity at the Greenlee School (mean=3.35). Three (6.3%) claimed they were very satisfied with the School's racial mix, most (22 or 45.8%) said they were satisfied with it. Sixteen (33.3%)

said they were neutral on the issue. Three (6.3%) were dissatisfied and four students were very dissatisfied (8.3) with the School's perceived ethnic diversity.

How do they rate their overall experience at the Greenlee School? Eight students (16.7%) report being very satisfied with their general experience in the School. The majority (31 or 64.6%) was satisfied, while seven (14.6%) were neutral. One student was dissatisfied and another was very dissatisfied. In general, however, the mean (3.91) suggests that the transfer students were satisfied with their overall experience so far at the Greenlee School.

The same group of student respondents were then asked for their level of satisfaction regarding specific topics related to the general university climate. First, they were asked to assess if they were satisfied with the sense of community they feel at Iowa State. Three claim they were very satisfied, and the majority (29 or 61.7%) said they were satisfied with the sense of community the university offers. Ten students (21.3%) were neutral on the topic while five (10.6%) said they were dissatisfied. The mean of the responses (3.63) indicates that most were neutral to satisfied with the sense of community they detect at Iowa State.

How do they evaluate student housing at Iowa State? Of the 48 who responded, 17 (35.4%) were satisfied with their housing accommodations, more than half (27 or 56.3%) were neutral, three were dissatisfied, and one was very dissatisfied with student housing. The mean of the answers (3.25) indicates that the transfer students were neutral to satisfied about student housing on campus.

How satisfied were they with the financial aid they received? Of the group of 48 students who responded, two were very satisfied, 12 (25%) were satisfied, and the majority (25 or 52.1%) was neutral regarding this statement. Six (12.5%) were dissatisfied and another three were very dissatisfied with the level of financial aid they received. The mean of the responses (3.08) places

their level of satisfaction with the amount of financial assistance they received at Iowa State at neutral.

How do they assess the opportunities for community service at Iowa State? Only one student reported being very satisfied with the community service opportunities within the university. Twelve (25%) said they were satisfied, and the majority (33 or 68.8%) was neutral. Two were dissatisfied. With the average of the responses falling at 3.25, the transfer students can be said to feel neutral or indifferent about the opportunities for community service they see at Iowa State.

What about the job placement opportunities at Iowa State? Of the 48 students who answered, two were very satisfied with the career advising and job placement opportunities they found within the university. Eleven (22.9%) were satisfied, more than half of those who responded (28 or 58.3%) were neutral, five were dissatisfied and two said they were very dissatisfied with the university's job placement opportunities. The mean of the responses (3.12) suggests that the transfer students were neutral about this aspect of their academic life at ISU.

Reliability Testing of Indices

To determine the respondents' general assessments of the conceptual topics to which they were exposed in the basic reporting and writing course at another college or university, an index was created by averaging the responses to six related Likert scale items. The responses to these items ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree," 3 means "neutral" and 5 means "strongly agree." The student-respondents were asked the extent to which they agree that the basic course taken at another academic institution (1) developed their critical and analytical thinking skills, (2) enhanced their writing and reporting abilities, (3) was intellectually challenging, (4) prepared them for the academic standards at the Greenlee School, (5) taught the

laws and ethics of the communication profession and (6) developed their research and data gathering abilities. The reliability test for this six-item composite index produced a Cronbach's alpha of .8142, indicating that the items combined were measuring the same variable (Table 11).

Table 11. Reliability testing for six items combined to measure transfer students' general assessments of the basic writing and reporting course taken at another academic institution

R E L I A B I L I T Y A N A L Y S I S - S C A L E (A L P H A)

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Case
1. Analytical skills	4.1818	.9816	11.0
2. Writing skills	4.0000	1.0000	11.0
3. Intellectual challenge	4.0909	.7006	11.0
4. Law and ethics	3.6364	.6742	11.0
5. Academic preparation	4.4545	.5222	11.0
6. Data gathering skills	4.1818	.8739	11.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	24.5455	12.2727	3.5032	6

N of Cases = 11.0 N of Items = 6

Alpha = .8142

To determine how the respondents assessed *the specific skills they were taught in the basic reporting and writing course at another college or university,* an index was created by averaging the responses to six Likert scale items the response range to which where also 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree," 3 means "neutral" and 5 means "strongly agree." The students were asked to assess the extent to which the basic writing and reporting course taken at another institution developed their (1) computer and other technology-related skills, (2) mathematical and statistical skills, (3) problem-solving skills, (4) visual communication concepts and skills, (5) research and data gathering skills and (6) writing and reporting skills. Then, the reliability for this composite index was determined by computing for Cronbach's alpha (Table 12). The reliability test produced an alpha of .7793, suggesting that the composed index was reliable.

Table 12. Reliability testing for six items combined to measure transfer students' assessments of skills learned in the basic writing and reporting course taken at another academic institution

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

		Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1.	Computer skills	3.1818	.9816	11.0
2.	Math skills	2.8182	.9816	11.0
3.	Problem solving skills	4.0000	.6325	11.0
4.	Visual communication skills	3.3636	.8090	11.0
5.	Research skills	4.1818	.7508	11.0
6.	Reporting skills	4.5455	.5222	11.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	22.0909	10.8909	3.3001	6

N of Cases = 11.0 N of Items = 6

Alpha = .7793

To determine the respondents' *general assessments of the basic reporting and writing course taken at Iowa State,* an index was created by averaging the responses to the same six Likert-scale items asked of those who took the course outside of the Greenlee School. Given a response range of 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree," 3 means "neutral" and 5 means "strongly agree," these items asked students to evaluate the extent to which JlMC 201, the basic writing and reporting course offered at the Greenlee School (1) developed their critical and analytical thinking skills, (2) developed their writing and reporting skills, (3) was intellectually challenging, (4) prepared them for the academic standards at the Greenlee School, (5) taught them the laws and ethics of the communication profession and (6) taught them how to research and gather data for the stories they were assigned to write. The reliability testing for this composite index (Table 13). produced a Cronbach's alpha of .8330, which indicates that the index was reliable and measures the same concept.

Table 13. Reliability testing for six items combined to measure transfer students' general assessments of the basic writing and reporting course taken at Iowa State

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1. Analytical skills	3.8276	.8481	29.0
2. Writing skills	3.9655	.6805	29.0
3. Academic preparation	3.6552	1.0098	29.0
4. Intellectual challenge	3.6897	.8495	29.0
5. Law and ethics	3.4138	1.0183	29.0
6. Data gathering skills	3.8966	.7720	29.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	22.4483	14.8990	3.8599	6

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 29.0 N of Items = 6

Alpha = .8330

To determine how the respondents assessed the *specific skills they were taught in the basic reporting and writing course at Iowa State,* an index was created by averaging the responses to six questions that asked for their evaluations of specific skills learned. These Likert scale items asked the extent to which the students agreed that the basic writing and reporting course taken at Iowa State developed their (1) computer and other technology skills, (2) mathematical and statistical skills, (3) problem-solving skills, (4) visual communication skills, (5) research and data gathering skills and (6) writing and reporting skills. As with the previous three indices, the response items ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 means "strong disagree," 3 means "neutral," and 5 means "strongly agree." The reliability test (Table 14) produced a Cronbach's alpha of .6889, indicating that the composed index was reliable and unidimensional.

Table 14. Reliability testing for six items combined to measure transfer students' assessments of specific skills taught in the basic writing and reporting course taken at Iowa State

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

		Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1.	Computer skills	2.7500	1.0408	28.0
2.	Math skills	2.1429	.8909	28.0
3.	Visual communication skills	3.0000	.9027	28.0
4.	Problem solving skills	3.0000	.7698	28.0
5.	Research skills	4.1786	.4756	28.0
6.	Reporting skills	4.2143	.6299	28.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	19.2857	9.1746	3.0290	6

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 28.0 N of Items = 6

Alpha = .6889

To determine how the transfer students evaluated the *general academic climate at Iowa State and at the Greenlee School,* their responses to 12 questions were averaged to form a composite index. The respondents were asked the extent to which they agree (1) whether adjusting to the academic standards and expectations at Greenlee was easy, (2) whether adjusting to the social environment at Greenlee was easy, (3) if they felt overwhelmed by the size of the School's student body, (4) if they felt alienated at Greenlee, (5) if they were involved in student activities at the Greenlee School, (6) if the Greenlee School's large classes intimidated them, (7) if they thought it was easy to find their way around campus, (8) if they experienced a dip in overall GPA during the first semester at Iowa State, (9) if they thought it was easy to make friends at the Greenlee School, (10) if they think they were meeting as many people and making as many friends as they would like at Iowa State, (11) if they felt more comfortable making friends with transfer students than non-transfer students and (12) if they thought there was a

strong sense of competition among students at Iowa State. As with the other indices, the potential responses ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 stands for "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree." Five of these 12 items were reverse-coded to indicate that a higher number means more positive agreement with all items. A reliability test of the index produced a Cronbach's alpha of .7032, which indicates that this index variable was reliable and the items measure the same variable (Table 15).

Table 15. Reliability testing for 12 items combined to measure transfer students' assessments of academic climate at the Greenlee School and at Iowa State

R E L I A B I L I T Y A N A L Y S I S - S C A L E (A L P H A)

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1. Adjusting to academic standards	3.8222	.8605	45.0
2. Adjusting to social environment	4.0000	.7071	45.0
3. Involved in activities at Greenlee	2.7778	.9744	45.0
4. Easy to find way on campus	3.9778	.9167	45.0
5. Easy to make friends	3.2222	1.0848	45.0
6. Easy to meet other people	3.2444	1.0259	45.0
7. Overwhelmed by size of student body	4.0889	.7331	45.0
8. Felt alienated at Greenlee	3.6444	1.0693	45.0
9. Intimated by large class sizes at Greenlee	4.0444	.8245	45.0
10. Experienced a grade dip	3.4222	1.4379	45.0
11. More comfortable with transfer students	3.5333	.9439	45.0
12. Environment too competitive	3.2222	.9266	45.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	43.0000	32.1818	5.6729	12

Reliability Coefficient

N of Cases = 45.0 N of Items = 12

Alpha = .7032

Seven of the 12 questions concerning academic climate above (Items 1 to 6 and Item 9 in Table 15) specifically asked the transfer students about the extent to which they were *satisfied*

with their experience in the Greenlee School. The responses to these seven items were averaged to form a Greenlee School climate index after reverse-coding the answers to Items 5, 6 and 7 below (Table 16). A reliability test of the index produced a Cronbach's alpha of .6655, which indicates that this index was reliable (Table 16).

Table 16. Reliability testing for seven items combined to measure transfer students' assessments of academic climate at the Greenlee School

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1. Adjusting to academic standards	3.8261	.8513	46.0
2. Adjusting to social environment	4.0000	.6992	46.0
3. Involvement in student activities	2.7826	.9641	46.0
4. Easy to make friends	3.2391	1.0788	46.0
5. Overwhelmed by size of study body	4.0870	.7250	46.0
6. Felt alienated	3.6522	1.0587	46.0
7. Intimated by large class sizes	4.0217	.8297	46.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	25.6087	13.1324	3.6239	7

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 46.0 N of Items = 7

Alpha = .6655

Five of the 12 questions on general academic satisfaction asked students about their *experience at Iowa State in general.* These five items asked the extent to which they were satisfied with (1) the ease with which they can find their way around campus, (2 whether they experienced a dip in overall GPA during their first semester at Iowa State, (3) whether they think they are able to meet as many people and make as many friends as they would like at Iowa State, (4) if they felt more comfortable making friends with transfer students than non-transfer students

and (5) whether they feel there is a strong sense of competition among students at Iowa State. The responses to these five items were averaged to form a University climate index. A reliability test of the index produced a Cronbach's alpha of .4436, which indicates that this was not a reliable index (Table 17). This suggests that the five items comprising this index must be individually tested to determine their independent impact on students' academic performance as measured in terms of GPA (RQ 4).

Table 17. Reliability testing for five items combined to measure transfer students' assessments of academic climate at Iowa State in general

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1. Easy to find way on campus	4.0213	.9205	47.0
2. Easy to meet people and make friends	3.2766	1.0151	47.0
3. Experienced a grade dip at first semester	3.4894	1.4427	47.0
4. More comfortable with other transfer students	3.5532	.9512	47.0
5. Strong sense of competition	3.2128	.9310	47.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	17.5532	8.7743	2.9621	5

Reliability Coefficients
N of Cases = 47.0 N of Items = 5

Alpha = .4336

Another set of 12 questions asked the transfer students about the extent to which they were *satisfied with the student services at the Greenlee School in particular and Iowa State in general.* To determine their level of satisfaction with these services, an index was created by averaging the responses to 12 Likert scale items that asked the extent to which the students were satisfied about (1) their sense of belonging in the Greenlee School, (2) the overall quality of instruction at the School, (3 the sense of community they find on campus, (4) the academic

advising they experienced in the School, (5) student housing, (6) financial aid services, (7) the amount of contact with Greenlee faculty, (8) the opportunities for community service at Iowa State, (9) the university's job placement services, (10) their level of interaction with other students, (11) the ethnic and/or racial diversity of faculty and students in the School and (12) their overall experience in the Greenlee School. The response range was 1 to 5, where 1 means "very satisfied," and 5 means "very satisfied." The reliability test for this index produced a Cronbach's alpha of .6689, which indicates that this index variable was reliable (Table 18) and that these items can be successfully combined to measure aggregate climate.

Table 18. Reliability testing for 12 items combined to measure transfer students' satisfaction with the academic climate at the Greenlee School and Iowa State

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE(ALPHA)

	Mean	Std Dev	Case
1. Sense of belonging in the School	3.5319	.8560	47.0
2. Quality of instruction in the School	3.6596	.8667	47.0
3. Sense of community on campus	3.6383	.7640	47.0
4. Academic advising at Greenlee	3.6596	1.0274	47.0
5. Student housing	3.2340	.6664	47.0
6. Financial aid received at Iowa State	3.1277	.8500	47.0
7. Contact with Greenlee faculty	3.7872	.7500	47.0
8. Community service opportunities at Iowa State	3.2553	.5698	47.0
9. Job placement services at Iowa State	3.1277	.8240	47.0
10. Interaction with other students at Greenlee	3.6596	.7598	47.0
11. Ethnic diversity in the School	3.4043	.9478	47.0
12. Overall experience in the School	3.9362	.7634	47.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N ofVariables
SCALE	42.0213	20.4561	4.5228	12

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 47.0 N of Items = 12

Alpha = .6689

Seven of these 12 questions that measured general satisfaction specifically asked subjects about their *satisfaction with the climate and student services at the Greenlee School* in particular (Items 1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12 in Table 18). To determine their level of satisfaction with the School's student services, an index was created by averaging the responses to these seven items. The reliability test for this index gave a Cronbach's alpha of .7145, which indicates that this index variable was highly reliable (Table 19).

Table 19. Reliability testing for seven items combined to measure transfer students' satisfaction with the academic climate at the Greenlee School

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1. Sense of belonging	3.5417	.8495	48.0
2. Quality of instruction	3.6667	.8588	48.0
3. Academic advising	3.6667	1.0176	48.0
4. Contact with faculty	3.7917	.7426	48.0
5. Interaction with other students	3.6458	.7576	48.0
6. Ethnic diversity	3.3542	.9998	48.0
7. Overall experience	3.9167	.7672	48.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	25.5833	13.4397	3.6660	7

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 48.0 N of Items = 7

Alpha = .7145

Five of the original 12 questions that measured general satisfaction asked subjects about their satisfaction with the academic climate, student services and opportunities offered by Iowa State in general (Items 3. 5. 6. 8. 9 in Table 18). To determine their level of satisfaction with the University's services, an index was created by averaging the responses to these five Likert scale items. Then, the reliability of this index was determined by computing for Cronbach's alpha. The

reliability analysis test shown in Table 20 produced an alpha of .3559, which indicates that this index variable is not reliable at all. This indicates that these 12 variables must be tested separately to determine their independent contribution to GPA as required in RQ 4.

Table 20. Reliability testing for seven items combined to measure transfer students' satisfaction with the academic climate at Iowa State in general

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
1. Sense of community on campus	3.6383	.7640	47.0
2. Student housing	3.2340	.6664	47.0
3. Financial aid	3.1277	.8500	47.0
4. Community service opportunities	3.2553	.5698	47.0
5. Job placement service	3.1277	.8240	47.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
SCALE	16.3830	3.8501	1.9622	5

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 47.0 N of Items = 5

Alpha = .3559

The ten indices above were created in order to pave the way for an analysis of the potential factors that influence this study's measure of student success, the transfer students' GPA at Iowa State.

The Variables that Predict Transfer Students' GPA at Iowa State

The fourth research question asks for the factors that influence the transfer students' cumulative grade point average (GPA) at Iowa State. Considering the array of potential variables that can influence a student's GPA, this general research question was broken down into 13 separate hypotheses as follows:

H1: GPA will differ by place of residence.

This hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test that compared students' grade point average according to place of residence. The results shown in Table 21 suggest that the students' GPA did not differ by place of residence [$F(17,15) = .732$, $p > .05$]. In other words, the students' GPA was not affected by where they live.

Table 21. ANOVA test showing no significant difference in cumulative GPA by place of residence.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.996	17	.353	.734	.732
Within Groups	7.205	15	.480		
Total	13.201	32			

H2: GPA is related to age.

To find out if GPA varies with age, a Pearson's correlation test was conducted. The result showed a negative, weak and therefore non-significant correlation between these two variables ($r = -.013$, $p = .933$). In effect, there is no relationship between GPA and the respondents' age on their last birthday. Age does not have an impact on GPA.

H3: GPA will differ by gender.

Do males and females differ in GPA? This question was answered using an independent-samples t-test. As the results in Table 22 show, no significant difference was found between males and females [$t(2) = -.319$, $p = .740$] (not assuming equal variances) in terms of GPA. Thus, GPA did not differ by gender. Males and females are not likely to differ in GPA performance.

Table 22. Independent samples t-test testing differences in GPA by gender.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
male	19	2.8158	.74882	.17179
female	27	2.8811	.57739	.11112

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	1.826	.183	-.334	44	.740	-.0653	.19553
Equal variances not assumed			-.319	32.299	.752	-.0653	.20460

H4: GPA is related to income.

A Pearson's correlation test was employed to determine the relationship between grade point average and income. A positive but weak correlation was found [r(24)=.244, p=.251], indicating that there is no significant relationship between the students' GPA and their personal income. In other words, GPA did not vary by income.

H5: GPA varies by number of hours allocated to work.

Another Pearson's correlation test was employed to examine the relationship between GPA and the number of hours students work per week. A positive but weak correlation was found (r=.120, p=.429), showing no significant relationship between grade point average and hours per week devoted to work. In short, GPA did not vary by amount of time dedicated to work.

H6: GPA is related to perceived importance of a bachelor's degree.

To determine if GPA is influenced by the extent to which students consider a bachelor's degree important, a Pearson's correlation test was conducted. The results showed a weak negative correlation that was not significant (r=-.045, p=.769), suggesting that GPA is not affected by the level of importance transfer students attach to a bachelor's degree.

H7: GPA will differ by career objectives.

Do students' career goals have a bearing on their GPA? To answer this question, a one-way ANOVA was done. No significant difference was found [F(3,36) =.350, p >.790] between groups of students who said they wanted a career in public relations, broadcasting, advertising, design, newspapers, education, managing a media-based business, and photography (Table 23). The result of the ANOVA test, therefore, suggests that career goals have nothing to do with GPA.

Table 23. ANOVA test showing no significant difference in cumulative GPA by career objectives

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.456	3	.152	.350	.790
Within Groups	15.649	36	.435		
Total	16.105	39			

H8: GPA is related to perception of the basic reporting and writing class experience

To find out if a relationship exists between the basic reporting and writing course experience and students' GPA, a correlation test was conducted. Here, the index that measures *general experience* with the basic reporting and writing course taken in *another college or university* was correlated with GPA. A positive but weak and therefore not significant correlation was found (r =-.103, p=.77), indicating that there is no relationship between grade point average and the non-ISU basic reporting and writing course experience.

Those who took the basic reporting and writing course *at Iowa State* were also asked the same questions about *general basic writing and reporting course evaluations* for which a composite index was created. Another correlation test produced a negative and weak correlation that was not significant (r=1.269, p=.158). This suggests that the respondents' basic reporting and writing experience at Iowa State is not at all related to the transferees' grade point average.

To find out if a relationship exists between the *specific skills* learned in a basic reporting and writing course taken in *another college or university* and GPA, another correlation test was done. A positive but weak and therefore not significant correlation was found (r=.487, p=.776), indicating that there is no relationship between grade point average and the specific skills learned in the basic reporting and writing course taken outside of Iowa State.

Those who took the basic reporting and writing course *at Iowa State* were also asked the same questions related to *specific skills* taught for which a composite index was created. Another correlation test produced a positive and very weak correlation that was not significant (r=.018, p=.927). This suggests that the skills learned in the basic reporting and writing course taken at Iowa State is not at all related to GPA.

H9: Those with and without high school media experience will differ in terms of GPA.

The students were asked whether they have participated actively in high school media such as school newspapers, yearbooks and radio or TV programs (yes=1; no=2). The hypothesis that those with and without high school media experience will differ in GPA was tested using an independent-samples t-test. As the results outlined in Table 24 shows, assuming equal variances, no significant difference exists between these two groups [t(43)=-.420, p = .677]. That is, those with high school media experience were not more likely to achieve higher GPAs than those without such an experience.

Table 24. T-test results showing the difference between those who had high school media experience and those who did not in terms of GPA.

	High school media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grade point average	yes	18	2.8883	.67460	.15900
	no	27	2.8052	.63513	.12223

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Grade point average	**Equal variances assumed**	.000	.998	.420	43	.677	.0831	.19810
	Equal variances not assumed			.415	35.030	.681	.0831	.20056

H10: Those with and without college media experience will differ in terms of GPA.

The transfer students were asked whether they have participated in college media such as college newspapers, yearbooks and radio or TV programs (yes=1; no=2). The hypothesis that those with and without college media experience will differ in GPA was tested using an independent-samples t test. As the results outlined in Table 25 shows, not assuming equal variances, no significant difference exists between these two groups [$t(43)=.084$, $p = .933$]. That is, those with college media experience are not more likely to score higher GPAs than those without such an experience.

Table 25. T-test testing the difference between those who had college media experience and those who did not in terms of GPA

	College media experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grade point average	yes	23	2.8304	.67402	.14054
	no	22	2.8468	.62874	.13405

		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Grade point average	**Equal variances assumed**	.020	.889	-.084	43	.933	-.0164	.19453
	Equal variances not assumed			-.084	42.975	.933	-.0164	.19422

H11: GPA is related to perceived conduciveness of the academic climate.

As the section on index reliability testing described, a general academic climate reliability index was created. To find out whether the students' perception of ISU's general academic climate is related to GPA, a Pearson's correlation test was conducted. A significant relationship (r=.483, p=.001) was found. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between perceived academic climate prevailing at ISU and grade point average. That is, as perception of this academic climate moves toward a positive direction, GPA significantly moves up with it.

The general academic climate was divided into two dimensions. The first dimension specifically refers to the academic climate in the Greenlee School. The second dimension sums up the general responses to statements that had more to do with the climate in the University as a whole. The Greenlee School academic climate index was created by averaging the responses to seven questions. To test whether this variable is related to GPA, a correlation test was done. The

results produced a positive, moderate and statistically significant correlation coefficient (r=.353, p=.019). This significant relationship suggests that the academic climate at the Greenlee School is positively related to GPA. That is, as the evaluations of the School's academic climate increases, GPA also increases.

Because the Greenlee academic climate index did not produce acceptable reliability, the responses to the seven separate items that comprise the index were correlated with GPA. Of these items, the variable "it is easy to make friends at the Greenlee School" correlated positively and significantly with GPA (r=.327, p =.026). This suggests that GPA increases the more students perceive it is easy to make friends in the School.

The second dimension of the general academic climate pertains to factors attributable to the University as a whole. To compute for this, an ISU academic climate index was created by averaging the responses to five attitudinal items. Because the reliability test showed that this index was not reliable (i.e., it demonstrated a low Cronbach's alpha), each of the items comprising this index was correlated with GPA. The results show that of these five items, two were significantly related to GPA—"experiencing a grade dip during the first year at ISU" (which was recoded to be in accord with the coding pattern that the bigger value means a more positive response; r=.444, p =.002) and "meeting as many people as I would like" (r=.367, p=.012). Specifically, as these two variables go up, GPA also goes up.

H12: GPA is related to academic satisfaction.

To measure perceived academic satisfaction, an index was created by averaging the responses to 12 questions that asked subjects about their general level of academic satisfaction. Because this was found to be a reliable index (Cronbach's alpha=.6689, this measure was correlated with GPA to test the above hypothesis. The test produced a weak positive correlation

between these two variables (r=.056, p=.714), indicating that there is no relationship between level of general satisfaction and GPA.

As the section on index reliability testing describes, general satisfaction was divided into two dimensions. The first dimension specifically refers to the level of satisfaction students have expressed about Greenlee School services and attributes. The second sums up the general responses to statements that had more to do with satisfaction regarding the University as a whole. The Greenlee School satisfaction index was created by averaging the responses to seven Likert scale items. The reliability of this index was acceptable. To test whether this variable is related to GPA, a correlation test was done. The results produced a positive, weak and statistically not significant correlation coefficient (r=.122, p=.419), suggesting that the level of satisfaction with the Greenlee School is positively related to GPA, but that this relationship is not significant.

The second dimension of general satisfaction pertains to factors attributable to the University as a whole. To compute for this, an ISU satisfaction index was created by averaging the responses to five attitudinal items. Because the reliability test showed that this index was not reliable (i.e., it displayed a low Cronbach's alpha), each of the items comprising this index was correlated with GPA. The results show that of these five items, only one—satisfaction with the opportunities for community service—was significantly related to GPA (r=-.352, p =.016). This relationship, however, was negative. This indicates that as satisfaction with community service opportunities rises, GPA goes down. This suggests a negative impact of community service opportunities on GPA perhaps because of the time community service takes away from academic work.

The Factors that Influence GPA: An Omnibus Test

Considering the predictor variables lined up above that have been tested to show their impact on GPA, the fifth research question asks: Which of these independent variables are the strongest predictors of transfer students' GPA?

To answer this research question, the five variables found to be significantly related to GPA in the individual and independent statistical tests above were included as the predictor variables in an omnibus multiple linear regression test. This more stringent and powerful test aims to pinpoint the strongest predictors of transfer students' GPA by examining each factor's influence in the presence of all other statistically significant predictors. These five predictor variables were: (1) interaction with other students, (2) opportunities for community service, (3) meeting as many people as possible, (4) easy to make friends in the Greenlee School, (5) experiencing a grade dip during the first semester at Greenlee. The results shown in Table 17 show that the five variables combined contributed 51 percent of the variance in GPA. The significant F value (8.342, p=.000) also shows that all five variables together significantly predict GPA. That is, the five variables taken together significantly affects GPA. Parceling out the individual contribution of each variable, however, shows that experiencing a grade dip is a significant disincentive to GPA (t=-2.675, p=.011, Table 26). So is satisfaction with opportunities for community service (t=-2.462, p=.018). Any increase in these two factors is likely to deflate GPA. The only positive predictor is satisfaction with the level of interaction with other students (t=3.271, p=.002). As interaction with other students increase, so does GPA, and this level of increase was statistically significant.

Table 26. Multiple regression test showing the influence of five significant predictor variables on GPA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.601	5	1.920	8.342	.000
	Residual	9.207	40	.230		
	Total	18.809	45			

[a] Predictors: (Constant), Satisfied with opportunities for community service, Interaction with other students satisfaction, Experienced grade dip, Meeting as many people as would like, Easy to make friends

[b] Dependent variable: Grade point average

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
Model					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.714	.510	.449	.47977	.510	8.342	5	40	.000

[a] Predictors: (Constant), Satisfied with opportunities for community service, Interaction with other students satisfaction, Experienced grade dip, Meeting as many people as would like, Easy to make friends.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.634	.556		4.740	.000
	Easy to make friends	-2.662E-02	.097	-.045	-.274	.785
	Meeting as many people as would like	-7.612E-03	.100	-.012	-.076	.940
	Experienced a grade dip	-.141	.053	-.314	-2.675	.011
	Satisfaction with interaction with other students	.473	.145	.536	3.271	.002
	Satisfaction with opportunities for community service	-.324	.132	-.288	-2.462	.018

a Dependent Variable: Grade point average

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A survey of students who transferred to the Greenlee School was conducted to determine their demographic and academic profiles, to assess how the level of preparation they received in their basic reporting and writing course prepared them to meet the challenges they face at Iowa State's four-year bachelor's degree program, to ascertain the extent to which they were satisfied with the academic climate in the Greenlee School in particular and at Iowa State in general, and to discern which factors influence transfer students' success at Iowa State as measured by their GPA.

Summary of Findings

Those who transferred to the Greenlee program were relatively young (average age=22 years old) Caucasian female students (58%) who are single and do not have children. They hail from all over the state of Iowa; a few were from other states. Many live in apartments while attending ISU, work less than 18 hours per week, and earn an average income of less than $20,000 per year. Although many have parents with annual incomes of more than $80,000 per year, they rely on student loans as the primary source of college funding. Those fortunate enough to receive financial aid get an average of $5,787 per year in financial assistance, but many reportedly receive financial help from their parents, from scholarships and by working part time.

Most of the students surveyed transferred from the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) where they stayed one to two years before transferring to Iowa State. The majority considers a bachelor's degree very important to their future careers in journalism and mass communication; most are planning a career in broadcasting.

Over 60 percent of the transfer students took the basic reporting and writing course at Iowa State. About a third had high school media experience, and about half participated in the college media. Their average grade point average last academic year was 2.85.

Those who took the basic writing and reporting course outside Iowa State consistently rated their experience higher (in terms of skills and academic preparation for upper-level journalism and communication courses) than those who took the course at the Greenlee School. In general, however, the two groups rated their basic writing course high in terms of how they were taught (1) writing and reporting skills and (2) research and data gathering skills, the cornerstones of the basic reporting and writing class regardless of where the course was taken. However, those who registered for the course in other universities and colleges rated their basic writing class higher in terms of the analytical skills they learned, knowledge about law and ethics, how to gather data, and visual communication skills they acquired.

The largest variance in the evaluations of the basic writing and reporting course taken at Iowa State and those who took the offering of other colleges and universities was in the areas of computer skills and problem-solving skills acquisition. Considering the importance of these skills to the journalism and communication profession, the Greenlee School should make up for these disparities in order to be in line with the offerings of other colleges. These findings clearly suggest skills areas that need to be enhanced to substantially improve the Greenlee program. This finding may lend support to the results of Piland (1995) who demonstrated that faculty accessibility and individualized attention in community colleges is one factor that works in their favor. The opportunities for more personalized instruction translate to more skilled and well prepared students.

The respondents' evaluations of their academic climate satisfaction suggest that the Greenlee transfer students are well adjusted socially and academically to the School's climate. They also report being satisfied with the quality of instruction, the level of contact with faculty and with their overall experience in the Greenlee School. This indicates that the School is doing a good job of handling the special needs of transfer students.

This study chose cumulative GPA at Iowa State as a measure of transfer students' success. What variables have a direct bearing on transfer students' GPA? The results of independent statistical tests showed that the demographic variables—age, gender, income, place of residence and hours spent working while attending college—did not significantly influence GPA. Neither did such academic-related variables as the importance attached to a bachelor's degree, career objectives, assessments of the basic reporting and writing class experience, and high school and college media participation had a bearing on GPA.

The variables that did have a significant influence on GPA were those that were related to the respondents' assessment of the academic climate at the Greenlee School in particular and at Iowa State in general. The results show that five variables—(1) interaction with other students, (2) opportunities for community service, (3) meeting as many people as they would like, (4) the ease with which students can make friends, and (5) a grade dip on the first semester at Iowa State—were statistically significant predictors of GPA.

The transfer students' evaluations of the academic climate at Iowa State were significant predictors of GPA so that an increase in these evaluations also boosts students' GPA. Of the seven items that measured academic climate, the perceived ease with which transfer students can make friends in the Greenlee School was the most powerful positive predictor. Another antecedent variable that significantly affected GPA was "experiencing a grade dip" during the

first semester at ISU, which has a negative influence on GPA. Another factor found to significantly deflate GPA was "meeting as many people and making as many friends." These findings suggest that these three facets of academic climate are very important determinants of transfer students' academic success.

The level of satisfaction with two University-related factors was also found to exert a significant influence on GPA. These were "level of interaction with other students," which increases GPA, and satisfaction with "community service opportunities on campus" every incremental increase in which was found to depress GPA (a significant negative predictor). This may be due to the time community service takes away from academic work.

Implications of the Results

This study originated with the goal of establishing how prepared transfer students were in the basic reporting and writing course taken within and outside of Iowa State. That transfer students who took basic writing and reporting in other institutions consistently rated their experience as stronger in the 1) analytical skills learned, 2) knowledge about law and ethics, 3) how to gather data, and 4) visual communication skills. This suggests that the Greenlee School should pay special attention to these skills and conceptual areas in order to remain qualitatively competitive with other institutions in its Jl MC 201 offering.

The factors that have a direct bearing on GPA uncovered in this study echo the findings of other studies (i.e., Diaz, 1992) that measured academic performance in terms of GPA, the most widely used index for transfer students admission. They have shown that although transfer students in 79% of the studies experienced transfer shock, the magnitude of GPA change in most cases was only one-half of a grade point or less. Of the studies that showed transfer shock, 67% reported that students recover from it usually within the first year after transfer (34% showed

complete recovery while 32% showed partial recovery). Complete recovery happens when students are easily adjusted and integrated into the new environment.

As more and more non-traditional students come back to school, it is important for senior institutions to understand how the adjustment process works. To be more attuned to transfer students' special needs and recovery from transfer shock, the Greenlee School can perhaps host special events for them as it does for new incoming students in general. A student advisor specifically trained to handle the special needs of transfer students will also help expedite the recovery process (Nickens, 1972). As the average age of transfer students in prior research was 30 years old (Piland, 1995), the average age at the Greenlee School was 22 years old. This may be a finding unique to Iowa in general, but should be considered during the transition process. The Greenlee School should offer more opportunities for student interaction such as class projects, and events to help ensure a smooth transition.

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Study

This study's sample under-represented minority and other ethnic groups. Considering that these student segments had to contend with more adjustment problems, subsequent studies must make the extra effort to solicit the views of these minority and other identified groups with special needs.

The sample also was composed of only a very small percentage of transfer students who took the basic reporting and writing course at another college or university. As such, the resulting sample may not be fully representative of the entire transfer student population within the School.

Curriculum planners in the Greenlee School will also benefit by conducting a focus group session with transfer students who took the basic course at other places to determine, using more

in-depth probes, their experience with the course. This will be very useful in identifying the inconsistencies in general concepts and skills taught in the basic reporting course across the state.

There are, of course, other measures of student success. This study, however, dealt exclusively with GPA. Another survey that will qualitatively assess students' open-ended responses to the questions concerning their experience will likely produce more personal and qualitative measures of "success."

While previous researchers have identified students' motivation as a critical factor toward their college success, this element was not directly included in the analysis. Although there were surrogate questions asked of transfer students related to motivation, they cannot be considered direct measures of this construct. Future studies can therefore incorporate motivation as a legitimate independent variable that may influence transfer students' success.

Asked to evaluate the job placement services at Iowa State, the School's transfer students assessed it as neutral. This may be due to the fact that job placement services within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has been combined into one office headquartered at Catt Hall. The move has not been a smooth one, with journalism professors arguing that there are special recruiting and job solicitation requirements for journalism and mass communication students. Greenlee School advisers are also concerned that the transition to Catt Hall reduces the impact of the School's direct connection with the industry and the professional connection.

Finally, this study was limited by its focus on Greenlee School transfer students. To get a more accurate read on the challenges facing this special group of students, future studies should endeavor to sample the experience of transfer students from across the state. Such a study will provide a more cross-sectional profile of journalism and mass communication transfer students

throughout Iowa and will substantially assist in drawing up integrated plans for the smooth transition of these students into new academic settings.

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APPENDIX A: HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Assurances
Vice Provost for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515 294-4566
FAX 515 294-4267

DATE: April 12, 2006

TO: Heather Arnold

FROM: Institutional Review Board,
Office of Research Assurances

RE: IRB ID Number: 06-209 **Study Review Date:** April 11, 2006

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed the project, "Factors that Influence Transfer Students' Success in Iowa State University's Journalism and Communication Program," and declared the study exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1) and (2). The applicable exemption category is provided below for your information. Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review by the IRB. Only the IRB may make the determination of exemption, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.

The IRB determination of exemption means that this project does not need to meet the requirements from the Department of Health and Human Service (DHHS) regulations for the protection of human subjects, unless required by the IRB. We do, however, urge you to protect the rights of your participants in the same ways that you would if the project was required to follow the regulations. This includes providing relevant information about the research to the participants.

Because your project is exempt, you do not need to submit an application for continuing review. However, you must carry out the research as proposed in the IRB application, including obtaining and documenting (signed) informed consent if you have stated in your application that you will do so or if required by the IRB.

Any modification of this research should be submitted to the IRB on a Continuation and/or Modification form, prior to making any changes, to determine if the project still meets the Federal criteria for exemption. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, then an IRB proposal will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.

CC: Dr. Lulu Rodriguez

Exempt Categories

(1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

For IRB Use Only		
	Review Date: _____	IRB ID: 06-309
	Approval Date: _____	Length of Approval: _____
	Approval Expiration Date: _____	FULL Committee Review: _____
	EXEMPT per 45 CFR 46.101(b): #2 Date: 4/11/06	Minimal Risk: ✓
	EXPEDITED per 45 CFR 46.110(b) _____	More than Minimal Risk: _____
	Category _____, Letter _____	Project Closed Date: _____

ISU NEW HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH FORM

IRB

APR 1 1 2006

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Principal Investigator (PI): Heather Arnold	Phone: 515-451-5373	Fax:
Degrees: B.A. ISU	Correspondence Address: 111 Sheldon Avenue Apartment 4	
Department: Greenlees School of Journalism and Communication	Email Address: hlarnold@iastate.edu	
Center/Institute: Iowa State University	College: Liberal Arts	
PI Level: ☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Postdoctoral ☒ Graduate Student ☐ Undergraduate Student		

Title of Project: Factors that influence transfer students' success in Iowa State University's journalism and communication program
Project Period (Include Start and End Date): [*mm/dd/yy*][*04/17/06*] to [*mm/yy/dd*][*08/01/06*]

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS	
Name of Major Professor/Supervising Faculty: Dr. Lulu Rodriguez	Signature of Major Professor/Supervising Faculty: Lulu Rodriguez
Phone: 515-294-0484	Campus Address: 111 Sheldon Avenue, Apartment 4
Department: Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication	Email Address: lulurod@iastate.edu
Type of Project: (check all that apply) ☒ Research ☒ Thesis ☐ Dissertation ☐ Class project ☐ Independent Study (490, 590, Honors project) ☐ Other. Please specify:	

KEY PERSONNEL

List all members and relevant experience of the project personnel. This information is intended to inform the committee of the training and background related to the specific procedures that the each person will perform on the project.

NAME & DEGREE(S)	SPECIFIC DUTIES ON PROJECT	TRAINING & EXPERIENCE RELATED TO PROCEDURES PERFORMED, DATE OF TRAINING
Heather L. Arnold	Principal Investigator	ISU Human Subjects Training; May 17, 2005
Lulu Rodriguez	Major Professor	ISU Human Subjects Training; March 11, 2003

Add New Row

FUNDING INFORMATION

Internally funded, please provide account number:
Externally funded, please provide funding source and account number:
Funding is pending please provide OSPA Record ID on GoldSheet:
Title on GoldSheet if Different Than Above:
Other: *e.g., funding will be applied for later.*

SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

Although the assurance committees are not intended to conduct peer review of research proposals, the federal regulations include language such as "consistent with sound research design," "rationale for involving animals or humans" and "scientifically valuable research," which requires that the committees consider in their review the general scientific relevance of a research study. Proposals that do not meet these basic tests are not justifiable and cannot be approved. If an assurance review committee(s) has concerns about the scientific merit of a project and the project was not competitively funded by peer review or was funded by corporate sponsors, the project may be referred to a scientific review committee. The scientific review committee will be ad hoc and will consist of your ISU peers and outside experts as needed. If this situation arises, the PI will be contacted and given the option of agreeing that a consultant may be contacted or withdrawing the proposal from consideration.

☐ Yes ☒ No Has or will this project receive peer review?

If the answer is "yes," please indicate who did or will conduct the review:

If a review was conducted, please indicate the outcome of the review:

NOTE: RESPONSE CELLS WILL EXPAND AS YOU TYPE AND PROVIDE SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR YOUR RESPONSE.

COLLECTION OR RECEIPT OF SAMPLES

Will you be: (Please check all the apply.)

☐ Yes ☒ No Receiving samples from outside of ISU? See examples below.
☐ Yes ☒ No Sending samples outside of ISU? See examples below.

Examples include: genetically modified organisms, body fluids, tissue samples, blood samples, pathogens.

If you will be receiving samples from or sending samples outside of ISU, please identify the name of the outside organization(s) and the identity of the samples you will be sending or receiving outside of ISU:

Please note that some samples may require a USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) permit, a USPHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Import Permit for Etiologic Agents, a Registration for Select Agents, High Consequence Livestock Pathogens and Toxins or Listed Plant Pathogens, or a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) (http://www.ehs.iastate.edu/bs/shipping.htm).

SECTION II: APPLICATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

APPENDIX B: COVER LETTER

April 21, 2006

Dear Sir or Madam:

My name is Heather Arnold and I am a graduate student enrolled in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. In pursuit of my Master of Science degree, I am in the process of gathering data for my thesis, which explores factors that affect transfer students' success in Iowa State University's journalism and communication program.

As a current transfer student, your response to the enclosed questionnaire can help provide information to the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication to aid in evaluating their current journalism curricula.

Attached to this email is copy of the questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you would take ten minutes to complete it. Please note that completion of the survey is voluntary in nature and the right to withdraw from the study is reserved. The sole purpose of the study is for research purposes only. Only my major professor and myself will have access to the returned questionnaires. Questionnaires will be destroyed once data analysis has been successfully completed. It will be very helpful if your completed questionnaire could be returned to me by **May 31**.

You will note that the questionnaire has a number located in the upper left-hand side. The purpose of the number is just to help me track who has responded in the first wave of mailing. The confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed. If you need any additional information, please phone me at (515) 451-5373, or email me at hlarnold@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the Human Subjects Research Office, 2810 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-4566; austingr@iastate.edu or the Research Compliance Officer, Office of Research Compliance, 2810 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-3115; dament@iastate.edu.

Please email your completed survey to hlarnold@iastate.edu. I sincerely appreciate your support and thank you in advance for your response.

Sincerely,

Heather L. Arnold
Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication
Iowa State University

CC: Dr. Lulu Rodriguez, Major Professor, lulurod@iastate.edu

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

Transfer Students' Success in Iowa State University's Journalism and Communications Program

Section I: Demographic information/Academic factors

Please answer the following questions

1	Gender	**Female** ☐	**Male** ☐			
2	Age					
3	Ethnicity	**Asian Pacific Islander** ☐	**African American** ☐	**Caucasian** ☐	**Native American** ☐	**Other** ☐
4	What is your marital status?	**Single** ☐	**Married** ☐	**Divorced** ☐		
5	Do you have children? How many?					
6	Current residence	**Residence Hall** ☐	**Fraternity /Sorority** ☐	**Apartment** ☐	**House** ☐	**Family Home** ☐
7	Home county (if from U .S.)					
8	Estimate your parents' household income for the past year	**< $20,000** ☐	**$20,000 - $39,000** ☐	**$40,000 - 59,000** ☐	**$60,000 - 79,000** ☐	**> $80,000** ☐
9	If independent, what was your annual income last year?	**< $20,000** ☐	**$20,000 - $39,000** ☐	**$40,000 - 59,000** ☐	**$60,000 - 79,000** ☐	**> $80,000** ☐
10	How many hours per week do you work?					
11	Where did you get your college funding?					
12	How much financial aid did you receive last academic school year?					
13	What other college or university have you attended aside from ISU and how long did you study at each?					
14	What is your perceived importance of a bachelor's degree?					
15	What is your career goal?					
16	Where did you take JlMC 201 or its equivalent?					

Section II: Community College Experiences with JlMC 201

If you took JLMC 201 at a school other than ISU, please answer the following questions.
If you took JLMC 201 at ISU, please skip to Section III.

Please answer the following questions						
17	How many hours did you usually spend studying or preparing for JlMC 201 at the community college?	**0-5** ☐	**6-10** ☐	**11-15** ☐	**15-20** ☐	**>20** ☐
18	During your time at the community college, about how many hours a week did you work?	**0-10** ☐	**11-20** ☐	**21-30** ☐	**31-40** ☐	**>40** ☐
Please rate the following questions about your experience with JlMC 201 at the community college		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
19	The course developed my critical and analytical thinking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	The course demanded intensive writing assignments and projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	Overall, the course was intellectually challenging.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	The course prepared me for the academic standards at Greenlee.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	The course required extensive reading and writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To what extent do you agree that your academic experiences at the community college gave you skills you needed to prepare you for the Greenlee program?		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
24	Computer skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25	Mathematical skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26	Note taking skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27	Problem solving skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28	Reading skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29	Research skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	Speaking and oral skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31	Time management skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32	Writing skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section III: ISU experiences with JlMC 201

If you took JLMC 201 at ISU, please answer the following.

Please answer the following questions						
33	How many hours while at ISU did you usually spend studying or preparing for JlMC 201?	0-5 ☐	6-10 ☐	11-15 ☐	15-20 ☐	>20 ☐
34	About how many hours a week did you usually spend working on a job for pay while attending ISU?	0-10 ☐	11-20 ☐	21-30 ☐	31-40 ☐	>40 ☐
Please rate the following questions about your experience with JlMC 201 at the Greenlee School of Journalism		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
35	The course developed my critical and analytical thinking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
36	The course demanded intensive writing assignments and projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
37	Overall, the course was intellectually challenging.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
38	The course prepared me for the academic standards at Greenlee.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
39	The course required extensive reading and writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To what extent do you agree that your academic experiences at the community college gave you skills you needed to prepare you for the Greenlee program?		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
40	Computer skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
41	Mathematical skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
42	Note taking skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
43	Problem solving skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
44	Reading skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
45	Research skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
46	Speaking and oral skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
47	Time management skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
48	Writing skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section IV: Adjustment and Satisfaction Information

Please answer the following.

	Please rate the following questions about your transfer process	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
49	I researched various aspects of the Greenlee school to get a better understanding of the environment and academic expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
50	I knew what to expect at the Greenlee school in terms of academics.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
51	I visited Hamilton Hall to learn where offices and departments were located for journalism students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
52	What is your most important reason for attending this University?					

	Listed below are some reasons that might have influenced your decision to attend ISU.	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
53	This university has a very good academic reputation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
54	This university has a very good reputation for its social activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
55	I was offered financial assistance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
56	This university has affordable tuition.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
57	A friend suggested attending.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
58	A university representative recruited me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
59	This university graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
60	This university's graduates get good jobs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
61	ISU's ranking in national magazines.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
62	Convenience and location.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
63	Cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
64	Did you attend a Greenlee-sponsored transfer student orientation?	**Yes** ☐	**No** ☐			
65	If you answered yes to question #45, how helpful was the orientation program	**Unhelpful** ☐	**Somewhat Unhelpful** ☐	**Neutral** ☐	**Somewhat Helpful** ☐	**Helpful** ☐

	Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
66	Adjusting to the academic standards or expectations at Greenlee has been easy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
67	Adjusting to the social environment at Greenlee has bee easy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
68	I often feel overwhelmed by the size of the student body.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
69	Upon transferring I felt alienated at Greenlee.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
70	I am very involved in activities at the Greenlee School.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
71	The large classes intimidate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
72	It is easy to find my way around campus.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
73	I experienced a dip in grades (GPA) during my first semester at ISU.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
74	It is easy to make friends at ISU.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
75	I fell comfortable spending time with friends that I made at the two-year college I attended.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
76	I am meeting as many people and making as many friends as I would like at ISU.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
77	I feel more comfortable making friends with transfer students than non-transfers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
78	There is a sense of competition between students at ISU that is not found in community colleges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Please rate your satisfaction with each of the aspects of campus life listed below	**Very Dissatisfied**	**Dissatisfied**	**Neutral**	**Satisfied**	**Very Satisfied**
79	Sense of belonging at the Greenlee School.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
80	Decision to transfer to the Greenlee School.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
81	Overall quality of instruction.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
82	Sense of community on campus.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
83	Academic advising.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Please rate your satisfaction with each of the aspects of campus life listed below	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
84	Career counseling and advising.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
85	Student housing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
86	Courses in your major field.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
87	Financial aid services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
88	Amount of contact with faculty.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
89	Opportunities for community services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
90	Job placement services for students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
91	Class size	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
92	Interaction with other students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
93	Ethnic/racial diversity of the faculty.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
94	Overall college experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX D: CODE BOOK

CODEBOOK FOR THE TRANSFER STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY'S JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

Question Number	Variable name	Variable label	Values
	Idno	Respondent's id number	
1	Gender		1= male 2= female 9= missing, don't know, no response
2	Age	Age on last birthday	99= missing, don't know, no response
3	Ethni	Ethnicity	1= Asian/Pacific Islander 2= African American 3= Caucasian 4= Native American 5= Other 9= Missing, don't know, no response
4	Marstat	Marital status	1= Single 2= Married 3= Divorced 9= Missing, don't know, no response
5	Child	Any children	1= yes 2= no 9= missing, don't know, no response
6	Child1	How many children	99= missing, don't know, no response
7	Residnt	Current residence	1= Residence hall 2= Fraternity/Sorority 3= Apartment 4= Off campus housing 5= Family 9= Missing, don't know, no response
8	Cnty	Home county (if from US)	1= Madison 2= Marion 3= Scott 4= Linn 5= Marshall 6= Cedar

			7= Muscatine 8= Boone 9= Polk 10= Dallas 11= Story 12= Pottawattamie 13= Warren 14= Madison 15= Tarrant 16= Cass 17= Woodbury 18= Carroll 19= Other State 20= Other Country 99= missing, don't know, no response
	Parinc	Parent's annual income	1= <$20,000 2= $20,000 - $39,000 3= $40,000 - $59,000 4= $60,000 - $79,000 5= >$80,000 9= Missing, don't know, no response
10	Indinc	Independent Income	1= <$20,000 2= $20,000 – $39,000 3= $40,000 - $59,000 4= $60,000 - $79,000 5= >$80,000 9= missing, don't know, no response
11	Wkhrs	Hours worked during college	99= missing, don't know, no response
12	Colfund	College Funding	1= loans 2= parents 3= loans and parents 4= work part time and loans 5= work part time 6= work full time 7= scholarships and loans 9= missing, don't know, no response
13	Finaid	How much financial aid	99= missing, don't know, no response
14	Othrcol	Other colleges attended	99= missing, don't know, no response
15	Yrstud	Years attended other	99= missing, don't know, no

		colleges	response
16	Bachimp	Bachelor's Degree importance	1= not important at all 2= important 3= neutral 4= somewhat important 5= very important 9= missing, don't know, no response
17	Cargoal	Career Goal	1= PR 2= TV 3= Adverting 4= Design/Creative 5= Broadcasting 6= Magazine 7= Sport Broadcasting 8= Video 9= Newspaper 10= Radio 11= Education 12= Own Media Business 13= Other 99= missing, don't know, no response
18	Bascour	Where attended basic course	1= ISU 2= DMACC 3= Marshalltown 4= St. Petersburg 5= Simpson 6= Nebraska 7= University of Iowa 8= IHCC 9= missing, don't know, no response
19	Hsexp	High school media experience	1= yes 2= no 9= missing, don't know, no response
20	Colexp	College media experience	1= yes 2= no 9= missing, don't know, no response
21	Devanal	Other college course developed analytical skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree

			9= Missing, don't know, no response
22	Devwrit	Other college course developed writing skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
23	Intelch	Other college course was intellectually challenging	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
24	acdprep	Other college course academically prepared for challenges	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
25	Ethicom	Other college course taught communication ethics	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
26	Gthrdat	Other college course taught data gathering skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response

27	Cmpter	Other college course taught computer skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
28	Math	Other college course taught math skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
29	Viscom	Other college course taught visual communication skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
30	Prbskil	Other college course taught problem-solving skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
31	Resrch	Other college course taught research skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response

32	Repskil	Other college course taught reporting skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
33	Devanal1	ISU course taught analytical skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
34	Devwrit1	ISU course developed writing skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
35	Intelch1	ISU course was intellectually challenging	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
36	Acdprep1	ISU course academically prepared for challenges	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
37	Ethicom1	ISU course taught communication ethics	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response

38	Gthrdat1	ISU course taught data gathering skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
39	Cmpter1	ISU course taught computer skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
40	Math1	ISU course taught math skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
41	Viscom1	ISU course taught visual communication skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
42	Prbskil1	ISU course taught problem-solving skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response

43	Resrch1	ISU course taught research skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
44	Repskil1	ISU course taught reporting skills	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
45	Adjacad	Adjusting to Greenlee academics was easy	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
46	Adjsoc	Adjusting to Greenlee socially was easy	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
47	Sizovw	Size of School is overwhelming	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
48	Aliensch	Alienated at School	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
49	Involact	Involved in activities at School	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree

			3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
50	Lgclass	Large classes overwhelm	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
51	Easyfnd	Easy to find way around campus	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
52	Gradip	Experienced grade dip	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
53	Mfrnd	Easy to make friends	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
54	Mtgpp	Meeting as many people as would like	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
55	Comtrn	Comfortable with transfer student vs ISU students	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral

			4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
56	Compet	Sense of competition at ISU	1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree 9= Missing, don't know, no response
57	Snsbel	Satisfied with sense of belonging	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
58	Qualin	Quality of instruction satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
59	Comm	Sense of community satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
60	Acadadv	Academic advising satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
61	Sdthou	Student housing satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral

			4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
62	Finaid1	Financial aid satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
63	Confac	Satisfied with amount of faculty contact	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
64	Comserv	Satisfied with opportunities for community service	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
65	Jobpl	Satisfied with job placement	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
66	Intract	Interaction with other students satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
67	Ethdiv	Ethnic diversity satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral

			4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response
68	Ovexper	Overall experience satisfaction	1= Very dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very satisfied 9= Missing, don't know, no response