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**ROWAN UNIVERSITY'S ROWAN 101 TRANSFER SEMINAR: IMPACT ON  
TRANSFER STUDENTS**

by

Michele A. Applegate

A Thesis

Submitted to the  
The Educational Services and Leadership Department  
College of Education  
In partial fulfillment of the requirement  
For the degree of  
Master of Arts in Higher Education  
at  
Rowan University  
June 22, 2016

Thesis Chair: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

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## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mom and dad. Knowing that I have your love, support, and that the work I do makes you proud means the world to me. You taught me at an early age that if I tried my hardest, I should be proud no matter the outcome. I've held onto this throughout all of the ups and downs in my life and will continue to do so in my career.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my family and friends for their tremendous support and understanding throughout my graduate school education. Thank you for always being the ones that I can go to when the world seems a little too heavy and for always finding a way to make it lighter.

I would also like to thank the transfer students of Rowan University for their participation in a study that will create a more thorough understanding of the experience transfer students receive at Rowan University.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Sisco for making an overwhelming undertaking feel manageable, for always being available to provide guidance, and for pushing me to continue to learn everyday.

## Abstract

Michele A. Applegate  
ROWAN UNIVERSITY'S ROWAN 101 TRANSFER SEMINAR: IMPACT ON  
TRANSFER STUDENTS  
2015-2016  
Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.  
Master of Arts in Higher Education

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) transfer seminar course offered to incoming transfers at Rowan University. The study explored students' college preparedness, support, concerns, and attitudes towards Rowan University; experiences with diversity; college goals and outcomes; study strategies; work patterns and reasons for working; and self reports of the impact that the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course had on them. A total population of 41 students from the fall semester's courses were contacted to take the *Transfer Student Survey* and to participate in an interview. Results from the data analysis revealed that the students felt prepared for college, supported, and had positive attitudes towards Rowan University; however, students remain concerned with finances, course availability, and academic requirements. Students reported desiring opportunities for diverse experiences, as well as a well-rounded education. Students frequently used study strategies, especially attending class. Most students did not plan to work on campus but many had off campus jobs and their reasons for working were financially based. Interview data confirmed previous literature that the transfer seminar did aid in the students' transition and created a sense of connection to the institution.

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

Today's competitive economy is creating a need for more college-educated workers. In response to this need, President Barack Obama set out to reach a new national goal of college enrollment and degree attainment in America (AACC, 2009). He designed a plan to reform education in order for Americans to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to compete with workers from all over the world (AACC, 2009).

Whether due to President Obama's initiatives or the competitive economy, increasingly more students are seeking higher education every year. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, there was a 24% increase in enrollment from 2002 to 2012 in degree-granting institutions and this increase is projected to continue in future years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

President Obama's initiatives specifically target community colleges because these institutions enroll the largest number of students in higher education and are best suited for all types of students (AACC, 2009). Community colleges provide "affordable tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules, and convenient locations," (AACC, 2009, para 6) which can be attractive to both traditional and non-traditional students. While many students are choosing to begin at community colleges for financial, work-related, or personal reasons, this avenue into higher education often leads to pursuing further education at a four-year institution. This may be in part due to the increase in partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions. The rising number of community college attendees has motivated administrators at four-year

institutions to seek out partnerships with local community colleges in order to increase the number of transfers entering their institution (Davis, 2009). Partnerships may vary from credit transfer agreements to shared faculty and educational space, including the opportunity for community college graduates to complete their baccalaureate degree by taking junior and senior classes at a local community college (Davis, 2009). Such is the case of Ferris State University in Michigan, whose president believes this type of partnership furthers the institution's mission to provide access to a bachelor's degree (Davis, 2009). Rowan University, a state university in New Jersey, has partnered with two local community colleges within the last two years for similar reasons (Rowan Today, 2015). Moreover, administrators are being faced with new challenges that are specific to the rising population of transfer students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Transfer students are a unique student population with experiences and needs that vary from first-time college students (Chin-Newman & Shaw, 2013). The transferring process may be confusing and stressful if the students are not being given enough or accurate information. Other difficulties associated with this process include preparing students for and managing transfer shock and implementing ways to engage transfers in their new institution (Cejda, Kaylor, & Rewey, 1998; Lester, Leonard, & Mathias, 2013). These barriers need to be addressed in order for transfer students to be successful.

A difficulty that is unique to transfers is known as transfer shock, or the dip in grade point average of a transfer student during their first semester at a new institution. This is a common occurrence amongst transfers and may affect the financial aid a student

receives, as well as personal confidence in their ability to be successful at the new institution. While not all transfers experience transfer shock, those that do may be at risk of being academically dismissed (Cejda, Kaylor, & Rewey, 1998; Ishanti, 2008). This phenomenon may be difficult for administrators to address and develop ways to support transfers during their transitional period.

Transfer students are also at risk of not becoming engaged on campus (Lester, Leonard, & Mathias, 2013). According to the *National Survey of Student Engagement* (2009), transfer students were less likely to interact with faculty or to participate in high-impact activities on campus, which could result in feelings of isolation at their new institution or a drop in their grade point average. Implementing ways to increase transfers engagement is important to the overall success of this student population.

There is limited research on programs designed specifically for transfer students. The concept of a transitional program, similar to that of a first year experience program for first time freshman, has been suggested but very little research to support its success exists (Grites & Farina, 2012). In theory, this type of a program would help a transfer to become more acclimated to the institution, to increase positive interactions between the student with peers and faculty members, and will engage the transfer student. Further research on transfer specific programming is necessary to better understand the impact of these programs on the overall success of transfer students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact that the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses had on the transfer students that participated

in the following semester after completing the course. The information collected is meant to provide insight into the effectiveness of this type of course for post-transfer students adjusting to a new institution.

### **Significance of the Study**

It has been well established that first year experience programs greatly benefit new students in acquiring both academic and social skills (Schrader & Brown, 2008). However, minimal research exists in regards to the impact of similar programs designed as transitional seminar courses for transfer students. According to Grites (2013), transitional programs specific to transfers are a successful method to relay important information and resources to post-transfer students and should be implemented in institutions accepting transfers. In the fall of 2015, Rowan University implemented its first transfer student course, similar to a first year experience seminar course, and successfully filled two sections. This study will provide greater insight into the impact that a transitional seminar course for transfers for institutions similar to Rowan University, as well as add to the knowledge base on transfer seminars in general. This study may also help administrators to better understand the needs of transfers and improve the transfer course for future transfer students.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

It is assumed that the participating transfer students from the two Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses were representative of first semester, post-transfer students. It is also assumed that these students were honest when filling out the survey and discussing the class in the focus groups. A further assumption is that these

students participated voluntarily, both in the class and in taking the survey and participating in the focus groups.

This study does have several limitations. The students in this course voluntarily registered and may have had a different experience than transfer students that are required to take a transfer seminar. The students that participated in taking the survey and individual interviews may have had a different experience than those that opted to not participate. The students' answers may have been swayed by my support in overseeing the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course. There was potential for researcher bias as well due to my involvement in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses.

### **Operational Definitions**

1. Nontraditional Student: Any college student that is not entering into higher education directly after completing four years of high school education.
2. Post-Transfer Student: An undergraduate student during the fall semester of 2015 that had transferred to Rowan University from at least one prior institution of higher education.
3. Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) Courses: Two 15 week courses offered to incoming transfer students during the fall of 2015.
4. Rowan University: A public four-year higher education institution located in Glassboro, New Jersey.
5. Students: Transfer students participating in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses in the fall of 2015.



6. Traditional Student: A first-time college student who graduated from high school and enrolled in a four-year higher education institution. This term does not include transfer students.

### **Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What did students report about their college preparedness, support, concerns, and attitudes towards Rowan University after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?
2. What did students report about their experiences with diversity after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?
3. What did students report about their college goals and outcomes after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?
4. What did students report about their study strategies after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?
5. What did students report about their work patterns and reasons for working?
6. What did the students in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses report about the impact that this course had on them?

### **Overview of the Study**

Chapter II provides a literature review regarding transfer students in higher education, including transfer student patterns, transfer student challenges such as transfer

shock and engagement, applying Tinto's Stages of Student Departure and Schlossberg's Transition Theory to transfers, first year experience programs, and transfer student transitional programs.

Chapter III establishes the methodology and procedures used in this study, as well as describes the context of the study, the population and sample selection, demographics of the sample, survey instrumentation, the data collection process, and analysis.

Chapter IV presents the findings of the study. This section also discusses the proposed research questions and summarizes the data via statistical analysis.

Chapter V provides a summary and discusses the major findings of the study, as well as offers recommendations for practice and further research.

## Chapter II

### Review of the Literature

Transfer students have increasingly become an integral part of higher education; however, these students are a distinct population with differing experiences from first-time college students and therefore, have different needs (Chin-Newman & Shaw, 2013). This claim was also supported by the transfer student testimonials in a study by Townsend (2008), where students claimed, “There’s a big difference between eighteen and twenty [years of age]. You do a lot of growing up after the first year of college” (p. 73). In order to understand these students’ needs, administrators must also recognize that not all transfer students are the same (National Student Clearinghouse, 2012b). Transfer students can be categorized by their mobility patterns, which often indicate why the students may have transferred in the first place.

Transfer students are continuing to increase in higher education institutions across the United States. According to a study by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2012b), a third of all college students attend at least two higher education institutions and many of these students transfer to multiple institutions during their post-secondary educational career. Although transferring is on the rise, there are a number of difficulties associated with this process, such as preparing students for and managing transfer shock, as well as implementing ways to engage transfers (Cejda, Kaylor, & Rewey, 1998; Lester, Leonard, & Mathias, 2013). Research has suggested using transfer transitional programs to aid this population in their transition, similar to first year

experience programs for first time freshmen (Grites & Farina, 2012); however, there is a limited amount of research demonstrating the success of these programs.

### **Today's Transfer Student Patterns**

**Vertical transfer.** According to Handel (2013), a majority of community college students intend to transfer to a four-year institution in order to attain a bachelor's degree. Fann (2013) corroborates this finding, claiming that 81% of first-time community college attendees indicate planning to pursue a bachelor's degree. This pattern of transferring from a two-year institution to a four-year institution is referred to as a vertical transfer (Archambault, 2014). A study by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2012b) of students between 2006 and 2011 demonstrated that 41.2% of the students studied made a vertical transfer from their public community college to a public four-year institution. There are a number of reasons why students may choose to vertically transfer, including gaining experience academically, personally, and professionally at an institution that does not pose as much of a financial strain. According to Fann (2013), vertical transfers are expected to increase due to students choosing to attend community colleges prior to four-year institutions because of the high costs associated with higher education.

**Lateral transfer.** Lateral transfer, or horizontal transfer, is another common transfer student pattern. It is the movement of a student from one institution to another within the same sector, which can include students transferring from a four-year institution to another four-year institution, as well as students transferring from a two-year institution to another two-year institution (National Student Clearinghouse, 2012b).

According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2012b), 37.6% of community college students transferred from their initial public community college to another public community college and 34.5% of four-year public institution students transferred to another four-year public institution between 2006 and 2011.

It is commonly the case that most students who transfer from a two-year institution to a four-year institution do so to attain bachelor's degree; however, it can seem unclear as to why a student may choose to transfer laterally. According to Archambault (2014), students may laterally transfer because of academic, financial, or personal reasons. The student may be seeking a program that was not offered at their initial institution or seeking an institution that is less expensive (Archambault, 2014). The student may also be relocating and needs to attend an institution closer to his/her new residence (Archambault, 2014). Due to other personal factors, the student may need to laterally transfer in order to be closer to home (Archambault, 2014).

**Reverse transfer.** Reverse transfer students are those who transfer from a four-year institution to a two-year institution (Archambault, 2014). These students are referred to as reverse transfers because their transfer pattern goes against the traditional pattern of students working towards a baccalaureate degree (Townsend & Dever, 1999). Often, a reverse transfer pattern is viewed as atypical; however, results in the *National Student Clearinghouse Research Center Signature Report* (2012b) demonstrate that as of 2006 through 2011, reverse transfer is the most common transfer pattern. This report showed that 51.9% of the students studied transferred from a public four-year institution to a public two-year institution. Due to the large number of reverse transfers reported, which

is over half of the transfer students in the study, the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2012b) did a follow up report specifically on reverse transfer students. The results of this study revealed that only 16.6% of the students who participated in a reverse transfer returned to their original four-year institution and almost twice this number, 28.3%, chose to transfer to a different four-year institution (National Student Clearinghouse, 2012a). However, the most common pattern revealed that these reverse transfers did not transfer again to a four-year institution (National Student Clearinghouse, 2012a). The more time that a student spent at a two-year institution after a reverse transfer, the more likely the student would not transfer vertically, which could negatively affect the student's goal of baccalaureate degree attainment (National Student Clearinghouse, 2012a; National Student Clearinghouse, 2012b).

Reverse transfers are a complicated group of students that can be further categorized. Townsend and Dever (1999) define these categories as: undergraduate reverse transfers, including temporary undergraduate reverse transfers, and postbaccalaureate reverse transfers. Undergraduate reverse transfers, students whom transfer from a four-year institution into a two-year institution, are typically the most referred to group of reverse transfers. Temporary reverse transfers are also considered part of undergraduate reverse transfers (Townsend & Dever, 1999). These students have transferred into a two-year institution from a four-year institution in order to receive credits that can be transferred back to their four-year institution (Townsend & Dever, 1999). Students may choose to take summer or winter courses or to finish their associate's degree at a local community college in order to transfer these often times

much less expensive credits into their four-year institution (Archambault, 2014; Townsend & Dever, 1999). While the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2012b) has shown that most reverse transfers do not return to a four-year institution, the report also claims that reverse transfer can positively affect baccalaureate degree attainment if students purposely use a temporary reverse transfer to acquire credits that will transfer to their four-year institution. The second category of reverse transfers is postbaccalaureate reverse transfers, which are students that have enrolled in community college although they have attained at least a bachelor's degree (Townsend & Dever, 1999). Postbaccalaureate reverse transfer often enables students whom are facing difficulties finding a career with their current degree or whom need further skills for their current job to obtain their career goals. Students may also choose to participate in a postbaccalaureate reverse transfer for personal reasons or the desire for further education (Townsend & Dever, 1999).

**Swirling.** Swirling is a transfer pattern that has become increasingly more common in higher education. According to McCormick (2013), swirling is the pattern amongst transfer students that move between multiple institutions, often of varying sectors. Archambault (2014) claims this pattern is typically intentional. Swirling encompasses all of the previously discussed transfer patterns, including vertical transfer, lateral transfer, and reverse transfer, as well as students taking time off from their studies before returning to the same or a different institution (Fredrickson, 1998). McCormick (2013) notes the various types of enrollment that may encourage students to “swirl,” including trial enrollment, special program enrollment, supplemental enrollment,

consolidated enrollment, and independent enrollment. Students may also choose to swirl from one institution to another and so on in order to balance a job, family, or financial responsibilities. According to Fredrickson (1998), swirling is typically beneficial to busy students that are seeking ways to fit higher education into their lives.

### **Transfer Challenges**

**Transfer shock.** Transfer shock, a term developed by Hill (1965), refers to a drop in the grade point average of transfer students during their first semester at a new institution. In 1998, Cejda, Kaylor, and Rewey reported that between 18% and 22% of community college transfer students experienced severe transfer shock, resulting in failing or being academically dismissed from their four-year institution after the first year. However, most transfer students recover from this dip in grade point average after about a year and continue on to receive their baccalaureate degrees (Ishanti, 2008; Laanan, 2001; Townsend, 1993). Ishanti (2008) also claims that not all transfer students experience transfer shock. According to Cejda, Kaylor, and Rewey (1998), students whom transfer with more credits and are considered part of the upper division are less likely to experience transfer shock and often perform well academically at their new institution. Laanan (2001) also discusses transfer students whose grade point averages improve after transfer, a phenomenon referred to as “transfer ecstasy” (p. 7); although, transfer shock is a far more common phenomenon. Grites (2013) claims that transfer students must make adjustments during their transition from one institution to another; however, adjusting to and managing transfer shock can be extremely challenging for both new transfer students and administrators.



**Engagement.** It has been well documented that engaged students are more likely to persist and be successful during their educational careers (Kuh, 2009). According to Kuh (2009), engagement “represents the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college” (p. 683). However, for transfer students, engagement has been indicated to be a challenge (Lester, Leonard, & Mathias, 2013). The *National Survey of Student Engagement* (2009) reported that both vertical and lateral transfer students were less likely to participate in high-impact activities and less likely to interact with faculty, especially outside of the classroom, than native students whom had not transferred. The survey also reported that in comparison to non-transfer students, transfers were more likely to rate their campus relationships lower (National Survey for Student Engagement, 2009). This lack of engagement can be very damaging to transfer students in terms of retention, persistence, and overall success (National Survey for Student Engagement, 2009).

### **Theoretical Framework**

**Tinto’s Stages of Student Departure.** Tinto’s (1988) Stages of Student Departure helps to describe why students decide to leave an institution of higher education and proposes ways for institutions to retain students. This can be particularly beneficial to institutions in regards to retaining transfer students. Tinto (1988) notes that much of the literature on student departure has focused largely on why students do not persist past their first year in college, particularly during the first six months, and has assumed that student departure is an invariant process. However, Tinto (1988) cites several studies and anecdotal evidence that claim that the factors involved in student

departure of students during their first year of college are often different than the factors that are involved in student departure for students later in their college careers.

Tinto's (1988) *Stages of Student Departure* largely draws on the work of social anthropologist, Arnold Van Gennep. Van Gennep (1960) studied rites of membership in tribal societies and was particularly interested in "social stability during times of change" (Tinto, 1988, p. 440). In Van Gennep's (1960) *Rites of Passage*, he discusses three stages: separation, transition, and incorporation, which he applies to the movement of an individual from participating in society as a youth to participating as an adult. The first stage, separation, marks the separation of the individual from their past group and is demonstrated through a decline in interactions with this group. The second stage, transition, is the phase in the individual's transition where they interact with the group in which they seek membership. During transition, the individual learns the knowledge and skills to fulfill their new role as a member in their new group. The final stage, incorporation, takes place when the individual has formed new patterns in regards to interacting with members of the new group. The individual must also prove himself or herself to be a competent member of the group (Tinto, 1988). Van Gennep (1960) notes that feelings of weakness and isolation may result from the transition from one group to the next. According to Chin-Newman and Shaw (2013), similar feelings of alienation are often reported by transfer students after their transition to a new institution.

Tinto (1988) connects Van Gennep's stages to that of college students, particularly those transitioning from high school into a college setting. However, these stages can also be applied to the transition that transfer students experience. Transfers are

separated from the groups that they were once members of at their prior institution. Group separation may vary by transfer pattern – a lateral transfer student from a community college may experience a disassociation from their family and home community after transferring to a four-year institution as a residential student, whereas a vertical transfer student from a four-year institution may experience a disassociation from certain club, organization, or Greek life memberships at their previous institution. Tinto (1988) notes that this separation is at the very least slightly stressful to the students and for others this separation may be overwhelming, leading to a departure from the college setting. Separation may be part of the reason that some college students choose to reverse transfer and begin attending a community college closer to their home community.

The transition stage takes place during the first few months that the transfer student is at their new institution. These students are no longer strongly tied to their previous institution, nor are they strongly tied to their new institution; thus, leaving these students feeling very disconnected. Tinto (1988) warns that many students in the transition phase may withdraw due to an inability to cope with the stress associated with transitioning. Commitment to academic goals or to the institution greatly increases the odds of persistence (Tinto, 1975). Institutions that implement transfer initiatives that increase involvement, engagement, and commitment to the institution increase the likelihood of students remaining at their new institution (Townley et al., 2013).

The final stage, incorporation, is often referred to as a student becoming integrated into the college (Tinto, 1988). Tinto (1975) discusses the importance of integration into formal and informal academic and social systems in terms of student

retention. At this stage, transfer students have established “repetitive contact” (Tinto, 1988, p. 446) with members of this new group, which can vary greatly from clubs, organizations, learning communities, athletic teams, faculty, administrators, or a number of other possible groups. Tinto (1988) notes the difficulty of forming these contacts and relationships and claims that for many students, there is not sufficient support initiating these relationships; therefore, these students are forced to seek them out on their own. Transfer students may also feel this lack of support due to faculty and administrator assumptions that these students are already prepared to be successful in the college environment (Townsend, 2008; Grites, 2013). Both Grites (2013) and Tinto (1975 & 1988) suggest that institutions implement long-term programs to aid in the transition and integration of students into the college atmosphere, or in the case of transfer students, into a new institution.

**Schlossberg’s Transition Theory.** Schlossberg (1984) proposed a transition theory that explores adult transitions in an effort to better understand, define, and support these changes. This theory can be applied to numerous changes in an individual’s life, including the transition that transfer students experience. Schlossberg (1984) believes that transitions are an opportune time for individuals to reevaluate themselves and their lives in order to promote growth and development. She claims a transition “alters one’s roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions” (Schlossberg, 2011, p. 159). According to Schlossberg (1984), perception plays an important role on determining and coping with a transition and she claims that an individual must attach significance to a change in order for it to be considered a transition.

Schlossberg (2011) separated transitions into three non-discrete types: anticipated transitions, unanticipated transitions, and nonevents. Anticipated transitions are expected. This may be the case for community college students making the transition into a four-year college or university. Unanticipated transitions are disruptive or unexpected, such as a student transferring to a college close to their home in order to be with a loved one who has fallen ill. The third type of transition is a nonevent, which includes changes that are expected to occur but in the end do not (Schlossberg, 2011). For example, a nonevent for a transfer student may be the belief that they will be accepted into a specific higher education institution and instead they are rejected. Nonevents are further separated into personal, ripple, resultant, and delayed transitions (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). A personal nonevent is related to an individual's personal aspirations; a ripple nonevent is due to the ripple effect of witnessing and emotionally caring for someone close who has experienced a nonevent; a resultant nonevent occurs when an event takes place that signifies the nonevent of an anticipated transition; and a delayed nonevent occurs when the individual is still anticipating an event that has not occurred yet (Evans et al., 2010). Transition types will vary for each individual, which means the same type of change for one individual may be classified differently than for another individual (Evans et al., 2010). Classification depends on the expectations and perceptions of the individual (Evans et al., 2010).

There are four factors in Schlossberg's (1984) Transition Theory that affect the coping abilities of an individual in transition. These factors, designated the 4 Ss, are situation, self, support, and strategies (Schlossberg, 1984). Situation encompasses the

individual's triggers, perception of control, prior experience, concurrent stress, perception of responsibility for the transition, and the timing of the transition (Evans et al., 2010). Self refers to the effect that personal and demographic characteristics, as well as psychological resources, have on the individual's view of life and their coping ability (Evans et al., 2010). Support refers to social support, which includes "intimate relationships, family units, networks of friends, and institutions and communities" (Evans et al., 2010, p. 217). And lastly, strategies can be separated into three categories: strategies that change the situation, strategies that control the initial problem, and strategies that aid with coping after a stressful transition has occurred (Evans et al., 2010). Schlossberg's (1984) Transition Theory also notes four coping methods: seeking out information, taking direct action, action being inhibited, and taking part in intrapsychic behavior (Evans et al., 2010). These 4 Ss are an influential, interconnected part of the transition process and may be of particular interest to higher education administrators and faculty members working closely with transfer students during their transition from one institution to another.

Applying the 4 Ss of Schlossberg's (1984) Transition Theory to transfer students will vary greatly by student. Transfer students are a unique group of students coming from a variety of situations (Chin-Newman & Shaw, 2013); therefore, the transitional experience for transfers will vary greatly depending on their personal situation. The same can be said for the "self" portion of this theory. Transfer students bring with them their own personal life views, which will affect how they cope with the transition from their previous institution to their new institution. Support is the area in which institutions can

ease the transition for transfer students. While it is important for these students to seek out social support systems, higher education institutions can connect students with their peers, faculty, and administrators through programs and other initiatives. These support systems are an important part of transfer student success (Townley et al., 2013).

### **First Year Experience Programs**

While transfer students have previous college experience and different needs than students entering higher education for the first time, transfer students often report feeling “like a freshman again” (Townsend, 2008, p. 73) after moving to a new institution. In a study by Townsend (2008), transfer students were interviewed in regards to their experiences. Students explicitly reported the differences between themselves and first-year students, claiming their experience as college students meant that they had differing needs. However, most also reported that attending a new institution brought about similar fears and concerns of first-time students (Townsend, 2008). Therefore, administrators may find it beneficial to base transfer support programs off of first year experience programs.

First year experience programs aid students during their transition into higher education (Schrader & Brown, 2008). These programs come in many forms, including orientations, seminars, full term courses, learning communities, one-time experiences, service learning, and adventure trips (Allen, 2004; Jamelske, 2008; Tinto, 1975).

According to Schrader and Brown (2008), first year experience programs aid students in gaining the academic and social skills necessary to be successful in the higher education setting. The programs also assist students in connecting with faculty and administrators

(Allen, 2004). Positive relationships between students, faculty, and administrators have been shown to increase intellectual growth and success among transitioning students (Volkwein, King, & Terezini, 1986). A study by Jamelske (2008) reported that freshmen taking a first year experience program were more positively impacted in terms of grade point average, retention, and graduation rates than those who had not participated in the program. While first year experience programs are typically noted as a preliminary intervention for students transitioning from high school into college, similar types of programs have been suggested to be helpful to students transferring from one institution into another (Grites, 2013).

### **Transfer Student Transitional Programs**

According to Grites (2013), transitional programs in the form of an academic course provide the optimal delivery method of important information and resources for transfer students at the post-transfer phase. Transfer students face the struggle of having to learn new policies, academic standards, and terminology of the institution, as well as having to adjust to different faculty expectations (Grites & Farina, 2012). Transfer seminar courses, usually taken in the first semester after transfer, which similarly to first year experience seminars, aid students in not only accessing important resources, but also allows students to meet their peers and form relationships that may lead to greater satisfaction with the university as a whole (Flaga, 2006). According to Flaga (2006), transfer students report the desire to connect with students with similar interests and backgrounds; connecting transfer students with one another is a successful way to initiate these relationships. Thus face-to-face seminars are highly suggested, as well as having



these seminars taught by full-time faculty members whom are familiar with the institution, its policies, requirements, and resources (Grites & Farina, 2012).

While a number of studies have been conducted on the issues that transfer students face and many suggestions have been made in regards to assisting this population in their transition, there is a gap in the knowledge base as far as the results of these transitional programs. One important study by Wawrzynski and Sedlacek (2003) used a survey created by Wawrzynski titled the *Transfer Student Survey*, which was designed to examine demographic data, students' expectations, academic behaviors, goals and outcomes, and study patterns of transfer students. During orientation, a total of 2,492 incoming undergraduate transfer students at a mid-Atlantic public doctoral extensive university were asked to complete the *Transfer Student Survey*. Statistical analysis determined that students of color expect to be involved outside of the classroom with both other students and with faculty and students of color were also more likely than Caucasian students to study with their peers. In regards to gender, males were more likely to be concerned with focusing on their educational goals than females; however, females were more concerned with becoming well-rounded students. According to Wawrzynski and Sedlacek (2003), females reported being more interested in learning to communicate effectively, as well as wanting to learn material that would complement their chosen major and career choice. Study patterns also varied by gender, with females being more likely to review, revise, and update class notes (Wawrzynski & Sedlacek, 2003). This study provided an important tool for future researchers to use when studying transfer students.

Grites and Farina (2012) explored the results of a transfer seminar course at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey using Wawrzynski's and Sedlacek's (2003) *Transfer Student Survey*. A number of previously offered courses were infused with important information and resources for transfer students. The classes are taught by faculty members that are dedicated to aiding the transition of the transfer student population (Grites & Farina, 2012). These transfer seminar courses are offered to all incoming transfer students but are not required, unlike Stockton College's freshmen seminar courses (Grites & Farina, 2012). Students also receive full academic credit for taking these courses (Grites & Farina, 2012). While pre and post surveys were collected to assess the impact of the course for transfer students, the results were not fully evaluated prior to 2012 when former Rowan University graduate student, Amanda Farina, completed her thesis on this topic. Farina (2012) evaluated archival data from the pre and post *Transfer Student Surveys* of Stockton College transfer students that took the Contemporary American Education transfer seminar from the fall of 2003 to the fall of 2011. In total, 328 surveys were evaluated. Farina (2012) revealed that transfer students were still concerned with financing their education, developing a manageable course schedule, and the availability of courses during registration. However, these students also reported feeling less concern in regards to adjusting academically to the institution as a result of connecting with their peers (Farina, 2012). These findings lead Farina (2012) to believe that the seminar had aided students in feeling more comfortable at the institution as a whole. An interesting finding was the decline in preparation and studying for the students' courses after the seminar course, which may have been an effect of the

increased socialization. No significant changes were reported in regards to students' goals (Farina, 2012).

St. Mary's College of Maryland provides a similar transfer transition course for incoming transfer students (National Resource Center, 2011). Incoming freshmen are required to take a CORE101 course, designed to acclimate them with the institution; whereas, transfer students with more than 24 credits are required to take a CORE301 course (St. Mary's College of Maryland, n.d.). The CORE301 courses are designed in a very similar fashion to the freshmen courses; however, the topics are altered to meet the needs of transfer students and the course serves as a way of connecting transfers with one another. These CORE courses for both freshmen and transfers are based in the liberal arts and teach the importance of a broad understanding of liberal arts for all majors (St. Mary's College of Maryland, n.d.). Transfer courses vary and include topics such as religion, history, film, and philosophy (St. Mary's College of Maryland, n.d.). No statistical information in regards to the benefits of this course has been collected.

The University of Central Florida has a shortened transfer transition program titled the Transfer Student Seminar (National Resource Center, 2011). This one-time seminar is held during the first week of classes during both the fall and the spring and reviews important information in regards to transfer resources (University of Central Florida, n.d.). Included topics are advice from faculty members, ways to get involved, health and wellness resources, financial aid and scholarship opportunities, and career development (University of Central Florida, n.d.). Again, no statistical information in regards to the benefits of this seminar has been collected, which leaves future higher

education administrators that may be interested in designing transfer transitional programs with little to no empirical support for such an endeavor.

### **Rowan 101: College Success Courses**

**Rowan Select.** In the summer of 2014, Rowan University implemented a new type of course, a two-credit Rowan 101: College Success course taken for a letter grade, which was taken by the first class of Rowan Select students (Rowan Select, n.d.). The Rowan Select Program provides opportunities to students that show great academic potential but did not meet the regular requirements of Rowan University students (Rowan Select, n.d.). These students are special admits into the university as students in the exploratory studies major. There are a series of requirements that these students must fulfill during their first year at the institution, including a Rowan 101: College Success hybrid course (Rowan Select FAQ's, n.d.). This course, which is taken during the summer prior to the students' first fall semester, begins immediately after orientation as in person class and then is continued as an online course. For this particular group of students, the Rowan 101: Transfer Success course does not cost anything in addition to the orientation cost (Rowan Select FAQ's, n.d.). The course is designed to provide transitional support for freshman as they begin performing at the college level, as well as helps the student engage with the Rowan University community and assists the student with planning for their future major and career. Some of the topics covered are academic skills, identity and diversity, academic integrity, and financial literacy (Course Catalog Entry, 2014). In the summer of 2014, a total of 17 sections were offered for the first Rowan Select cohort, with class sizes ranging from 13 to 27 students; however, the

average class size was 25 (Section Tally, n.d.). These classes began on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and ended on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 prior to the start of the fall classes. Sections increased to 22 in the summer of 2015 with very similar class sizes; although the course itself took place a little later than previous summer instead running from July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 through August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The newest Rowan Select cohort for the summer of 2016 will also be separated into 22 sections. While the majority of the Rowan 101: College Success courses are taught by academic advisors, other administrators in various departments, such as the Office of Volunteerism, Community Engagement & Commuter Services, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, and the Office of Residential Learning and University Housing, also teach sections of these courses (Section Tally, n.d.).

**EOF/MAP and PCI.** Students that have qualified for the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and/or the Maximizing Academic Potential (MAP) programs, which are based on an application process, are required to take part in a summer enrichment program at Rowan University known as the Pre-College Institute (PCI) (Rowan University Educational, n.d.). This program is a six-week, intensive program that provides students with an array of skills training, including college survival skills, leadership skills, academic skills, and social skills, all of which are necessary tools to help students make the most of their educational experience (Rowan University Pre-College Institute, 2015). During the students' first semester of their freshman year they are required to take the Rowan 101: College Success course with their peers from the EOF/MAP programs in order to receive the same assistance that is provided to the Rowan Select students: transitional support to college level coursework, engagement with Rowan

University, and assistance in planning for their major and future careers (Rowan University Pre-College Institute, 2015). In this case the course is offered as a full-term, 15-week course taught by administrators associated with the EOF/MAP programs for 50 minutes twice a week; however, it is still a two-credit course taken for a grade (Section Tally, n.d.). This course was first required of the EOF/MAP students in fall semester of 2014 with a total of six sections being taught and class sizes ranging from 14 to 22 students. In the fall of 2015, two additional sections were added for a total of eight and class sizes remained about the same ranging from 14 to 24. The Rowan 101: College Success course for EOF/MAP students are only offered in the fall as part of the requirement of the PCI program (Section Tally, n.d.).

**Achieving the Dream Scholarship.** The Achieving the Dream Scholarship program is dedicated to helping students achieve academic success by providing academic advising, group meetings and workshops, and on-campus support services (Rowan University Achieving the Dream, n.d.). Students that qualify for the Educational Opportunity Fund that have a 3.0 or above high school GPA and a 950 or above SAT score may receive scholarship funding towards their Rowan University education (Rowan University Response, 2014). These students are required to maintain a 2.75 GPA in order to continue receiving the scholarship and must also take a Rowan 101: College Success course (Rowan University Response, 2014). In the fall of 2015, four sections of the course were designated for students in the Achieving the Dream Scholarship program. These sections were full-term, 15-week courses taught twice a week for 50 minutes by

EOF/MAP administrators and advisors. These sections will continue to be required of scholarship participants each fall (Section Tally, n.d.).

**Rowan University freshmen.** Freshmen that do not fall into one of the three previous categories are also able to take a Rowan 101: College Success course if they so choose but it is not a requirement for them (Section tally, n.d.). While the two-credit course was designed originally to support students that may have needed additional help during their transition from high school into college, administrators believe that the course may be beneficial to all students due to the components that pertain to engagement, major and career planning, academic skills, identity and diversity, academic integrity, and financial literacy (Rowan Select, n.d.). The Rowan 101: College Success courses were first offered to all freshmen in the fall of 2014 through three sections (Section Tally, n.d.). Two of the sections were twice a week for 50 minutes, while the third was offered once a week for an hour and 40 minutes. All of the sections were full-term for 15-weeks. Class sections were very similar to that of the EOF/MAP sections, with an average of 20 students. An additional three sections were offered in the spring of 2015. In the fall of 2015, two of the courses were offered on the Camden campus for the first time and seven sections were offered on the Glassboro main campus. Class sizes ranged from 14 to 24 students; however, one of the sections only had four students. This was also the first time that one of the sections was offered as a late-start beginning on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and ending on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Sections vastly decreased in the spring of 2016 with only two being offered for the full-term and class sizes for these

remained less than 20 students. Instructors included academic advisors and other administrators (Section Tally, n.d.).

**Transfer students.** In the fall of 2015, two sections of the Rowan 101: College Success course were piloted strictly for transfer students. The course remained a two-credit, full-term (15-week) course taken for an academic grade (Section Tally, n.d.). Similar to the Rowan 101: College Success offered to incoming freshmen, the transfer sections are not mandatory to incoming transfers and the only prerequisite for students were that they must be transfer students, meaning they must have transferred in at 12 credits or more to Rowan University. The course was slightly altered to meet the needs of transfers in order to assist in their transition from a higher education institution outside of Rowan University.

The two transfer sections of the Rowan 101: College Success courses in the fall of 2015 accommodated 19 and 22 students for a total of 41 students (Section Tally, n.d.). Two additional sections were offered in the spring of 2016 for transfers; however, enrollment in the courses was lower with 11 and 16 students for a total of 27 students. (Section Tally, n.d). This is likely due to the difference in admitted transfer students from over 1600 in the fall of 2016 to just a little less than 450 in the spring of 2016. Transfers that are interested in the course may sign up for it during orientation, at a Transfer Information Session, or by emailing the Coordinator of University Transfer Services at Rowan University. The Rowan 101: College Success courses will continue to be offered in both the fall and spring semesters for transfers and additional sections will be added as needed based on enrollment.



## Summary of the Literature Review

This literature review explores the role that transfer students play in higher education today and the need for higher education administrators to find new ways to support this population. Understanding the various transfer patterns provides faculty and administrators with a better understanding of the struggles that these students may face, including transfer shock and difficulty engaging on campus. Tinto's (1988) Stages of Student Departure outlines the transition, including stressors, which transfers may experience during their transition from one institution into the next and provide insight into when transfer students may decide to withdraw, stop out, or transfer again. Schlossberg's (1984) Transition Theory also provides insight into the types of resources that can aid transfers during the transition process. These resources are similar to what is provided in first year experience programs, although the information must still be specific to transfers. A number of transitional programs have been offered at higher education institutions for transfers and Grites and Farina (2012) discuss the importance of using transfer transition programs to connect these students to their new institutions and to form long-lasting relationships; however, very little data have been collected from such transition programs to demonstrate their effectiveness. Rowan University specifically offers a two-credit transfer seminar course, Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section), which was altered from its original form designed to aid freshmen in their transition into the institution.

## Chapter III

### Methodology

#### Context of the Study

This study took place at Rowan University's main campus in Glassboro, New Jersey. Rowan University is a state public research institution that is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (Rowan University, 2015a). The university enrolls 16,155 students in total, which is separated into 13,169 undergraduate students, 2,078 graduate students, and 908 professional students, which is the largest student body that the institution has ever had (Rowan University, 2015a). The student body comes from 19 foreign countries and 33 states, the majority of which are from New Jersey. The student ethnic composition is 67.42% White, 10.46% Black or African American, 9.40% Hispanic-Latino, 6.33% Asian, 3.87% Not Reported, 1.41% International, 0.97% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.15% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Rowan University, 2015a). Enrollment by gender is almost even, with 7,940 female students and 8,213 male students. The majority of students are enrolled full-time, with 11,710 full-time students and 1,459 part-time students (Rowan University, 2015b). There were almost equal numbers of first time freshman in comparison to transfer students in the fall of 2015, with 1,770 and 1,659 respectively (Rowan University, 2015a).

All of the admitted transfer students for the fall of 2015 were given the option to register for a 15 week Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course. The Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) classes, in which there were two, were piloted for the first time on Rowan University's main Glassboro campus in the

fall of 2015. Both classes met for 50 minutes every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00pm-2:50pm (Section Tally, n.d.). This is a two-credit course designed to help introduce transfers to Rowan University's campus, its resources, and to other transfer students (Appendix E). The course is also graded and includes a number of written assignments.

Coursework is designed to teach students to:

- 1) Articulate the meaning and value of being a member of the Rowan University community;
- 2) Describe their personal interests, values, and skills as related to education and career;
- 3) Understand the academic differences between other colleges/universities and Rowan University;
- 4) Be familiar with campus resources and materials and how to use them to achieve academic and personal success at Rowan;
- 5) Develop short and long term personal goals to guide their plans for academic and professional success;
- 6) Build skills and knowledge for finding and using appropriate library and information sources for college level work;
- 7) Develop an understanding of self and others in a diverse world and diverse campus.
- 8) Academically, personally, and professionally engage with the University.
- 9) Understand diversity and the role it plays on college campuses. (Appendix E)

The structure of the course was built to be interactive; however, almost half of the classes were lecture-based presentations by Rowan University administrators and

students in order to assist students in becoming familiar with Rowan University's resources. The two sections were taught separately by two different professors; however, the sections were held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00pm-2:50pm in order to bring both classes together for the presentations (Section Tally, n.d. and Appendix E)

The students were graded based on their attendance and participation (20%), five Rowan University Passport Program assignments (10%), five participation preparation assignments (PPAs) (20%), five reaction assignments (20%), and a final assignment and group presentation (30%) (Appendix E). The PPAs are small assignments given by the instructor in order to supplement the readings and assist students in their participation in an interactive environment. The Rowan University Passport Program assignments require that students engage outside of the classroom by attending campus events. These assignments are designed to help students to feel comfortable on campus and to reflect on what they gained from each of the events that they attend through submitting a brief reflection paper. The five reaction assignments are one-page essays that students must apply to a real-life situation while also applying the readings, in order to allow students to practice written communication at a college-level. The students are also asked to work in a small group to present on their similarities and differences and how that this may benefit them at Rowan University. A final essay assignment involved students writing to a future transfer student with advice and what they've learned from the course as their "legacy." (Appendix E)

### **Population and Sampling**

The target population for this study was all of the post-transfer, undergraduate students in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses for the

fall of 2015 at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. The study's population included 41 students. This full population sample from the two Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses was informed of the purpose of the study in the fall of 2015 during the courses. An email in the spring of 2016 was sent to the population's student emails explaining the purpose of the study and asked students to take the online survey and participate in a focus group. Only those that that responded with interest in participating in the focus group were included in this portion. Due to limited scheduling availability, six individual interviews were held instead of one focus group.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The data collected consisted of administered surveys and verbal responses during individual interviews. The instrument used in this study was the *Transfer Student Survey* (Appendix A), which is a 69-item survey that pertains to the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course based on demographics, perceptions, attitudes, concerns, academics, diversity, goals and outcomes, support, finances, and study patterns of each student. This survey was designed by Dr. Matthew Wawrzynski during his study of transfer students at the University of Maryland (Farina, 2012). This *Transfer Student Survey* has also been administered by Dr. Tom Grites to transfer students at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. His results were analyzed in the spring of 2012 by Amanda Farina, a former graduate student of Rowan University's Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration program as part of her thesis (Farina, 2012). Dr. Wawrzinski was contacted through email to receive permission to use the *Transfer*

*Student Survey* in this study (Appendix C). This study was replicated in Qualtrics, an online surveying system, and sent as a link through email to the full population.

The first 26 questions in Section I relate to student's feelings of college preparedness and concerns and experience with diversity and support. This section used a Likert scale and asked students to rate each statement on a scale of 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree. Section II included questions 27-35 that related to college goals and outcomes. Participants were again asked to rate each statement, this time using a Likert scale of 5=Very Important, 4=Important, 3=Undecided, 2=Not Too Important, and 1=Not At All Important. Questions 36-42 included questions on study habits and class preparation, where students were asked to rate statements on a Likert scale of 5=Always, 4=Most of the Time, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, and 1=Never. Demographical information was collected in questions 43-49, including what type of institution the student is transferring from, rating the choice that Rowan University was to the student as a transfer institution, what the student would have likely done if they were not accepted into Rowan University, the student's main reason to leave their previous institution, the student's main reason for choosing Rowan University, the number of times the student has transferred institutions, and the highest academic degree the student plans to obtain. Questions 50 and 51 related to the students hours spent working on and/or off campus with a Likert scale of 7=Do Not Plan to Work, 6=1-9 Hours, 5=10-14 Hours, 4=15-19 Hours, 3=20-29 Hours, 2=30-39 Hours, and 1=More than 40 Hours. Question 52 asked students how far they will be living from campus, with a Likert scale of 7=I will be living on campus, 6=Less than 3 miles each way, 5=3-5 miles each way, 4=6-10 miles each way, 3=11-50 miles each way, 2=51

miles each way, and 1=not yet sure where I will live. Question 53 asked about the student's general attitude toward Rowan University with a Likert scale of 5=Very Positive, 4=Positive, 3=Neutral, 2=Negative, and 1=Very Negative. Section IV asked students to rate the importance of the reasons they plan to work in college with a Likert scale of 3=Major Reason, 2=Minor Reason, and 1=Not a Reason for Me. The final section, Section V asked students to select a "yes" or "no" answer in regards to enrolling in an upper-level transition class, their interest in an outdoor adventure experience, their interest in discussing their transition into Rowan University, and whether the student had previously applied to Rowan University. The survey concluded with a few more questions related to demographical information, including what grades the student received in their first semester at Rowan University, their parents' highest level of education, their racial/ethnic group, and their gender. Students were also asked to answer an open-ended question about any additional concerns they have regarding their transition into Rowan University.

The only alterations from the original *Transfer Student Survey* were the replacement of Rowan University instead of the University of Maryland and the addition of a question in regards to student gender, making this survey a total of 69 questions. The *Transfer Student Survey* was pilot tested with students and then modified accordingly increasing the reliability of the instrument (Farina, 2012). According to Dr. Wawrynski, this survey's items ranged from 0.7 to 0.8 in terms of reliability (Farina, 2012). A reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha revealed items ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This survey has proven to be reliable and valid by Wawrynski and Sedlacek (2003) and has since been used by Dr.

Grites and Amanda Farina (Farina, 2012). In 2012, Amanda Farina completed her master's thesis through the analysis of 328 *Transfer Student Surveys* taken by students at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. Quantitative data analysis revealed a statistical significance between pre-test and post-test survey scores regarding students' attitudes about college and the adjustment process; therefore, demonstrating the validity of this survey (Farina, 2012).

Interview probative questions (Appendix B) were also employed in this study.

Questions focused on the last research question posed in Chapter I of this study:

6. What did the participants in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses report in terms of the impact that this course had on them?

Interview probative questions were as follows:

1. Can you talk about the impact that the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course had on you?
2. What was the most beneficial part of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course for you?
3. Was there anything that you would change about the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course?
4. Would you advise future incoming transfer to Rowan University to take the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course?
5. Is there anything else you wish to share about the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course?



## Data Gathering Procedures

An electronic Institutional Research Board (eIRB) application (Appendix D) was completed and approved prior to distribution of the online survey and the collection of any data. In the fall of 2015, a verbal announcement of the intended purpose for this study was made in both of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses in order to ask students to begin considering participating in the spring online survey and focus group. In March of 2016, an email was sent out to all of the students from the courses asking for their participation in the online *Transfer Student Survey* and the focus group. Included in this email was information on the purpose of the study, the link to the *Transfer Student Survey* through Qualtrics which began by having students electronically consent to taking the survey, and a Doodle Schedule for students interested in participating in the focus group. Surveys were anonymously completed online and data was entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). After a few students completed the Doodle Schedule for the focus group, it was clear that their schedules would not align and an email asking for individual interviews was then sent out. Additional emails were sent asking for further participation in terms of completing the survey and scheduling individual interviews.

Participants that scheduled an interview were provided with information regarding its purpose and intended use for the completion of the master's thesis of Higher Education Administration. Students were given two consent forms, the first indicating that they understood the purpose of the study, that it is completely voluntary and that they could choose to end their participation at any point, and that the information gathered would remain confidential. The second consent form asked participants' for their

permission to have their answers recorded on a recording device during the interview. Once both of the consent forms were collected, a recording device was turned on and the interview continued with a series of questions to learn more about what the impact of the class, what was most beneficial, anything they'd suggest changing, whether or not they would recommend the course to future transfers, and any other information they wished to share about their experience with the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course. Due to the face-to-face interactions with the participants, all information remained confidential throughout the study and no personally identifiable information was used. All information regarding this survey and the interviews have been saved to a computer by password and all paper notes collected, as well as the recordings from the interviews, have been stored in a locking file cabinet. The key to this cabinet is stored in a private location in order to ensure the confidentiality of all of the participants.

### **Data Analysis**

The independent variable of this study are the two Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses offered to first semester transfer students at Rowan University in the fall of 2015. The dependent variables were students' demographics, perceptions, attitudes, concerns, academics, diversity, goals and outcomes, support, finances, and study patterns after haven taken the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course. Information regarding the dependent variables was collected through online surveys and six individual interviews in the spring of 2016 on Rowan University's main campus in Glassboro, New Jersey. Analyses were directed by the research questions. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software was used to analyze the participants' responses, particularly in regards to

descriptive statistics: frequency distribution, percentages, and measures of central tendency, and dispersion. Data recorded during the interviews were analyzed using *Content Analysis and Logical Analysis of Written Data* (Sisco, 1981).

## Chapter IV

### Findings

#### Profile of the Sample

This study consisted of a total population sample of 41 students from the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) classes, of which there were two, that were held in the fall of 2015. All of the students who participated in this course were initially informed of the intent of the study during one of their classes in the fall. In the spring of 2016, an email describing the study, which assured anonymity and confidentiality, was sent asking for student participation. This email included a link to the *Transfer Student Survey* through Qualtrics, as well as asked students to respond to a Doodle, which is an online scheduler, in order to select a time for a focus group. Due to limited availability, students were then asked to respond to a new email with their individual availabilities in order to schedule personal interviews. A total of 31 students participated in the survey, yielding a 75.6% response rate. A total of 16 males and 15 females completed the survey. A large portion of the population with 61.3% reported their racial/ethnic group as White Caucasian. Nine subjects reported their racial/ethnic group as African American/Black, two reported their racial/ethnic group as Hispanic/Latino(a), and only one reported their racial/ethnic group as Asian American/Pacific Islander. No subjects reported their racial/ethnic group as Native American, American Indian, Alaskan native. Table 4.1 represents the gender and racial/ethnic groups of the subjects.

Table 4.1

*Gender and Racial/Ethnic Groups (N=31)*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
Gender		
Male	17	51.5
Female	16	48.5
Total	33	100
Race		
White Caucasian	19	61.3
Asian American/Pacific Islander	1	3.2
African American/Black	9	29.0
Hispanic/Latino(a)	2	6.5
Native American, American Indian, Alaskan native	0	0
Total	33	100

The Transfer Student Survey also asked participants about their parents' education levels. A total of 41.9% of the subjects reported that their father's highest level of education was as a high school graduate. This number was just slightly less with 38.7% in regards to their mother's highest level of education as a high school graduate. Nine students reported that their father had achieved a college degree and nine also reported that their mother had achieved a college degree. Only four students reported that their father had some college experience, whereas seven students reported the same for their mother. More subjects also reported that their mothers had received a graduate degree with three students in comparison to two students that reported their fathers had achieved a graduate degree. No students reported that either their father or mother had

some graduate school experience. Two students reported that their fathers had gone to postsecondary school other than college and only one student reported that their father had some high school experience. Table 4.2 further demonstrates the results of the subjects' parent's highest level of formal education.

Table 4.2

*Parent's Highest Level of Formal Education (N=31)*

	Father		Mother	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Some High School	1	3.2	0	0
High School Graduate	13	41.9	12	38.7
Postsecondary School Other Than College	2	6.5	0	0
Some College	4	12.9	7	22.6
College Degree	9	29.0	9	29.0
Some Graduate School	0	0	0	0
Graduate Degree	2	6.5	3	9.7

The majority of students have transferred institutions one time with 90.3%. The remaining three students all reported transferring twice. Seventeen subjects reported transferring from a four-year college or university and 14 subjects reported transferring from a two-year community/junior college. Subjects were also asked to select the main reason for why they decided to leave their previous institution. A total of 12 students reported that they left because they had attended community college and no bachelor's degree was available, 11 reported that the cost of the school caused them to leave, and four students reported that they were dissatisfied with their previous institution. Two

students also reported that their previous college or university did not have the major that they wanted and one student reported that they had moved. The final subject reported other, listing their reason as having graduated. Table 4.3 represents the number of times that the subjects have transferred, the type of institution they transferred from, and the main reason that they left their previous institution.

Table 4.3

*Transfer Patterns and Information (N=31)*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Number of Times Subjects Transferred</b>		
Once	28	90.3
Twice	3	9.7
Three Times	0	0
More Than Three Times	0	0
<b>Institution Type Transferred From</b>		
Two-Year Community/Junior College	14	45.2
Four-Year College or University	17	54.8
Other	0	0
<b>Main Reason for Leaving Previous Institution</b>		
Community College (no bachelor's degree available)	12	38.7
Cost of School	11	35.5
Did Not Have the Major I Wanted	2	6.5
Moved	2	6.5
Dissatisfied	4	12.9
Other	1	3.2

Subjects were also asked questions related to Rowan University specifically. A total of 26 subjects reported that Rowan University was their first choice of transfer school and the other five subjects reported that it was their second choice. In regards to the main reason that subjects decided to attend Rowan University, 32.3% reported that they chose the institution because it was relatively inexpensive, followed by 22.6% reporting that it was the recommendation of family and/or friends that made them select this institution. Six students reported that Rowan University offered the kind of program that they wanted and four reported that the geographical location was the main reason. Of the four remaining students, two reported the reputation of the school and the last two reported the availability of financial aid were the main reasons for choosing Rowan University. No subjects reported that the size of the institution was the main reason in their selection. Subjects were also asked to report what they would most likely have done if they were not accepted into Rowan University. A total of 54.8% reported that they would transfer to another institution, 25.8% reported that they would continue to take classes at the institution they transferred from, 16.1% reported that they would reapply to Rowan University, and 3.2% or only one student reported that they would get a job. Table 4.4 further represents the order of choice that Rowan University was for the subjects, their main reason for choosing to attend Rowan University, and what they would have most likely done if they were not accepted into Rowan University.



Table 4.4

*Decision-Making to Attend Rowan University (N=31)*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Order of Choice of Transfer School</b>		
First Choice	26	83.9
Second Choice	5	16.1
Third Choice	0	0
Other	0	0
<b>Main Reason for Attending Rowan University</b>		
Relatively Inexpensive	10	32.3
Geographical Location	4	12.9
Offered the Kind of Program Wanted	6	19.4
Recommendation of Family/Friends	7	22.6
Reputation of the Program/School	2	6.5
Size of Institution	0	0
Availability of Financial Aid	2	6.5
<b>Most Likely Action if Subject Was Not Admitted to Rowan University</b>		
Continue to Take Classes at the Institution Transferred From	8	25.8
Transfer to Another Institution	17	54.8
Get a Job	1	3.2
Reapply to Rowan University	5	16.1

## Analysis of the Data

**Research question 1.** What did students report about their college preparedness, support, concerns, and attitudes towards Rowan University after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

Subjects were given six items related to college preparedness, which are represented in Table 4.5 organized by level of agreement from most to least positive. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and descriptives, were used to analyze the data through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A total of 90.3% of the subjects reported strongly agreeing and agreeing with feeling adequately prepared for the academic demands at Rowan University. Nine subjects strongly agreed with feeling adequately prepared for the writing demands in their coursework, followed by 17 subjects reporting that they agreed with this item. Numbers decreased slightly for the item in regards to their high school preparation for college. A total of 54.9% reported strongly agreeing and agreeing that their high school prepared them for college; however, 29.0% reported that they disagreed with this statement. No subjects reported strongly disagreeing that their high school prepared them for college. Almost three quarters (70.9%) of the subjects disagreed and strongly disagreed with the item stating that they expected to have a hard time adjusting to the academic work of Rowan. Only five students agreed with this item and none strongly agreed.

Table 4.5

College Preparedness (N=31)

(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I feel adequately prepared for the academic demands at Rowan University. <i>M=4.26, SD=.729</i>	12	38.7	16	51.6	2	6.5	1	3.2	0	0
I feel adequately prepared for the writing demands that I will have to take in my coursework. <i>M=4.06, SD=.814</i>	9	29.0	17	54.8	3	9.7	2	6.5	0	0
I would consider seeking study skills training at Rowan University. <i>M=3.52, SD=1.092</i>	5	16.1	14	45.2	5	16.1	6	19.4	1	3.2
My high school prepared me well for college. <i>M=3.45, SD=.1.121</i>	6	19.4	11	35.5	5	16.1	9	29.0	0	0
I feel adequately prepared for the math demands that I will have in my coursework. <i>M=3.35, SD=.1.199</i>	5	16.1	12	38.7	5	16.1	7	22.6	2	6.5
I expect to have a hard time adjusting to the academic work of Rowan. <i>M=2.29, SD=.938</i>	0	0	5	16.1	4	12.9	17	54.8	5	16.1

Students were also surveyed in regards to support through advice and encouragement using a Likert scale and the results are represented in Table 6 organized by level of agreement from most to least positive. Students reported high levels of support from family encouraging them to continue their college education with 67.7% strongly agreeing and 29% agreeing. Only one student disagreed. More than half of the subjects with 58.1% reported agreeing that it was best for them to rely on the advice of close friends or relatives when they have a problem. Only two students disagreed with this item and no students strongly disagreed. These data are shown in Table 4.6. In regards to attending a five-day outdoor adventure experience with other new students, which is a way to support transfers during their transition into their new institution, 17 subjects reported yes, seven reported maybe, and seven reported no. These data are represented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.6

*College Support: Advice and Encouragement (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree				Agree				Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree					
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%				
My family encourages me to continue my college education. <i>M=4.61, SD=.667</i>	21	67.7	9	29.0	0	0	1	3.2	0	0				
It is best for me to rely on the advice of close friends or relatives when I have a problem. <i>M=3.97, SD=.795</i>	7	22.6	18	58.1	4	12.9	2	6.5	0	0				

Table 4.7

*College Support: Five-Day Adventure Experience (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 3=Yes, 2=Maybe, 1=No)*

Variable	Yes		Maybe		No	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Would you be interested in attending a five-day outdoor adventure experience with other new students? <i>M=3.97, SD=.795</i>	17	54.8	7	22.6	7	22.6

A number of student concerns were also addressed in this survey. Twelve students strongly agreed that they were concerned about their ability to finance their college education, followed by eight subjects agreeing that finances were a concern. Only one subject strongly disagreed. Another concern students were surveyed about was whether they were concerned with developing a course schedule that meets their other obligations. A total of 54.8% of subjects strongly agreed and agreed with this concern, whereas 29% reported that they disagreed and strongly disagreed. In regards to academic requirements outside of students' majors, 64.5% agreed that they were concerned and only 6.5% strongly disagreed. Results were varied in regards to being concerned about adjusting to a new academic environment with half of the subjects (51.6%) disagreeing with this item and a little less than half (32.3%) agreeing. Only one student strongly agreed that this is a concern, two remained neutral, and two strongly disagreed. Results of these concerns are represented in Table 4.8, organized by level of agreement from most to least positive.

Table 4.8

*Concerns (N=31)**(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
I am concerned about my ability to finance my college education. <i>M</i> =3.87, <i>SD</i> =1.147	12	38.7	8	25.8	7	22.6	3	9.7	1	3.2
I am concerned about course availability. <i>M</i> =3.77, <i>SD</i> =.805	4	12.9	19	61.3	5	16.1	3	9.7	0	0
I am concerned about the academic requirements outside my major. <i>M</i> =3.61, <i>SD</i> =1.022	3	9.7	20	64.5	3	9.7	3	9.7	2	6.5
I am concerned about the transferability of my courses completed at other institutions. <i>M</i> =3.42, <i>SD</i> =1.057	4	12.9	14	45.2	4	12.9	9	29.0	0	0

Table 4.8 (continued)

Concerns (N=31)

(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I am concerned with developing a course schedule that meets my other obligations. <i>M</i> =3.39, <i>SD</i> =1.145	5	16.1	12	38.7	5	16.1	8	25.8	1	3.2
I am concerned about adjusting to a new academic environment. <i>M</i> =2.74, <i>SD</i> =1.094	1	3.2	10	32.3	2	6.5	16	51.6	2	6.5

The final concern addressed in the survey was about students' living situation for the fall semester. Living close to campus can be a serious concern for college students, especially transfers who may already feel disconnected to a new institution. The majority of students (87.1%) reported being interested in living on-campus with two remaining neutral and one student each disagreeing and strongly disagreeing. The data are represented in Table 4.9. Twenty of the students reported they will be living on campus,

two living less than three miles away, two living 3-5 miles away, two living 6-10 miles away, four living 11-50 miles away, and one living 51 miles or more each way, which is represented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.9

*Interest in Living On-Campus (N=31)*

*(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
	I would be interested in living on-campus. <i>M=4.32,</i> <i>SD=.979</i>	17	54.8	10	32.3	2	6.5	1	3.2	1

Table 4.10

*Distance Living From Campus in the Fall (N=31)*

	<i>f</i>	%
I will be living on campus	20	64.5
Less than 3 miles each way	2	6.5
3-5 miles each way	2	6.5
6-10 miles each way	2	6.5
11-50 miles each way	4	12.9
51 or more miles each way	1	3.2
Not yet sure where I will live		
Total	33	100



The final part of Research Question 1 delves into students' attitudes towards Rowan University after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course, which are demonstrated in Tables 4.11-4.14. A total of 25.8% strongly agreed and 58.1% agreed that they felt a sense of connection with Rowan. Only five students remained neutral on this item and no students disagreed or strongly disagreed. Subjects' present attitudes toward Rowan University were fairly positive with 10 students reporting feeling very positive, 15 reporting feeling positive, and six remaining neutral. Again, no student reported feeling negative at all towards Rowan University. More than half of the subjects (54.8%) said they would be interested in discussing their transition to Rowan University, with the remaining 14 students split between saying maybe and no. Subjects also reported having very positive attitudes in regards to their grades for their second semester at Rowan University. More than half of the students (54.8%) reported that they expect to receive an A, closely followed by 41.9% expecting to earn a B. Only one student expects to earn a C in their second semester.

Table 4.11

*Sense of Connection to Rowan University (N=31)*

*(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
I am feeling a sense of connection with Rowan University. <i>M=4.10, SD=.651</i>	8	25.8	18	58.1	5	16.1	0	0	0	0

Table 4.12

*General Attitude Towards Rowan University (N=31)**(Scale: 5=Very Positive, 4=Positive, 3=Neutral, 2=Negative, 1=Very Negative)*

Variable	Very Positive		Positive		Neutral		Negative		Very Negative	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
	At present, what is your general attitude toward Rowan University? <i>M=4.13, SD=.718</i>	10	32.3	15	48.4	6	19.4	0	0	0

Table 4.13

*Interest in Discussing Transition (N=31)**(Scale: 3=Yes, 2=Maybe, 1=No)*

Variable	Yes		Maybe		No	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
	Would you be interested in discussing your transition to Rowan University during the fall semester with a research member? <i>M=4.32, SD=.832</i>	17	54.8	7	22.6	7

Table 4.14

*Second Semester Expected Grades (N=31)**(Scale: 4=A, 3=B, 2=C, 1=D or Below)*

Variable	A		B		C		D or Below	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
	What grades do you expect to earn your second semester at Rowan University? <i>M=4.52, SD=.570</i>	17	54.8	13	41.9	1	3.2	0

**Research question 2.** What did students report about their experiences with diversity after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

Table 4.15 contains information regarding subjects' experiences with diversity after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course and is organized by level of agreement from most to least positive. The majority of the subjects (90.3%) reported strongly agreeing and agreeing to looking forward to meeting people different from them at Rowan University, with only three students remaining neutral. A large number of students (83.9%) also reported strongly agreeing and agreeing for discussing topics related to cultural awareness with friends. In regards to students having a close friend who is not their race, a total of 45.2% agreed, 19.4% strongly agreed, 12.9% remained neutral, and 22.6% disagreed. A little less than half of the subjects (41.9%) remained neutral in regards to the statement that most of their friends are of their own race. This was followed by a total of 29.0% agreeing and 19.4% disagreeing.

Table 4.15

*Experiences with Diversity (N=31)**(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree				Agree				Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree			
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%		
I am looking forward to meeting people different from me at Rowan University. <i>M</i> =4.32, <i>SD</i> =.653	13	41.9	15	48.4	3	9.7	0	0	0	0	0	0		
I discuss topics related to cultural awareness with friends. <i>M</i> =4.00, <i>SD</i> =.775	7	22.6	19	61.3	3	9.7	2	6.5	0	0	0	0		
I have a close friend who is not my race. <i>M</i> =3.61, <i>SD</i> =1.054	6	19.4	14	45.2	4	12.9	7	22.6	0	0	0	0		
Most of my friends are my own race. <i>M</i> =3.16, <i>SD</i> =.934	2	6.5	9	29.0	13	41.9	6	19.4	1	3.2	0	0		

**Research question 3.** What did students report about their college goals and outcomes after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

Table 4.16 reports the results of students' general college goals and outcomes and is organized by level of agreement from most to least positive. The majority of the students reported that getting a broad and well-rounded education is important to them with 48.4% strongly agreeing and 41.9% agreeing. Similar high levels of agreement were

reported for being interested in joining campus organizations with 32.3% strongly agreeing and 61.3% agreeing. More than half of the subjects (58.1%) agreed with the statement that they were interested in interacting with faculty outside of class, followed by 22.6% strongly agreeing and 16.1% remaining neutral. No students disagreed; however, one student strongly disagreed with this item. Almost three quarters of the subjects (67.8%) strongly agreed and agreed with the statement that they would be interested in working with a faculty member on a research project, with six students remaining neutral and four disagreeing. About a third of the subjects (32.3%) remained neutral in regards to the statement that if better jobs were available that did not require a bachelor's degree, they would not go to college. Almost another third (29.0%) agreed with this statement and a little less than that (22.6%) disagreed.

Table 4.16

*General College Goals and Outcomes (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Getting a broad and well-rounded education is important to me. <i>M=4.35, SD=.755</i>	15	48.4	13	41.9	2	6.5	1	3.2	0	0
I am interested in joining campus organizations. <i>M=4.26, SD=.575</i>	10	32.3	19	61.3	2	6.5	0	0	0	0

Table 4.16 (continued)

*General College Goals and Outcomes (N=31)*

*(Scale: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I am interested in interacting with faculty outside of class. <i>M=3.97, SD=.836</i>	7	22.6	18	58.1	5	16.1	0	0	1	3.2
I would be interested in working with a faculty member on a research project. <i>M=3.77, SD=.956</i>	7	22.6	14	45.2	6	19.4	4	12.9	0	0
If better jobs were available that did not require a bachelor's degree, I would not go to college. <i>M=2.87, SD=1.088</i>	1	3.2	9	29.0	10	32.3	7	22.6	4	12.9

Table 4.17 contains information on subjects' college goals and outcomes regarding skills and knowledge acquisition and is organized by level of agreement from most to least positive. A total of 80.6% of the subjects reported that acquiring knowledge and skills in their academic interest area was very important, making this item the highest rated in terms of importance. A total of 77.4% of the subjects reported that it was very important to learn to communicate effectively orally and to develop leadership skills.

Skills continued to be reported as very important, with two of the lower rated skills of acquiring technology skills for work and life, and learning to communicate effectively in writing still receiving very important by 20 subjects. Of all of the skills and knowledge goals and outcomes in this section, gaining an appreciation of attitudes/cultures different than their own was the only item to have any students reporting it was not too important (3.2%). The majority (90.3%) rated it as very important and important. Students fairly evenly reported very important (41.9%) and important (45.2%) for participating in community service.

Table 4.17

*Importance of Goals and Outcomes: Skills and Knowledge Acquisition (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 5=Very Important, 4=Important, 3=Undecided, 2=Not Too Important, 1=Not At All Important)*

Variable	Very Important		Important		Undecided		Not Too Important		Not At All Important	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Acquiring knowledge and skills in my academic interest area. <i>M=4.81, SD=.402</i>	25	80.6	6	19.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Learning to communicate effectively orally. <i>M=4.77, SD=.425</i>	24	77.4	7	22.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Developing leadership skills. <i>M=4.74, SD=.514</i>	24	77.4	6	19.4	1	3.2	0	0	0	0

Table 4.17 (continued)

*Importance of Goals and Outcomes: Skills and Knowledge Acquisition (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 5=Very Important, 4=Important, 3=Undecided, 2=Not Too Important, 1=Not At All Important)*

Variable	Very Important		Important		Undecided		Not Too Important		Not At All Important	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>		<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Learning to think and reason. <i>M=4.68, SD=.475</i>	21	67.7	10	32.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Learning to communicate effectively in writing. <i>M=4.65, SD=.486</i>	20	64.5	11	35.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acquiring knowledge in areas that complement/enhance my academic interest area. <i>M=4.61, SD=.615</i>	21	67.7	8	25.8	2	6.5	0	0	0	0
Acquiring technology skills for work and life. <i>M=4.61, SD=.558</i>	20	64.5	10	32.3	1	3.2	0	0	0	0
Gaining appreciation of attitudes/cultures different than mine. <i>M=4.45, SD=.768</i>	18	58.1	10	32.3	2	6.5	1	3.2	0	0
Participating in community service. <i>M=4.29, SD=.693</i>	13	41.9	14	45.2	4	12.9	0	0	0	0



**Research question 4.** What did students report about their study strategies after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

Table 4.18 reports subject's study strategies after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) Course and is organized by level of agreement from most to least positive. In regards to students' present patterns of attending classes, a total of 74.2% reporting always attending classes, followed by 22.6% reporting most of the time and 3.2% reporting sometimes. No students reported rarely or never for this item. A total of 51.6% reported always or most of the time reviewing/revising/updating their class notes, while 41.9% reported sometimes and 6.5% reported rarely doing this. Results varied for how often students spoke up in class with five reporting that they always do, 10 reporting most of the time, seven reporting sometimes, and nine reporting rarely. Only three students reported always putting off studying, with seven doing this most of the time, 12 doing this sometimes, and nine reporting that they rarely put off studying. About three quarters of the subjects (74.2%) reported sometimes or rarely having trouble deciding what coursework to study with the remaining quarter (25.8%) reporting that they have an issue with this most of the time or always. Subjects' responses were also quite varied in regards to studying with other students with two reporting always, six reporting most of the time, 13 reporting sometimes, nine reporting rarely, and one reporting never. This was the only item in this section to receive a response of never. Only 3.2% of subjects reported always preparing for class by reading aloud and 16.1% report never doing this.

Table 4.18

*Occurrence of Study Strategies (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 5=Always, 4=Most of the Time, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never)*

Variable	Always		Most of the Time		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Attend classes. <i>M</i> =4.71, <i>SD</i> =.529	23	74.2	7	22.6	1	3.2	0	0	0	0
Review/revise/ update class notes. <i>M</i> =3.65, <i>SD</i> =.877	6	19.4	10	32.3	13	41.9	2	6.5	0	0
Speak up in class. <i>M</i> =3.35, <i>SD</i> =1.082	5	16.1	10	32.3	7	22.6	9	29.0	0	0
Put off studying. <i>M</i> =3.13, <i>SD</i> =.957	3	9.7	7	22.6	12	38.7	9	29.0	0	0
Have trouble deciding what coursework to study. <i>M</i> =3.03, <i>SD</i> =.948	3	9.7	5	16.1	13	41.9	10	32.3	0	0
Study with other students. <i>M</i> =2.97, <i>SD</i> =.948	2	6.5	6	19.4	13	41.9	9	29.0	1	3.2
Prepare for class by reading aloud. <i>M</i> =2.77, <i>SD</i> =1.087	1	3.2	7	22.6	12	38.7	6	19.4	5	16.1

**Research question 5.** What did students report about their work patterns and reasons for working?

Table 4.19 contains information regarding students' predicated work patterns for the fall semester. Eleven students reported that they do not plan to work off campus in the fall semester, eight reported working 10-14 hours, six reported working 15-19 hours, 3 reported working 20-29 hours, 2 reported working 30-39 hours, and one student reported working more than 40 hours per week at an off campus job. In regards to an on campus jobs, 23 students reported not planning to work on campus, two reported working 1-9 hours, three reported working 10-14 hours, and the remaining three reported working 15-19 hours on campus.

Table 4.19

*Student's Predicted Work Patterns for the Fall Semester (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 7=Do Not Plan to Work, 6=1-9, 5=10-14, 4=15-19, 3=20-29, 2=30-39, 1=More than 40)*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
Hours per week students will be working at an on-campus job. <i>M=4.55, SD=1.028</i>		
Do Not Plan to Work	23	74.2
1-9	2	6.5
10-14	3	9.7
15-19	3	9.7
20-29	0	0
30-39	0	0
More than 40	0	0
Hours per week students will be working at an off-campus job. <i>M=3.00, SD=1.789</i>		
Do Not Plan to Work	11	35.5
1-9	0	0
10-14	8	25.8
15-19	6	19.4
20-29	3	9.7
30-39	2	6.5
More than 40	1	3.2

Table 4.20 contains information regarding students' reasons for working while attending college and is organized by importance of reason from most to least positive. In regards to earning extra spending money (clothes, snacks, gas, etc.), more than three quarters of the students (77.4%) reported that this is a major reason. A total of 21 students reported that taking care of personal or family obligations is a major reason for working. Three students reported this is a minor reason and seven reported that it is not a reason

for them. More than half of the subjects (54.8%) reported that helping to pay for their college education (tuition, books, etc.) is a major reason, while 16.1% reported this is a minor reason. However, one student did report that this is not a reason for them. The results were a little more in regards to working to gain general job experience and gaining job experience related to their anticipated major, with 16 and 15 students respectively reporting this is a major reason, six and seven students respectively reporting this is a minor reason, and nine students for both items reporting this is not a reason for them. A total of 45.2% reported that career exploration is a major reason in their decision to work, while 22.6% reported that this is a minor reason and almost a third of the subjects (32.3%) reported that this is not a reason for them. Results were also fairly varied for career networking with 13 students reporting that this is a major reason, 11 reporting that this is a minor reason, and seven reporting that this is not a reason for them to work during their college education.

Table 4.20

*Students' Reasons for Working While Attending College (N=31)*  
*(Scale: 3=Major Reason, 2=Minor Reason, 1=Not a Reason for Me)*

Variable	Major Reason		Minor Reason		Not a Reason for Me	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Earn extra spending money (clothes, snacks, gas, etc.). <i>M</i> =4.68, <i>SD</i> =.653	24	77.4	4	12.9	3	9.7
Take care of personal or family obligations. <i>M</i> =4.45, <i>SD</i> =.850	21	67.7	3	9.7	7	22.6
Help you pay for your college education (tuition, books, etc.). <i>M</i> =4.26, <i>SD</i> =.893	17	54.8	5	16.1	9	29.0
Gain general job experience. <i>M</i> =4.23, <i>SD</i> =.884	16	51.6	6	19.4	9	29.0
Gain job experience related to your anticipated major. <i>M</i> =4.19, <i>SD</i> =.873	15	48.4	7	22.6	9	29.0
Career networking. <i>M</i> =4.19, <i>SD</i> =.792	13	41.9	11	35.5	7	22.6
Career exploration. <i>M</i> =4.13, <i>SD</i> =.885	14	45.2	7	22.6	10	32.3

**Research question 6.** What did the students in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses report about the impact that this course had on them?

In order to answer what students in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses reported about the impact that the course had on them, six

students were individually interviewed to gather qualitative data. With the permission of the participants, the interviews were recorded by an audio device and later transcribed verbatim. I then reviewed the transcript in order to remove nonessential words and correct syntax errors. Six themes emerged after reviewing the transcripts, including the assistance with transitioning/learning about campus resources, the social component of the course, the assistance/relationship with their professor, the college preparation they received, the class structure, and their sense of mattering and connection to Rowan. Table 4.21 demonstrates the number of times these themes were mentioned amongst all six participants.

Table 4.21

*Themes of Impact (N=6)*

Theme	Number of Times Theme was Mentioned <i>f</i>
Assistance with transitioning/learning about campus resources	22
Social component	11
College preparation	11
Assistance/relationship with professor	7
Class structure	7
Sense of mattering and connection to Rowan University	6

**Demographics.** Participants self-disclosed demographic information at the beginning of the interview, which is represented in Table 4.22.

Participant A identifies as an African American and Mexican male that is 38 years old. He has attended three institutions of higher education, including a military school. He is currently a full-time senior at Rowan University studying Mechanical Engineering. He also shared that he is an adult learner returning to the classroom after having owned his own company and returning to the state.

Participant B identifies as an African American female that is 41 years old. She has attended one previous higher education institution 10 years ago and has now returned to higher education by attending Rowan University. She is currently a full-time junior studying Early Childhood Education.

Participant C identifies as an African American female that is 21 years old. She has attended two institutions of higher education, including Rowan University. She is currently a full-time junior studying Psychology.

Participant D identifies as a White female that is 22 years old. She attended one previous higher education institution prior to Rowan University. She is beginning her second semester at Rowan University as full-time but has had to drop some of her courses. She is currently only taking two classes as a part-time junior studying Writing Arts.

Participant E identifies as an African American male that is 20 years old. He has attended two institutions of higher education, including Rowan University. He is



currently a full-time sophomore studying Elementary Education with a minor in Mathematics.

Participant F identifies as a White female that is 20 years old. She has also attended two institutions of higher education, including Rowan University. She is currently a full-time Exploratory Studies sophomore, planning to change her major to Business Marketing.

Table 4.22

*Interview Participants' Demographics (N=6)*

Participant	Demographic	Response
Participant A		
	Race	African American and Mexican
	Gender	Male
	Age	38
	Number of Higher Education Institutions Attended	3
	Full-Time of Part-Time	Full-Time
	College Year by Credit	Senior
	Major	Mechanical Engineering
Participant B		
	Race	African American
	Gender	Female
	Age	41
	Number of Higher Education Institutions Attended	2
	Full-Time of Part-Time	Full-Time
	College Year by Credit	Junior
	Major	Early Childhood Education

Table 4.22 (continued)

*Interview Participants' Demographics (N=6)*

Participant	Demographic	Response
Participant C	Race	African American
	Gender	Female
	Age	21
	Number of Higher Education Institutions Attended	2
	Full-Time of Part-Time	Full-Time
	College Year by Credit	Junior
	Major	Psychology
Participant D	Race	White
	Gender	Female
	Age	22
	Number of Higher Education Institutions Attended	2
	Full-Time of Part-Time	Part-Time
	College Year by Credit	Junior
	Major	Writing Arts
Participant E	Race	African American
	Gender	Male
	Age	20
	Number of Higher Education Institutions Attended	2
	Full-Time of Part-Time	Full-Time
	College Year by Credit	Sophomore
	Major	Elementary Education
Participant F	Race	White
	Gender	Female
	Age	20
	Number of Higher Education Institutions Attended	2
	Full-Time of Part-Time	Full-Time
	College Year by Credit	Sophomore
	Major	Exploratory Studies

**Theme 1: Assistance with transitioning/learning about campus resources.** All six participants claimed that the course greatly assisted with their transition into Rowan University and that the course helped them learn about the resources provided on campus. Participant A stated, “I haven’t been in school in 18 years so it was a nice transition into just being a student again.” Participant B, who is also an adult learner returning to higher education after a long period of time working, brought up her commuter status in regards to the importance of the course claiming, “I don’t know if I would have honestly taken the initiative to learn more about Rowan, especially being a commuter student and working full-time, like your time is limited so you kind of want to get in and get out but it was pretty cool [learning about what Rowan has to offer].” Participant C echoed Participant B by stating, “I feel like I got to learn a lot about Rowan and different things that I wouldn’t have learned about except for from the class.” She also claimed, “[transfers will] be lost without the class. It makes your transition easier so you get adjusted faster.” Another common theme amongst the participants was learning about specific resources, such as attending the fall organization fair, listening to presentations on Greek Life and the Study Abroad program, taking time outside of the classroom to attend sessions at the library and recreation center, and being required to attend on campus events as a requirement of the course’s Passport program. Participant C claimed, “I don’t think I learned about anything [about the campus] that I know now other than what I learned from that class.”

**Theme 2: Social component.** Only two of the participants specifically mentioned the social benefits of the course; however, both of the students vehemently pointed out

this benefit. Interestingly, this was Participant A and Participant E, both of which are males, although one of them is an adult learner returning to higher education after 18 years whereas the other is a relatively young, traditional student at 20 years old.

Participant A stated, “I made several friends in that class. I still have like five or six friends from Rowan 101 that I actually talk to. In other classes I don’t really talk to other people... so it helped me socially.” He went even further to claim, “the biggest help was the social side of it where I could have a small network of people where I felt like I knew someone here and I wasn’t such a stranger.” Participant E made similar claims, including “I met a lot of my close friends in that class and I got to experience being in class with people who are the same as me, other transfers who are new to everything so it helped me a lot.” He specifically notes that being in a social setting of all transfers was helpful. He also claimed that the social aspect was the most beneficial:

The most beneficial part of the class was just meeting other people. Most of those people I probably wouldn’t have talked to on an everyday basis, so meeting people outside of my normal friend zone made me branch out and I’m still close with everyone today... I think I made life friends in that class.

Only one participant dispelled the social benefits of the course. Participant F mentioned that she did not make friends with anyone in the course but stated that is was because she is “pretty shy... [and] didn’t really come out of [her] little bubble.”

**Theme 3: College preparation.** Participant B admitted that she thought the course would provide further college preparation than it did, although she felt that learning about the campus resources was helpful. Although she has been out of higher education for 10

years, her previous transcripts did exempt her from taking the placement exams, thus exempting her from taking any developmental education courses. She stated:

After being out of school for so long, I was under the impression that this class would be somewhat of a transition type class that would say okay well you've been out for X amount of time, these are the things that may be expected of you from this class or from this particular subject as opposed to just focusing on the campus itself.

However, she did also mention the benefits of the course in regards to college preparation by stating, "even though there was no midterm or final, we still had papers that were due. We still had projects that were due. We had to write reaction papers, so the same expectations [as other classes] were there." While none of the other participants mentioned a similar thought to Participant B believing the course would have some developmental coursework, other participants did mention the importance of the class in terms of college preparation. Participant A felt that the course prepared him for his college career by teaching him and the other students that they are "able to reach out and stop in different offices and... that there's not a liaison person needed between the student and the faculty."

***Theme 4: The assistance/relationship with the professor.*** The same two participants that touted the social benefits of the course also noted the benefit of the professor's assistance and their relationship with their professors. The participants were not in the same Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) class and therefore did have two different professors. Participant A felt that his professor, "opened

the lines of communication... [and he has] gone to her office several times and just was able to engage with her.” He also sought her out prior to meeting with the dean of the engineering school and claims, “she kind of gave me a little pep talk before I went. It was nice.” Participant E mentioned that his professor “is a really good instructor, counselor, and... [he is] just really glad [he] took the class.”

**Theme 5: Class structure.** Overall, participants were really pleased with the structure of the course. Participant B claimed, “it was very interactive. We had fun. It wasn’t just [the professor] sitting and lecturing.” Both Participant B and F mentioned the passport program as a beneficial component. Participant F really enjoyed the structure of the course but suggested that in the future the passport activities should be made a little more serious since more of the activities she attended for it were already built into the course. Two of the participants did mention the amount of work required in the course in their responses. Participant D stated, “there was more work, like homework, than I expected but it wasn’t necessarily a bad thing.” According to Participant E, “I think that everything that went on in the class was very helpful. The structure of the class was helpful too. It did incorporate assignments and some of them were a little tedious so if I did have to say anything [to improve the course] probably the length of some of the assignments.”

**Theme 6: Sense of mattering and connection to Rowan University.** Three of the participants also reported a sense of mattering and feeling a connection to Rowan University. Participant E claimed, “it [the course] further developed my understanding of what a university is supposed to feel like. I feel comfortable here and... I’m glad I

transferred.” He wasn’t the only participant to mention making transfers feel comfortable. Participant A felt that that one of the biggest elements to the course is “making whomever comes in feel comfortable and open – try to open them up and engage them... letting them know that it’s okay to ask questions and that none of us [the students in the class] know where anything is when we first get here and that’s okay.” One of the participants, Participant C, even mentioned the concept of a transfer community. She stated that a goal of the course should be “definitely building the transfer community and bringing awareness to new transfers... because freshmen are more prioritized... but transfers, we need help too. We’re like the upperclassmen freshmen.”

## Chapter V

### Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary of the Study

This study investigated the impact that the first Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course, which was taken in the fall of 2015, had on transfers at Rowan University. The subjects in this study were a total population of both of the transfer courses, totaling 41 undergraduate transfer students. Subjects must have transferred in at minimum 12 college credits to the university in order to be considered a transfer and to be able to choose to take the course. A total of 31 of the subjects opted to participate in the online survey portion of the study and six students participated in the individual interviews.

The *Transfer Student Survey*, with permission from its creator Dr. Wawrzynski, was recreated online using the online surveying system Qualtrix. The link to the survey was then emailed to all 41 students from the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses from the fall of 2015. This email also included information about the purpose of the study and asked participants interested in participating in a focus group to click the link to an online scheduling system, Doodle.com. After it became clear that interested participants' schedules did not align well, an additional email asking students to again participate in the online survey if they had not already but also to respond directly to the email if they were interested in participating in individual interviews rather than a focus group. A total of 31 subjects completed the *Transfer Student Survey* yielding a 76% response rate. Six participants agreed to participate in



individual interviews held on the main campus of Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. Students were once again told the purpose of the study and asked to sign two consent forms: one to participate in the interview and one to allow the researcher to use a recording device.

Quantitative data were analyzed from the surveys in order to respond to Research Questions 1-5. Descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages, were used to analyze the survey data via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Qualitative data were analyzed from the recordings of the individual interviews using *Content Analysis and Logical Analysis of Written Data* (Sisco, 1981). A total of six themes emerged from the content and logical analysis.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

Transfer students have continued to grow in higher education and research shows that these students bring with them a unique set of skills and needs that differ from that of a first-time college student (Chin-Newman & Shaw, 2013). The process of transferring often is associated with much confusion and stress and addressing these concerns, as well as the distinct needs of transfers, is critical to maintaining access to higher education and fostering success for transfers. One increasingly popular method of supporting transfers is providing a transfer seminar, which is similar to that of a freshman seminar, and assists transfers in their transition into a new institution (Grites & Farina, 2012). This study addresses the impact of a similar type of transfer seminar that was piloted at Rowan University in the fall of 2015 through two Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses.

**Research question 1.** What did students report about their college preparedness, support, concerns, and attitudes towards Rowan University after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

The findings of a descriptive statistics analysis reveal that the 31 transfers from the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) overall did feel adequately prepared for the academic demands at Rowan University, including the writing demands and math demands, and these students did not expect to have a hard time adjusting to Rowan University's academic demands. According to Ishanti (2008), not all transfer students experience transfer shock and fortunately it appears that the subjects from this study did not have difficulty adjusting to the academic demands at a new institution. These findings may be a result of the preparation provided to the transfers in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course; however, students did report considering seeking out study skills training, so this may still be an area of interest to further delve into in the course.

In regards to college support through advice and encouragement, subjects reported high agreement that their family encourages them to continue their college education. Agreement that students rely on the advice of close friends or relatives when they have a problem was less than that of feeling encouraged to continue their education. Support is an essential factor in students coping with transition (Schlossberg, 1984). According to Schlossberg's (1984) Transition Theory, support can be provided through intimate relationships, family members, and friendships, as well as through institutional communities (Evans et al., 2010). Although many of the subjects did report feeling

supported by their family and friends, the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course may have provided additional support to the students in pursuing their educational and career goals.

A high number of students were concerned with financing their education, the course availability, and the academic requirements outside of their major. Townsend (2008) notes that transfers often report having fears and concerns after their transition into a new institution and these are issues that the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) may consider focusing on further in the future in order to better assuage student fears. Students were not very concerned with adjusting to a new academic environment, which may be a result of the topics covered in the course.

Students did report a high sense of connection to Rowan University and had an overall positive attitude of the institution at the time of the survey completion. Most students also reported expecting to receive an “A” or a “B” at the completion of the spring semester. Research indicates that feelings of connection and satisfaction greatly increases the odds of student persistence (Tinto, 1975). These findings may also indicate that now in their second semester at Rowan University, most of the students have reached the incorporation phase of Tinto’s (1988) Stages of Student Departure. Transfers are more likely to reach the incorporation phase and feel integrated and comfortable into the new college through participation in a long-term transition program, such as the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course (Grites, 2013; Tinto, 1975 & 1988). Feeling connected, satisfied with the institution, and confident in their academic

performance are all strong indicators that the students have made a successful transition into Rowan University.

**Research question 2.** What did students report about their experiences with diversity after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

In terms of diversity, the findings of a descriptive statistics analysis revealed that students did report looking forward to meeting people that are different from them at Rowan. Less students but still a large majority reported that they discuss topics related to cultural awareness with their friends. Students were very split in their reports of having a close friend that is of a different race than them and in regards to most of their friends being of their same race. According to the American Council on Education (2012), diversity enables students to challenge their preconceptions and stereotyped beliefs, as well as to learn from those that differ from them. Putting more of an emphasis on incorporating diversity education into transfer seminars would be beneficial to both transfers and the institutions as a whole.

**Research question 3.** What did students report about their college goals and outcomes after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

The findings of a descriptive statistics analysis showed that most students reported desiring to get a broad and well-rounded education and being interested in joining campus organizations. These numbers decreased slightly for being interested in interacting with faculty outside of class and being interested in working on a research

project with a faculty member. These findings are typical of transfer students. According to the *National Survey of Student Engagement* (2009), transfers are less likely to participate in campus activities or interact with faculty outside of the classroom. Students also reported being fairly neutral in regards to not going to college if better jobs that did not require a bachelor's degree were available. This may indicate that at least some of the subjects are pursuing higher education for reasons other than obtaining a good job.

All of the skills and knowledge acquisition items were rated high in terms of importance to the students, with the highest being acquiring knowledge and skills in their academic interest area closely followed by learning to communicate effectively orally and developing leadership skills. The lowest of the skills, participating in community service, was still rated as very important.

**Research question 4.** What did students report about their study strategies after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course in the fall semester of 2015?

The findings of a descriptive statistics analysis revealed that subjects reported almost always attending classes. These numbers significantly dropped in regards to the other study strategies listed, such as reviewing/revising/updating class notes and speaking up in class; however, these study habits were still rated fairly high in terms of occurrence. Occurrences were much less frequent for subjects studying with other students and preparing for class by reading aloud. These findings support the previous reports that the subjects did not expect to have a hard time adjusting to Rowan University's academic demands. After the initial semester, students may have felt that it was not as necessary to

place an emphasis on all of the study strategies mentioned; however, it is clear that class attendance is still highly valued amongst the subjects.

**Research question 5.** What did students report about their work patterns and reasons for working?

The findings of a descriptive statistics analysis revealed that most of the subjects do not plan to work at an on-campus job; however, results were much more varied in terms of an off-campus job. Almost a third of subjects still reported not planning to work, while the rest reported working anywhere from 10-14 hours to more than 40 hours, with the number of subjects reporting these steadily decreasing as hours increased. Subjects reported that all of the reasons listed for working during college were fairly major reasons, with the most important reason for working while attending college was earning extra spending money. Career networking and career exploration were rated the least important of the reasons listed; however, both of these still had an average that placed them as major reasons. The fact that many students reporting not planning to work or planning to only work limited hours may be tied to the financial concerns also reported.

**Research question 6.** What did the students in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) courses report about the impact that this course had on them?

A content analysis revealed that there were six themes students reported in terms of the impact of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course: assistance with transitioning/learning about campus resources, the social component of the course, the assistance/relationship with their professor, the college preparation they received, the class structure, and their sense of mattering and connection to Rowan

University. Students felt that the course forced them to explore the resources Rowan University has available, which greatly assisted with their transition. This reflects the viewpoint of Grites (2013), who stated that transfer transitional programs are the optimal method of introducing transfers to campus resources.

The second theme, the social component of the course, was only touted by two of the participants. According to Flaga (2006), transfers desire opportunities to meet peers and form relationships, which also helps to increase greater satisfaction with the university as a whole. Due to the high levels of satisfaction with Rowan University that the participants reported, there is reason to believe that students may have used opportunities outside of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course to engage with other students, faculty, and staff. It is likely that some social component contributed to the satisfaction of these students; however, this course may not have provided that component for all its participants.

The same students that were highly satisfied with the social component of the course were also highly satisfied with the assistance and relationship they have with their professors. This course was designed similar to that of a first year experience program, which is meant to aid students in connecting with both faculty and administration (Allen, 2004). Therefore, students had the opportunity to interact with not only their professors, but administrators from many areas on campus both during and after their presentations to the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course. Volkwein, King, and Terezini (1986) note that fostering relationships between students and faculty/administration helps increase academic growth and success among transitioning

students and therefore a significant emphasis on building these relationships through this transfer seminar should be made.

Subjects also reported feeling that the course helped to prepare them for the academic work at Rowan University. Grites and Farina (2012) note that transfer students often face struggles of having to adjust to the new academic demands of their post-transfer institution; therefore, this course provided assistance in aiding students in this transition. Similar reports were also made about the structure of the course. Subjects reported enjoying the course's interactive nature, although the length and tediousness of assignments were mentioned and should be taken into consideration for future sections of this course.

At least half of the participants in the individual interviews reported feeling a sense of mattering and connection to Rowan University. The students placed an emphasis on the institution finding ways to make transfers feel comfortable at their institution, in which they felt the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course did. One student specifically mentioned feeling like an upperclass freshman, which really echoes the literature in regards to treating transfers specific needs but recognizing that they are new to the institution (Townsend, 2008).

**Comparison to Farina (2012).** Farina's (2012) study using the same *Transfer Student Survey* presents an opportunity to compare the post survey results of the two student populations. It is important to keep in mind that these courses do vary in structure, with Stockton University's course presented as a three credit Contemporary American Education course and Rowan University's presented as a two credit transfer



seminar similar to a freshman experience course. Farina (2012) also had both pre and post surveys to compare data to for 328 participants, whereas this study is a total population of 41 students.

Rowan University's transfers reported slightly higher agreement than Stockton University's transfers to the statement that their high school prepared them well for college with a mean score of 3.45 in comparison to 3.31. Similar slightly higher mean scores for Rowan University's transfers were reported in terms of study patterns, including revising/reviewing/updating class notes (3.65 vs. 3.52), attending classes (4.71 vs. 4.58), and putting off studying (3.13 vs. 2.96). Considering the relatively similar mean scores for all of these areas, it is possible that the types of transfers who opt into taking a transfer seminar style course exhibit similar studying patterns.

One of the largest differences in mean scores between transfers from these institutions was in regards to if students would attend college if better jobs were available that did not require a bachelor's degree. There was a .46 difference between Rowan University's mean score of 2.87 and Stockton University's mean score of 2.41 in terms of agreement. It appears that Rowan University's transfers are more committed to receiving a college education despite job opportunities. Another relatively large difference in agreement was related to being concerned about financing their education. The mean score for Rowan University transfers was 3.87 in comparison to Stock University's transfer with 3.52. Financial security in college is a national concern that unsurprisingly has greatly affected both students. There was one item that had a mean score that was nearly identical for both institutions, which was students' concerns with adjusting to a

new academic environment. Rowan University's transfers reported a mean score of 2.74, whereas Stockton University's transfers reported a mean score of 2.72. These scores may show that both types of transfer seminars assist well with transitioning transfers into the institution.

There were two items that Rowan University's transfers had a lower mean score than Stockton University's transfer in terms of agreement. There was a 0.22 difference between Rowan University's mean score of 3.77 and Stockton University's mean score of 3.99 for concern over course availability. An even larger gap existed for students concern about creating a schedule that meets their other obligations, with a .46 difference, and Rowan University's mean score of 3.39 in comparison to Stockton University's mean score of 3.85. This may be indicative that Rowan University's course offerings and course schedules are more easily manageable than Stockton University's.

### **Conclusions**

The results of this study confirmed findings from previous research and findings about transfer students, particularly in regards to the benefits of transfer seminars. Descriptive statistics analysis revealed that the students from the fall 2015 Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course reported high levels of college preparedness and support; however, even after taking the course students still reported concerns particularly in regards to financing their education, course availability, and the academic requirements outside of their major. Subject's attitudes towards Rowan University were very positive and students did report feeling a connection to the institution.

The transfers had varied views and experiences in terms of diversity. Most of the subjects are looking forward to meeting people that are different from them and do discuss cultural topics but in terms of having close friends of different races, students reports were mixed.

Subjects' college goals and outcomes after taking the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course centered on gaining a broad and well-rounded education and integrating themselves into the campus through joining organizations. Students were not as interested in interacting with faculty. Students rated acquiring knowledge and skills in their areas of academic interest, effectively communicating orally, and leadership skills as highly important.

Most of the study patterns and strategies were rated as occurring fairly frequently; however, attending classes was clearly the most valued study strategy. The least frequently employed study strategies were studying with other students and reading aloud prior to class.

Future work plans showed variation between on-campus and off-campus employment. Most students do not plan to work on campus, whereas more than half of the students do plan to work at an off-campus job. Reasons for working ranged from financial reasons to career and networking opportunities; however, financial gains were more of a priority.

A content analysis on the impact of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course on selected students revealed that participants felt transitioned, more aware of campus resources, better prepared for Rowan University's academic work,

and a sense of connection and mattering to the institution. Fewer students cited the social and relational benefits of their peers and professors from the course; however, the students that did adamantly touted these benefits.

### **Recommendations for Further Practice**

Based upon the findings and conclusions, I recommend the following:

1. Incorporate a pre and post test survey in the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Seminar Section) course at Rowan University in order to better understand the impact of this type of course.
2. When teaching a transfer seminar, address students' concerns regarding finances, course availability, and the academic requirements outside of students' majors during transfer.
3. When teaching a transfer seminar, place an emphasis on diversity education.
4. Provide further social opportunities for transfers to interact with their peers.
5. Provide further opportunities for transfers to interact with faculty both inside and outside of the classroom.
6. Professional development training for faculty and administrators that interact with transfers in order to address transfer specific needs and concerns.
7. Make the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course mandatory for all incoming transfer students at Rowan University.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Based upon the findings and conclusions, I recommend the following:

1. Further studies should be conducted with a larger sample to confirm the findings of this study.
2. Further research into the relationship of transfer students college preparation and ease of transition into transfers' new institution is recommended.
3. Further research into the relationship of transfer students support and ease of transition into transfers' new institution is suggested.
4. Further research into the relationship of transfer seminars and transfer student persistence is recommended.
5. A study focusing more in depth on qualitative data to determine the impact of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course may be beneficial.
6. Further research into the transition programs that other higher education institutions offer for transfer students.
7. A longitudinal study should be done to explore the impact of transfer seminar courses for transfers in comparison to transfers that did not participate in a transfer seminar.

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## Appendix A

### Wawrzynski's Transfer Student Survey Instrument Revised for use at Rowan University

Rowan University needs your help to obtain the best possible information about your experience here. Your honest and thoughtful responses are very important and much appreciated. In accordance to University policy, your responses are treated as confidential and available only to university advising and research personnel fulfilling assigned specific responsibilities. Summarized results will be reported to campus departments and/or staff to help plan and provide better services to students. Group results may appear in many locations including campus media.

I. Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I feel adequately prepared for the academic demands at Rowan University.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. It is best for me to rely on the advice of close friends or relatives when I have a problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I am concerned about my ability to finance my college education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My high school prepared me well for college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I am concerned with developing a course schedule that meets my other obligations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Most of my friends are my own race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I expect to have a hard time adjusting to the academic work of Rowan University.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. If better jobs were available that did not require a bachelor's degree, I would not go to college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I am concerned about adjusting to a new academic environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I have a close friend who is <u>not</u> my race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I am looking forward to meeting people different from me at Rowan University.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I would be interested in living on-campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I discuss topics related to cultural awareness with friends.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I feel adequately prepared for the math demands that I will have in my coursework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I am concerned about course availability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I would consider seeking study skills training at Rowan University.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. I feel adequately prepared for the writing demands that I will have in my coursework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. I am concerned about the transferability of my courses completed at other institutions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. I would be interested in working with a faculty member on a research project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. My family encourages me to continue my college education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Getting a broad and well-rounded education is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. I am interested in joining campus organizations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. I am interested in interacting with faculty outside of class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. I am concerned about the academic requirements outside my major.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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25. I am feeling a sense of connection with Rowan University.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. I do <u>not</u> expect to earn a degree from Rowan University.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>II. Please indicate how important the following college goals/outcomes are to you.</b>	Very	Important	Undecided	Not too	Not at all important
27. <u>learning</u> to communicate effectively in writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. <u>learning</u> to communicate effectively orally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. <u>acquiring</u> technology skills for work and life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. <u>acquiring</u> knowledge and skills in my academic interest area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. <u>acquiring</u> knowledge in areas that complement/enhance my academic interest area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. <u>gaining</u> appreciation of attitudes/cultures different than mine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. <u>participating</u> in community service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. <u>learning</u> to think and reason	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. <u>developing</u> leadership skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>III. At present, how often do you do the following?</b>	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
36. <u>review</u> /revise/update class notes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. <u>prepare</u> for class by reading ahead	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. <u>put off</u> studying	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. <u>have</u> trouble deciding what coursework to study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. <u>speak</u> up in class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41. <u>study</u> with other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42. <u>attend</u> classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

43. What type of school are you transferring from?

- 2 year college
- 4 year college or university
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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44. When you decided to transfer, was Rowan University your:
- First Choice of transfer school
  - Second Choice of transfer school
  - Third Choice of transfer school
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
45. If you were not accepted to Rowan University, what would you most likely do:
- continue to take classes at the institution you are transferring from
  - transfer to another institution
  - get a job
  - reapply to Rowan University
46. What was the main reason you decided to leave your last institution? (CHOOSE ONE)
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Community College (no B.A. available) | <input type="radio"/> Job                                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Cost of school                        | <input type="radio"/> Dissatisfied- Please specify why: _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> <u>Did not have major I wanted</u>    | <input type="radio"/> Other _____                             |
| <input type="radio"/> Moved                                 |   |
47. What is the main reason you decided to attend Rowan University? (CHOOSE ONE)
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Relatively inexpensive                | <input type="radio"/> Reputation of program/school  |
| <input type="radio"/> Geographical location                 | <input type="radio"/> Size of institution           |
| <input type="radio"/> Offered kind of program that I wanted | <input type="radio"/> Availability of financial aid |
| <input type="radio"/> Recommendation of family/friends      | <input type="radio"/> Other _____                   |
48. How many times have you transferred colleges or universities (including your transfer to Rowan University)?
- Once
  - Twice
  - Three times
  - More than three times
49. What is the highest academic degree you intend to obtain?
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Bachelor's                           | <input type="radio"/> Law (LL.B. or J.D.)       |
| <input type="radio"/> Master's                             | <input type="radio"/> Divinity (B.D. or M.Div.) |
| <input type="radio"/> <u>Ph. D. or Ed.D.</u>               | <input type="radio"/> Other _____               |
| <input type="radio"/> Medical (M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M.) |   |

	Do not plan to work	1-9	10-14	15-19	20-29	30-39	More than 40
50. How many hours per week will you be working at an <b>off-campus</b> job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
51. How many hours per week will you be working at an <b>on-campus</b> job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	I will be living on campus	Less than 3 miles each way	3-5 miles each way	6-10 miles each way	11-50 miles each way	51 miles or more each way	Not yet sure where I will live
52. How far from campus will you be living this fall?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative		
53. At present, your general attitude toward Rowan University is:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
<b>IV. Please indicate the importance of reasons you plan to work while in college:</b>		Major reason	Minor reason	Not a reason for me			
54. <del>help</del> pay for your college education (tuition, books, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
55. <del>take</del> care of personal or family obligations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
56. <del>earn</del> extra spending money (clothes, snacks, gas, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
57. <del>gain</del> general job experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
58. <del>gain</del> job experience related to your anticipated major	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
59. <del>career</del> exploration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
60. <del>career</del> networking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>V. Please answer the following questions below.</b>				Yes	No		
61. Would you enroll in an upper-level (UNIV 300) class to assist in your transition to the University?				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
62. Would you be interested in attending a five-day outdoor adventure experience with other new students?				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
63. Would you be interested in discussing your transition to Rowan University during the fall semester with a research member?				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
64. Have you applied to Rowan University before?				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		

Version Date: February 29, 2016  
 Creation/Revision Date: 2/29/2016

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65. What grades do you expect to earn your first semester at Rowan University?

- A                                       C  
 B                                       D or below

66. What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parents? (Mark one in each column)

	Father	Mother
Grammar school or less	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some high school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High school graduate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Postsecondary school other than college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
College degree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some graduate school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate degree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

67. Racial/ethnic group (select all that apply):

- African-American/Black                                       Hispanic/Latino(a)  
 Asian/Asian-American/Pacific Islander                                       Native American/American Indian/Alaskan native  
 White Caucasian

68. What is your gender?

- Male  
 Female  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

69. Although many of your questions may be answered during your orientation today, what concerns do you still have regarding your transition to Rowan University?

*For more information and/or permission to use the TSS, contact: Dr. Matthew Wawrzynski, Assistant Professor, Michigan State University, 426 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48823 or mwawrzyn@msu.edu*

## Appendix B

### Interview Probative Questions

1. Can you talk about the impact that the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course had on you?
2. What was the most beneficial part of the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course for you?
3. Was there anything that you would change about the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course?
4. Would you advise future incoming transfer to Rowan University to take the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course?
5. Is there anything else you wish to share about the Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) course?



## Appendix C

### Permission to use Wawrzynski's *Transfer Student Survey Instrument*

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

February 18, 2016

Michele Applegare  
Chamberlain Student Center Suite 117  
Rowan University  
201 Mullica Hill Road  
Glassboro, NJ 08028

Dear Michele:

Per your request, I am providing this letter to indicate that you have permission to use the Transfer Student Survey (TSS) for your master's thesis research. You agree to use the instrument as is, with the following exception. You may substitute "University of Maryland" for another institution. If you would like to change the instrument beyond this, please contact me with the individual question and rephrased item. As I mentioned, there is no cost for you to use the instrument. Best wishes with your research.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew R. Wawrzynski".

#### EDUCATION

Department of Educational  
Administration

Michigan State University  
413 Erickson Hall  
East Lansing, MI  
48824-1034  
517/355-4538  
FAX: 517/884-1392

HALE Program  
423 Erickson Hall  
517/353-5187

K-12 Program  
402 Erickson Hall  
517/353-8480

Matthew R. Wawrzynski, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Michigan State University

## Appendix D

### eIRB Notice of Approval

Rowan University eIRB: Study Approved

✖ DELETE  
 ← REPLY  
 ↶ REPLY ALL  
 → FORWARD  
 ☰



eIRB@rowan.edu  
Mon 3/7/2016 11:29 AM

Mark as unread

To: Applegate, Michele A.:



\*\* This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.  
 The originating e-mail account is not monitored.  
 If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office \*\*

**DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier:** FWA00007111

**IRB Chair Person:** Harriet Hartman

**IRB Director:** Sreekant Murthy

**Effective Date:** 3/7/2016

#### eIRB Notice of Approval

#### STUDY PROFILE

<b>Study ID:</b>	Pro2015000689		
<b>Title:</b>	Rowan University's Rowan 101 Transfer Seminar: Impact on Transfer Students		
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	Burton Sisco	<b>Study Coordinator:</b>	None
<b>Co-Investigator(s):</b>	Michele Applegate	<b>Other Study Staff:</b>	None
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Department Funded	<b>Approval Cycle:</b>	Twelve Months
<b>Risk Determination:</b>	Minimal Risk	<b>Device Determination:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Review Type:</b>	Expedited	<b>Expedited Category:</b>	6 7
<b>Subjects:</b>	42		

#### CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

<b>Submission Type:</b>	Research Protocol/Study	<b>Submission Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Approval Date:</b>	3/7/2016	<b>Expiration Date:</b>	3/6/2017
<b>Pregnancy Code:</b>	No Pregnant Women as Subjects Not Applicable	<b>Pediatric Code:</b>	45CFR46.404 / 21CFR50.51 (for FDA - Regulated)
		<b>Prisoner Code:</b>	Not Applicable No Prisoners As Subjects

<b>Protocol:</b>	Permission to use Transfer Student Survey.pdf Focus Group Questions.docx eIRB Protocol Form.docx Thesis Transfer Survey.docx	<b>Consent:</b>	There are no items to display	<b>Recruitment Materials:</b>	Email to Focus Groups.docx
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**\* Study Performance Sites:**

Glassboro Campus      College of Education, James Hall, Glassboro Campus Chamberlain Student Center, Glassboro Campus

**ALL APPROVED INVESTIGATOR(S) MUST COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Conduct the research in accordance with the protocol, applicable laws and regulations, and the principles of research ethics as set forth in the Belmont Report.
2. **Continuing Review:** Approval is valid until the protocol expiration date shown above. To avoid lapses in approval, submit a continuation application at least eight weeks before the study expiration date.
3. **Expiration of IRB Approval:** If IRB approval expires, effective the date of expiration and until the continuing review approval is issued: **All research activities must stop unless the IRB finds that it is in the best interest of individual subjects to continue. (This determination shall be based on a separate written request from the PI to the IRB.) No new subjects may be enrolled and no samples/charts/surveys may be collected, reviewed, and/or analyzed.**
4. **Amendments/Modifications/Revisions:** If you wish to change any aspect of this study, including but not limited to, study procedures, consent form(s), investigators, advertisements, the protocol document, investigator drug brochure, or accrual goals, you are required to obtain IRB review and approval prior to implementation of these changes unless necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects.
5. **Unanticipated Problems:** Unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: <http://www.rowan.edu/som/hsp/>
6. **Protocol Deviations and Violations :** Deviations from/violations of the approved study protocol must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: <http://www.rowan.edu/som/hsp/>
7. **Consent/Assent:** The IRB has reviewed and approved the consent and/or assent process, waiver and/or alteration described in this protocol as required by 45 CFR 46 and 21 CFR 50, 56, (if FDA regulated research). Only the versions of the documents included in the approved process may be used to document informed consent and/or assent of study subjects; each subject must receive a copy of the approved form(s); and a copy of each signed form must be filed in a secure place in the subject's medical/patient/research record.
8. **Completion of Study:** Notify the IRB when your study has been stopped for any reason. Neither study closure by the sponsor or the investigator removes the obligation for submission of timely continuing review application or final report.
9. The Investigator(s) did not participate in the review, discussion, or vote of this protocol.
10. **Letter Comments:** *There are no additional comments.*

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** This email communication may contain private, confidential, or legally privileged information intended for the sole use of the designated and/or duly authorized recipient(s). If you are not the intended recipient or have received this email in error, please notify the sender immediately by email and permanently delete all copies of this email including all attachments without reading them. If you are the intended recipient, secure the contents in a manner that conforms to all applicable state and/or federal requirements related to privacy and confidentiality of such information.

## Appendix E

### Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) Syllabus

#### Rowan 101: College Success (Transfer Student Section) INTR 01107 SYLLABUS

**COURSE TITLE:** Rowan 101: College Success

**COURSE NUMBER:** INTR 01107

**CREDITS:** 2

**OFFERED:** Fall/Spring

**PREREQUISITES:** *Must be a Transfer Student*

### Welcome to Rowan 101!

#### *What is this course about?*

*This course provides support during transfer students' transition to Rowan University and planning for major and career. Included among many topics are discussions of academic skills, identity and diversity, academic integrity, and financial literacy.*

This course will equip students with the academic skills necessary to successfully transition to Rowan University and upper level academics. This course will also help students become integrated into the Rowan community. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Articulate the meaning and value of being a member of the Rowan University community;
- 2) Describe their personal interests, values, and skills as related to education and career;
- 3) Understand the academic differences between other colleges/universities and Rowan University;
- 4) Be familiar with campus resources and materials and how to use them to achieve academic and personal success at Rowan;
- 5) Develop short and long term personal goals to guide their plans for academic and professional success;
- 6) Build skills and knowledge for finding and using appropriate library and information sources for college level work;
- 7) Develop an understanding of self and others in a diverse world and diverse campus.
- 8) Academically, personally, and professionally engage with the University.
- 9) Understand diversity and the role it plays on college campuses.

### *What assignments and exams are there?*

**Reading Assignments and Class Participation:** You are expected to do all reading assignments prior to coming to class! Attendance and class participation count for 20% of the final course grade.

**Participation Preparation Assignments/Homework (PPA's):** Throughout the term, I will give small participant preparation assignments, or PPA's designed to prepare you for and to reinforce your learning in interactive class activities. These might include finding information on the internet or in a research database, Passport Program activities, developing questions or comments about the reading assignment, etc. These preparatory exercises will enhance the classroom experience for all of us - students will rely on each other for their learning, so everyone must be actively involved. *PPAs cannot be handed in late. If you must miss class for an excused reason, you may email me your assignment BEFORE class time.*

**Passport Program:** Details regarding the Passport Program will be shared in class and will count as 10% of the final grade. More information about the Passport Program can be found at [www.rowan.edu/passport](http://www.rowan.edu/passport).

**Reaction assignments:** There will be 5 reaction assignments essays during the course. Each reaction paper should be at least one page in length and will require you to apply material learned in the course to a real-life situation (be sure to connect your writing to the literature reviewed in class). The reaction assignments are worth 20% of your final grade. Formal essay writing rules are in effect, including proper grammar, spelling, and citations.

**Small Group Assignment:** There will be a small group assignment and presentation in class towards the end of the semester that will count as part of your overall grade. More information about the small group assignment will be given to you and discussed in class.

**Final Assignment:** There will be one final essay assignment and presentation that accounts for 30% of your overall grade. The essay is worth 20% and the presentation is worth 10%. More information about the final assignment will be given to you and discussed in class.

**The final grade will be computed as follows:**

	<u>Weight</u>
Attendance & Participation	20%
Rowan University Passport Program (5)	10%
Participation Preparation Assignments (5)	20%
Reaction Assignments (5)	20%
Final Assignment and Presentation	30%

A	93-100%	C+	77- 79.9%
A-	90-92.9%	C	73-76.9%
B+	87-89.9%	C-	70-72.9%
B	83-86.9%	D+	67-69.9%
B-	80-82.9%	D-	60-62.99%
D	63-66.9%	F	below 60

Topic	Assignment Due
Course Introduction/Syllabus What do you want and what is expected? Student Handbook	
<i>Presentation: Getting Involved on Campus – Student Leaders Panel</i>	<b>PPA</b> – What is different at RU compared to your former institution? <i>Bring a list of 3 things to class.</i>
Know Your Campus: Campus Scavenger Hunt Transitions and Life Changes	<i>Passport Check! Make sure you are working on your Passport activities!</i>
<i>Presentation: Greek Life</i>	<b>Reaction Paper 1</b>
<i>Presentation: Library Tour</i> <u>Meet in Library Entrance</u>	
<i>Presentation: Academic Advising: Getting Ready to Register and Working with your Advisor</i> <i>RSN Presentation</i>	<b>PPA</b> - Schedule an advising appointment through RSN and meet with your advisor.
<i>Presentation: Rec. Center</i> <u>Meet in Recreation Center Entrance</u>	
FOCUS2	
<i>Presentation: Money Management</i> <i>By HEESA</i>	<b>PPA</b> – What did you learn from FOCUS 2? <i>Bring a list of 3 career titles to class.</i>
Organizing Time and Tasks	<b>Reaction Paper 2</b>

Organizing Time and Tasks (Part 2)	
Creating a Positive Attitude	Reaction Paper 3
Academic Integrity	PPA – What did you learn? <i>Bring a list of 3 things to class.</i>
Improving Your Communication Style	
Improving Your Communication Style – Part 2	<i>Passport Check! Make sure you are working on your Passport activities!</i>
Problem Solving / Confronting Conflict	Reaction Paper 4 – Your personal communication skills
Career Goals – What are yours?	
<i>Presentation: Wellness Center and Healthy Campus Initiatives</i>	
Developing a Support Network <i>Transfer Mentors Presentation</i>	
<i>Presentation: Office of Social Justice and Inclusion</i>	
Small Group Assignment	Reaction Paper 5
<i>Presentation: Center for Career Advancement Meet in Savitz Hall: Center for Career Advancement (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Across from Admissions)</i>	PPA – Bring a draft of your resume to class
Small Group Assignment	PPA – Complete assignment and present findings to class.
Group Presentations	<i>Final Passport reminder! Make sure you have completed all Passport activities and submitted them online.</i>
“My Legacy” – What I want other new transfer students to know and what contributions I plan to make.....	Final Paper Due