THE EFFECT OF A SPECIAL ORIENTATION PROGRAM

FOR ENTERING FRESHMEN ON ATTRITION,

SATISFACTION, AND GRADE

POINT AVERAGE

DISSERTATION

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This study was initiated to assess the effectiveness of a special orientation program with the purpose of reducing the anxiety of entering freshmen and easing their adjustment to the campus environment. The criteria of evaluation were retention, satisfaction, and academic achievement.

The 468 subjects were first-time freshmen from outside Tarrant County entering Texas Christian University in the fall of 1980. Half of the subjects participated in the experimental program, Operation Welcome, and the other half served as a control group. Those in Operation Welcome were grouped in teams with eight other freshmen, two upperclassmen serving as a big brother and big sister, and a local alumni family. Each of the freshmen in the program received letters of welcome prior to leaving home and participated in special events upon arrival on campus.

The effectiveness of the program was determined by attrition after the first semester, academic achievement as indicated by grade point averages, and satisfaction as measured by the _College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire_

(CSSQ). There was no significant difference in the academic achievement of the experimental and control groups; the other two measures, however, indicated a significant positive effect of the program.

The overall score and the subscale scores of the CSSQ of the experimental and control groups were compared using a t test with .05 as the level of significance. The participants of Operation Welcome were significantly more satisfied with the university in every area measured: working conditions, compensation, quality of education, social life, recognition and overall satisfaction. There was no significant difference in the effect of the program on the satisfaction of males and females or on Texans and non-Texans.

Differences in attrition were compared using the z test of independent proportions with significance at the .05 level. Attrition in the experimental group was significantly lower than in the control group when measured at the beginning of the spring semester 1980. Moreover, the pre-matriculation correspondence during the summer had a positive effect on the number of experimental subjects actually enrolling in the fall 1979. When the attrition was factored by sex and place of residence, the program was shown to have a significant effect on females and on Texans but not on males or non-Texans.

Further research is recommended to determine the separate effects of the pre-matriculation and post-matriculation activities, to reduce male and non-Texan attrition, to monitor attrition of the subjects after one year and of the upperclassmen serving as big brothers and sisters, and to test the correlation of satisfaction and retention. Moreover, upperclassmen should be trained specifically as peer advisors if academic achievement is to be affected.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Leaving home to enter college is the first major step
into the adult world for many new high school graduates.
Yet the gulf between the world they are leaving--safe,
secure, and familiar--and the world of unknowns they are
entering often seems formidable. The first few days of
college life do little to dispel these feelings for many
freshmen, who experience isolation and loneliness in spite
of the activity going on around them. It is little wonder
that some return home soon after arrival or vow to do so as
soon as the term is over. Nor should one be surprised at
the poor academic achievement so common among freshmen who
are struggling to find a foothold and maintain balance in
the new environment they have entered.

If, however, an entering freshman knew before leaving
home that a surrogate family group was waiting to welcome
him or her and provide the support needed to adjust to the
new environment, the anxiety so common to new students could
be greatly reduced and anticipation of the new experience
increased. The expected results of this improved balance of
emotions would be reflected in greater satisfaction with the
campus environment and improved chances for academic
success.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the effects of a special orientation program on college freshmen.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether attrition, satisfaction, and academic achievement could be affected by a particular orientation program which offered both pre-entry and post-entry assistance to freshmen in their adjustment to campus life. It also examined differences which occurred between males and females, Texans and non-Texans.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested.

1. The proportion of students in the experimental group who re-enroll for the spring term will be significantly higher than in the control group.

2. The degree of satisfaction with the institution will be significantly higher for the experimental group than for the control group as measured by

   a. the overall score of the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire, Form C (CSSQ), and

   b. the majority of the five scores on the subscales of the CSSQ.

3. The mean grade point average for the fall semester will be significantly higher for the experimental group than for the control group.

4. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on males and on females as measured by the rate of attrition, degree of satisfaction, and grade point averages of the experimental and control groups.

5. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on Texans and on non-Texans as measured by the rate of attrition, degree of satisfaction, and grade point averages of the experimental and control groups.

Significance of the Study

As higher education moves into the decade of the 1980s, it faces two major threats. First is the spectre of decreasing enrollments as indicated by population trends. The decline in the number of high school graduates which began in 1979 (8, p.1) is not likely to be counteracted by an increase in the proportion of graduates attending college:

> Already the percentage of high school students going on to college has slipped from a peak of 55% in 1968 to about 47% in 1976. Experts once thought that 85% of high school graduates would go to college by 1990. They now expect 50% at most (10).

The declining pool of eighteen-year olds desiring higher education is increasing the competition for students among colleges seeking to maintain their enrollments of traditional college freshmen. At the same time, rapidly

rising costs of admissions efforts have brought dramatic
escalation in the cost of recruiting new students. As a
result of decreasing prospects and increasing costs,
institutions are stepping up retention efforts as the most
cost-effective means of maintaining the size of their
student populations.

A review of attrition research makes it clear that the
most logical target for retention efforts is the freshman
(6, 7, 9, 16, 20, 26).

> During the 1980s, more than fifteen million men and
> women will enter nearly three thousand colleges and
> universities. Because most of the evidence from
> national retention studies conducted over more than
> four decades yields surprisingly consistent results, it
> can be expected that five or six million of these stu-
> dents will never earn degrees. About 40 percent of
> entering freshmen in baccalaureate-granting insti-
> tutions never achieve a degree . . ." (6, p.3).

In their recent summary of attrition studies since 1950,
Pantages and Creedon concur: "For every ten students who
enter college in the United States, only four will graduate
from that college four years later. . . . Of the six
students who dropped out, three did so during the first
year" (16, p. 49).

Moreover, the pre-entry period and the first few days
after a new freshman has enrolled can be critical stages in
the process of deciding whether or not to leave an insti-
tution. The withdrawal of a freshman who returns home
after a few days on campus is a far too common occurrence.

Others may persist until the end of the semester, a more practical time to withdraw, even though the decision to leave was made much earlier. Cope and Hannah (11, p. 53) indicate that twenty-five per cent of those who withdraw were only tentative in their commitment to stay at the time of enrollment and had considered withdrawal even before their arrival on campus.

Noel points out that "the first six weeks on campus are the most important and critical in determining whether the student is going to stay or leave. To get students to stay, you must get them started right" (15). Unfortunately this critical period in the freshman's adjustment to an institution coincides with what is frequently the most hectic time for most campus personnel--registration, the opening of residence halls, orientation, the start of classes, departmental meetings, head counts, and the myriad of other activities that are concentrated at the beginning of the academic year. Peers and alumni can provide an invaluable resource to supplement the dispersed energies of the faculty and staff at a time when it is most needed, a time when attitudes toward the institution are formed and thoughts of leaving are not uncommon.

Attrition is costly both to the institution and to the student. For the school, the cost of recruiting a one-semester or one-year student may well become prohibitive.

But to the student, the cost is far more than financial; the investment of a significant portion of a young adult life and the energy spent before the intended educational goal is abandoned unrealized are also major expenditures. For many the emotional trauma of failing in one of their first ventures into the adult world is the greatest penalty of all. Altering the pattern and rate of attrition could be a highly significant benefit of the study, both for institutions and for students.

Studies of students who leave have repeatedly indicated that major causes of attrition are isolation, dissonance between the campus and the individual, and failure to reach a level of academic achievement the student or the institution deems satisfactory (1, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 44). If a program of orientation for first-time college students can minimize the feeling of isolation and loneliness while it helps freshmen adjust to an unfamiliar environment and assists them in developing academic skills appropriate for college, improved retention should follow.

As a result of this study, an orientation program was developed to provide pre-entry and post-entry assistance to freshmen to aid them in their adjustment to the campus environment. The effects of the program as indicated by attrition, satisfaction, and academic achievement can

provide a rationale as well as a model for other institutions wishing to develop similar programs.

Definition of Terms

The following terms had restricted meaning and were thus defined for this study:

1. Academic achievement: the level of academic success as measured by the total number of grade points and the grade point index as defined by the Texas Christian University Bulletin (28).

2. Attrition: the failure to reenroll for the spring semester, regardless of previous or subsequent patterns of withdrawal. (The converse of attrition is retention.)

3. Leaver: a student who was not enrolled for classes at the beginning of the spring semester, regardless of the actual date of withdrawal, enrollment in another institution, or plans to return to TCU.

4. Persister: a student who was enrolled for classes at the beginning of the spring semester, regardless of prior or subsequent withdrawal.

5. Student satisfaction: general contentment with the total college experience, the level of which was indicated by the overall satisfaction score of the CSSQ and by the majority of the scores of the five subscales (Working Conditions, Compensation, Quality of Education, Social Life, and Recognition.)

Delimitations

This study was subject to several delimitations in generalizing from the data.

1. The experiment was conducted in a private university whose freshmen are typically eighteen years old and live in a campus residence hall.

2. The rate of attrition was measured after the first semester of enrollment even though the highest withdrawal rate normally occurs after two semesters.

3. The samples for the experimental and control groups were drawn June 15, 1979, in order to initiate the pre-entry phase of the program, even though a number of freshmen were admitted after that date. The samples, therefore, do not reflect the freshman class in its entirety but only those who had completed the admissions process, including the submission of SAT or ACT scores, and had paid housing deposits by the time the samples were selected.

Basic Assumptions

This study rests on the following basic assumptions.

1. Other factors such as Greek rush, summer orientation, residence hall programming, and academic advising, which might affect attrition, satisfaction, and academic achievement affected both groups equally.

2. As young adults who have experienced a wide range of human needs and emotions, college students are capable of

discerning that which is fulfilling and which produces satisfaction.

3. The conscious efforts of the surrogate family group to improve the retention, satisfaction, and academic achievement of the freshmen participating in the experiment should not be viewed as "Hawthorne effect" but rather should be considered program goals.

Instrument

The level of student satisfaction was determined by the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire, Form C. The CSSQ is based on research on the satisfaction of employees in business and industry such as the works of Herzberg, Hoppock, and Vroom. It is a 70-item instrument which measures the following five dimensions of satisfaction:

Working Conditions: The physical conditions of the student's college life, such as the cleanliness and comfort of his place of residence, adequacy of study areas on campus, quality of meals, facilities for lounging between classes;
Compensation: The amount of input (e.g., study) required relative to academic outcomes (e.g., grades), and the effect of input demands on the student's fulfillment of his other needs and goals;
Quality of Education: The various academic conditions related to the individual's intellectual and vocational development, such as the competence and helpfulness of faculty and staff, including advisors and counselors, and the adequacy of curriculum requirements, teaching methods, and assignments;
Social Life: Opportunities to meet socially relevant goals, such as dating, meeting compatible or interesting people, making friends, participating in campus events and informal social activities;
Recognition: Attitudes and behaviors of faculty and students indicating acceptance of the student as a worthwhile individual (23).

The CSSQ Manual (23) provides reliability coefficients for each of the five scales as well as for the total score for both public and private schools. Internal consistency reliabilities range from .78 to .84 with a median of .82.

The Manual also reports a number of validity studies which had been completed at the time of publication (1971), indicating that additional studies of validity were in progress. For the most part these studies have tested the basic assumption underlying the development of the CSSQ that student satisfaction is analagous to job satisfaction. The negative correlation between job satisfaction and turnover, which is consistently indicated by researchers, is paralleled by the study of Starr, Betz, and Menne (24), showing the satisfaction score of dropouts to be lower than that of persistors. Additional studies have shown CSSQ scores to be positively related to type of residence (3), type of institution (2), and age (25). A more recent study by Hallenbeck (11) also shows the positive relationship of CSSQ scores to age and type of residence as well as to college and classification. A factor analytic study of the CSSQ scales by Betz, Menne, Starr, and Klingensmith (4) supports the validity of the instrument.

Procedures for Collection of Data

Data were collected at two stages during the study. The first began in mid-November continuing through the end of the semester when the CSSQ was administered to students in both the experimental and control groups in a series of group meetings called solely for that purpose. Those who were unable to be present at the initial meetings were contacted to arrange individual appointments for filling out the questionnaire.

Then in January when the Registrar's reports became available, grade point averages of those in both groups who completed the fall semester were collected. At the same time the enrollment reports for the spring semester were studied to ascertain which students in the two groups had reenrolled.

The Population

The 1979-80 entering freshman class of Texas Christian University was composed of 992 students, predominantly eighteen years old, with 51.9 per cent residing out of state. The mean SAT score of freshmen entering TCU is consistently above the national mean by 60 to 90 points. Although many of the freshmen can easily afford the cost of private higher education, at least half usually receive financial aid. The ethnic composition of the entering freshman class of 1979-80, according to self-reported

classification at the time of application for admission, included 5.7 per cent minority members.

Selection of the Sample

In mid-June, 234 students who lived outside Tarrant County were randomly selected from the Office of Residential Living's list of those who had been admitted to the 1979-80 freshman class and had submitted a housing deposit. The housing deposit was used as a criterion for selection because it served as further evidence that the student had selected TCU from among any number of institutions to which he or she may have applied and been admitted.

The sample was stratified proportionally by sex and by ability as determined by SAT or ACT scores. The total of the SAT-Verbal and SAT-Mathematics scores was used to place each student in the high (1200-1600 SAT), middle (850-1190 SAT), or low category (400-840 SAT). For those submitting ACT rather than SAT scores, the following categories of ACT composite scores were used: high (26 to 36), middle (16 to 25), and low (1 to 15). In the event that a student submitted both SAT and ACT scores, the SAT score determined the category into which he or she was grouped.

The proportions were based on the total population of those who had been admitted by the selection date and had paid housing deposits. In the event that data were missing for any student, that individual was omitted. All who

remained were assigned a three-digit number. Once the proportion of the strata had been determined, selection was made using the three-digit numbers and a table of random numbers. A control group of 234, similarly stratified, was selected by the same method.

Research Design

The experimental design for this study was patterned after the "posttest-only control group design" described by Sax in Empirical Foundation of Educational Research (19, p. 336). The experimental subjects were divided into twenty-six groups of nine students; each group was assigned to a team composed of two returning students, who served as a "big brother" and "big sister," and a local alumni family. These surrogate families helped prepare the students for the adjustment to campus prior to arrival and continued their assistance throughout the first few weeks of the semester. In addition, the experimental subjects participated in the traditional orientation program for all entering freshmen as did members of the control group.

Both the experimental and control groups were surveyed in November to determine the comparative levels of satisfaction as previously described; rates of attrition and grade point averages were collected in January. These

measures served as the dependent variables in determining the effect of the program on the experimental subjects.

Procedures for Analysis of Data

The data were prepared for automatic data processing. Each of the hypotheses was restated in the null form and tested for significance at the .05 level. of the data.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 was tested in the null using the z test of proportion as the test of significance for the difference between two independent proportions. Hypothesis 2 and its subhypotheses and Hypothesis 3 were tested in the null using a one-tailed t test to determine the significance of the difference in the means of the independent samples. Hypotheses 4 and 5 were tested in the null using the z test of proportion to determine the significance of the differences in attrition and a two-way analysis of variance to determine the significance of the differences in the means of the grade point averages and satisfaction scale scores.

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CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

Two basic approaches were utilized in conducting an
extensive review of contemporary literature. The first was
a search for recent studies of programs similar to the ex-
periment proposed. An ERIC search was conducted through the
Bibliographic Retrieval Services utilizing the descriptors
of "college students" and "orientation." Although much has
been written about freshman orientation, none of the pro-
grams described met the basic criteria of similarity: small
groups of freshmen receiving pre-entry and post-entry
assistance from specific upperclassmen and/or alumni. The
second approach was an extensive search of contemporary
literature for evidence supporting the rationale of the
program: that small groups of entering freshmen assisted by
upperclassmen and alumni would make a better adjustment to
college than freshmen coping in the traditional manner and
that the improved adjustment would be reflected in better
retention, academic performance, and satisfaction with the
school. This chapter will include four sections which
present an overview of the topic: (1) the problems of
entering freshmen; (2) satisfaction, academic performance,
and attrition; (3) the impact of peers; and (4) the impact
of alumni.

The Problems of Entering Freshmen

Eighteen-year-olds preparing to enter college face a complex set of pressures with which they must cope if they are to adjust successfully to the new environment. As a result of the Industrial Revolution and technological advances, a lengthened period of education has postponed the transition from childhood to adulthood, creating a period of adolescence where none existed before (21, 36). Erickson describes the young person in the later school years as "beset with the physiological revolution of their genital maturation and the uncertainty of the adult roles ahead" (36, p. 128).

During this extended postponement of adulthood, the struggle with the problems of identity and alienation is prolonged (2, 19, 21, 25, 36). Heiney outlines five developmental tasks which are encountered in late adolescence and early adulthood by the college student:

    (a)   the shift in the nature of one's relationship with one's parents, i.e., from a child-parent to an adult-adult relationship;
    (b)   the resolution of a personal sexual identity;
    (c)   the creation of a value system which fits the student as a truly unique individual;
    (d)   the development of the capacity for true human intimacy; and
    (e)   the choice of a life's work (48, p. 533).

For many these problems are compounded by additional pressures associated with entering college.

    In general terms the freshman in college is a novice in an unfamiliar social organization, and is therefore confronted with the values, norms, and role structures

of a new social system and various new subsystems.
Such an experience usually involves desocialization
(pressures to unlearn certain past values, attitudes,
and behavior patterns) as well as socialization (pres-
sures to learn the new culture and participate in the
new social structure). The uncertainties of this
learning period often are compounded by the frustration
involved in moving from a system where one is an es-
tablished member--the former high school and home
community--to a system where one is only a novice (38,
p. 89).

As the freshman attempts to maintain his balance in these

shifting pressures of socialization and desocialization, he

is coping simultaneously with a plethora of adjustments:

The personal tempo of life is apt to be changed; there
are a variety of new day-to-day decisions to be made.
In addition to the necessity of adjusting to being away
from home and adapting to new living arrangements (for
those who do not commute from home), there are the more
general pressures to become independent. Some freshmen
may feel a new and disturbing sense of anonymity. Such
frustrations are often compounded by threats to the
student's self-image with respect to his intellectual
and social abilities. . . . The entering freshman
places a high emphasis on doing well academically . . . .
He is both excited and anxious about whether or not he
is going to make it socially in the sense of adjusting
to campus mores, and being liked, accepted, respected,
and sought out by fellow students (38, pp. 88-89).

The difficulty freshmen experience in coping with these

pressures becomes evident in reviewing the literature. The

results of a four-year study by Sharp and Kirk indicates

that the greatest influx of students seeking counseling help

at the University of California-Berkely occurred during the

freshman year just after arrival on campus (77, p. 49).

Baker and Nidorf (8) also point to the freshman year-- the

early months in particular--as the time of greatest

psychological disturbance in college students. A study at Washington University reports that seventy-five per cent of the subjects questioned reported at least mild depression during the freshman year, with forty-one per cent describing moderate to severe depression (16).

Some of the pressures experienced by college freshmen are of their own making. Feldman and Newcomb (38), Pascarella (68), and Stern (86) have shown that freshmen overrate college pressures and stereotype the total experience. It is not uncommon for high school students to feel excitement and dread simultaneously as they prepare for college, and often their fears reach exaggerated proportions by the time of arrival (38, 78). Throughout the freshman year a gradual demythologizing of the college experience occurs spontaneously (68, 86). Speeding up this process could relieve unnecessary pressure and the attendant problems facing entering freshmen.

Satisfaction, Academic Performance, and Attrition

Attrition rates, levels of satisfaction with the institution, and academic performance may be viewed as discrete effects of adjustment of freshmen to college. A survey of the literature, however, indicates that the three variables are frequently interrelated. For example, a student who is unable to cope with the pressures of college is likely to experience dissatisfaction with the institution, and his

academic performance may suffer as a result. The next step may well be transferring or dropping out of higher education altogether. To understand the significance of the three variables, one must be aware of the relationships between them. This section will discuss each of the subtopics stressing the studies which show correlation between one variable and another.

Satisfaction

The term satisfaction can assume a multitude of meanings and may be defined in general philosophical constructs. In developing the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (12), Betz and Menne worked from the premise that college student satisfaction parallels employee satisfaction and can be defined as contentment with the total collegiate experience. Integrating previous theories of "college fit" (49, 58, 65, 66, 67, 84, 85, 86, 90) and student personality with a "theory of work adjustment," the authors postulate that when the skills of the student are balanced with the press of the institution (academic and social requirements), the student will benefit from the rewards of the institution and will be satisfied. More than the "college fit" theory, this model stresses the congruence of the student's needs and the reinforcement system of the institutional environment. Prior to the work of Starr, Betz, Klingensmith, and Menne (11, 12, 13, 14, 82, 83),

there had been no systematic research on college student satisfaction as a significant variable in itself. Further, research on satisfaction has been seriously hampered by the lack of accurate assessment techniques. As a result, the literature relating to satisfaction as defined for this study is limited.

It is not uncommon for a freshman to be dissatisfied with college. This is in part due to the exaggerated image previously discussed. Studies by Hallenbeck (46), Roelf (71), and Sturtz (87) have linked dissatisfaction to age, finding lower levels of satisfaction among traditional age-group students as opposed to older students and among undergraduates as opposed to graduate students. Hallenbeck (46) also shows a lower level of satisfaction in students who live in residence halls, a common condition of freshmen and a uniform condition of those participating in this study. Freshmen are also likely to be undecided about their majors, with fifty-five per cent of all students changing their major at least once (51). Hecklinger (47) indicates that the undecided student is likely to be less satisfied with college than the student who has declared a major. Others have noted that the undecided major is more likely to drop out of school than a student who has declared a major (27, 35, 92, 95). In short, many characteristics common in freshmen have been linked to dissatisfaction with college.

A relationship between college dissatisfaction and poor academic performance is noted by Starr, Betz, and Menne (83) and later by Morstain (61). Neither study, however, shows a causal relationship between the two.

The link between dissatisfaction and attrition is more clearly demonstrated. Pantages and Creedon (67) point out, however, that research in this area began less than two decades ago. Prior to Iffert's landmark study (51) in 1947 which pointed up the need for such research, the effects of college environment on attrition had been treated as a constant for all students in a given institution. Since then the "college fit" theory has been developed and tested as a variable affecting retention. Studies have shown that as the congruence between the student's needs and college press increases, the greater the likelihood that the student will persist (5, 6, 9, 37, 73, 96). As improved measures of student satisfaction have provided empirical evidence, the relationship between satisfaction and attrition has been further confirmed (27, 45, 83).

Correlational studies have shown the link between dissatisfaction and attrition. Other research indicates that a causal relationship exists. In summarizing the large body of literature relating to student-reported reasons for withdrawal, Pantages and Creedon have noted that "dissatisfaction with college is given often enough to warrant its

separate classification apart from academic or motivational

reasons. This includes dissatisfaction with the size of the

college, its social and/or academic environment, etc." (67,

p. 82). Moreover, in their findings and conclusions,

Pantages and Creedon point to the needs/press model as "one

of the best theoretical frameworks for understanding the

causes of attrition," noting that "the extent to which the

student can meet the demands of the college and derive

satisfaction from doing so is the degree to which the

student may be expected to persist at the college" (67,

p. 93).

Hoyt suggests the relationship of satisfaction and

attrition in a series of assumptions:

> Persisting in college represents a choice that is available to most students. . . .
> Persistence will be chosen when satisfactions (both real and anticipated) associated with it exceed those associated with any other choice. . . .
> Lacking satisfaction in a given situation, individuals will "experiment" with alternative choices and select one that is judged to have the highest probability of providing satisfaction. . . .
> Satisfactions arise from two sources: a sense of progress (including expected progress) in reaching personal goals and a sense of comfort with the environment (acceptance, security, freedom from pressure). . . .
> Enduring satisfactions (sound choices) require support from both sources of satisfaction. . . .
> The process of finding satisfaction is threatened by barriers that, in theory, can be removed (50, pp. 79-80).

Building on these assumptions, Hoyt calls for programs of

intervention which prevent conditions leading to dissatis-

faction. Noel also notes that ". . . if an individual is to

remain within the college environment, he/she must be fulfilling the requirements of that environment (performing satisfactorily) and the college environment must be meeting the needs of the student (leading to satisfaction)" (64).

Academic Performance

Tinto notes that a student's integration into the academic system of an institution can be measured by grade performance and intellectual development (91, p. 104). Most studies of academic performance, however, focus only on the grades of students, for, as Spady (80, 81) points out, grades are the most visible extrinsic reward of the academic system. Grades reflect not only the student's ability but the "institution's preference for particular styles of behavior" (91, p. 104) as well. Therefore, academic achievement, as it is defined for this study, is measured by the student's grade performance.

The correlation between dissatisfaction and poor academic performance has been noted in the previous section. Research to this point, however, does not permit significant causal inference. It is important to note that in linking grade performance to satisfaction, poor academic performance may be as likely to follow as to precede dissatisfaction with the campus.

The same can be said of poor grade performance and attrition. While the student who makes a poor academic showing frequently decides to drop out, it is not uncommon for the grades of a student planning to withdraw to fall after the decision has been made. Attrition, dissatisfaction, and poor grades may all be symptoms of still other problems.

Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that grade performance is the single most important factor in predicting a student's persistance in college (1, 4, 10, 15, 17, 23, 24, 41, 44, 52, 54, 56, 59, 60, 70). Prediger (69) goes even further to say that other data such as biographical information can predict persistence only insofar as they can predict grades.

Summerskill (88) examined thirty-five studies of attrition and first-semester college grades and found a highly significant relationship in each of the studies. He notes, however, that while poor grades are a stable predictor of attrition, good grades are not necessarily a predictor of retention. Tinto, in fact, points out that "voluntary withdrawals [excluding students dismissed for academic performance] generally show both higher grade performance and higher levels of intellectual development than do the average persisters" (91, p. 117).

Sexton (75) notes that freshman attrition is partially the result of the students' unwillingness to commit themselves to the increased intellectual demands placed on them by college work. Freedman (39), in analyzing the reasons reported by students for withdrawing, finds attrition during the freshman year to be primarily for academic reasons. Pantages and Creedon point out that the most frequently cited reasons given by students for leaving college concern academic matters, including poor grades (67, p. 82). Chickering and Hannah (22) studied the withdrawing student, those with whom the student discussed withdrawing, and the topics discussed. They report that the topic most frequently discussed was academic difficulty or under-achievement. Although academic problems may be the most common reason given for dropping out, Eckland (34) notes that academic difficulties usually lead to temporary withdrawal or transfer but not to permanent withdrawal.

Attrition

In spite of the very extensive literature on attrition from higher education, there is surprisingly meager empirical data showing why students drop out. Many have noted (4, 26, 27, 42, 67, 91) that the basic cause of the deficiency is oversimplification, as illustrated by the numerous single variable studies showing no significant results because they fail to acknowledge the complexity of withdrawal from college.

In an attempt to capture the complex process of inter-
action between individuals and institutions that leads to a
variety of forms of dropout behaviors, Tinto has formulated
a theoretical model of attrition (Figure 1). His longitu-
dinal model argues that individuals enter college with a
variety of attributes and experiences and varying degrees of
commitment to a particular goal or to the institution it-
self. Given these differences, Tinto's scheme argues that
"it is the individual's integration into the academic and
social systems of the college that most directly relates to
his continuance in that college" (91, p. 95). As the
integration into these systems increases, the level of com-
mitment to the institution and goal is also increased and
chances of dropping out decreased. Persistence is more
likely if integration into the academic and social system is
balanced:

> . . . a person can conceivably be integrated into the
> social sphere of the college and still drop out because
> of insufficient integration into the academic domain of
> the college (e.g., through poor grade performance).
> Conversely, a person may perform adequately in the aca-
> demic domain and still drop out because of insufficient
> integration into the social life of the institution
> (e.g., through voluntary withdrawal). Nevertheless,
> one would expect a reciprocal functional relationship
> between the two modes of integration such that exces-
> sive emphasis on integration in one domain would, at
> some point, detract from one's integration into the
> other domain. Too much time given to social activities
> at the expense of academic studies springs to mind as
> one example of such a relationship (91, p. 91).
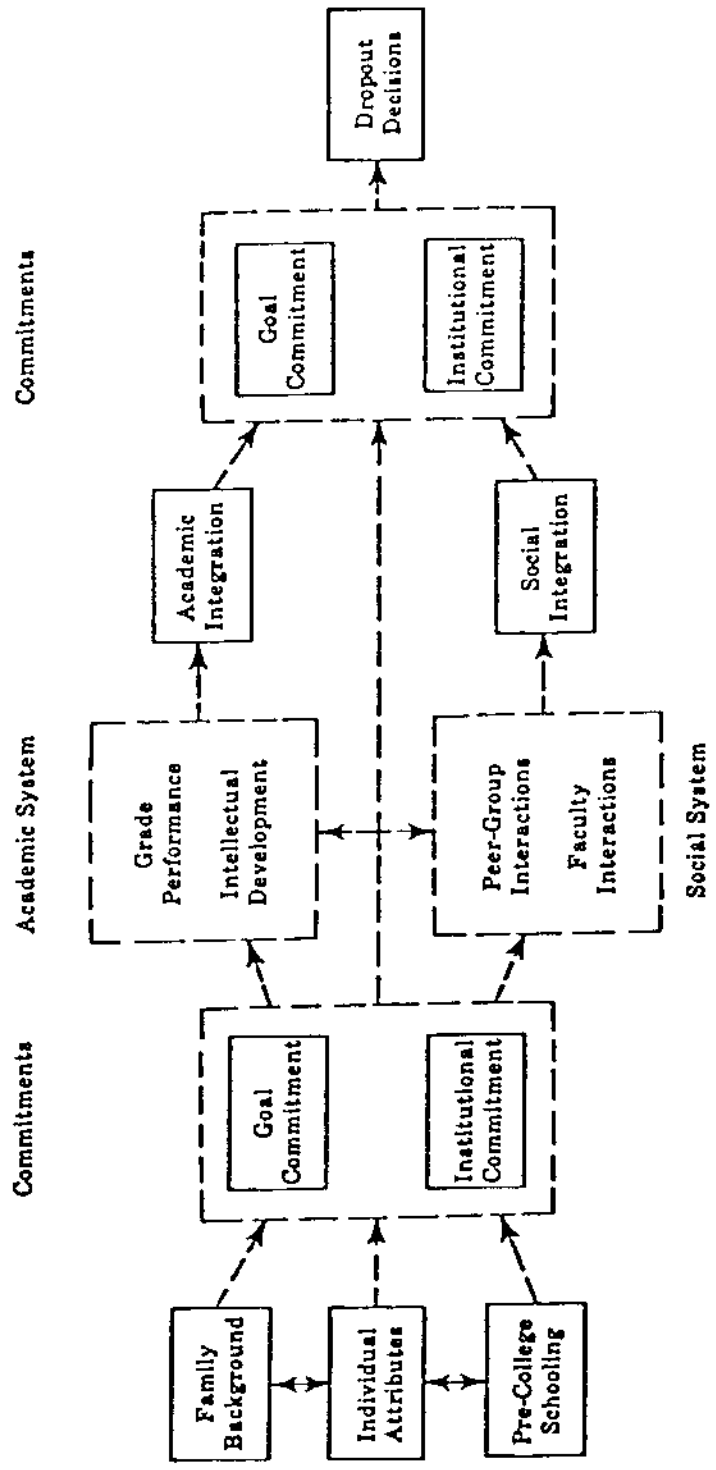
Fig. 1--Tinto's conceptual schema for dropout from college

Terenzini and Pascarella provide empirical data supporting Tinto's theoretical model. They conclude that "sizeable reductions in attrition may be possible only through actions which touch both the social and academic dimensions of the institutional environment" (89, p. 25). Noel concurs, describing "a staying environment" as

        Academic (Curriculum, Instruction)
            Progress toward educational career goal
            Academic success
            Program options clear
            Advising and support services available
        Social/Psychological (Faculty, Peers, Environment)
            Feeling of belonging
            Social integration
            Personal involvement
            Positive identity
            High self-esteem (64).

Further, Noel states that "retention should not be an institutional goal but rather a by-product of improved educational programs and services for students" (64). The experimental program is an effort at such improvement. Although it is aimed primarily at improving the integration of freshmen into the social system of the institution, a secondary goal is assistance in adjusting academically. Studies by Demitroff (32) and by Gekowski and Schwartz (42) suggest that an ongoing program of orientation which is more comprehensive than traditional models will improve the integration of new students into the college environment.

The Impact of Peers

Studies of peer groups provide abundant evidence that the influence of peer groups and group norms on college students is highly significant. Newcomb, in his landmark studies of college peer groups (38, 62), provides a theoretical base for his contention that peer-group experiences rank above any other factor in determining a student's attitude toward college, career, and life in general. In brief, he argues that the response of a person to a situation is based on perception rather than reality. The kinds of perceptual habits that a person develops are influenced largely by peer groups for two primary reasons: the power of the group to reward and punish and the basic human desire and need for relationships with other human beings.

Research including case studies and statistical analyses support Newcomb's emphasis on the significance of peer relationships. Some, based on the evaluation of formal peer-counseling models, document the effectiveness of undergraduate college students as behavioral change agents (18, 43, 48, 94, 98). Davie (30, p. 257) notes the importance of peers in the overall development of adolescents, particularly in gaining independence and establishing identity. Armstrong (3) builds on the theories of Maslow (57) and Schofield (74) among others, in contending that intimate friendships are potentially therapeutic in themselves.

Dressel and Lehmann (33) note the impact of groups within
residence halls, particularly roommates, on college stu-
dents' attitudes and values. Like Newcomb, Wallace notes
the impact of peers on the student during "his transitional
institutional life" but even moreso on "the larger and often
more burning problems of developing an orientation to life
in general; problems in short, of life-cycle, rather than
institutional socialization" (93, p. 114). In a study by
Wilson (96), Antioch seniors indicated that with the ex-
ception of courses, work, and the maturation process, fellow
students were more significant than any other agent of
change influencing their development, including faculty,
family, the campus and community, college staff and numerous
other factors.

Building on an exhaustive review of the literature,
Feldman and Newcomb pose the following functions that peer
groups can serve for individual students:

1. As part of the intermediate stage between the family
   and larger post-college world, the college peer
   group may help the individual student through the
   crisis of achieving independence from home. . . .
2. Under certain conditions . . . the peer group can
   support and facilitate the academic-intellectual
   goals of the college. . . .
3. The peer group offers general emotional support
   to the students; it fulfills needs not met by the
   curriculum, the classroom, or the faculty. . . .
4. The college peer group can provide for the student
   an occasion for and practice in getting along with
   people whose background, interests, and orientations
   are different from his own. . . .
5. Through value reinforcement, the peer group can
   provide support for not changing. . . . Yet, it can
   also challenge old values, provide intellectual

stimulation and act as a sounding board for new points of view, present information and new experiences to the student, help to clarify new self-definitions, suggest new career possibilities, and provide emotional support for students who are changing. . . .

6. The peer group can offer an alternative source of gratification and of positive self-image, along with rewarding a variety of nonacademic interests, for students who are disappointed or not completely successful academically. . . . Friends and social ties may also serve to discourage voluntary withdrawal from college for other than academic reasons. . . .

7. College peer-group relations can be significant to students in their post-college careers--not only because they provide general social training but also because of the development of personal ties that may reappear later in the career of the former student. . . . (38, pp. 236-237).

A number of studies show that students--freshmen in particular (40)--turn to peers for help with problems far more frequently than they turn to any other source. Dana, Heynen, and Burdette analyze the resources used by students in times of crisis, finding that "students prefer help from their peers to that from professionals identified with campus facilities in time of crisis" (29, p. 60). Kramer, Berger, and Miller report the results of a questionnaire in which "a friend was the most frequently mentioned source of help for the problems of personal unhappiness, unhappy love affair, conflicts with people you live with, troubles with your parents, troubles in your parents' family, and conflicts in areas of values" (55, p. 389). They also noted that sexual problems were frequently discussed with peers and that females turned to friends to discuss discomfort about ethics and religious differences.

Studies of students who withdraw from college also support the contention that students rely primarily on peers for help with problems. Chickering and Hannah (22) note that with the exception of finances, dropouts discuss problems sooner and more frequently with friends than with others. A study of the process of withdrawal by Cope and Hannah (27, p. 55) differs somewhat in that students are shown to discuss financial difficulties most often with peers, even above parents. In general, however, the two studies concur, with Cope and Hannah noting that peers are most frequently turned to in problems of academic difficulties, religious beliefs, attitudes and values, and limitations in curriculum or extra-curricular activities, as well as finances. The only problems in which peers are insignificant, according to Cope and Hannah, are educational opportunities elsewhere and college rules and regulations.

Chickering points to peers as the single most influential factor in the development of college students:

> A student's most important teacher is another student. Friends and reference groups filter and modulate the messages from the larger student culture. They amplify or attenuate the force of curriculum, faculty, parietal rules, institutional regulations. They can trump the best teacher's ace and stalemate the most thoughtful or agile dean. Thus relationships with close friends and peer groups, or subcultures, are primary forces influencing student development in college . . . (21, p. 253).

The effect of peers on academic development is not necessarily negative, however. Feldman and Newcomb suggest that

peer groups "can support and facilitate the academic and intellectual goals of the college" (38, p. 236). Carew (20) reports that students with high peer acceptance achieved significantly higher grades than did those with low peer acceptance. Damico (28) notes a relationship of clique membership to academic performance. In a study of attrition, Sexton (75)) points out that underachievers tend to have best friends with poor grades, while overachievers have best friends with good grades. Shapiro and Voog's study of "inherently helpful students" and the effect of first-semester freshmen on roommates' grade point averages shows that "therapy-like behavior was predictive of roommate's GPA. . . . Other factors in roommates which might have been expected to affect GPA (aptitude, earned grade-point) appeared to have no effect" (76, p. 506).

Insofar as peer groups may have an effect on academic performance, they may also be serving as retention agents, for grades have been shown to be positively related to persistence (1, 4, 10, 15, 17, 23, 24, 41, 44, 52, 54, 56, 59, 60, 70). Peers may also have direct influence on attrition in that friendships and social ties discourage voluntary withdrawal (27, 38, 62, 67, 78, 89, 91). Tinto summarizes the research on social integration:

> Social integration via friendship support is directly related to persistence in college. . . . College dropouts perceive themselves as having less social interaction than do college persisters. . . . Even when the individual perceives himself as not being congruent

with the prevailing social climate of the college (i.e., lack of "social fit"), sufficient friendship support can still lead to social integration. . . . Social integration, as it pertains to persistence in college, seems, then, not to imply absolute or even wide-ranging congruence with the prevailing social climate of the institution as much as it does the development, through friendship associations, of sufficient congruency with some part of the social system of the college . . . (91, p. 10).

Pantages and Creedon note conflicting results of studies of social integration and attrition, concluding that "social isolation is not a significant factor in attrition" (67, p. 70), for few students who drop out describe themselves as "lonesome" (51, 88). They conclude, however, that "the quality of the relationship with peers" and "the values that the peer group endorses" are indeed significant factors in attrition and recommend that "conditions or institutional interventions that facilitate the formation of positive group attitudes toward the college are therefore very likely to decrease the rate of attrition" (67, pp. 70-72).

The effect of peers on attitude toward school is less conclusive. Damico, in a study of high-school sophomores at a university-sponsored laboratory school, concluded that "clique membership is related to academic performance but not attitude toward school" (28, p. 34). Newcomb, on the other hand, finds attitude to be the factor most directly influenced by peers (63, p. 478). He notes, however, the studies which show no significant attitude change as a result of peer group influence but points out that

almost without exception . . . these studies have made no attempt to study differentiated peer groups. Their data have generally come from samples (more rarely, whole populations) of certain college classes, with no attention to group membership beyond the assumption that entire classes, or even entire student bodies, constitute membership groups (63, p. 471).

Johnson, Miskel, and Crawford (53), in their research on high school students, note the effect of peers on improved attitudes toward school. This study also indicates a significant, positive relationship peer group influence and extracurricular involvement, a factor linked frequently to retention (4, 6, 7, 75, 79, 91). Slocum (79) reports that in his study of attrition, the dropouts had a significantly lower level of participation in extracurricular activities than persisters with one-fourth of the dropouts having no activities as compared with one-tenth of the enrolled students who had no extracurricular involvement. Astin (7) notes the significance of participation in extracurricular activities, particularly fraternities and sororities, in retention. Tinto contends that "extracurricular activities may provide both social and academic rewards that heighten the person's commitment to the institution and therefore reduce the probability of his dropping out from college" (91, p. 109). He notes, however, that social interaction can have either positive or negative effects on attrition:

Given . . . the importance of academic integration (especially grade performance) in persistence in college, social interaction with one's peers (through

friendship associations) can both assist and detract from continuation in college. Insufficiant social interaction seems to lead primarily to voluntary withdrawal, whereas excessive social interaction may, in some cases, lead to dropout if the group with whom one associates is itself disinclined toward academic achievement or if the intensity of interaction detracts from time spent on academic studies (91, p. 109).

Although the purpose of the program is to assist incoming freshmen, there is evidence that the upperclassmen involved as big brothers and big sisters will experience a beneficial side effect. A study of student volunteers describes the feelings of competence and self worth experienced by those assisting their peers and suggests that programs involving student volunteers "can aid in overcoming the 'just a number' syndrome in higher education and can enable students to experience their true value to themselves and others" (31, p. 60).

In short, the expected effect of peers on attrition, satisfaction, and academic performance are well supported by existing research. The double-edged benefits as well as the ready availability and low program costs make upperclassmen an invaluable resource in assisting freshmen in their adjustment to campus:

> Students can be trained as "peer counselors" at relatively low cost to institutions and can be quite effective in reducing attrition. They can be quite valuable as a "first line of defense," able to contact those who are thinking about dropping out without invoking the image of "official" intervention. They can also serve as extremely useful disseminators of information about where to go to get professional assistance, etc. . . . Students can also be quite effective in study-habit counseling, competent in

leading groups of freshmen with only a small amount of training (67, p. 90).

The Impact of Alumni

The literature has little to say about the relationship of alumni per se to college freshmen, but there is ample support for the premise that the adolescent needs non-parental adult relationships. Chickering, for example, notes the role adults can play in the process of the adolescent's disengagement from parents:

> Perhaps for the first time parents are seen for what they are, middle-aged persons neither omniscient nor omnipotent. The child's early faith in these strong and reliable guides cannot survive mounting evidence of their weakness and fallibility. Then come doubt, anxiety, disillusionment, anger. Reliance is trans-ferred to peers, to nonparental adults, and to occupational and institutional reference groups (21, p. 12).

This transferred reliance goes well beyond providing a sub-stitute parent figure, however, for it offers a broadening of experience and perspective beyond that possible within the family:

> . . . distortions carried from their own family set-tings can be tempered; and as the range of encounters increases, so do opportunities for partial identifi-cation and emulation, for critical modeling.
> . . . .
> Therefore, adults who are accessible and who can be fully known can have substantial impact. With them the actions and reactions habitual with parents and other adults, which were learned during childhood can be reexamined and new behaviors can be tested (21, pp. 238-239).

Chickering notes the necessity of support from both peers
and nonparental adults during the adolescent disengagement
from parents. Even though peers provide the primary support
group, adults provide an essential balance:

> A peer group or a close friendship with one or two
> others the same age provides the principal support
> during this period of disengagement. Frequently these
> new supports themselves can be binding. Sometimes they
> exact a high price for the support provided. A close
> relationship with an older person can temper total
> reliance on these friends and can provide perspective
> on those relationships. With such help it is often
> possible for the young person to leave one group and
> join another when participation is less costly and
> where the values and behaviors better suit the
> developmental directions most desired, or he can move
> among several to acquire the diversity of experience
> through which greater autonomy can be achieved (21, pp.
> 239-240).

The nonparental adult with whom the college student is
most likely to relate is the faculty member (21, 38, 62,
72), although Sanford would include other college staff
members and graduate students as well (72). The reality of
forming close relationships with faculty, however, is
questionable. Feldman and Newcomb summarize the studies of
faculty-student contact outside the classroom, concluding:

> With the exception of certain smaller schools, students
> in general do not indicate very much or very close con-
> tact with faculty outside the classroom. Between
> one-third and two-thirds of the students, depending on
> the college, say that their contact with faculty is
> quite infrequent. Also large minorities or even
> majorities of students at various schools describe a
> fairly depersonalized environment in which they see
> their teachers as not especially concerned with their
> personal welfare (38, p. 249).

Faculty relationships may be hindered by the peer culture, according to Sanford: ". . . the student peer group may be quite productive of devices for keeping the faculty at a distance, forcing them always to behave like faculty--even to behave all alike--so that litle is learned about adultness, either through observation or through forced variation of responses" (72, p. 274).

Sanford also distinguishes between students who are primarily peer-oriented and those who are primarily adult-oriented. Those who are peer-oriented typically stereotype adults either as authority figures or as benignly benevolent subjects for exploitation. Both types of students need adult relationships, however, particularly the peer-oriented:

> one way--perhaps the only way--in which peer-oriented students can attain freedom in personal relationships is for faculty members to enter importantly into their lives, stir them up, and produce situations that will expose the inappropriateness of old ways of reacting by revealing the differences between real adults and the stereotypes of adults that characterize peer-oriented students (72, pp. 275-276).

It is clear that adult relationships are important to the college student's development. Establishing and maintaining such relationships, however, may be difficult:

> Most students for the first time find themselves cut off from intimacies with adults; they probably see little of their parents, and their teachers neither invite intimacies nor welcome students into faculty society. Such a combination of circumstances is hardly calculated to aid the student in his search for identity --precisely at the time when he is least certain about it (62, p. 477).

Alumni comprise a seldom tapped source, a viable alternative

to the faculty in providing opportunities for adult rela-

tionships. The role they can play is multifaceted: a

surrogate parent and yet a nonparent, related to the uni-

versity and yet separate from it. The literature offers no

evidence permitting a prediction of the degree of impact

that alumni might have on incoming freshmen. Nevertheless,

there is ample indication that they may be a highly signif-

icant component of the program.

Summary

The need of entering college freshmen for support

systems--both peer and adult--is well documented by decades

of research. Rapid integration into the college environment

is important:

> Researchers reveal that the first few weeks of college
> are critical, reinforcing through the remaining four
> years student expectations, aspirations, and precon-
> ceptions or denying them and establishing new
> guidelines by which the students view themselves in the
> educational process at that college. A number of
> investigators have noted that young persons both expect
> and want to change and develop in college and the
> opportunity for the college to capitalize on this
> expectation is virtually limited to the first semester
> (78, p. 41).

Assisting the student in his or her integration into the

campus environment can be beneficial to the student in terms

of greater satisfaction and improved academic performance

and to the institiution as well, as retention is improved.

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CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM

The experimental program grew out of the anxieties and needs frequently expressed by Texas Christian University freshmen during the summer orientation program and the first few weeks of school. Students attending the July orientation sessions have a chance to visit campus, meet other students, and find answers to their questions before they actually move to campus. Still they express anxiety about arriving in August and the likelihood of finding the few acquaintances they have made at orientation.

Those attending the final orientation session just prior to registration in August face a different set of problems. Because the session is limited to students living at least five hundred miles from campus, the group is made up primarily of non-Texans, many of whom have never visited the campus or even the state before. As recruitment efforts have expanded, it is not uncommon for a student's only link to campus to be the Admissions Office. Knowing no other students who have attended TCU, these students leave home with a myriad of unanswered questions on topics ranging from classes to climate.

Arrival on campus brings a new set of problems for in-coming freshmen. Some, traveling alone for the first time, must cope with the unfamiliar logistics of getting themselves and a year's supply of personal belongings to campus and into a dormitory room. Others have parental assistance with moving in, but, unlike those who arrive alone, still face the moment of separation from their parents. In addition, all of them must begin the socialization process of becoming part of their new environment.

In response to these needs for increased pre-entry information and assistance upon arrival, the experimental program was conceived. This chapter will describe the development of the program and its implementation.

Development of the Program

Planning

Once the program was conceived, a search was made for similar models. It was essential to the concept that fresh-men be assigned to groups to reap the benefits of small stable units of peers and that someone designated a "significant other," preferably an upperclassman and/or alumnus, be assigned to lead the group. Although the literature offered no descriptions of comparable programs, members of the National Orientation Directors Association noted the similarity of the Vanderbilt VUCEPT Program.

Interviews were arranged with the student president of the VUCEPTors and the staff advisor to the organization, as well as several freshmen who had participated in the program and, in a few cases, their parents. The interviews provided a model for structuring the groups and laying out ground rules. Even though the group size of fifteen was larger than that of the teams in this experiment and no alumni were included in the project, the Vanderbilt program provided encouragement that a program with minimal structure and direction, staffed by volunteers, could be successful. Both the president and the staff advisor provided invaluable tips and caveats that ultimately proved highly beneficial.

As a result of these interviews and suggestions from various participants of the National Orientation Directors Association, the basic plan for the program evolved. Groups of new freshmen, a maximum of ten per group, would be selected with the group composition matching the total population in the proportions of males and females and in the distribution of entrance examination scores. There would be no attempt to select on the basis of residence. Each group would be assigned to a big brother and big sister, carefully selected and trained for the purpose, and an alumni family living within Tarrant County. It would be the responsibility of the big brothers and sisters to correspond with the students during the summer, answering questions, ascertaining

whether transportation from the airport was needed, and offering to be on hand when the student arrived to assist in moving in. Further, the upperclassmen were to arrange group activities during the first few weeks and maintain contact with individuals in the team to the degree it seemed appropriate. The alumni agreed to assist in providing transportation to campus and to host a party in their home for the group in the first weeks of the semester. Beyond these requirements, the teams were urged to be sensitive and responsive to the particular needs of the group and creative in finding solutions to problems and devising activities to build group rapport. Intended primarily for the first few weeks, group activities were to taper off, according to the needs and desires of the group, with continued relations between the group or individuals at the discretion of the participants.

Once the basic plan was laid, arrangements were made with TCU's director of the master's degree program in Student Personnel Services for a student interne to assist in the implementation of the program. With her help, in early February a projected calendar was laid out and the program was underway.

Student Selection

The next task was to recruit and select big brothers and big sisters for the program. For the project to be small enough to manage but large enough for the results to be meaningful, approximately twenty-five teams would be selected. Because the number of upperclassmen chosen would be small, rather than run the risk of wide-scale disappointment caused by over-selling the program, a brief and relatively low-key appeal was made for applicants.

The recruitment campaign was publicized for only one week prior to the initial information session, February 15. The primary appeal was made in a letter to presidents of student organizations and other campus leaders (Appendix A), briefly explaining the program and requesting that they announce at their group meetings that interested students should attend the February 15 meeting for further information. In addition, two fliers were designed with simple lead lines ("REWARDing experience as a big brother or big sister--Freshmen need you" and "HELP. . . incoming freshmen adjust to campus life--Be a big brother or sister") and the time and place of the information session. These fliers were reproduced on paper of two bright, contrasting colors and posted widely across campus. Finally, the campus newspaper, the Daily Skiff, ran a feature story on the new program.

In addition to the formal publicity campaign, some students were informally encouraged to apply by various staff members and other students. This word-of-mouth campaign seems to have been highly effective in increasing the number of applications, especially in the period between the initial information session and the application deadline, March 1. Many students who applied indicated that they had heard about the program from a friend or staff member.

Approximately forty students attended the initial information session. The purpose of the program, the rationale for a pilot study, and the anticipated activities were explained to the group. The criteria for serving as a big brother or big sister were outlined: an interest in and, preferably, a demonstrated ability to assist other students; a positive view of TCU; and a commitment to the objectives of the program. In addition, those selected must participate in training and be willing to write letters to each of the freshman assigned to them and continue correspondence if a response was received; to return to campus early for the fall semester (August 19); and to commit time and effort in the early weeks of the semester to the program. The big brothers and sisters could also expect to bear some minimal costs of the program (stationery, postage, Dutch-treat entertainment of their freshmen, an organization T-shirt, etc.). Students of any classification were

eligible, and some effort would be made to select a group representing a variety of organizations, majors, interests, geographical areas, and such. In addition, the group was told that anticipated outcomes were increased satisfaction, decreased attrition, greater academic success, and a general increase in campus involvement for these freshmen.

Applications were distributed and the selection process described. In addition to name/address information and other demographic data, the application included a listing of campus activities, a request for faculty references, and the following open-ended questions: What do you see as the major needs of incoming freshmen and how could you help meet these needs? How do you see yourself as an individual? (Appendix B). Those wishing to continue in the process were to turn in their applications to the Office of University Advisement by March 1. At the time the application was submitted, an appointment for an individual interview was arranged. The interview provided an opportunity for answering questions about the program as well as eliciting information and expressions of attitudes from the applicant. The stress in the questions asked was on the contribution the individual could make to the program. Selection of big brothers and sisters would be posted March 1.

In actuality, the selection process was one of self-screening. The student who had little desire to assist

incoming freshmen and was unwilling to commit himself to the demands of the program did not apply. Grades were not used as a screening criterion, for students who struggle academically have valuable insights to share with freshmen. Nor was classification used as a selection variable, for the wisdom of the senior was offset by the closeness of the sophomore to the freshman experience.

Several students who lacked the qualifications or the time to commit to the program were helped in the process of the interview to see the problems in their participation and withdrew their applications. Because the recruiting process yielded more qualified applicants than the forty to be selected the number of groups was increased from twenty to twenty-four to accommodate this number. Several students who applied after the March 1 deadline were named alternates and eventually the number of groups was raised to twenty-six to include all those who went through training.

Recruiting Alumni

Recruitment of alumni families was delayed until selection of big brothers and sisters was complete so that priority could be given to finishing student training before the spring term ended. Early in March, a plan for recruitment of host families was worked out with the assistance of the Director of Alumni Relations and the Fort Worth chairman of LINKS (Leaders in a Network for Key Students), a

nationwide organization of TCU alumni assisting in recruiting and retaining students from their local communities.

A letter was sent April 5 over the LINKS chairman's signature to 150 selected alumni families in Tarrant County, describing the program and inviting them to participate. As a host family they were asked to

1) Meet this spring with the big sister and big brother to whom you are matched;
2) Be available next fall to provide transportation from the airport to TCU for any of your ten freshmen who need such assistance;
3) Invite your ten freshmen and the big brother and big sister to whom you are matched to an informal afternoon or evening at your home; and
4) Maintain contact with your freshmen throughout the school year (Appendix C).

A reply card (Appendix D) was enclosed for their convenience and was to be returned by April 20. In addition to the mailing, several families were contacted personally and invited to participate.

By the end of the spring term, nineteen families had agreed to serve in the program and three others made tentative commitments. Because alumni recruitment was not yet complete and end-of-semester pressures made it difficult to schedule an event for big brothers and sisters to meet the host families, matching of the student/alumni teams was delayed until August. This allowed time during the summer to complete the roster of host families.

Organizing

Following the selection of the big brothers and sisters, a meeting was held March 1 to organize. To do this, a number of ad hoc committees were set up with the following purposes:

1. Workshop Committee (to assist in planning and arranging an April training session for big brothers and sisters);

2. Nominating Committee (to determine the offices needed and the responsibilities of each, solicit nominations from the membership, and prepare a slate of nominees;

3. Panhellenic/Inter-Fraternity Council Committee (to work with Panhellenic and the Inter-Fraternity Council to determine if and how rush restrictions will apply and ensure that all big brothers and sisters who are members of Greek organizations understand and comply);

4. Alumni-Matching Party Committee (to arrange a covered-dish dinner to get acquainted with the host families);

5. T-Shirt Committee (to design, select, purchase, and distribute T-shirts for big brothers and sisters to wear at program events, particularly when welcoming arriving freshmen);

6. Letter Committee (to compose sample letters for big big brothers and sisters, duplicate, and distribute);

7. Gift Committee (to prepare a list of inexpensive gifts to have waiting in the rooms of freshmen when they arrive and plan a crafts workshop if appropriate);

8. Welcome-Back Party Committee (to plan and arrange a party August 19 for big brothers and sisters before freshmen begin to arrive);

9. Moving-In Committee (to set up procedures and a schedule for meeting and assisting arriving freshmen and to coordinate these activities);

10. Activity Planning Committee (to create an extensive list of suggested activities for groups during the first weeks after freshmen arrive);

11. Name-the-Group Committee (to solicit and suggest a list of proposed names for the organization to present to the group for a vote); and

12. Fundraising Committee (to investigate the possibilities of raising money, present a plan to the group for approval, and implement the plan with help of the group).

Students were asked to join one or more of the committees, and volunteers were selected as chairmen.

To simplify communication, a bulletin board was set up
for the group and members were encouraged to check it daily.
Chairmen of the ad hoc committees were able to post notices
of meetings, request input from others, announce plans,
leave messages, etc. To encourage frequent checking of the
bulletin board, out-of-date notices were taken down im-
mediately and new materials went up daily, including news of
honors received by members of the group.

Because the group was selected from diverse segments of
the campus, many students were strangers to each other. In
order for group spirit and cohesiveness to develop, it was
necessary for the members to get acquainted rapidly. From
the beginning, nametags were provided, and students were
urged to spend the first few minutes of each meeting mixing
and getting to know each other. Several days after the
members were selected, a wine-and-cheese party in the co-
ordinator's home gave the students an opportunity to mix
informally. At the end of the evening, forms were distrib-
uted (Appendix E and F), giving them an opportunity to
suggest nominees for offices to the Nominating Committee and
to express preference for being paired with a teammate.
Another form (Appendix G), delineating the expectations of
big brothers and sisters was to be signed and returned,
serving as a contractual agreement that the student under-
stood the purpose and expectations and wished to take part.

The pairing of big brothers and sisters was done by the coordinator and the interne. Each student had listed at least four group members of the opposite sex with whom they would like to serve. Mutual choices were acknowledged and paired accordingly. When the preferences expressed did not match, effort was given to matching complementary backgrounds, such as pairing a member of a sorority with an independent male or a Texan with a New Englander to provide a broader range of experiences within the team. In every case, however, the pairings were based on the preference of at least one member of the team. By March 28, the matching was completed and posted. Pairs were urged to spend time together getting better acquainted and beginning to lay out plans for their group.

Weekly group meetings, usually proceeded by an executive committee meeting, began March 28 continuing through May 7. During this period, the group selected the name Operation Welcome, elected officers, applied and received recognition from the University as an official student organization, selected a logo, and held two fund-raising events. Each of the committees met separately and made reports to the group at the meetings. (Some of the reports are included in the Appendices.) By the final meeting, May 7, the organization of the group was complete, and plans were laid out for the implementation of the program.

Training

A day of training, planned and arranged by the ad hoc Workshop Committee, was held April 22. After a welcome, introductions and announcements, the day began with small groups (three pairs of big brothers and sisters), with each discussing his or her own freshman experience and ways a program such as this could have improved it. The group then reconvened to be led in a series of activities by a youth minister from the Southwest regional office of the Christian Church. His purpose was to heighten awareness of the feelings of loneliness, insecurity, and anxiety common to freshmen and help the group recognize ways peers can have a positive effect in dealing with these feelings.

A folder of materials had been prepared for each student. Included was a seventeen-page summary of significant information about TCU and Fort Worth likely to be important to incoming freshmen, a student handbook, and a freshman curriculum guide used at orientation, plus other materials to be used in the course of the workshop. The information in the folder was reviewed stressing particularly sources of referral. The purpose of the materials in the folder and the review was to give the students accurate answers to anticipated questions of the freshmen and sources for answers to those that were unanticipated.

The remainder of the agenda included a variety of activities and reports planned and presented by some of the ad hoc committees. The Letter Committee distributed instructions for corresponding with the freshmen and samples of letters to be sent initially to each freshman (Appendix H) and reviewed the points of information that were essential, noting that the big brothers' letters were to include points not covered in big sisters' letters. The Gift Committee distributed large purple plastic cups with a TCU logo to be given to freshmen in the program upon arrival. The cups were purchased with proceeds from fundraising activities. Time was allotted for each big brother and big sister pair to plan how they would use the cups (painting names on them, filling with hard candy, plants, popcorn or necessities such as pencils, bandaids, razor blades, etc.). The Activities Committee used small-group brainstorming to produce ideas for group events and individual activities that might occur in the fall. Each group shared its ideas with the total group, producing an extensive list of suggestions. After a final business meeting, the day ended with a weiner roast.

Attendance at the workshop was mandatory. Students who were unable to be present submitted written excuses to the executive committee and were allowed to attend a makeup session May 1.

Alumni training took place during the summer. The host families were given the option of attending sessions either July 9 or August 7. Students who were in the Fort Worth area assisted with the workshops. The sessions were held in the evening and were meant to orient the alumni primarily to the program--rather than to TCU--on the assumption that freshmen would direct questions about the University to peers. Alumni were more likely to be asked questions about Fort Worth and its resources. On the assumption that the host families were already knowledgeable about the community, the sessions were devoted to acquainting the alumni anecdotally with the kinds of problems freshmen experience and the role the host family could play in alleviating them. Group discussion was employed to generate specific ideas on ways the alumni families could be a resource to freshmen.

A joint workshop for big brothers, big sisters, and host families was held August 20 after the students had returned to campus. Following a potluck lasagne supper, introductions, and announcements, the individual teams met to plan upcoming activities for the freshmen in their groups.

Implementation of the Program

Once the big brothers and big sisters were selected and trained, the pre-entry phase of the program could begin. On June 15, the experimental group was selected and divided

into twenty-six subgroups. Each of these was assigned to an Operation Welcome team. Big brothers and sisters were sent the names and mailing addresses of the freshmen in their group, and the correspondence phase began. Freshmen were invited but not necessarily expected to respond to the letters they received. Many did, however, and those with questions were able to get answers before leaving home. In addition to writing letters, some big brothers and sisters reported calling or visiting those who lived in nearby areas.

The alumni were not expected to begin their role in the program until the freshmen arrived for the fall semester. Several, however, elected to write to the families of the freshmen assigned to them, offering to serve as a link to the parents if needed.

A newsletter to big brothers, big sisters, and alumni, prepared by Operation Welcome members attending summer school, was sent in early August. This gave an opportunity for updating information about scheduled events and sharing reports from big brothers and sisters about the responses of freshmen to the program. It also provided a reminder to those who had not completed all their letters.

Freshmen began arriving on campus August 21. For four days, big brothers and sisters, wearing the very easily recognizable Operation Welcome T-shirts, manned a table at

the Student Center where freshmen in the program had been requested to report. The Moving-In Committee supervised groups of big brothers and sisters, working in shifts to greet and assist the freshmen in carrying belongings to their rooms.

At the same time, another committee collected requests received by big brothers and sisters for transportation from the airport. Even though the intention had been to use alumni help primarily in this component of the program, the committee often found it easier to make arrangemants with students who were readily available.

As freshmen began to arrive, individual group activities got under way. With each team trying to respond creatively to the needs of the group, activities were highly diverse. While some teams made formal plans for evenings out--dinner, movies, dancing--others met informally for lunch at the Student Center or attended on-campus events together.

Many contacts were made on a one-to-one basis, with the upperclassmen providing assistance in shopping for forgotten items, giving directions, assisting in changes of regis-tration, introducing freshmen to other students, suggesting campus resources, and simply listening. In one instance, a parent called the Dean of Students to report a death in the family and requested that the big brother or sister assigned

to her daughter accompany the staff member who would break
the news. The big sister stayed with the freshman during
the night and reportedly provided invaluable support
throughout the grief process. Another big sister found
herself sewing buttons on a coat for a little brother
inexperienced with needle and thread. In short, when a need
presented itself, the big brother or big sister tried to
respond in helpful ways.

The relationships with the alumni were just as diverse.
Each group met in the host family's home at least once.
These gatherings included ice cream or watermelon parties,
backyard cookouts before football games, Sunday dinner after
church, potluck suppers, etc. One group spent a Saturday
swimming and boating at a lakehouse. Another met for a
riverboat ride and a stop at an ice cream parlor. Occa-
sionally, host families combined efforts with another team,
having larger parties which allowed mixing between the two
groups.

The response of alumni went beyond group events to
individual relationships as well. Some offered a quiet
place to study or a temporary respite from a roommate.
Others watered plants over the holidays or baked a cake for
a special occasion. One family presented each freshman a
"coupon" book at the end of a party in their home; each book
contained "coupons" for a batch of home-baked cookies, an

overnight stay, a load of laundry, a hamburger supper, a trip to the airport, etc., as an encouragement to the freshman actually to call on them for services. Several alumni wrote to parents before Parents' Weekend in October, arranging a time to get acquainted. Another used community contacts to find tickets to a sold-out ballet performance for some freshman dance majors.

In summary, the program was implemented in a variety of ways with group and individual contacts on the part of both students and alumni. The majority of contacts took place within the first three weeks, gradually diminishing as the freshmen adjusted and found support groups of their own selection. By the end of the semester, no teams were meeting as groups, and individual contacts continued only where personal friendships had developed. Some individual relationships with alumni persisted as well, but as a group effort, the implementation of Operation Welcome was complete.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present, analyze, and discuss the findings of this study. The data will be examined as they relate to each hypothesis.

Hypothesis I

For testing purposes, the stated hypotheses of Chapter I were restated in the null form. Null hypothesis I was: there will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the proportion of students who reenroll for the spring term. A z test of proportion was used with .05 as the level of significance. The data presented in Table I compare the attrition rates of the two groups after the first semester.

TABLE I

FRESHMEN NOT ENROLLED SPRING 1980

Group	Number	Not Enrolled Spring 1980		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Experimental	234	15	6.4	3.236	.0007
Control	234	37	15.8		

On the basis of the data showing a significance level of .0007, the null hypothesis was rejected. The retention of students in the experimental group was significantly greater than that of students in the control group.

An examination of the time of attrition also showed differences in the two groups. Attrition was defined for this study as the failure to reenroll for the spring semester, regardless of previous or subsequent patterns of withdrawal. During the experiment, however, there were two discrete periods of attrition. The first occurred prior to matriculation, for some in the population from which the samples were drawn in June failed to enroll in August. This pre-matriculation attrition is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

FRESHMEN NOT ENROLLED FALL 1979

Group	Number	Not Enrolled Fall 1979		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Experimental	234	8	3.4	2.018	.0436
Control	234	18	7.7		

During the period between the selection of the sample and the end of registration for the fall semester, fewer students in the experimental group canceled their admissions

than in the control group, the level of significance being .0436. Since the only pre-matriculation activity of the program was the correspondence of the big brothers and big sisters, it can be inferred that the letters received by freshmen in the program had significant impact in maintaining their commitment to TCU during the summer.

The second discrete period of attrition occurred after enrollment in August. The attrition of the freshmen matriculating in the fall but failing to reenroll in the spring is presented in Table III.

TABLE III

FRESHMEN ENROLLED FALL 1979 BUT NOT
REENROLLED SPRING 1980

Group	Number Enrolled Fall 1979	Not Enrolled Spring 1980		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Experimental	226	7	3.1	2.545	.0109
Control	216	19	8.8		

The rate of attrition of students actually arriving for the fall semester was significantly higher for students in the control group than for those in the experimental group. Thus it can be inferred that participation in the program led to greater retention. It is not possible, however, to determine whether the program activities which occurred

after the participating freshmen arrived on campus in the fall served as a deterrent to attrition or whether the improved retention was the result of the residual effect of the pre-matriculation correspondence.

In summary, the assertion of Hypothesis I that the proportion of students in the experimental group reenrolling for the spring semester would be greater than in the control group was supported by the data. Moreover, the effect of the experiment on the rate of attrition was significant throughout the study during both the pre-entry and post-entry phases of the program with the cumulative difference in attrition highly significant. On the basis of the data, the null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis as stated in Chapter I was retained.

Hypothesis II

Null hypothesis II was: there will be no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in the degree of satisfaction with the institution as measured by the overall score and the majority of the scores of the subscales of the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire. A one-tailed t test was used to determine the difference in the means of the independent samples with .05 as the level of significance. The results of the CSSQ are presented in Tables IV and V.

TABLE IV

A COMPARISON OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS
ON THE OVERALL SCORE OF THE CSSQ

Group	Number Enrolled*	CSSQ Participants		Mean Score	Standard Deviation	t Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent				
Experimental	223	151	67.7	249.16	32.551	5.74	.0001
Control	212	138	65.1	226.99	33.049		

*Original number less non-matriculants and early withdrawals

TABLE V

A COMPARISON OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS
ON THE FIVE SUBSCALE SCORES OF THE CSSQ

Subscale	Group	Number	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	t Value	Level of Significance
Working Conditions	Experimental	151	46.728	8.5205	3.73	.0001
	Control	138	43.065	8.1717		
Compensation	Experimental	151	49.603	7.6595	4.18	.0001
	Control	138	45.891	7.4311		
Quality of Education	Experimental	151	51.709	7.7577	4.37	.0001
	Control	138	47.536	8.4059		
Social Life	Experimental	151	49.126	10.6480	4.45	.0001
	Control	138	43.536	10.6630		
Recognition	Experimental	151	51.993	6.9623	5.55	.0001
	Control	138	46.957	8.3298		

The data presented in Table IV indicated that students participating in the experimental program experienced much greater satisfaction with the university than those in the control group, the level of significance being .0001. Moreover, when the results of the subscales shown in Table V were examined, a highly significant difference in the satisfaction of the two groups was evident, particularly on the Recognition subscale. This subscale measured the student's satisfaction with his or her acceptance by faculty and peers as a worthwhile individual. The second highest subscale mean score was Social Life, which indicated the level of satisfaction with the opportunities for dating, making friends, and participating in campus events and social activities. The activities of the program were aimed specifically at improved satisfaction in these spheres. The effects, however, extended beyond the targeted areas, and the experimental subjects experienced greater satisfaction on every subscale. The area of satisfaction with the least difference in the means of the two groups was Working Conditions (physical conditions such as residence hall, food service, etc.). Even in this area, however, the difference in the level of satisfaction was significant at the .0001 level.

In summary, the t value required for significance at the .001 level is 3.291. In every case, the t value exceeded this level showing a highly significant difference in

the level, of satisfaction. Thus the null hypothesis was
rejected, and the research hypotheses IIa and IIb, as stated
in Chapter I, were retained.

Hypothesis III

Null hypothesis III stated that there would be no
significant difference in the grade point averages of the
experimental and control groups. A $\underline{t}$ test was used, with a
$\underline{t}$ value of 1.96 required for significance at the .05 level.
The results are shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI

A COMPARISON OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS
ON FIRST-SEMESTER GRADE POINT AVERAGES

Group	Number*	Mean GPA	Standard Deviation	t Value	Level of Significance
Experimental	222	2.9927	.72280		
				.43	NS**
Control	213	3.0230	.73757		

*Number of students receiving grades at the close of the
   fall semester

**No significant difference

The number of students receiving grades at the close of
the fall semester differs from the number of students en-
rolled at the time the CSSQ was administered (Table IV).
One student in the experimental group became ill during the
last week and did not complete the semester, bringing the

number receiving grades to 222. In the control group, one student, who left school before the administering of the CSSQ, failed to complete the formal withdrawal procedures, raising the number in the control group receiving grades to 213.

A t test of the difference in the means of the grade point averages of the experimental and control groups produced a t value of .43. To be significant at the .05 level, a t value of 1.96 was required. Because the difference in the means was not significant and could be attributed to chance, the null hypothesis was retained.

Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV was stated in the null in Chapter I but was restated in three parts for testing since three variables were considered in determining the difference in the effect of the program on males and females. The three subhypotheses stated in the null form were as follows.

a. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on males and on females as measured by the rate of attrition of the experimental and control groups.

b. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on males and on females as measured by the overall score and subscale scores of the CSSQ of the experimental and control groups.

c. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on males and on females as measured by the grade point averages of the experimental and control groups.

A z test of independent proportions was employed to test subhypothesis IVa, analyzing the differences in rates of attrition of males and females. The data presented in Table VII compare male and female attrition within each of the two groups.

TABLE VII

DIFFERENCE IN MALE AND FEMALE ATTRITION WITHIN
THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Group	Number	Not Enrolled Spring 1980		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Experimental Female	151	7	4.64		
Male	83	8	9.64	1.495	NS*
Control Female	151	22	14.57		
Male	83	15	18.07	.703	NS*

*No significant difference

Although the difference between the rate of attrition of males and females was higher in the experimental group and the control group, the difference was insufficient to be

significant. When females in the experimental group were
compared to females in the control group in rates of at-
trition, however, the difference is more pronounced. The
data shown in Table VIII first compare the attrition of
males in the two groups, and then of females.

TABLE VIII

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL
GROUPS IN MALE AND FEMALE ATTRITION

Sex	Number	Not Enrolled Spring 1980		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Male					
Experi- mental	83	8	9.64	1.57	NS*
Control	83	15	18.07		
Female					
Experi- mental	151	7	4.64	2.93	.0036
Control	151	22	14.57		

*No significant difference

A comparison of the attrition of males in the experi-
mental group and males in the control group indicated that
the program had little significant effect on the males
involved; the z value of 1.57 fell short of the 1.96
required for significance at the .05 level. On the other
hand, the experimental program resulted in significantly
better retention of participating females with almost 10 per

cent difference in the rates of attrition in the two groups and a .0036 level of significance. The inference can be drawn that the highly significant effects of the experiment on attrition resided primarily with the group of female program participants.

In summary, a simple comparison of male and female attrition in the experimental group was insufficient to determine whether a difference in males and females led to different effects as a result of the program. Both sexes showed a reduced rate of attrition although the reduction was significant only among female program participants. The cumulative effect, however, was sufficient to indicate a highly significant effect of the program overall on attrition without regard to sex. But when the two groups were compared by sex, the rate of attrition among females in the control group as compared to the experimental group was more than three to one. With a z value of 2.93 and a level of significance of .0036, it can be inferred that the program had a greater effect on females than on males. Thus the null subhypothesis IVa was rejected.

Subhypothesis IVb tested the difference in the means of the two groups on the subscale scores and overall score of the CSSQ. The means of the individual grade point averages tested are summarized in Table IX.

TABLE IX

SUMMARY OF MEAN SUBSCALE SCORES AND OVERALL SCORE
OF THE CSSQ BY SEX AND EXPERIMENTAL STATUS

Scale	Mean Score			
	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Working Conditions	47.2353	46.4700	41.7609	43.7174
Compensation	49.7255	49.5400	44.8478	46.4130
Quality of Education	51.3137	51.9100	46.2609	48.1739
Social Life	49.8431	48.7600	44.3913	43.1087
Recognition	50.0784	52.9700	45.7826	47.5435
Total	248.1961	249.6500	223.0435	228.9565

The difference in the mean scores was tested using a
two-way analysis of variance. The results, presented in
Table X, further supported the earlier findings that the
experimental group experienced a higher level of satis-
faction in every area measured. The data indicated no
significant difference in the effect of the program on males
and females even though females showed a significantly
higher level of satisfaction in the area of recognition than
did males, as evidenced by the between-rows variance at the
.01 level of significance. As a result of the analysis of
variance, null hypothesis IVb was retained.

TABLE X

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE SUBSCALE SCORES AND
OVERALL CSSQ SCORE OF MALES AND FEMALES OF THE
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Scale	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of Significance
Working Con- ditions	Row	18.0999	1	18.0999	.259	.61106
	Column	968.8101	1	968.8101	13.874	.00024
	Interaction	119.0725	1	119.0725	1.705	.19266
	Within	19901.1090	285	69.8284		
	Total	21005.8790	288	72.9371		
Compensation	Row	27.0295	1	27.0295	.473	.49221
	Column	994.6726	1	994.6726	17.403	.00004
	Interaction	49.2630	1	49.2630	.862	.35399
	Within	16289.2270	285	57.1552		
	Total	17358.6840	288	60.2732		
Quality of Ed- ucation	Row	96.3719	1	96.3719	1.478	.22509
	Column	1258.4590	1	1258.4590	19.300	.00002
	Interaction	27.8684	1	27.8684	.427	.51379
	Within	18583.2700	285	65.2045		
	Total	19962.7460	288	69.3151		
Social Life	Row	89.4339	1	89.4339	.784	.37653
	Column	2248.5413	1	2248.5413	19.722	.00001
	Interaction	.6395	1	.6395	.006	.94035
	Within	32492.8710	285	114.0101		
	Total	34835.7270	288	120.9574		

TABLE X--Continued

Scale	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of Significance
Recognition	Row	356.9353	1	356.9353	6.203	.01332
	Column	1836.7822	1	1836.7822	31.921	.00001
	Interaction	20.5489	1	20.5489	.357	.55059
	Within	16399.2540	285	57.5412		
	Total	18606.0080	288	64.6042		
Total	Row	824.0391	1	824.0391	.764	.38284
	Column	35500.3590	1	35500.3590	32.910	.00001
	Interaction	319.5891	1	319.5891	.296	.58666
	Within	307432.8800	285	1078.7117		
	Total	344027.1900	288	1194.5388		

Null hypothesis IVc predicted no significant difference in academic achievement of males and of females as a result of the program. The difference in mean grade point averages is summarized in Table XI.

TABLE XI

MEAN GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF MALES AND
FEMALES IN THE EXPERIMENTAL
AND CONTROL GROUPS

Group	Sex	Mean GPA
Experimental	Male	2.899874
	Female	3.044021
Control	Male	2.812605
	Female	3.139796

A two-way analysis of variance was employed to test the difference in the grade point averages of males and females in the two groups. The results, presented in Table XII, indicate that even though females' grade point averages are higher than males', the difference is consistent in both groups and is not, therefore, a result of the program. Thus the null hypothesis IVc was retained.

TABLE XII

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE MEAN GRADE
POINT AVERAGES OF MALES AND FEMALES OF THE
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of Significance
Row	5.4450	1	5.4450	10.460	.00131
Column	.1006	1	.1006	.193	.66050
Interaction	.8398	1	.8398	1.613	.20471
Within	224.3533	431	.5205		
Total	230.7372	434	.5317		

In summary, the program had no differential effect on males and females in the areas of satisfaction and academic achievement. The differences that resulted between males and females in grade point average and satisfaction occurred in both the experimental and control groups and, therefore, could not be attributed to the program. On the other hand, the attrition rates of males and females in the experiment showed a difference; while male attrition was not affected, female attrition was significantly reduced by participation in the program. As a result of the data, only the null hypothesis IVa, concerning the difference in the attrition rates of males and females participating in the experimental program, was rejected.

Hypothesis V

Like Hypothesis IV, Hypothesis V was stated in the null in Chapter I, but because three measures were used to determine the difference in Texans and non-Texans, it was restated in three subhypotheses for testing.

a. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on Texans and on non-Texans as measured by the rate of attrition of the experimental and control groups.

b. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on Texans and on non-Texans as measured by the overall score and subscale scores of the CSSQ of the experimental and control groups.

c. There will be no significant difference in the effects of the program on Texans and on non-Texans as measured by the grade point averages of the experimental and control groups.

Null subhypothesis Va was tested using a z test of independent proportions to analyze the difference in rates of attrition of Texans and non-Texans. The data presented in Table XIII shows the difference in the attrition rates of in-state and out-of-state residents within each of the two groups.

TABLE XIII

DIFFERENCE IN TEXAN AND NON-TEXAN ATTRITION WITHIN
THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Group	Number	Not Enrolled Spring 1980		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Experimental					
Texan	90	4	4.44	.971	NS*
Non-Texan	144	11	7.64		
Control					
Texan	80	13	16.25	.132	NS*
Non-Texan	154	24	15.58		

*No significant difference

Comparing the attrition of Texans and non-Texans in
each of the two groups offered no indication that place of
residence was a significant factor in retention. When
Texans participating in the program were compared to Texans
in the experimental group, however, a difference related to
geographic background as well as effects of the experimental
program was indicated. A z test of proportion was used to
test the difference. The results of the comparison of
Texans in the two groups, followed by a comparison of
non-Texans, are presented in Table XIV.

TABLE XIV

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ATTRITION OF TEXANS AND NON-TEXANS
IN THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Sex	Number	Not Enrolled Spring 1980		z Value	Level of Significance
		Number	Per Cent		
Texan					
Experi-mental	90	4	4.44	2.561	.01
Control	80	13	16.25		
Non-Texan					
Experi-mental	144	11	7.64	.896	NS*
Control	154	24	15.58		

*No significant difference

According to the data presented in Table XIV, the effect of the program on the attrition of non-Texans was inconsequential. Texans, however, were significantly affected by the experimental program as measured by the rate of attrition. As a result of the .01 level of significance, the null subhypothesis Va was rejected.

Subhypothesis Vb tested the difference in the means of the scores of the Texans and non-Texans in the two groups on the subscale scores and the total score of the CSSQ. A summary of the means tested is presented in Table XV.

TABLE XV

SUMMARY OF MEAN SUBSCALE SCORES AND OVERALL SCORE OF
THE CSSQ BY RESIDENCE AND EXPERIMENTAL STATUS

Scale	Mean Score			
	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Texan	Non-Texan	Texan	Non-Texan
Working Conditions	45.3276	47.6022	40.6809	44.2967
Compensation	48.4138	50.3441	45.2340	46.2308
Quality of Education	52.2241	51.3871	47.4043	47.6044
Social Life	47.3966	50.2043	42.1277	44.2637
Recognition	51.9138	52.0430	46.4255	47.2308
Total	245.2759	251.5806	221.8723	229.6264

When the mean scores presented in Table XV were tested,
the results, shown in Table XVI, indicated a difference in
Texans and non-Texans on the Working Conditions and Social
Life subscales and on the overall score. On each of these
scales, non-Texans were more satisfied with the university
than were Texans. The data also confirmed the tests of
Hypothesis II, showing the experimental group to be
significantly more satisfied than the control group in every
area measured. However, the two-way analysis of variance
failed to show that any differences in the satisfaction of
Texans and non-Texans could be attributed to the experi-
mental program; therefore, null hypothesis Vb was retained.

TABLE XVI

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE SUBSCALE SCORES AND
OVERALL CSSQ SCORE OF TEXANS AND NON-TEXANS OF THE
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Scale	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of Significance
Working Con- ditions	Row	560.1685	1	560.1685	8.209	.00448
	Column	1033.2539	1	1033.2539	15.142	.00012
	Interaction	29.8550	1	29.8550	.438	.50886
	Within	19448.2580	285	68.2395		
	Total	21005.8790	288	72.9371		
Compensation	Row	149.4278	1	149.4278	2.629	.10606
	Column	1026.2319	1	1026.2319	18.052	.00003
	Interaction	14.4632	1	14.4632	.254	.61437
	Within	16201.6290	285	56.8478		
	Total	17358.6840	288	60.2732		
Quality of Ed- ucation	Row	8.4177	1	8.4177	.128	.72034
	Column	1243.4043	1	1243.4043	18.969	.00002
	Interaction	17.8518	1	17.8518	.272	.60217
	Within	18681.2380	285	65.5482		
	Total	19962.7460	288	69.3151		
Social Life	Row	415.5396	1	415.5396	3.682	.05599
	Column	2336.4097	1	2336.4097	20.705	.00001
	Interaction	7.4867	1	7.4867	.066	.79692
	Within	32159.9180	285	112.8418		
	Total	34835.7270	288	120.9574		

TABLE XVI--Continued

Scale	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of Significance
Recognition	Row	13.1085	1	13.1085	.223	.63716
	Column	1839.5415	1	1839.5415	31.288	.00001
	Interaction	7.5839	1	7.5839	.129	.71974
	Within	16756.0470	285	58.7931		
	Total	18606.0080	288	64.6042		
Total	Row	3248.5408	1	3248.5408	3.033	.08269
	Column	36354.0430	1	36354.0430	33.938	.00001
	Interaction	34.8545	1	34.8545	.033	.85698
	Within	305293.1300	285	1071.2039		
	Total	344027.1900	288	1194.5388		

According to null hypothesis Vc, there should be no significant difference as a result of the program in the academic achievement of males and females as indicated by first-semester grade point averages. The mean grade point averages of Texans and non-Texans in the two groups, are shown in Table XVII.

TABLE XVII

MEAN GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF TEXANS AND
NON-TEXANS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL
AND CONTROL GROUPS

Group	Residence	Mean GPA
Experimental	Texan	2.938070
	Non-Texan	3.027287
Control	Texan	2.994131
	Non-Texan	3.075184

By means of a two-way analysis of variance, the grade point averages of Texans and non-Texans in the two groups were tested. The results, presented in Table XVIII, indicated that no significant difference occurred in the grade point averages of Texans and non-Texans in either the experimental or control groups. Thus the null hypothesis was retained.

TABLE XVIII

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE MEAN GRADE POINT
AVERAGES OF TEXANS AND NON-TEXANS OF THE
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of Significance
Row	.7357	1	.7357	1.379	.24087
Column	.2743	1	.2743	.514	.47368
Interaction	.0015	1	.0015	.003	.95808
Within	229.9009	431	.5334		
Total	230.7372	434	.5317		

To summarize, there was no significant difference in the effects of the program on Texans and non-Texans, using satisfaction and academic achievement as the criteria. Nor was the attrition rate of freshmen in the experiment residing out of state affected. Texans, on the other hand, were significantly affected by the program, using retention as a measure.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was undertaken to investigate the effects of a special orientation program on college freshmen. This chapter presents a summary of the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the data, the findings and conclusions derived from the study, and the recommendations suggested by the results.

Summary

The 468 subjects of this study were freshmen entering Texas Christian University in the fall semester of 1979. The subjects were divided into two matched groups, one participating in the experimental program, Operation Welcome, and the other serving as a control group. The experimental subjects were assigned in groups of nine to two upperclassmen who served as a "big brother" and "big sister." The surrogate family group also included a local alumni family. The experimental subjects received letters of welcome prior to leaving home and were met upon arrival by the upperclassmen in Operation Welcome. During the first few weeks of the semester, groups participated in a wide variety of activities aimed at integrating them quickly into the campus and community environment.

The criteria for evaluating the effect of the program were attrition after one semester; academic achievement, as indicated by grade point average; and satisfaction, as determined by scores on the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire administered in November. The data collected were analyzed for statistical purposes. The z test of independent proportions was applied to analyze differences in attrition rates, and t tests were used to test grade point averages and satisfaction scores. In addition, the effect of the program on males and females, Texans and non-Texans, was analyzed by means of z tests and two-way analyses of variance.

Findings

Statistical treatment of the data presented in Chapter IV comprised the basis for the rejection or retention of the hypotheses. Each of the hypotheses of Chapter I were re-stated in the null for testing with .10 as the level of significance. The analysis and interpretation of the data resulted in the following findings.

1. The attrition rate of experimental subjects at the beginning of the spring semester 1980 was significantly lower than that of the control group.

2. The number of experimental subjects failing to enroll for the fall semester 1979 was significantly smaller than that of the control group.

3. The number of students beginning the fall semester 1979 but failing to reenroll in the spring was significantly smaller in the experimental group than in the control group.

4. The experimental subjects were more satisfied than the control subjects with every area of the campus environment measured by the CSSQ.

5. There was no significant difference in the mean grade point averages of the experimental and control groups.

6. There was no significant difference in the attrition of males and females in either the experimental or control groups.

7. There was no significant difference in the attrition of experimental males and control males.

8. Significantly fewer experimental females failed to enroll in the spring semester 1980 than control females.

9. There was no significant difference between males and females in the scores of the CSSQ with the exception of the Recognition subscale score, which indicated greater satisfaction of females.

10. There was no significant difference in the effect of the program on the satisfaction of experimental males and females.

11. The mean grade point average of female subjects in both groups was significantly higher that that of males.

12. The difference in experimental male and female grade point averages could not be attributed to the program.

13. There was no significant difference in attrition of Texans and non-Texans in either the experimental or control groups.

14. There was no significant difference in the attrition of experimental and control non-Texans.

15. Significantly fewer Texans in the experimental group failed to reenroll in the spring semester 1980 than Texans in the control group.

16. There was no significant difference in Texans and non-Texans in scores on three subscales of the CSSQ: Compensation, Quality of Education, and Recognition.

17. Non-Texans were significantly more satisfied in the areas of Working Conditions and Social Life and in overall satisfaction with the campus environment.

18. The differences which were indicated in the satisfaction of Texans and non-Texans could not be attributed to the experiment.

19. There was no significant difference in the mean
    grade point averages of Texans and non-Texans in
    either the experimental, control or an aggregrate
    group.

Conclusions

Based upon the procedures employed for data collection,
the stated limitations and major findings of the study, the
following conclusions merit consideration.

1. A program welcoming freshmen to campus and assist-
   ing them in integration into the college environment
   can have beneficial effects on freshman retention.

2. Correspondence with upperclassmen during the summer
   prior to initial enrollment in college can serve
   as a reinforcement of the incoming freshman's
   commitment to the institution and deter pre-matricu-
   lation attrition.

3. The effects of such a program can improve reten-
   tion of matriculating freshmen.

4. An orientation program such as this can have a
   positive effect on satisfaction of freshmen with
   every aspect of the campus environment.

5. The beneficial effects of such a program do not
   extend into the academic area, but neither is ac-
   ademic achievement affected negatively.

6. Females respond more favorably than males to the program, but only in the area of retention.

7. Texans' response to the program is also more favorable than non-Texans, but only in the area of retention.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Further research is needed to determine the separate effects of the pre-matriculation exchange of correspondence and the activities upon arrival on program participants. It is clear that attrition prior to enrollment was affected only by the correspondence. Later effects of the program could be attributed to either.

2. Further research should investigate the time of attrition and relative effects of the program as a deterrent. For example, two experimental subjects withdrew during the fall semester in contrast to four in the control group. The numbers were too small for significant statistical results, but the difference is an indication that the program may have had an effect.

3. Further research should examine the difference in satisfaction of Texans and non-Texans with social

life and living conditions, looking at expecta-
tions, socio-economic background, etc.

4. Considering that the retention benefits of the
program were greater for females than males but
that the overall attrition rate of males is great-
er, additional solutions for retaining freshmen
males should be sought.

5. Further investigation of the retention benefits
of the program is needed. It is clear that the
effect of the experiment on attrition was highly
significant, particularly for Texans and females.
Although the two categories were not combined for
the purposes of this study, a preliminary indica-
tion of a significant difference in attrition of
the experimental and control Texas females is a
z score of 2.72 indicating a .007 level of sig-
nificance. Other variables such as SAT scores,
specific home state, major, residence hall, pa-
rental income, etc. might also be correlated
with the retentive effects of the program.

6. Considering the greater effect of the program on
Texans than non-Texans, admissions trends should
be studied as they relate to the program. For
example, inflated costs of student recruitment
could reduce out-of-state admissions efforts.
Further, recent demographic trend analysis makes

it clear that Texas, even more than other sunbelt
states, can expect a disproportionate growth in
the pool of eighteen-year-olds residing within
the state. As a result, the balance of Texans
and non-Texans of future classes could shift
dramatically, making such a program highly valu-
able to the university.

7. A follow-up study should be conducted at the
   beginning of the fall semester 1980, examining
   the attrition patterns of subjects after one
   year.

8. A study of upperclassmen who served as big sisters
   and brothers should be conducted, comparing the
   rate of attrition with that of other upperclassmen
   to determine the reciprocal effects of program
   participation.

9. A correlational study of CSSQ scores and attrition
   patterns should be conducted to investigate the
   relationship of satisfaction and retention.

10. Upperclassmen serving as big brothers and sisters
    should receive specific training in assisting
    freshmen academically if there is to be an effect
    on grade point averages. Studies have consistent-
    ly shown the effectiveness of peer advisors, but
    training is an essential prerequisite.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TCU

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Fort Worth, Texas 76129
817-921-7486

Director of University Advisement
for Freshmen and Premajors

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February 7, 1979

To: Organization Presidents/Leaders

From: Carol R. Patton   *cep*

Most of you can probably remember the anxieties you
experienced as entering freshmen, and even though you
may have attended orientation in the summer, you probably
felt awkward, even lonely, when you first arrived on
campus in the fall. Those all too common feelings often
make a rocky start for new students. I am seeking your
help in alleviating the problem.

We need thirty students with a wide range of interests,
abilities, and backgrounds, who will serve as big brothers
and big sisters to new students. A team made up of a male
and a female upperclassman and a local alumni family will
be assigned ten incoming freshmen. Duties will include
writing to them during the summer, greeting them when they
arrive in the fall (alums will pick them up at the airport
if needed), helping them move in, getting the group
together for lunch, a party at the alum's house, an "orienta-
tion" to the social scene, or whatever gatherings fit the
group. In short, the role of the team is to see that their
freshmen have answers to questions, advice and help when
needed, and enough company that they feel they are part of
TCU from the moment they hit campus.

If your organization has members who will be back next fall
and would make good big brothers or big sisters, I hope you
will urge them to attend an information session Thursday,
February 15, at 7:00 p.m. in the Student Center, Room 218.
If they are unable to be there, applications will be available
in my office, Reed 107. You might point out to potential
applicants that no special expertise is required (this year's
freshmen might be more in tune with the problems than anyone)
and that there is no need for them to be in Fort Worth for
the summer as long as they can be here when the freshmen
arrive in the fall.

I'm convinced that the best solution to the problems faced
by entering freshmen lies in students helping students. The
impact of such a program could be highly significant both for
the freshmen and for TCU. I hope your organization will be
represented in this effort.

APPENDIX B

BIG BROTHER AND BIG SISTER APPLICATION

Name _____ Classification _____

Expected Date of Graduation _____ Current GPA _____

Sex ___ TCU Box _____ Residence Hall Address _____

TCU Phone _____ Major _____

Summer Address _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Employer _____ Working Hours _____

Activities:

Respond to the following questions on the back:

    What do you see as the major needs of incoming freshmen
    and how could you help meet these needs?

    How do you see yourself as an individual?

List at least one faculty member who may be called as a
reference:

_____   _____

Return to Reed 107 or TCU Box 29850A

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APPENDIX C

TCU ⬡⬡ LINKS

Leaders
In a
Network for
Key
Students

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April 5, 1979

Dear Tarrant County Alum,

As part of our new LINKS program for alumni involvement in student recruitment, TCU has asked the Fort Worth LINKS committee to assist in a special project. In order to improve retention of entering freshmen students who come to TCU from great distances and who feel lost and lonely in unfamiliar surroundings, it has been suggested that such students be matched with a local alumni family who would act as parents or friends.

For this 1979-80 year, a pilot program has been developed to match 250 freshmen with host families and a big brother and big sister who are current members of the TCU student body. Each family and big brother, big sister team will be responsible for ten freshmen.

The twenty-five male and female students who will serve as big brothers and big sisters have already been carefully screened and selected. They are excited and enthusiastic...and now all that is needed is to identify twenty-five alumni families who are equally as willing to participate.

As a host family, you will be asked to:

1) Meet this spring with the big sister and big brother to whom you are matched;
2) Be available next fall to provide transportation from the airport to TCU for any of your ten freshmen who need such assistance;
3) Invite your ten freshmen and the big brother and big sister to whom you are matched to an informal afternoon or evening at your home; and
4) Maintain contact with your freshmen throughout the school year.

Since it is important that alumni families meet with big brothers and big sisters before the TCU spring semester concludes, we would appreciate your indicating your interest in being a host family by April 20. You may respond by returning the enclosed card. The twenty-five alumni families will be selected on a first come, first serve basis.

Thanks so much for your interest. You will be assisting TCU in a a very grand way by volunteering to be a part of this program.

Cordially yours,

Angie Ambrose Cochran   '71
Fort Worth LINKS Chairman

APPENDIX D

ALUMNI REPLY CARD

TCU LINKS: LEADERS IN A NETWORK FOR KEY STUDENTS

_____ Yes, I would like to be a host family for 1979-80.

_____ Sorry, I am unable to assist this year.

_____ I would like to have more information about the Fort Worth LINKS Committee.

Name _____ Class Year _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Office Phone _____

APPENDIX E

NOMINATION FORM

I would like to be considered for the following offices:

_____ President

_____ Vice President

_____ Secretary

_____ Treasurer

I would like to submit the following nominations:

Name   Office

Signed:_____

PLEASE RETURN TO REED 107 BY WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7.

APPENDIX F

PAIRING REQUEST FORM

List at least four preferences for the person you would like
to be paired with as a Big Brother/Big Sister team. Put the
names in rank order with your first choice number 1. You may
list as many as you would be willing to be paired with but
please include at least four names.

    1.

    2.

    3.

    4.

Signed: _____

PLEASE RETURN TO REED 107 BY WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7.

APPENDIX G

BIG BROTHERS-BIG SISTERS AGREEMENT FORM

A Big Brother or Big Sister will be expected to participate
in the following activities:

- planning and organizing efforts of the group during
  the spring semester.

- participating in an April workshop.

- writing letters to approximately ten freshmen in
  late June or early July and answering questions
  of those who respond.

- greeting freshmen as they arrive and assisting them
  in moving in, beginning approximately August 21.

- providing an inexpensive welcome gift for the fresh-
  men in the group in cooperation with the other team
  member.

- arranging activities during the first two weeks, or
  longer if needed, which help the freshmen meet people
  and become integrated into TCU and the community.

- cooperating with the assigned alumni family.

- continuing the relationship with the freshmen in the
  group on an informal basis throughout the year, giv-
  ing help where needed and planning activities as they
  seem appropriate.

- evaluating the project at the end of the first semes-
  ter so that plans can be drawn for next year.

A Big Brother or Big Sister must also be committed to the pur-
pose of the program, assisting freshmen in becoming integrated
to TCU and the Fort Worth community. The program must not be
viewed as a recruiting vehicle for any organization or cause.

* * *

I understand the purpose and activities of the Big Brother-
Big Sister program and wish to participate.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

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APPENDIX H

REPORT OF THE LETTER COMMITTEE

The Letter Committee worked on the following three items
which we think will help Big Brothers and Big Sisters in
writing letters of introduction to freshmen this summer:

1. A general outline to suggest a form the letters
   might take;
2. Sample letters, to be used as guides but not as
   mandatory formats;
3. A list of suggestions regarding the content of
   the letters.

Please remember how very important these letters are to the
success of Operation Welcome. As Big Brothers and Sisters,
we are responsible for getting the letters written.

We would like to stress that personal initiative is en-
couraged; we do not intend to dictate what the Big Brothers
and Sisters say in their letters. We hope these materials
will be helpful, however, and that members will use some of
our ideas and some of their own ideas to construct really
dynamic letters.

Outline of the Letter

 I. First Paragraph

     This paragraph might serve to welcome the student to
     TCU, and particularly to introduce yourself as a mem-
     ber of Operation Welcome who will be working with him
     when he gets here. You might say something about
     yourself so that the freshman feels he knows something
     about his "Big Sibling." You might tell him your name,
     where you're from, your major, which dorm you live in,
     or some aspect of TCU you really enjoy.

II. Second Paragraph

     This paragraph will include very important information
     for the freshman:

     A. Big Sisters will write to tell them to disregard
         instructions from the housing office telling them

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to report first to their residence halls; instead they will come directly to the Student Center where we'll be waiting. Girls, you also need to ask the freshmen at this point if they need a ride from DFW, and, if so, to let us know the date, time, and flight number of their arrival.

B. Big Brothers will write this second paragraph to (briefly!) explain Operation Welcome. Remember that the freshman is unfamiliar with college, not to mention our program. In a sentence or two, tell him the aims of our organization, the structure of the program (Big Brother/Big Sister/Alumni family teams) and who his Big Sister and alumni family are. You might also mention possible activities planned for your group.

III. Third Paragraph

In this paragraph you might express an interest in the freshman, comment on his home town if you've been there or have relatives from the area, etc. Indicate your willingness to answer questions and encourage him to write back. Ask when he plans to arrive on campus. Above all, make him feel that you're interested in him and in his adjustment to college.

Suggestions

1. Letters should be handwritten on stationery (notebook paper is tacky!).

2. Make the letter interesting, but don't worry about length. A page to a page and a half is fine.

3. Possibly include a list of items that are often overlooked by students when they first come to college (items such as wastebaskets and can-openers).

4. Get off to an enthusiastic start; remember, this is your letter of introduction!

5. Avoid mention of specific organizational affiliations --be pro-TCU.

6. Remember--these are only guidelines, hopefully useful ones. Add your own personal touch, and feel free to use any ideas of your own.

Sample Letter for Big Brothers

Dear (Freshman),

Welcome to TCU! My name is (   ), and it's my privilege
to be your Big Brother in TCU's Operation Welcome, a new
program for introducing freshmen to campus life. I'm from
(   ), and I'm a (classification) majoring in (   ).
My experience at TCU has been exciting. I have especially
enjoyed the opportunity to meet many fantastic people (OR
the interest the professors here take in their students,
OR the many great activities open to students; whatever
has pleased you most about TCU).

Operation Welcome is a program that TCU has just started.
You are one of a limited number of freshmen who will have
the opportunity to participate in the program this fall.
The program consists of fifty-six TCU students paired
into Big Brother/Big Sister teams and working closely
with alumni families to help familiarize you with TCU and
to assist you in adjusting to TCU. Each Big Brother/Big
Sister team will work with a group of ten freshmen. Your
Big Sister, (my partner), is (   ). Feel free to write
to either of us regarding any questions you have about
college in general or TCU in particular. We'll be more
than happy to answer. When you arrive on campus in the
fall, we (along with your alumni family) will be here to
greet you and help you in any way we can. Also, (my part-
ner) and I will be planning various activities for our group
during the first part of the semester.

When you find out when you'll be arriving on campus in
August, please let us know. (Partner) and I are both
looking forward to meeting you. Be sure to write to
either of us if we can help in any way. Have a great
summer, and I'll see you on campus!

Sincerely,

P. S. My address is: (Partner's)address is:

_____   _____

Sample Letter for Big Sisters

The first and third paragraphs of the Big Sister's letter will probably follow a format similar to that in the Big Brother's sample letter. Try to use your own words--we don't want the freshmen getting two identical letters!

The second paragraph includes vital information for the freshmen that Big Brothers won't be including in their letters. A sample of the Big Sister's second paragraph might be as follows:

> Members of the Operation Welcome program will be on campus to meet you when you arrive in August. As a Big Sister, I will work with my partner (   ), (your Big Brother), and an alumni family to help greet you and the nine other freshmen in our small group within the program. Since this is the first year Operation Welcome is functioning, we are only working with a part of the incoming freshman class. The Housing Office will send instructions to all freshmen to report directly to their dormitories upon arrival on campus. However, as one of the participants in our program, you may go first to the Brown-Lupton Student Center where members of our program will be waiting. We will help you check into your dorm from there. If you have any questions at all, please let me know. Also, if you need someone to meet you at either airport in Dallas, tell me the date and time of your arrival and the flight number. We will arrange for an alumni family to pick you up.

APPENDIX I

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rules for Sorority Members Participating

in Operation Welcome

1. Do not let any of your sorority sisters know who your
    little sisters are until after rush is over.

2. As of Saturday, August 25, you must wear your pin or
    some other identifiable sorority insignia at all times.

3. Do not talk rush at all to any prospective rushee!

Inform your little sisters immediately that you are a
member of a sorority and cannot discuss any aspect of
sorority life with them. Refer all questions to the
Panhellenic Rush Counsellors, who will be living in
dorms from Wednesday, August 25, through Wednesday,
August 30.

These rules are to protect rushees from excessive
pressure from any house. Any Big Sister breaking
these rules will not be allowed to rush for her
sorority and may be subject to other penalties as
deemed appropriate by the TCU Panhellenic Council.

Duties of Operation Welcome Officers:

Report of the Nominating Committee

March, 1979

The Duties of President:

1. to oversee the running of the organization
2. to call general meetings and executive board meetings and preside at each
3. to be an ex-officio member of the organization's selection committee
4. to be an ex-officio member of the chairman's council

The Duties of the Vice-President:

1. to officiate in the President's absence
2. to oversee and coordinate the activities of the committees
3. to call and preside at meetings of the chairman's council

The Duties of the Secretary:

1. to inform members of general, executive board, and chairman's council meetings
2. to take minutes at the three meetings
3. to be an ex-officio member of the chairman's council
4. to handle all correspondence associated with the organization
5. to keep a scrapbook for the organization

The Duties of the Treasurer:

1. to keep records of all financial transactions made by and within the organization
2. to be an ex-officio member of the fundraising committee
3. to prepare a yearly report outlining the finances and expenditures of the organization

Members of the Executive Board:

1. President   4. Treasurer
2. Vice-President   5. Faculty Advisors
3. Secretary

Members of the Chairman's Committee:

1. Vice-President   3. Secretary*
2. President*   4. Faculty Advisors
5. Chairmen of all standing committees in the organization
   and the chairmen of any ad hoc committees whose presence
   on the Chairman's Council is deemed important by the
   Chairman's Council.

* designates ex-officio position

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