PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES MID-MANAGERS TOWARD THEIR CAREER GOALS AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of North Texas in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

Matthew Joseph Connell, B.A., M.A.

Denton, Texas

May, 1993
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The problem of this study was career goals of student activities mid-managers and their perceptions of attaining these career goals. An introduction and the purposes of the study are included in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 includes a review of selected literature on professional development and mobility. The methodology used to conduct this study is described in Chapter 3. The findings are presented in Chapter 4, and the summary, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations are contained in Chapter 5.

The 455 student activities mid-managers employed at institutions holding membership in the National Association for Campus Activities were mailed a questionnaire composed of demographic items and questions seeking information relevant to the purposes of this study. A total of 296 (65%) usable surveys were returned.

The results of the study indicate that the positions of chief student affairs officer and dean of students were career goals of the subjects. The dean of students position was the only position that was perceived as attainable by the subjects. When looked at by gender, males desired and
believed that the positions of chief student affairs officer and dean of students were reachable. Women desired both positions, but believed that only the position of dean of students was attainable. A t-test revealed a significant difference between the desire of males and females regarding the position of chief student affairs officer. Fourteen items were presented to the subjects to assess their perceptions of institutional support for professional growth. The sample identified 8 of the 14 items as present in their organizations. A t-test revealed no significant difference between the perceptions of males and females regarding institutional support on any of the 14 items.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor, Dwane Kingery, for his guidance and direction. I would like to thank Zach Tucker and Joe Stewart for their assistance and support. I would like to thank my wife and partner, Evelyn Baxevane, for her support and confidence and my children, Alexander and Moriah, for their support as well. I would like to thank my parents, Gerald and Claire Connell for their encouragement. I would like to thank Linda Kuk for the idea for this project.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF TABLES</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Chapter

1. **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

   - Statement of the Problem
   - Purposes of the Study
   - Assumptions
   - Research Questions
   - Significance of the Study
   - Definition of Terms
   - Delimitation
   - Organization of the Study

2. **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

   - Introduction
   - Conceptual Theories
   - Studies Conducted in Noneducational Settings
   - Studies Conducted in College and University Settings
   - Summary

3. **PROCEDURES USED FOR COLLECTION OF THE DATA**

   - Introduction
   - Research Design
   - Instrument
   - Demographic Items
   - Field Test of the Instrument
   - The Population
   - Selection of the Sample
   - Time Frame
   - Response Rate
   - Procedures for the Analysis of the Data

4. **FINDINGS**

   - Introduction
   - Description of the Sample
   - Student Activities Mid-Managers Career Goals
   - Perceptions of Attaining Career Goals
4. FINDINGS (continued) 47

Aspiration and Attainment According to Gender
Profiles of Student Activities
    Mid-Managers with Aspirations and Perceptions of Attainment
Institutional Support for Professional Development
Summary of Major Conclusions

5. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 75

Summary
Summary of Major Conclusions
Discussion
Recommendations

APPENDIX 87

BIBLIOGRAPHY 98
LIST OF TABLES

Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Profile of Student Activities Mid-Managers.</td>
<td>49-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cross-Tabulation of Student Activities</td>
<td>52-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Managers' Characteristics by Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student Activities Mid-Managers' Career Aspirations</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perceptions of Student Activities Mid-Managers Toward Attaining Career Goals</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Perceptions of Aspirations and Attainability</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toward Administrative Levels by Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Activities Mid-Managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Perceptions of Aspirations and Attainability</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toward Administrative Levels by Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Activities Mid-Managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Comparisons of Aspirations of Student Activities Mid-Managers by Gender</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Comparisons of Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Attaining Positions by Gender</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Student Activities Mid-Managers' Desire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Stay or Leave the Field of Student Affairs</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Cross-Tabulation of Sample by Gender</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to Staying/Leaving Student Affairs Field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Institutions' Support for Professional Growth</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Comparisons of Men and Women Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Institutions' Support for Professional Growth</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Results of Test for Significance between Men and Women Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Institutions' Support for Professional Growth</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A dream of most professionals is their advancement up the career ladder. Advancement is important to professionals because it means success, power, and greater financial reward (Hall, 1976; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee, 1978). The desire to advance was described by Lawing, Moore, and Groseth (1982) as "one of the most sought after American dreams, . . . getting to the top of the career ladder" (p. 22). Arnold Tannenbaum (cited in Kanter 1977) stated that "Hierarchy, in American plants at least, represents to many organization members the path of achievement; movement along the hierarchy implies personal success or failure" (p. 133). Job mobility, especially upward mobility, is important to the professional. Miner and Estler (1985) defined mobility as the movement of a person "from one predefined job to another. The upwardly mobile individual masters responsibilities of his/her current position and moves on to a position with greater responsibility" (p. 123). Janasiewicz and Wright (1993) stated that the interaction between and among the professional, the job market structure, and those in power positions influence career mobility.
Kanter (1977) and Rosenbaum (1979a) explained that, in the corporate culture, any change of status—a promotion, demotion, transfer, or discharge—is a significant event in the organization. Rosenbaum (1979b) pointed out that an organization's promotion and status changing powers are one of the most effective control systems it possesses. An organization exercises this control through the structure it develops. Included in the structure are career tracks and career paths, and employees are given opportunities to move up or across these tracks based upon decisions made by leaders of the organization.

Organizations, through the personnel decision making process, make these career ladders/paths a formal part of the structure. Individuals are promoted from one level to the next, or from one track to another, based upon evaluations of their performance. Twombly (1986) used the term internal labor markets to describe this process, and indicated that the collegiate administrative career is an "occupational internal labor market" (p. 16). An occupational internal labor market is made up of individuals of one or a number of closely related professions who are not connected to one organization (p. 16).

On an individual basis, the opportunities that exist for an individual to achieve higher status within an organization are motivating factors. Halaby and Sobel
(1979) noted that, "for most adults, advancing a career by moving up the hierarchy of the workplace is a more tangible and proximate experience and of greater motivation and significance than crossing class boundaries" (p. 386). As professionals achieve higher status within an organization, their commitment to the organization grows stronger.

As a profession, student affairs offers opportunities for individuals to advance. As noted by Benke and Disque (1990), student affairs mid-managers expect to advance their careers (p. 34). Theoretically, professionals in the field of student affairs can obtain entry level positions and, over the course of their careers can advance up the career ladder through the mid-management level to the position of chief student affairs officer. According to Levinson et al. (1978), for every person who attains a top level administrative position, there are at least 20 who advance no further than the mid-management level. Therefore, a majority of professionals are unable to realize their professional goals. What then becomes of the professionals who can advance no further than the mid-manager position? How do these professionals deal with the reality that they can not move any higher within their organization or profession? Kanter (1977), Levinson et al. (1978), Kraus (1983) and Carpenter (1990a) raised the issue of mid-
managers who feel "stuck." Stuck is defined as the state professionals reach when they desire to move up the organizational career ladder but see little or no opportunity to do so (Kanter, 1977).

Milstein (1988) used the term plateauing as another way of defining stuck. Career plateaus exist in organizations that Milstein identified as defender organizations. Defender organizations are mature and established, and seek little growth or change. As a contrast to defender organizations, Milstein also identified analyzer organizations, which are growth oriented and seek change. Milstein asserted that educational organizations behave as defender organizations. It is in this defender environment that professionals feel plateaued or perceive that little upward progress is possible.

Identifying the role and responsibilities of mid-managers is important in understanding the scope of this study. Scott (1978) succinctly stated the purposes of mid-managers. They serve as a bridge between the institution and the community, utilize resources according to the expectations of the institution, and work with students to help them become connected to the institution.

How do student activities mid-managers deal with their expectations or aspirations when opportunities are not abundant? To what level do the mid-managers expect to
advance? What support do the mid-managers receive to move up the ladder? These questions are addressed in this study.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study concerned the perceptions of student activities mid-managers regarding their opportunities for career advancement in higher education administration and student affairs.

Purposes of the Study

The specific purposes of this study were: (a) to identify student activities mid-managers' perceptions of and attitudes toward their career growth, (b) to develop a profile of student activities mid-managers who perceived their upward or lateral mobility as limited, (c) to develop a profile of student activities mid-managers who perceived their upward or lateral mobility as unlimited, (d) to determine the career goals of student activities mid-managers, and (e) to determine if their perceptions of career opportunities differed according to gender.

Assumptions

According to Kuk (1981), student affairs professionals serve in a different capacity, perform different functions and have different roles than professionals in academic, business, and development administration. Student affairs administrators serve in a number of capacities including
manager, administrator, and counselor. In comparison to other types of administrative workers in higher education, student affairs professionals may perceive their opportunities for advancement differently.

For this study, it was assumed that individuals employed as student activities mid-managers chose the profession as a career path, not just as a job. It was also assumed that student activities mid-managers view themselves as professionals who possess the credentials and the qualifications for the positions they hold.

Finally, it was assumed that student activities mid-managers desire opportunities for greater responsibility. Although the setting in which they seek greater responsibility may or may not be higher education, it was assumed that they desire to attain higher levels within an organization.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the attitudes of student activities mid-managers toward their upward or lateral mobility in higher education administration and student affairs?

2. What perceptions do student activities mid-managers have toward their upward or lateral career opportunities in higher education administration and student affairs?
3. What differences exist between the perceptions of men and women regarding their upward or lateral mobility?

4. What are student activities mid-managers' career goals?

5. What are student activities mid-managers' perceptions of institutional support for professional development?

Based upon the above research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated for this study.

Hypothesis 1—Student Activities mid-managers do not aspire to top level administrative positions.

Hypothesis 2—For student activities mid-managers who aspire to top level positions, there will be no significant difference between men and women's career aspirations and their perceptions of attaining upper-level positions.

Hypothesis 3—There will be no significant difference between men's perceptions of institutional support for career growth and women's perceptions of institutional support for career growth.

Significance of the Study

A comprehensive national study of mid-manager career aspirations and perceptions of career opportunity in higher education has not been undertaken in the past decade. During this time, many changes in the internal and external environments of higher education have occurred which have
impacted professional opportunities for mid-Managers. This study provides a perspective of the aspirations of student activities mid-Managers and how these individuals view their chances of attaining their career aspirations. In addition to the assessment of mid-Managers' career goals and their perceptions of the attainment of their goals, mid-Manager commitment to the student affairs profession is determined. Because the sample was randomly selected, the findings for aspirations, perceptions of career opportunities, and commitment to the student affairs profession may be generalized to the population of student activities mid-Managers from which the sample was drawn.

The mid-Managers' perceptions of their institutions' support for professional growth and development was identified. Kanter (1977) found that organizational environment can have an effect on employees' desire for advancement. This study provides a base for further investigations to determine if the overall climate in higher education is meeting the needs of professionals with respect to their professional growth.

The findings of this study also provide data for analysis of, and rationale for, potential actions to address higher education's lack of career ladders and paths, especially in the administrative area. Numerous authors (Carpenter, 1990a; Miner & Estler, 1985; Scott, 1978) have
identified the lack of career paths in all areas of higher education administration except in academic administration. According to Moore, Salimbene, Marlier and Bragg (1983), higher education administrators rise to the top as a result of a natural selection process, rather than through a structured organized process in the corporate sector that grooms potential administrators through a series of positions held at various levels of the institution.

The findings about career aspirations, perceptions of career opportunities, and organizational climate with respect to career development can provide useful information to professional associations, graduate preparation programs, and human resource professionals in higher education. These individuals and agencies can initiate studies on the potential for change in the structure of higher education, the structure and organizational location of positions, and how professionals define success so that, "as chief student affairs officers observe their staffs, they are faced with two challenges: (a) broadening the definition of professional success to allow for those who do not wish to become deans; and (b) helping those who do wish to become a dean" (Lawing et al., 1982, p. 22).

Definition of Terms

For purposes of this study, the following terms have specific definitions.
A student activities mid-manager is a student affairs professional who reports to a chief student affairs officer or an assistant who reports to a chief student affairs officer and is responsible for the direction, control, and supervision of a student affairs function that includes any or all of the following: campus-wide programming, leadership training, Greek Life, advising student government, advising student organizations, orientation, and union management. The mid-manager can be responsible for staff and/or the management of a student affairs functional area (Young, 1990).

A chief student affairs officer is a vice president of student affairs or a dean of students who serves as an institution's top student affairs administrator usually, reporting to the president or chief executive officer of the institution.

Opportunity is a student activities professional's expectation for professional advancement in the institution or profession.

Aspiration is the desire that student activities professionals possess for advancement.

Delimitation

The fact that this study is based on the responses of randomly selected student activities mid-managers rather
than the population of all such individuals is a
delimitation of this study.

Organization of the Study

The statement of the problem, purposes of the study, research questions to be answered by the study, and significance of the study are presented in this introductory chapter. A selected review of the literature about career mobility, career paths, and career ladders in the business and corporate setting and in higher education are provided in Chapter 2. The literature review documents the fact that little research has been conducted on higher education mid-managers' career aspirations and perceptions of career opportunities. The methodology used to conduct the study is discussed in Chapter 3. Among the methods presented are the components of the survey instrument used, information about the population and the procedures used to select the random sample, the time frame that was followed, the provisions for insuring an adequate response rate, and the procedures used for analyses of the data.

The findings of the data analyses used to meet the purposes of the study are presented in Chapter 4. Data are presented in tabular and narrative form. A summary and discussion of the findings, conclusions which were reached as a result of the study, and recommendations for future research are provided in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature on student affairs mid-managers is limited. As noted by Walter (1992) and Moore and Sagaria (1982) the research conducted on student affairs professionals has been done on either chief student affairs officers or entry level professionals. Studies conducted on the careers of chief student affairs officers provide data which have been extrapolated to apply to student affairs mid-managers. Investigations on student affairs entry level professionals have been focused on the professionals' level of satisfaction with their preparation programs and persistence in the profession but have not addressed mid-management issues.

Also included are reports on career tracks in higher education and the structure of higher education. Although these articles are tangential to the focus of this study, they provide a perspective on mid-managers' perceptions of mobility in higher education, which is the subject of this project.

Studies conducted in settings outside of higher education are included in this review. Although Kanter's
(1977) INDESCO study is most relevant to this study, others are included because, again, they cover mobility and mid-managers, the focus of this paper.

Conceptual Theories

Kanter (1977), who studied the relationship of the structure of opportunity, power, and relative numbers of specific groups in organizations on the human behavior of a multi-national corporation, looked at the effects of these variables on women and minority employees. Although her model was developed from research within an industrial setting, it is readily applicable to the higher education administrative setting. Kanter defined opportunity as the expectations and future prospects for growth and mobility within a particular organization or profession. This definition includes more than just promotion or advancement, it involves skill, pay, challenge, and increased influence. When these items are viewed within the structure of a hierarchical organization, of which higher education is a model, it is difficult for professionals to have a sense of growth, challenge, more pay, influence, and mobility without somehow continuing to climb the organizational or professional ladder.

The presence or lack of opportunity impacts employees' behavior and attitudes. Those who see little opportunity for advancement tend to limit their aspirations. Kanter (1977) describes these individuals as "stuck." Those who
are stuck possess minimal commitment to the organization and minimal aspirations for advancement opportunities (Austin & Gamson, 1983, p. 24). According to Austin and Gamson, individuals who believe they are stuck act in ways that confirm the organization's lack of attention toward them and continue to reinforce their ineligibility for career growth through their behavior. Kanter (1981) explained that those who are "movers" will behave in ways that match the organization's expectations of movers. Consequently, movers will develop higher aspirations. According to Austin and Gamson, movers are more satisfied professionally and personally and take an active interest in their own development (p. 24).

Rosenbaum's (1979a) Tournament Model of Upward Mobility indicates that any change in the status of an employee within an organization—a promotion, transfer, demotion or discharge—is an important event in the organization and for the individual with respect to her or his career. According to the model, those who achieve upper level administrative positions have won the "tournament" and are considered the fittest. The tournament starts with employees' initial evaluations which, if positive, have an impact on the employees' future prospects for promotions. The contest continues as the employees progress up the chart. Each positive assessment enhances the individuals' opportunity for future promotion. As stated by Rosenbaum, a "Social
Darwinistic environment exists in the organization because only the fittest survive. This model suggests that those that aspire and realize their aspirations have succeeded because they have won the contest.

The model provides a different perspective for those who lose the contest. Those who do not obtain promotions or positive evaluations early in their careers find that opportunities for advancement do not come as easily as they do for winners. Those who aspire and fall short of their aspirations have lost. They have to live with the label of loser which carries with it many negative connotations that, if internalized by the individual, can affect their motivation and commitment.

Studies Conducted in Noneducational Settings

Kanter's (1977) study of INDESCO (a name given by Kanter to a multi-national corporation to protect the identity of the corporation) covered a broad range of topics. The topic relevant to this project was earlier in this section. Kanter found that overall, men were more likely than women to have been with INDESCO for less than 5 years, and were more than twice as likely (men, 57%; women 20%) to have held supervisory positions. In addition, when comparing reports of men and women employees on their perceptions of the institution's support for professional growth, and, ultimately, advancement, there was a significant difference between the scores of men and women.
Furthermore, Kanter conducted a comparison between the desirability versus the likelihood of promotion for women and concluded that women sought greater responsibilities but did not believe that they would attain them.

Rosenbaum (1984) conducted a longitudinal study of mobility in a private corporation. The personnel records of all employees who entered the organization between 1960 and 1962 and remained until 1975 were studied to determine if relationships existed between the Tournament Theory of Mobility and patterns of promotions of groups of employees. Rosenbaum found that individuals who were promoted early in their careers were more likely to attain management positions than were those who were not promoted early in their careers. Furthermore, Rosenbaum found that individuals who were promoted early in their careers found higher career ceilings than did those who were not.

Halaby and Sobel (1979) found that mobile managers were less committed to the organization and more committed to looking for opportunities, either within the organization or outside the organization. They also found that, when compared to those who stayed in the organization, mobile managers were more cynical. Finally, the authors found that getting ahead depended largely on individual performance attributes, ability and quality of work. The results of Halaby and Sobel's study are contrary to the results of Kanter's (1977) research. One reason for this difference is
that Kanter looked at all classes of employees in INDESCO while Halaby and Sobel studied only managers.

Dalton and Thompson (1986) conducted an extensive study of careers and mobility in a number of professional fields. One area they discussed was specialization. They concluded that there were two career tracks in organizations, technical/specialists and administrative/generalists. They found that specialists' upward mobility was limited because of the narrow focus of their responsibilities and because they did not want to be promoted out of their technical positions. On the other hand, they found that generalists possessed a broad perspective and sought managerial responsibilities. Hence, the generalists were promoted more often than the specialists.

DiPrete (1987) identified internal labor markets, a system that exists in corporate and governmental bureaucratic organizations, as influencing the upward mobility of staff. According to DiPrete, an internal labor market is a system of filling positions by hiring individuals from within the organization who are one level below the position to be filled. This system implies a career path that begins at the lowest level of the organization and gradually moves upward through the organization. DiPrete stated that some paths terminate at low level grades while others offer better access to top level positions. The findings of his study indicated that
"white collar job ladders typically have ceilings that are lower than the highest grade found in the organization" (p. 427). Thus, these ceilings caused certain positions at the end of a career path to be seen as dead end jobs that limited further movement.

Gattiker and Larwood (1987) surveyed individuals at 14 major corporations who were identified by their respective personnel directors as talented and promotable. The authors looked at career success, career mobility, and career satisfaction. Their results indicate that demographics are the best predictor for career success and mobility.

Mainiero (1990) also stated that professionals' mobility is affected by specialization. Individuals can get stuck because of their expertise, whether it be administrative or technical. A professional who is perceived and evaluated as an administrative manager is given unlimited opportunity by an organization. Administrative responsibilities give managers a broad range of experiences that eventually aid them in achieving top level administrative positions. On the other hand, managers who specialize and work in a technical area can end up as stuck or plateaued. Mainiero concluded that organizations treat technical experts differently than generalists.
Studies Conducted in College and University Settings

Research conducted on mid-managers in higher education is limited. Therefore, the literature reviewed in this section covers a number of areas. Investigations of the career paths of chief student affairs officers and senior level administrators, namely institutional presidents and chief academic affairs officers are included. Studies of higher education mid-managers that include admissions directors career paths and future aspirations are covered. A study to assess institutional support for the development of professional staff is reviewed. Studies on the satisfaction and persistence of graduates of student personnel preparation programs are covered. Perspectives on the structure of higher education as it relates to the careers of professional staff are included. Finally, the dissertation upon which this study is based is reviewed.

Career Paths of Chief Student Affairs Officers

Studies conducted on the career paths of chief student affairs officers have led to the conclusion that no clear path or track exists for student affairs professionals to follow in order to reach the top of the student affairs administrative level. A few studies have also prompted the conclusion that more chief student affairs officers are choosing to stay in their positions for a longer time, thus
limiting opportunities for those aspiring to become senior level student affairs administrators.

Harder (1983), who sent 741 surveys to members of the Southern Association of College Student Affairs, received responses from 354 (52%). Based upon the results of her study, Harder concluded that young professionals aspiring to be chief student affairs officers must obtain a terminal degree, preferably in higher education or educational administration. Harder further stated that upward mobility is predicated upon movement between institutions of higher education rather than within colleges and universities. She also found that no clear path existed to the top student affairs administrative level, although experience in general student services administration or as a director of a student affairs functional area enhanced the professionals' chances of achieving the position of chief student affairs officer. Harder concluded that opportunities to attain the top level of student affairs administration were minimal because the chief student affairs officers surveyed intended to remain in their present position until retirement. A majority of the respondents in Harder's study were in their late 40s and early 50s.

Kuh, Evans, and Duke (1983) surveyed chief student affairs officers from 280 institutions in six states in the upper midwest. A response rate of 75% (N = 212) yielded data that indicated that chief student affairs officers,
regardless of the size of the institution at which they were employed, came from many different backgrounds, within and outside student affairs. The results of their study indicate that some larger institutions employ chief student affairs officers who have little or no background in student affairs.

Lunsford (1984) sent surveys to 218 chief student affairs officers at institutions that enrolled at least 2,000 students, and held membership in a national student affairs administrator organization. Of the 218 instruments sent, 147 (67%) were returned. Lunsford found that mobility was enhanced when professionals moved between institutions versus moving up within an institution. Although Lunsford indicated that experience in a student affairs functional area was necessary for advancement, no one student affairs area was identified. Lunsford concluded that a terminal degree in higher education administration or student personnel is a necessity for advancement to a top student affairs administrative position.

Ostroth, Efird, and Lerman (1984) sent surveys to 400 chief student affairs administrators at 4 year institutions randomly selected from the Education Directory, Colleges and Universities. A total of 335 instruments were returned. Analysis of the returned surveys indicated that no clear career path exists to the top student affairs administrator position. The authors found that chief student affairs
administrators planned to stay in their present positions longer than their predecessors which would affect the availability of these positions for younger student affairs professionals.

Rickard (1985) sent surveys to 313 chief student affairs officers at institutions identified in the Education Directory, Colleges and Universities. His study, which yielded a 52% return rate, revealed that chief student affairs officers attained the top position from a wide variety of mid-manager positions in student service areas. In addition, Rickard found that women took different paths to the chief student affairs officer position than did men. Over 50% of the men in the study held the dean of students or department director position prior to becoming a chief student affairs officer. Only 31% of the women in the study came from the assistant or associate dean of students position, director, assistant or associate director position, or coordinator position.

These studies are beneficial because they indicate that the top of the student affairs career ladder is open to any professional who possesses the experience and the education necessary for that position. At the same time, the studies confirm that a career track is not in place in student affairs. However, the application of these studies to mid-manager positions is limited. The studies reviewed have sought information from chief student affairs officers, who
are a limited and focused population. Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee's (1978) theory is that for every professional who achieves the chief student affairs officer position, there are at least 20 student affairs mid-managers who do not achieve this goal. Thus, these studies provide the perspectives of individuals who have already reached the top of the student affairs career ladder. They do not address the perceptions or aspirations of professionals as they relate to reaching the top of the career ladder, the purpose of this study. In addition, the data from these studies are presented in frequencies and percentages and do not test for differences according to subgroups within the population.

**Research on Aspirations of Higher Education Mid-Managers**

Sherburne (1970) found that upward mobility rates for student affairs professionals decreased as the professional reached a higher level position. Grant and Foy (1972), who studied the career patterns of mid-managers in student affairs work, found that 15% of the mid-managers surveyed expected to be promoted in their next move, 4% expected demotions, and 22% expected to make lateral moves. Solomon and Tierney (1977) found that the respondents in their sample were generally less satisfied with vertical and lateral transfer aspects of their jobs, especially those in mid-manager positions.
Moore and Burns (1983) surveyed entry level and middle managers with regard to their career paths and future career aspirations. The results of their research suggest that early in a student affairs professional's career, promotions are sought because of the opportunities that an upgrade provides. However, they found that, by the time an individual reached his or her fourth position, which was usually a mid-level management position, the desire for advancement was secondary. Instead, professionals at this level sought the salary and prestige associated with the mid-management position.

Chapman and Urbach (1984) surveyed 3,110 admissions directors at institutions of higher education in the United States. The response rate for their study was 1,065 (42%). Chapman and Urbach, who sought information on career patterns and the future plans and ambitions of the respondents, found that 50% of the respondents saw an opportunity for advancement. They also found that 67% of admissions directors anticipated leaving their present position within the next 10 years. Of these respondents, 60% expected to make a lateral move to another area within their institution, and 20% expected to look for employment outside of education. Chapman and Urbach concluded that many of the respondents saw their present positions as a dead end with little room for upward advancement.
Chapman and Benati (1986) surveyed the directors of admissions from all accredited colleges and universities in the United States to determine their future career plans, level of satisfaction with their present positions, career entry positions, and salary information. Of the 3,035 directors who received the survey, 1,214 responded (40%). The results of the survey indicated that almost 60% of the respondents expected to leave their present position within the next 10 years and move into another position at the same institution. Only 25% of the respondents who expected to move into a new position in the next 10 years perceived that they could advance upward. Almost 60% saw little opportunity for advancement. Also, Chapman and Benati concluded that at least 33% of the respondents anticipated leaving higher education in their next move.

Bogenschutz and Sagaria (1988), who conducted a qualitative study of a sample of 40 mid-level administrators at one institution, found that the mid-level administrators possessed a variety of career aspirations that ranged from staying at their present institution for the next 1 to 5 years to staying for an indefinite amount of time. Most of the respondents in the study placed greater value on the organization, institutional mission, or goals, than on seeking promotions. Almost 30% of the participants expected to stay in higher education, and 33% planned to leave higher education on their next move.
Only studies involving admissions directors address student affairs mid-manager mobility from a functional basis. The studies reviewed provide data in percentages and frequencies. The data are not compared with subgroups within the population, and respondents' aspirations are not compared with their perceptions of attainment. In addition, the conclusions from the admissions directors studies are not generalizable because of the low rates of return on the survey instruments. The early studies on student affairs professionals also report frequencies and percentage data. The conclusions derived from the qualitative analysis of mid-managers in one institution, while useful, are not generalizable because the sample was not randomly selected from the population.

Career Paths of Chief Administrative Officers and Presidents

Moore and Sagaria (1982) conducted a study of the job change patterns of academic administrators of 80 4-year colleges and universities in Pennsylvania. They concluded that persons in line positions—dean, director—were more likely to have upward opportunities than those in staff positions—associate dean, assistant to the dean, assistant to the vice president.

In a study that looked at career paths of a national sample of presidents Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, and Bragg (1983) found that the institutional chief executive officers
had followed 15 different career paths in reaching the top. Moore et al. hypothesized that presidents started as faculty members and proceeded through the positions of department chair, dean, provost, and ultimately, president. Moore et al. found that only 3% of the sample (N = 156) actually followed this path. The most common route was from faculty member to an administrative position other than dean or provost and then to president.

Anthony (1986) pointed out that, in order for an individual to realize the presidency of a community college, he or she must have the terminal degree and professional experience. In addition, an individual must possess the appropriate social skills and the ability to discern regional differences in values and social mores.

Twombly (1986), who studied the career histories of top level administrators, found that their career paths were not ordered or rigid. She also found that chief student affairs officers at 2-year institutions were more likely to have been in the 2-year environment than in the 4-year environment or outside of higher education.

In another study, Twombly (1988) found that the career paths of chief executive officers and chief academic officers at 2-year institutions were more structured than those of the chief business officer and chief student affairs officer. In addition, she found that entry positions for the president and vice president for academic
affairs were related. The vice president for student affairs and vice president for business affairs were found to be ceiling positions; individuals attaining these positions rarely moved on to the presidency.

Waiver, Brazzell, Allen, Bostwick and Marlin (1988) surveyed college and university administrators at the dean's position and above. They found that less than half of the respondents whose highest degrees were in education were employed in academic administration (those with degrees in education were in non-academic administration), and that faculty experience was an important component for those who sought and eventually gained academic and chief executive officer positions.

The studies reviewed in this section indicate that, despite the structure of higher education, career paths do exist in the academic division. This conclusion is vastly different than the conclusion about career paths in student affairs. The results of the investigations described are presented in frequencies and percentages with no test for difference between sub-groups within the sample. Also, the sample of the Moore (1983) study was drawn from a state system of public higher education in one state. The results of this study are not generalizable to the population.

Satisfaction/Leaving Student Affairs

Evans (1988) conducted a review of literature on the topic of professionals leaving the field of student affairs.
One of the conclusions reached in her review was that professionals were leaving the field because of limited mobility, upward or lateral, and because of a lack of clearly defined career paths in higher education. Review of this type of research merits attention because the research, in one way or another, examined individuals' satisfaction and persistence in terms of opportunities for advancement in higher education.

In looking at the job satisfaction and careers of mid-managers, Bess and Lodahl (1969) surveyed 204 administrators in 17 institutions. The results of their study indicated that respondents were least satisfied with the institutional support for professional growth, which the authors identified as what the institution does to develop employees for promotions to higher level positions.

Burns (1982) conducted an investigation of professionals who were leaving the student affairs field and why they were doing so. Samples were drawn from a pool of graduates of student personnel preparation programs at two institutions. A total of 372 surveys were sent to the graduates; 50% were returned. Of the graduates responding, 71 had left the student affairs field. Of this number, 19% had left because of the potential for advancement outside of higher education and a perceived lack of advancement opportunities in higher education.
Bender (1980) surveyed 200 professional members of a National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Region on the East Coast. One hundred forty-five of the 200 members responded. Bender found that almost 50% of those who were between 23 and 36 years of age and women respondents were dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities for advancement within their organizations. Bender indicated that these respondents were looking at employment opportunities outside of higher education as a result of the perceived lack of opportunity within higher education.

Holmes, Verrier, and Chisholm (1983) studied the persistence in student affairs work of 170 graduates between 1971 and 1981 of a master's program in student personnel administration. The authors concluded that one of the reasons professionals leave student affairs work is the low rate of advancement in the institutional hierarchy. They found that women tended to leave the profession at a faster rate than men, were more undecided about their future in the profession, and reported less often that a mentor had influenced their career. By the 5th year out of graduate school, 42% of the women responding had stayed in the profession. Although 65% of the men responded that they had been influenced by a mentor in their careers, only 56% of the women responded in the same.

The studies reviewed indicate that those who leave the profession do so because they perceive that little or no
upward mobility opportunities exist. Data from the studies were presented as percentages and frequencies with no statistical manipulation. One study included information on the percentages of women versus men leaving the field, but did not include a test for significance. Although these studies provide information that serves as foundation for further research, they do not provide conclusions that can be generalizable because the samples are not representative of the population.

Institutional Support for Development

After concluding that career and advancement paths were not clearly defined in higher education, Harvey and Stiff (1985) studied how 10 large state universities structured advancement opportunities for professional staff. They found that 4 of the 10 institutions did not provide employees with a clear statement of advancement or promotion paths and that the remaining 6 had some advancement structure in place which was tied to the wage and salary schedules of the institution. In addition, they found that 4 of the institutions did not offer formal training to the professional staff. The remaining 6 offered manager training or general employment training.

Kanter (1977) and Kuk (1981) stated that the institutional environment impacts an individual's aspirations. Results of the study by Harvey and Stiff (1985) support this assertion. The study was based on self-
reported information and did not include tests for significance. In addition, the sample was not representative of the population because it was not randomly selected.

**Structure of Higher Education**

Twombly (1986) noted that, in theory, a career path or ladder exists because a department head reports to a chief administrative officer at a college or university. However, Twombly asserts that, in reality, there are unclear, nebulous career structures in higher education. As stated by Holmes (1982), the prediction of a true career path is difficult for a student affairs professional because there are, in some cases, short career ladders and, in other cases, no clear career paths for higher education administrators to follow.

The structure of higher education institutions has been identified as an impediment to upward mobility of professional staff. Numerous researchers have defined the organizational structures of colleges and universities and correlated these designs with lack of opportunity or mobility. According to Kanter (1977), the structure of business and industrial organizations is more conducive to upward mobility; careers and career ladders are structured to help individuals move to the top.

Colleges and universities are structured and operate in a manner that is significantly different than the corporate

Miner and Estler (1985) and Twombly (1990) defined the collegiate structure as "flat," which does not permit upward movement nor does it allow for the development of career ladders. Carpenter (1990a) used the phrase "bottleneck at the top" to describe the collegiate organizational chart. Kraus (1983), Evans (1988), Benke and Disque (1990) and Carpenter (1990b) have also compared the structure of academe to a pyramid.

The consequences of this type of structure have resulted in no clear cut, or poorly defined career paths (Benke & Disque, 1990; Brown 1987; Bogenschutz & Sagaria, 1988; Ost & Twale, 1988; Scott, 1978; Twombly 1990). Unlike the corporate sector, an individual entering higher education as a professional does not have his or her career structured. As Chapman and Benati (1986) state, most theorists of career mobility assume that individuals move within a system of predefined fixed positions. The application of this model is limited. Career paths available to non academic professional staff are often not clear to the employee or to the
institutional administrator seeking a more efficient management of personnel. (p. 3)

As stated by Kanter (1981) the practice in higher education is to rely on intrinsic rewards versus opportunities for upward mobility for professionals in higher education.

The flat, pyramidal shape of the structure of higher education also contributes to the lack of upward mobility because of the limited number of senior level positions at the top. When one considers that there are over 3,200 institutions of higher education in the United States, the structure and limited number of institutions make the odds of one attaining an upper level position high (Carpenter, 1990a, Scott, 1978). As a result of this flat, pyramidal structure and the poorly defined career paths within this structure, mid-managers can only advance to a certain point and then reach a dead end (Kraus, 1983).

Specialization

Higher education mid-managers are specialists. This specialization is another function of the structure of colleges and universities. Placement in one of the divisions of an institution of higher education can impede an individual's ability to transfer laterally as would be expected in the corporate sector (Benke & Disque, 1990; Carpenter, 1990a; Kraus, 1983; Scott, 1978). Kraus (1983) pointed out that each division in higher education has a progression to a point and then results in a dead end.
Student affairs professionals are specialists. Mid-managers in student affairs are responsible for a specific function within the institution, such as financial aid, counseling, or student activities. Twombly (1990) noted that, because of the specialist perspective, there are multiple career paths within student affairs. As specialists, student affairs professionals miss opportunities to gain a broad perspective, which can have an impact on their promotion opportunities (Benke & Disque, 1990).

According to Twombly (1990), the structure of higher education is built upon its academic responsibilities. The remaining areas of the institutional structure--student affairs, administrative, and financial--are responsible for supporting the teaching, research and service aspects of the academic area. Twombly pointed out that these administrative areas each have separate career paths. The institutional chief executive officer is more likely a product of the academic career system than of the other administrative areas.

**Kuk's Study of Women Student Affairs Professionals**

In a study similar to this present project, Kuk (1981) studies women student affairs administrators and their career aspirations and perceptions of opportunity. She surveyed women student affairs administrators employed
within higher education and who hold membership in one of three national student personnel organizations. Kuk's sample included 450 women administrators; 300 responded. Kuk sought answers to the following questions: Do women student affairs administrators aspire to higher level administrative positions within a university organization? Is there a relationship between women student affairs administrators' aspirations and their perceptions of the external work environment? Is there a relationship between women student affairs administrators' aspirations and their perceptions of work needs?

Kuk (1981) found that women do aspire to high level positions in higher education, and that most desire a mid-manager position in student affairs. A majority sought to move to the vice president for student affairs level. While the respondents possessed aspiration for upward mobility, results of the study indicate that the women student affairs administrators perceived these positions as not attainable. Kuk also found that more than half of the women responding had given thought to leaving the field of higher education on their next move. The results of Kuk's survey indicate that, with regard to work environment, organizational support for professional development, which ultimately leads to advancement, is weak.
Summary

Research on the career paths of chief student affairs officers indicates that they are not chosen from any particular student affairs functional area. In fact, some of research has shown that chief student affairs officers, in some cases, come from outside of the student affairs profession. This suggests that those who desire a top level administrative position can achieve it if they possess the relevant experience and the appropriate education. (In some studies, a number of the chief student affairs officers possessed only a master's degree.) The literature also indicates that chief student affairs officers expect to stay in their present positions for a long period of time. As a result student affairs professionals who possess the relevant experience and appropriate education to reach the top student affairs administrative level, may find their goal harder to attain because of the longevity of the incumbents.

Numerous researchers have commented on the structure of higher education institutions and how this structure limits upward and lateral mobility for administrators. The organizational structure of higher education has been described as flat and as a pyramid. Related to, and perhaps because of its structure, higher education lacks clear, definitive career paths or ladders. The structure of higher education also limits upward and lateral mobility because of
the specialization factor. This factor, when applied to the student affairs field, is easily understood. A financial aid officer, trained to interpret federal, state, and institutional policies and laws with regard to the awarding of financial support, is a specialized individual and therefore, would have a hard time moving into career planning, counseling, housing, or other areas of student affairs. The same applies to an activities officer. The transition could be made, but not without a significant amount of training, time, and expense.

In any profession, there are individuals who make a commitment to the profession at some point in their lives. The literature shows that this commitment is based upon intrinsic and ideal rewards such as service and dedication to an institution's mission and goals. Individuals who have not persisted in their fields, especially in student affairs, have indicated that their leaving the field was based upon a perceived lack of upward mobility.

From a functional perspective, admissions directors are the only professional field that has been studied in terms of their career paths and eventual career goals. These studies indicate that admissions directors see little opportunity for upward mobility and either expect to leave higher education or to make lateral moves within higher education, perhaps outside of admissions work.
In reviewing the literature, it was noted that many of the studies of career paths or ladders in higher education administration involved college presidents. In the field of student affairs, a significant amount of research was found on chief student affairs officers and on entry level positions. Although the information gained from these studies has been used to make inferences about the mid-manager positions, very little research has involved mid-managers.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Introduction

The design selected to determine student activities mid-managers' career aspirations and perceptions of career opportunities was the single cross section design. According to Warwick and Lininger (1975), "this design involves collection of information at a single point in time from a fraction of the population selected to represent the total" (p. 57). Single cross section studies produce results which can describe the population with some confidence. As indicated by Warwick and Lininger (1975), the major limitation of this design is the lack of independent measures at different points in time.

Four hundred fifty-five randomly selected directors or coordinators of student activities at institutions of higher education holding membership in the National Association for Campus Activities received a questionnaire (Appendix) designed to measure their career aspirations, perceptions of attaining their career goals, and perceptions of institutional support for professional development. Kuk (1981) developed an instrument to assess women student affairs professionals' perspectives on these topics. Kuk's instrument was modified for use in this study and, after a
field test, was sent to the sample. Responses postmarked after June 19, 1992, were not used in the data analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences-X software program was used to analyze the 296 usable responses returned. Specific information about the research design, instrument, population, selection of the sample, and procedures for data analysis is provided in this chapter.

Research Design

Data were collected by mail survey (Appendix) from a sample selected to represent the total population. The survey method was used because of the limited amount of literature available on the topic. The results of the survey describe the population at a certain time. These data can provide a baseline for the population which can be used for future comparisons.

The research study outline was submitted for approval to the University of North Texas Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research. A letter from the chair of the Review Board was received indicating that the project had been reviewed and approved.

Instrument

The instrument (Appendix) used to gather the data for this study was adapted from a section of the Student Affairs Work Climate Survey, developed by Kuk (1981). The first section of Kuk's instrument was modified for this project.
The first 11 statements requested demographic information including marital status, age, educational background, ethnic background, as well as information regarding present position, career experience in student affairs and size and type of present employing institution. Questions 12 through 15 asked respondents to rate, using a five-point scale, the degree to which they desired and believed they would attain each of the five position levels within an institution of higher education, including: president, vice president of student affairs, vice president in another area in the institution, dean of students, or director of a department in an area other than student affairs. Statement 13 requested information on the reasons the respondents rated positions in statement 12 as desirable and very desirable. Statement 15 requested information on the reasons the respondents rated positions in statement 14 as not attainable and not very attainable.

Statement 17 included a series of fourteen questions designed to gather information regarding the respondents' perceptions of their institutions' support for their professional growth and development. The respondents were asked to rate each question, using a five-point Likert type scale, on the degree to which the item was present in their current institutional environment.
Demographic Items

The demographic data requested supplied information relative to marital status, education, gender, ethnicity, age, title, total number of years as a professional in student affairs, and number of years in present position. Additional demographic data requested included whether the employing institution was public or private, and 2- or 4-year, and how many professional development programs respondents had attended in the past 2 years.

Field Test of the Instrument

The instrument was field tested by sending the instrument and a cover letter (Appendix) to 10 student activities professionals. After careful analysis and review of the feedback provided by the 10 student activities professionals, the instrument was revised. Changes to the instrument included the addition of a question seeking the respondents' present position and a question regarding the number of professional development programs respondents had attended in the past 5 years. Deleted from questions 12 and 14 on the original instrument was the choice "Director of a Student Affairs Department."

The Population

The population consisted of directors of student activities and professionals in comparable positions who were employed at all member institutions of the National
Association for Campus Activities. Based on the membership list obtained from the National Association for Campus Activities, the population included 1,191 members. Elimination of duplications and individuals not holding a director of student activities or equivalent position reduced the population to 910.

Selection of the Sample

Three identical sets of mailing labels were received from the National Association for Campus Activities. The total number of mailing labels per set was 1,191. After duplicate labels and labels addressed to students and associate/assistant directors of student activities or comparable position were eliminated the final population numbered 910. The sample was randomly selected from the final population. Four hundred and fifty five directors and coordinators of student activities or persons in comparable positions constituted the sample.

Time Frame

Four hundred and fifty-five instruments (Appendix), cover letters (Appendix) and stamped, addressed return envelopes were mailed on May 16, 1992, to randomly selected directors and coordinators of student activities. On May 26, 1992, non-respondents were mailed a post card reminder (Appendix). Those who had not responded by June 8, 1992, received another cover letter (Appendix), survey instrument,
and stamped, addressed return envelope. A postmark of June 19, 1992, was used as a final cutoff date for data to be included in the study.

Response Rate

A minimum response rate of 50.1% was sought to insure the use of inferential statistical analyses. To help provide this response rate, the cover letter was written to explain the purpose of the study and to convince the directors and coordinators of student activities that the results of the study would provide useful information concerning the working conditions of student activities mid-managers (Dillman, 1978). Respondents were assured of complete confidentiality as well. Inclusion of an addressed, stamped envelope for ease of return encouraged survey recipients to respond (Warwick & Lininger, 1975). Follow-up waves at 2 and 3 week intervals after the initial mailing consisted of a postcard and another cover letter, instrument, and return envelope, in that order. Three hundred and sixty-seven surveys were returned by the cutoff date. After extensive review of the surveys, 71 surveys were determined to be unusable because they were completed by persons whose position was not director of student activities or an equivalent position. An overall response rate of 65% or 296 usable responses were postmarked by the cutoff date of June 19, 1992.
Procedures for Analysis of the Data

The data were coded and submitted to the State University of New York College at Cortland Computer Center for data entry. The Software Package for the SPSS-X was used for data analyses procedures. The level of significance was set at $p > .05$.

Research questions 1, 2 and 4 were answered by calculating frequencies and percentages. Research questions 3 and 5 were answered by calculating a $t$-test of the differences between the sub group means.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

The national sample (N = 455) surveyed for this study included individuals who were directors or coordinators of student activities or were employed in equivalent positions at 2-and 4-year, public and private institutions of higher education. Three hundred and sixty-seven student activities professionals responded to the survey, 79% of the sample.

Of the 367 responses, 296 (65%) were determined to be usable. Seventy one questionnaires were completed by individuals holding assistant or associate director of student activities positions, which were not the focus of this paper.

Not all responses included complete data. Missing data were treated using the default option of the SPSS-X program and were not coded. Questionnaires with data missing on a variable were not included in the summary statistic for that variable, but were included for other variables where data were provided. By default, t-test procedures delete cases with missing data on an analysis-by-analysis basis. Responses with missing data were not included in frequency tables or percentage figures.
Description of the Sample

Table 1 provides a demographic description of the sample. Table 1 contains information on the gender, marital status, education, age and ethnicity of the subjects. Also, Table 1 contains information on the professional experience of the sample, and information on the institutional make up of the sample.

More than half (55.1%) of the respondents were married, and over one third (36.5%) were single. Slightly more than half (52%) of the respondents were male and 47.3% were female. The respondents ranged in age from 25 through 51 years, with 83% included in the range between 26 and 45 years. A majority of respondents had obtained a master's degree (63.2%), 8.8% had completed post-master's work, and 5.7% had earned a doctorate.

Ethnically, an overwhelming majority (87.8%) of the respondents were caucasian; 6.1% were African-American; 1.7% were native-American; 1% were Asian; and .7% were Hispanic/Latino. Forty seven percent were employed at private, 4-year institutions. Slightly more than one fourth (25.7%) worked at public, 4-year institutions. One fourth were employed at public, 2-year institutions, and 1.7% worked at private, 2-year institutions. Sixty-two percent of the respondents were employed at institutions with enrollments of 3,000 students or less. Twenty six percent of the respondents served at institutions with enrollments
Table 1.
Profile of Student Activities Mid-Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single</td>
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<tr>
<td>Married</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorced/Separated</td>
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<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 or less</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
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<td>36-40</td>
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<td>51 or older</td>
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<td>6.1</td>
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<td>Educational Background</td>
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<td>Ed.D/Ph.D.</td>
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<td>5.7</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>Years in Student Affairs</td>
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<td>0-5</td>
<td>99</td>
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<td>6-10</td>
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<td>16-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 or more</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.4</td>
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Table 1 (continued)

Profile of Student Activities Mid-Managers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Years in Present Position</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
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<td>3-4</td>
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<td>9-11</td>
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<td>16-20</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attended Professional Development Program in past five years</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.5</td>
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<td>1-3</td>
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<td>35.1</td>
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<td>4-7</td>
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<td>8 or more</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>19.6</td>
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<td><strong>Institutional Enrollment:</strong></td>
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<td>1,000-3,000</td>
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<td>15,001 or over</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Institution:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public, Four Year</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public, Two Year</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, Four Year</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, Two Year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

between 3,001 and 10,000. Eleven percent were employed at institutions with enrollments of 10,001 or higher.

One third of the respondents had 5 or fewer years of experience in student affairs. Almost one-half (49%) had between 6 and 15 years of experience in student affairs.
Seventeen percent had 16 or more years of experience in the field of student affairs. A majority (62.8%) had been employed 4 years or less in their present position, one-fifth had been employed in their present position between 5 and 8 years, and 16.7% had been employed in their present position for 9 or more years. Over one-third (35.1%) had attended between 1 and 3 professional development programs in the past 5 years. Fifty percent had attended 4 or more professional development programs in the past 5 years. Only 13.5% of the respondents had not attended professional development programs in the past 5 years.

Table 2 includes data calculated through cross-tabulation according to gender. Information provided includes comparisons of the ages of men and women student activities mid-managers, men and women student activities mid-managers years of experience in student affairs, men and women student activities mid-managers years in their present position, men and women student activities mid-managers according to institutional enrollment, and men and women student activities mid-managers according to institution type.

More than 70% of the women were 35 years or less, and 45% of the men were 35 years or less. More than 90% of the women responding had 15 or fewer years experience in student affairs while 76% of the men responding had 15 years or less experience in the field. Eighty-eight percent of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 years or less</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35 years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40 years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50 years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 years or older</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 5 years</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 15 years</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 20 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years or more</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In Present Position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 8 years</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 11 years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 15 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 20 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years or more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institution Size</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 1000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 to 3000</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3001 to 5000</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001 to 10,000</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001 to 15,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,001 or more</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 (continued)

Cross-Tabulation of Student Activities Mid-Managers' Characteristics by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public, Four Year</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public, Two Year</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, Four Year</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private, Two Year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women responding had held their present position for 8 years or less, while 78% of the men responding had been in their present position for 8 years or less. At institutions with full-time enrollment under 1,000, female student activities mid-managers outnumbered their male counterparts by almost two to one, 39 to 20. At institutions with full-time enrollments of 10,001 or more, male directors of student activities outnumbered their female counterparts by more than three to one, 26 to 7. At public, 4-year institutions, men were more than twice as likely as women, 55 to 21, to hold student activities mid-manager positions. At private, 4-year institutions, 83 women served as the director of student activities and 57 men served in the same position.
Student Activities Mid-Managers' Career Goals

One purpose of this study was to determine the career goals of student activities mid-managers. This was accomplished by asking the respondents to rate the desirability of five higher education administrative positions—president, chief student affairs officer, chief administrative officer other than student affairs, dean of students, and director of a department in an area other than student affairs. The respondents were asked to rate their desires on a scale of 1, not very desirable to 5, very desirable. The findings are presented below in Table 3. For purposes of this study, respondents who rated their desires as 1 or 2 were placed in the no aspiration group. Respondents who rated their desires as 4 or 5 were placed in the aspiration group. Respondents who rated their aspiration as 3 were not considered in this report.

Sixty-nine percent of the respondents indicated no desire to become college or university presidents, 55.1% of the respondents aspired to become vice presidents for student affairs. Sixty-eight percent of the activities directors did not want to become vice presidents of an area other than student affairs. More than 68% of the respondents indicated a desire to become the dean of students. Slightly more than 53% did not want to make lateral moves into director positions outside of student affairs.
Based upon the data collected, Hypothesis 1 is rejected. Student activities mid-managers do aspire to achieve top level administrative positions in higher education, namely the chief student affairs officer position, in the case of male mid-managers, or the dean of students position for both men and women student activities mid-managers.

Respondents were given an opportunity to state reasons they identified certain positions as career goals. Only 186 of the sample chose to respond to this question. The responses were broken into nine categories. Forty five indicated that the positions they sought were of increased responsibility. Forty respondents indicated that the positions they desired were part of their career plan.
Another forty, who responded that they desired to maintain close contact with students, sought to attain only the dean of students position. Twenty indicated that the position to which they aspired would have an impact on the overall campus environment. These individuals were interested in the vice president for student affairs position. Eighteen stated that the requirements for the position desired matched their skills and abilities. Ten respondents, who saw their career goals as a change in careers, were seeking the director's position in areas other than student affairs. Six perceived that their career goals required less of a time commitment than their present positions. Another six also indicated that they were satisfied with their present position and did not desire to attain any of the positions listed. One indicated that a mentor had influenced his or her desire to achieve a chief student affairs officer position.

Perceptions of Attaining Career Goals

The subjects were asked to indicate their perceptions of their ability to achieve the five higher education administrative positions—president, chief student affairs officer, chief administrative officer in an area other than student affairs, dean of students, and director of a department in an area other than student affairs. Student activities mid-managers were asked to rank their responses
Table 4

Perceptions of Student Activities Mid-Managers Toward Attaining Career Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Attain</th>
<th>Will Not Attain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. of Student Affairs</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Other</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Other</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

as follows: 1, not very attainable to 5, very attainable.

The findings are presented in Table 4.

Less than half (48.3%) of the activities directors believed they would reach the chief student affairs officer position. Almost 70% (69.6%) of the student activities mid-managers viewed the dean of students position as attainable.

The subjects were asked to state reasons why they believed certain positions were not attainable. Two hundred and nine respondents chose to answer this question. The major reason stated by 126 of the respondents was that they had no desire for the position or to pursue the doctorate, which was necessary to attain the position. Twenty-seven of the respondents stated that they had the desire for the position but lacked the appropriate education, the doctorate. Lack of experience was identified as a reason by
22 of the respondents. Thirteen respondents stated that the position did not fit their career goals. Eleven perceived that their ethnicity or gender would prevent them from attaining their career goals. Eight stated that they were in the wrong career track for certain positions. One stated that she or he did not like the politics that took place on the upper administrative level. One indicated that she or he would retire within the next five years.

Aspiration and Attainment According to Gender

Another purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between male and female student activities mid-managers' career aspirations and perceptions of attaining their career goals. Information on student activities mid-managers' career aspirations and their perceptions of attaining their career goals are provided in Tables 11 and 12. The t-test results are presented in Tables 13 and 14.

Eighty two percent of the women did not aspire to be institutional chief executive officers. Slightly over 60% of the men responding did not desire to become college presidents. Less than half (46%) of the women respondents wanted to become vice presidents for student affairs. Of the women who desired to become chief student affairs officers, only 38.8% believed they would attain the position. Sixty three percent of the men expected to reach the chief student affairs officer position and 57% of the
Table 5

Perceptions of Aspiration and Attainability Toward Administrative Levels for Male Student Activities Mid-Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Aspiration</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Attainability</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Student Affairs</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Other</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Other</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men believed they would become vice presidents for student affairs. Slightly more than 73% of the women had no interest in becoming vice presidents or chief administrators in areas other than student affairs. Almost 62% of the men responded in the same manner. Seventy-six percent of the men and 58.5% of the women wanted to attain the position of dean of students. Seventy-five percent of the men and 64.3% of the women believed they would attain the position of dean of students.

Using a two-tailed t-test for significance of difference between the means, the aspirations and perceptions of attainment of student activities mid managers according to gender was calculated. Comparing the t values
for this data, there is a significant difference between men and women in aspiring for the chief student affairs officer position. Consequently Hypothesis II is rejected.

Profiles of Student Activities Mid-Managers
With Aspirations and Perceptions of Attainment

Another purpose of this study was to present a profile of student activities mid managers based upon two sets of parameters. Information profiling student activities professionals who desired advancement to an upper level position and believed they would succeed or perceived that advancement is not possible is provided in this section.

Table 6
Perceptions of Aspiration and Attainability Toward Administrative Levels for Women Student Activities Mid-Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Aspiration</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Attainability</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Student Affairs</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Other</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Other</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

Comparisons of Aspirations of Student Activities Mid-Managers by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Student Affairs</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Other</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Other</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*P < .05

Table 8

Comparisons of Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Attaining Positions by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Student Affairs</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.P. Other</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Other</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*P < .05

As stated earlier, student activities mid-managers desire the chief student affairs officer position, but
perceive it as not achievable. The typical mid-manager who viewed his or her career in this manner was a white female who possessed a master's degree and was between the ages of 26 and 35 years. This individual had been a professional in student affairs for 10 years or less, had served in his or her position for 8 years or less, and was presently employed at a private, 4-year institution with a full time enrollment between 1,001 and 3,000.

The dean of students position was the position choice of a majority of the student activities mid-managers. The typical mid-manager who wanted to become and believed he or she would become a dean of students was married, possessed a master's degree, and was between 26 and 35 years of age. This individual had 10 years or less experience in student affairs, had been employed in his or her present position for no more than 2 years, and worked at a private, 4-year institution with an enrollment between 1,001 and 3,000.

Institutional Support for Professional Development

According to Kuk (1981) professionals' perceptions of an institution's support for professional growth and development are important in assessing the environment's support of future aspirations to higher level positions. If opportunities for professional development are not provided within an institution, professionals do not obtain the skills and confidence needed to move into higher level
positions. Institutional support for professional growth was examined in two ways. The first was an examination of the professionals' desire to continue in the field of student affairs. The second was a series of 14 questions that requested the respondents' perceptions of institution's support for professional development.

Table 9 contains information on student activities mid-managers' desire to stay in the student affairs field. Table 10 contains information, according to gender, on student activities mid-managers' desires to continue or leave the student affairs field. Table 11 contains frequencies and percentages of student activities mid-managers' perceptions of institutional support for professional development. Table 12 contains the N and the mean of the sample. The results of the t-test calculated to determine if significant differences exist between men and women student activities mid-managers' perceptions of institutional support for professional development are shown in Table 13.

Kuk (1981) pointed out that the desire to continue in the field of student affairs provides a positive perspective of an institution's support because the professional believes his or her needs are being met. Consequently, the professional's growth and development within the field and the organization continue. Individuals who choose to leave
Table 9

**Student Activities Mid-Managers Desire to Stay or Leave the Field of Student Affairs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staying/Leaving</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely will leave the field</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have explored the idea of leaving the field</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely will stay in student affairs</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

**Cross Tabulation of Sample by Gender According to Staying/Leaving Student Affairs Field**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staying/Leaving</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Leave</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering Leaving</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Stay</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the field cease their growth within that field or organization.

Student activities mid-managers, at the time of this survey, were split between leaving the student affairs field and staying in the field. Thirteen percent of the subjects indicated that they would leave the field of student
affairs. More than one-third (36.1%) had given some thought to leaving the student affairs field. Forty-nine percent definitely expected to stay in student affairs.

More than half (53.9%) of the male student activities mid-managers planned to continue their careers in student affairs. Forty-five percent of the female activities directors planned to stay in student affairs.

The final part of the instrument was designed to seek the student activities mid-managers' perceptions of institutional support for professional growth. This part of the instrument contained 14 questions which the respondents answered on a scale of 1 (very little support) to 5 (very much support).

Fifty-five percent or more of the subjects indicated that the institution supported their growth (59%), encouraged involvement in professional organizations (60.5%), were appointed to important committees (61.1%), provided opportunities for professional development (56.8%), provided opportunities to attend professional conferences (64.2%), provided opportunities to obtain new skills and experiences (60.2%), and allowed flexibility for personal responsibilities (67.9%). Close to thirty eight percent (37.9%) of the sample indicated that there were opportunities to plan and discuss career objectives, 41.9% indicated that they received feedback on their skills and abilities, 27% indicated that there was encouragement for
Table 11

Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Institution's Support for Professional Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Received</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Encourages professional growth and development</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourages involvement in professional organizations</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Appoints to university committees</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provides opportunity for professional development</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provides opportunity to attend professional conferences</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Encourages contribution to professional publications</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Provides information on advancement opportunities</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provides increased responsibilities in the institution</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Encourages application for promotion</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Encourages development of mentoring relationship</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Provides feedback on skills and abilities</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Allows flexibility to meet personal responsibilities</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Encourages attaining advanced degrees</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Provides opportunity to plan and discuss future career objectives</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Characteristics</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Encourages professional growth and development</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourages involvement in professional organizations</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Appoints to university committees</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provides opportunity for professional development</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provides opportunity to attend professional conferences</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Encourages contribution to professional publications</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Provides information on advancement opportunities</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provides increased responsibilities in the institution</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Encourages application for promotion</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Encourages development of mentoring relationship</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Provides feedback on skills and abilities</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Allows flexibility to meet personal responsibilities</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Encourages attaining advanced degrees</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Provides opportunity to plan and discuss future career objectives</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12
Comparisons of Men and Women Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Institutions' Support for Professional Growth
developing a mentoring relationship, 21% indicated that there was encouragement to seek promotional opportunities, 24% received information on advancement opportunities, and 21% received encouragement to publish.

When comparing work environment responses by gender, 64% of the male activities directors believed their professional growth is encouraged compared to 54% of the women directors. Sixty-six percent of the men and 53.6% of the women believed that they were encouraged to participate in professional organizations. Sixty-five percent of the men and 57% of the women are appointed to important committees. Sixty-three percent of the men and 51.1% of the women believed their employing institution provided opportunities for professional development. Sixty-eight percent of the men and 60% of the women received information on opportunities for advancement. Twenty-four percent of the men and 21% of the women received encouragement to publish in professional journals. Forty percent of the men and 21.7% of the women received information on advancement opportunities. Sixty-four percent of the men and 56% of the women believed their employing institution provided increased responsibilities. More than 26% of the men and more than 16% of the women received encouragement to seek promotional opportunities. Men and women were almost equal in their institutions' promotion of a mentoring relationship (men, 28%; women, 27%). Forty-two percent of the men and
Table 13

Results of Test for Significance between Male and Female Student Activities Mid-Managers' Perceptions of Institutions' Support for Professional Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Characteristics</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Encourages professional growth and development</td>
<td>N 154</td>
<td>Mean 3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourages involvement in professional organizations</td>
<td>N 154</td>
<td>Mean 3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Appoints to university committees</td>
<td>N 154</td>
<td>Mean 3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provides opportunity for professional development</td>
<td>N 153</td>
<td>Mean 3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provides opportunity to attend professional conferences</td>
<td>N 154</td>
<td>Mean 3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Encourages contribution to professional publications</td>
<td>N 153</td>
<td>Mean 2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Provides information on advancement opportunities</td>
<td>N 152</td>
<td>Mean 2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provides increased responsibilities in the institution</td>
<td>N 154</td>
<td>Mean 3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Encourages application for promotion</td>
<td>N 151</td>
<td>Mean 2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Encourages development of mentoring relationship</td>
<td>N 152</td>
<td>Mean 2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Provides feedback on skills and abilities</td>
<td>N 152</td>
<td>Mean 3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Allows flexibility to meet personal responsibilities</td>
<td>N 154</td>
<td>Mean 3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Encourages attaining advanced degrees</td>
<td>N 149</td>
<td>Mean 3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Provides opportunity to plan and discuss future career objectives</td>
<td>N 153</td>
<td>Mean 3.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p < .05
women received feedback from their supervisors on their skills and abilities. Sixty-eight percent of the men and women were given flexibility to take care of their personal needs. Forty-eight percent of the men and 46% of the women were encouraged to pursue advanced degrees. Forty-two percent of the men and 33% of the women were given opportunities to plan and discuss their career objectives. According to the data presented, Hypothesis 3 is accepted. Using a two tailed t-test with pooled variance, in all fourteen items, there exists no significant difference between men and women's perceptions of institutional support for professional growth.

Summary of Major Findings

A total of 296 usable surveys were received for an overall response rate of 65%. The data were analyzed using the SPSS-X software package. Based upon analysis of data, the major findings of the study are as follows:

1. A majority of student activities mid-managers desired only two upper level positions, chief student affairs officer (55% of the sample) and dean of students (68% of the sample).

2. Close to 70% of student activities mid-managers had no desire for the institutional chief executive officer position (69%) or for vice presidency in an area other than student affairs (68%). Fifty-three percent of student
activities mid-managers had no desire to become the director of a department in an area outside of student affairs.

3. Student activities mid-managers' responses concerning positions they desire indicated that only 69% of the sample perceived the dean of students position as attainable.

4. When comparing men and women's desires to achieve upper level administrative positions and subsequent perceptions of attaining these positions, an overwhelming majority of men and women had no desire to become an institutional chief executive officer or to be the chief administrative officer in an area other than student affairs. A majority of the men and women did not want to become a director of a department in an area other than student affairs.

5. The respondents' desires differed regarding the chief student affairs administrator position. Sixty-three percent of the men, but only 46% of the women, desired this position. An overwhelming majority of men (76%) and a majority of the women (60%) desired the dean of students position. Only 57% of the men believed they would reach the chief student affairs officer position. Seventy-five percent of the men and 64% of the women expected to attain the dean of students position.

6. A t-test revealed a significant difference in men's desires for the chief student affairs officers position and
the women's desires for the same positions. In the other
three positions, chief administrative officer in an area
other than student affairs, dean of students, and director
of a department in an area other than student affairs, a t-
test revealed no significant difference between the desires
of men and women for attaining these positions. A t-test
revealed no significant difference between the perceptions
of men and women concerning their attaining the position of
chief student affairs officer, chief administrative officer
in an area other than student affairs, or dean of students
and director of a department in an area other than student
affairs positions. A t-test revealed a significant
difference in the perceptions of men and women concerning
their attaining the position of institutional chief officer.

7. A profile of the sample who desired and perceived
administrative positions as attainable suggests that the
professional is a white male with a master's degree who has
been employed in the student affairs field for 10 years or
less, and is now working at a private, 4-year institution
with an enrollment between 1,001 and 3,000 students.

8. A profile of student activities mid-managers who
desired administrative positions and perceived them as not
reachable indicates that the professional is a white female
with a master's degree, who is employed at a private 4-year
institution with an enrollment between 1,001 and 3,000 and
has been in the student affairs field for 10 years or less.
9. Almost half of the student activities mid-managers planned to leave or have considered leaving the field of student affairs. Almost half planned to continue in the field. A majority of the men planned to continue in the field of student affairs, and a majority of the women planned to leave or had considered leaving the field of student affairs.

10. Student activities mid-managers indicated that their professional growth was supported in the following areas: encouraging professional growth, involvement in professional organizations, appointments to important institutional committees, opportunities for professional development, attendance at conferences, increased responsibilities within the institution, and flexibility to meet personal responsibilities. Institutional support for professional growth was missing in the following areas: encouraging contributions to professional journals, information on advancement opportunities, encouraging applications for promotions, encouraging the development of a mentoring relationship, providing feedback on skills and abilities, encouraging attaining advanced degrees, and opportunities to discuss future career objectives.

11. A t-test revealed no difference between the perceptions of men and women regarding institutional support for professional growth. Fourteen items were presented to the sample. Both men and women were consistent in
identifying aspects of institutional support conducive to their growth and in identifying institutional characteristics that did not promote their development as professionals.
A summary of the design and implementation of this study and the findings that resulted concerning student activities mid-managers career goals and perceptions of achieving these goals is included in this chapter. The findings are discussed as they relate to the purposes for the study and the conclusions reached are enumerated. Recommendations for future research are presented and an application of the findings for higher education are also presented.

Summary

The scarcity of literature on mid-managers in higher education, specifically student affairs mid-managers, was important to the purposes of this study. According to Walter (1992) and Sagaria (1982) only limited research has been conducted on higher education mid-managers. A need to know student activities mid-managers' career goals and perceptions of attaining their goals contributed to the need for this study, as did the lack of literature on student affairs mid-managers.

This study was designed as a cross-sectional status study to determine student activities mid-managers' career
goals and their perceptions of achieving these goals. The study was structured to determine the positions student activities mid-managers desire, their perceptions of attaining their desired career goals, and their perceptions of institutional support for their professional development, which, according to Kuk (1981), has a significant role in professionals' potential to advance up the career ladder. Additional purposes of the study were to determine if student activities mid-managers perceived attaining career goals differently based on gender.

Aspiration was defined as a professional's desire for advancement. Opportunity was defined as professional's expectation of advancement. For purposes of this study, a chief student affairs officer was defined as a vice president of student affairs or dean of students who serves as an institution's top student affairs administrator and usually reports to the president or chief executive officer of the institution. For the purposes of this study, a student activities mid-manager was defined as a professional who reports to the chief student affairs officer or an assistant who reports to the chief student affairs officer and is responsible for the direction, management, supervision and control of a student affairs function that includes any or all of the following: campus-wide programming, leadership training, Greek Life, advising
student government, advising student organizations, orientation and union management. Student activities mid-managers can also be responsible for the management of staff or the management of a student affairs functional area (Young, 1990).

The population of student activities mid-managers who fit the description was made up of 910 persons holding such positions at institutions with membership in the National Association for Campus Activities. A random sample of 455 student activities mid-managers was selected for inclusion in the study.

The survey instrument used in the study (Appendix) was a modification of one used by Kuk (1981) and included demographic items, a series of questions seeking student activities mid-managers career goals and perceptions of attaining these goals, a question seeking the mid-managers' desire to continue in the field of student affairs, and a series of 14 questions assessing the professionals' perceptions of institutional support for their development.

The 296 responses processed for data analysis represented an overall return rate of 65%. The Software Package for the Social Sciences-X (SPSS-X) was used to analyze the data. The level of significance was set at \( P < .05 \). Missing data were treated using the default mechanism of SPSS-X.
Discussion

The first purpose of this project was to document the career aspirations of student activities mid-managers. The analysis showed that a majority of the respondents did not desire to become the chief executive officer of an institution of higher education (69%), a vice president of an area other than student affairs (68%) or a director of a department in an area other than student affairs (53%). A slight majority (55%), however, aspired to become the chief student affairs officer. A significant majority (68%) desired the dean of students position.

Research conducted by Chapman and Urbach (1984) and Chapman and Benati (1986) provides some comparable data. Chapman and Urbach found that 50% of their sample saw opportunities for advancement. Though specific positions were not listed in their study, the population was of the mid-manager level, directors of admissions at institutions of higher education. Chapman and Benati's study yielded different results. Only 25% of their sample expected to move up the administrative ladder. In research by Kuk (1981), 56.6% of the respondents, all women, desired to attain the chief student affairs officer position and 62.9% of the respondents wanted the position of dean of students.

Another purpose of this study was to ascertain the student activities mid-managers' perceptions of attaining their career goals. For the chief student affairs officer
position, less than half (48%) of the respondents believed they would achieve this position, and 69% of the respondents viewed the dean of students position as reachable. When studied from a gender perspective, 57% of the men and 38.8% of the women believed they would attain the chief student affairs officer position. A comparison between the men and women respondents' perceptions of reaching the dean of students position showed that 75% of the men and 64.3% of the women believed they would reach the position of dean of students.

Another aspect of this study was the investigation of possible significant differences between men and women student activities mid-managers career goals and their perceptions of achieving these goals. A t-test revealed a significant difference in men's perceptions of attaining the presidency and women's perceptions of attaining the presidency. For the other four positions, chief student affairs officer, vice president in an area other than student affairs, dean of students, and director in an area other than student affairs, no significant difference was found in men's and women's perceptions of achieving these positions.

Kuk (1981) found that women, while desiring higher level positions such as the chief student affairs officer position and the presidency, perceived the positions as less attainable. According to Kuk, a majority of the respondents
indicated that they aspired to become chief student affairs officers. On a scale of 1—not desirable, to 5—highly desirable, the 259 respondents in Kuk's study scored a mean of 3.96. Their perceptions showed a significant difference. Using the same scale, the respondents, all women, scored a 3.26 mean on attaining the position. Kuk found no significant difference between the aspiration and attainment means for the respondents for the dean of students position.

Another purpose of this study was to determine student activities mid-managers' perceptions of institutional support for professional growth. This was done by assessing the professionals' desire to stay in the student affairs field and by assessing the professionals' perceptions of institutional qualities that provide for professional growth.

The results indicate that 13.2% planned to leave the field on their next move. More than 36% had considered leaving student affairs. The remainder, 49%, planned to remain in the field of student affairs. The results, when considered from a gender perspective, indicate that 11.7% of the men and 15.3% of the women expected to leave the field. Thirty-four percent of the men and 39% of the women had considered leaving the field. The percentage of men continuing in the student affairs profession, 53.4%, is somewhat greater than that of women, 45.2%.
These findings are somewhat consistent with findings from previous studies on the persistence of student affairs graduates. Burns (1982) found that 26% of the sample from her study had left the field. Bender (1983) found that women student affairs professionals and professionals between the ages of 23 and 36 years had left the field. Holmes, Verrier and Chisholm (1983) found that women were more likely than men to move into a profession outside of student affairs. Results of Kuk's (1981) study indicated that 24.8% of the respondents planned to leave the student affairs field on their next move, 33% had given some thought to leaving the field, and 42.2% were staying in the student affairs field.

Respondents of the current study selected from 14 characteristics that indicated their institutions' support. Of the 14 characteristics, the following 8 were identified by an overwhelming majority as present in their work environment: encouraging professional growth, encouraging involvement in professional organizations, making appointments to important institutional committees, providing opportunities for professional development, providing support for attending conferences, providing increased responsibilities within the institution, providing flexibility to allow professionals to meet personal responsibilities, and encouraging the attainment of advanced degrees. The remaining 6 were identified by a majority as
not present in their institution: encouraging contributions to professional publications, providing information on advancement opportunities, encouraging the development of a mentoring relationship, encouraging application for promotions, providing feedback on skills and abilities, and opportunities to discuss future career objectives. A t-test of male and female student activities mid-managers' perceptions of institutional support indicated that there was no significant difference in how they viewed their institutions' support for professional development.

The results of this study support Kuk's (1981) findings related to perceived institutional support for professional growth. The mean scores for this project are consistent with the mean scores for Kuk's project in all but two areas. The mean score for Kuk's study in providing feedback on skills and abilities was 2.83. The mean score for Kuk's study on encouraging attainment of advanced degrees was 2.84. Although the scores for this study are somewhat higher than for Kuk's, the difference may be due to the differences in subjects—men and women student activities mid-managers for this study; women student affairs administrators for Kuk's study.

Summary of Major Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached as a result of this study:
1. Men may be more inclined than women to commit to the field of student affairs.

2. Student activities mid-managers perceive advancement opportunities in higher education as limited and narrow.

3. The student affairs field is a transitory field.

4. Institutions of higher education provide minimal encouragement for student activities mid-managers' professional growth.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Research

A perspective of student activities mid-managers' career goals was the purpose of this study. This knowledge will enable institutions, chief student affairs officers, and campus activities professional organizations to provide the training, supervision, and feedback necessary to help student activities mid-managers achieve their career goals. A majority of the respondents identified the dean of students position as desirable and attainable. A majority of men identified the position of chief student affairs officer as desirable and achievable. A majority of women identified the position of chief student affairs officer as desirable, but not achievable. A majority of the subjects had no desire to be an institutional chief executive officer or a vice president in an area other than student affairs.
A majority of the subjects identified the position of director of a department in an area other than student affairs as attainable but not desirable. It is recommended that a follow-up assessment of the same sample be conducted seeking information on why the positions identified are perceived as not desirable.

The data show that almost half of the subjects plan to leave or are considering leaving the field of student affairs on their next move. As Kuk (1981) stated, this is one factor that indicates the amount of support that professionals receive from an institution for their professional growth. An assessment of the same sample with respect to their next career move and reasons for the career move is recommended to assist institutions and supervisors as they establish and maintain an environment conducive to professional development.

Because a majority of the subjects identified the student affairs field as their choice for future career moves, an assessment of their satisfaction with their chosen career is recommended. Focusing on reasons why student activities mid-managers chose the field and their level of satisfaction will be of assistance to professional organizations and chief student affairs officers.

Kuk (1981) conducted a study similar to this project using only women in the research. This study used a modified version of Kuk's instrument and assessed career
goals and institutional support from a functional perspective, the student activities mid-manager perspective. Similar studies conducted on student affairs mid-managers in other functional areas are recommended to validate the results of the studies conducted on career paths of chief student affairs officers (Harder, 1982; Kuh, Evans & Duke, 1983; Lunsford, 1984; Ostroth, Efri and Lerman, 1984; Rickard, 1985).

Recommendations for Application to Practice

The results and conclusions of this study serve a number of purposes. Student activities mid-managers are encouraged to review the results of this project to gain a better understanding of individuals within the field. Chief student affairs administrators can obtain a more in-depth perspective of student activities mid-managers and, with this understanding, provide the support and encouragement to meet the professional needs of student activities mid-managers. Institutions of higher education can use this information in reviewing their structures and work environment.

Student affairs preparation programs can use this information to better meet the needs of its participants. Preparation programs are encouraged to assess the career goals of their participants and, with this information, provide their students the academic and practical
experiences that will enable them to achieve their career goals.

Professional organizations and institutions of higher education can use this information to provide the career counseling that will enable practicing professionals to realize their career goals. One area that requires a significant amount of development is the initiation of a mentor program. Chief student affairs officers and professional organizations can impact the growth of student affairs mid-managers through this informal process. Another area that chief student affairs officers and professional organizations can address is the continuing education of the mid-manager, especially attaining advanced degrees. Mid-managers can be effective as long as they stay current with issues of their profession. Pursuing advanced degrees is an important means of staying current. The provision of professional development opportunities that enable student activities mid-managers to achieve their professional goals can be beneficial to both professionals and institutions.
STUDENT ACTIVITIES WORK ENVIRONMENT SURVEY

This questionnaire is designed to solicit your input as a Student Activities Professional regarding your perceptions of your work environment. The data are part of a doctoral study analyzing the work climate of Student Activities Professionals in higher education institutions. Please answer each question by circling the response which most closely represents your honest perception. All responses are confidential. Thank you for your assistance.

1. Marital Status:
   1. Single
   2. Married
   3. Divorced/Separated
   4. Widowed

2. Education:
   1. Bachelors Degree
   2. Masters in progress
   3. Masters Degree
   4. Doctorate in Progress
   5. Ed. D/Ph. D.

3. Sex:
   1. Male
   2. Female

4. Age:
   1. 25 or less
   2. 26 - 30
   3. 31 - 35
   4. 36 - 40
   5. 41 - 45
   6. 46 - 50
   7. 51 or older

5. Please indicate which of the following best represents your ethnic background.
   1. Native American
   2. African-American
   3. Hispanic/Latino
   4. Asian
   5. Caucasian
   6. Other
6. Please indicate your present title: ____________________________

7. Total years of experience in Student Affairs:
   1. 0 - 5
   2. 6 - 10
   3. 11 - 15
   4. 16 - 20
   5. 20 and over

8. Number of years in present position:
   1. 1 - 2
   2. 3 - 4
   3. 5 - 8
   4. 9 - 11
   5. 12 - 15
   6. 16 - 20
   7. 20 and over

9. Please circle the range that best represents your institution's full-time enrollment.
   1. under 1000
   2. 1000 - 3000
   3. 3001 - 5000
   4. 5001 - 10000
   5. 10001 - 15000
   6. 15001 and above

10. In what type of institution are you employed?
    1. Public, four-year
    2. Public, two-year
    3. Private, four-year
    4. Private, two-year

11. In the past five years, how many regional or national new professional or mid-manager professional development programs have you attended?
    1. None
    2. 1 - 3
    3. 4 - 7
    4. 8 or more
12. Please rate the following positions according to your desire to ultimately attain that type of position using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Very Desirable</th>
<th>Not Desirable</th>
<th>Equally Desirable</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Very Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President of a college or university</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President or Chief Student Affairs Administrator</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President/Chief Administrator in an area other than Student Affairs</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of a department in an area other than Student Affairs</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Please provide the reasons you rated certain positions above as "Desirable" and "Very Desirable".
14. Please rate the following positions as to whether you believe you will actually attain that type of position using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Very Attainable</th>
<th>Not Attainable</th>
<th>Equally Attainable</th>
<th>Both Attainable</th>
<th>Very Attainable</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

President of a college or university

1 2 3 4 5

Vice President or Chief Student Affairs Administrator

1 2 3 4 5

Vice President/Chief Administrator in an area other than Student Affairs

1 2 3 4 5

Dean of Students

1 2 3 4 5

Director of a department in an area other than Student Affairs

1 2 3 4 5

15. Please provide the reasons you rated certain positions above as "Not Very Likely" and "Not Likely".

16. Are you considering leaving the field of Student Affairs/Student Personnel in your next move?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely will leave the field</th>
<th>Have explored the idea of leaving</th>
<th>Definitely will stay in Student Affairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Describe your present work organization regarding the following statements using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Equally</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Encourages my professional growth and development

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Encourages my involvement in professional organizations

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appoints me to important institutional committees

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Provides opportunities for my professional development

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Provides opportunities for me to attend professional conferences

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Encourages my contributions to professional journals and publications

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Provides me with information regarding advancement opportunities

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Provides me with the opportunity to acquire new skills and experiences through increased responsibility within my organization

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Encourages my application for promotional opportunities

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
17. (continued)

Describe your present work organization regarding the following statements using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Equally Both</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Promotes the development of a mentoring relationship for me

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Provides me with adequate feedback regarding my skills and abilities

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Allows me the flexibility to attend to personal responsibilities and commitments, while still meeting my work expectations

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Encourages my attaining advanced degrees

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Provides me with an opportunity to plan and discuss my future career objectives

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
May 10, 1992

Dear Colleague,

I am in the process of conducting doctoral research in the area of Student Activities Mid-Managers' career aspirations and perceptions of career opportunities. As a Student Activities Mid-manager, your interaction on a daily basis with your institution's organizational environment places you in a position to assess and provide input regarding your interaction and its effects on you as a professional.

I would like your assistance in supplying this vital information by taking 15 to 20 minutes and filling out the enclosed questionnaire. Your response will be kept confidential and used to compile normative and descriptive data. It is intended that such data will be used to analyze the work environments in which Student Activities Mid-Managers work, and to recommend changes that will lead to more supportive and growth-producing institutions.

Your contribution within the next few minutes will hopefully reap benefits for you and your colleagues in the future.

Included is the survey and a stamped, addressed envelope. Please complete the survey and return it to me in the addressed envelope.

In advance, thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Connell
Director of Student Life
June 10, 1992

Dear Colleague,

In the past three weeks you received a copy of the Student Activities Work Climate Survey. Although I realize the time limits of your busy schedule, I would like to request no more than 20 minutes of your time to complete and return the survey, if you have not done so.

Your response is critical in providing a diverse and thorough assessment of the perceptions of Student Activities professionals regarding their work climates.

In case you misplaced the first survey, another is enclosed along with a stamped, addressed envelope. Please complete the survey and return it to me in the addressed envelope.

Your prompt attention is appreciated. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Connell
May 20, 1992

Dear Colleague,

Recently you received the Student Activities Work Environment Survey. This instrument is part of a doctoral study analyzing the work climate of Student Activities Professionals in higher education institutions. If you have completed and returned the survey, thanks for your help and support. If you have not already done so, please take 15 - 20 minutes to complete the instrument and return it in the addressed and stamped envelope to the address below. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Matthew J. Connell
Director of Student Life
SUNY College at Cortland

Return survey to:
29 Madison Street
Cortland, New York 13045
April 20, 1992

Dear Colleague,

I am completing my Ph.D in Higher Education at the University of North Texas. I am beginning work on my dissertation. My topic is centered on Student Activities Mid-managers' career aspirations and perceptions of career opportunities. I would appreciate your assistance with the development of the instrument for my study.

Attached is the copy of the instrument I propose to use. I would like to request your assistance as part of the pilot run in evaluating the instrument.

Would you complete the survey and record your reactions with reference to the following questions:

1. How long did it take you to complete the survey?
2. What are your reactions to its length?
3. What are your reactions to its format?
4. Were there any questions you had difficulty in understanding? If so, which questions?
5. Were there any questions you had trouble answering? What questions and why did you have trouble with them?
6. Are there any additional comments or ideas you might be able to provide that would make the instrument a more positive and useful tool?

I have enclosed a stamped self-addressed envelope in which you can return the completed survey and your comments. I would appreciate it if you could return the material to me by April 30.

I appreciate your time, effort and feedback. It will be most useful in assisting with my research. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Connell
Director of Student Life
BIBLIOGRAPHY


