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Freshman Friendship and University Connection

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FRESHMEN FRIENDSHIP AND UNIVERSITY CONNECTION

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HONORS THESIS

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Research Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand better the support systems available to freshmen students at the University of Connecticut and how those support systems impact their connection to the university. The study involves two questionnaires, one distributed at the beginning of their first semester and a second follow-up questionnaire at the end of that same semester. Two main research questions are the focus of this study. The first question is whether freshmen who make friends on campus feel more connected than freshmen who report having fewer friends. The second question concerns whether freshmen who feel more connected to the university report stronger feelings of support than freshmen who do not feel connected to the university.

This study has found that support at the university level needs to be more focused on individual students because freshmen who make friends at the university report experiencing greater levels of support. Parents, faculty, and counselors need to reexamine the way in which they provide support in order to reach those students who are not connecting with friends. The First Year Experience Program could better serve freshmen students by focusing on the relationship between students, instructor, and mentor to build friendships within the FYE class, which will foster friendships and support.

Introduction

Colleges and universities nationwide have invested a significant amount of resources in attracting prospective students. Attracting students is only half the battle however. Once they have made the decision to attend a given college or university, the real challenge is ensuring that students follow through with that decision and complete their program of choice.

Many universities, including the University of Connecticut, acknowledge the need to ensure that students follow through with their decision to attend. To that end, the university has taken several steps to maximize its efforts in this area. Even though the university has made significant progress in recent years, there is still much work to be done. Most notably, the university is failing to address two main support issues, the types of support students need, and the sources providing that support. Finally, the university is not adequately addressing the roles and impact of friends, parents, and mentors in that system.

Ratcliff (1991) and Tinto (1993) as cited in Boutler (2002, p.1) propose two factors relating to whether or not a student remains in college: “(1) individual factors or dispositions students have upon entering the institution, and (2) interactional factors that relate to experiences the students have after entering the institution.” This study includes an initial questionnaire distributed when students first enter the university designed to understand any individual factors or dispositions influencing students. The second questionnaire addresses the issue of receiving different types of support from different people and how that impacts students’ satisfaction with the university.

Studies have shown a number of outside sources influence students as they enter college and impact students’ choice to remain at a university. Sanders & Burton (1996) and Ratcliff

(1991), as cited in Boutler (2002, p.2) states: “Studies have shown that students overcame these feelings of pressure and persisted in their education if they made a commitment to their education goals and committed to the belief that attending their institution was the right decision.” Boutler’s (2002) findings emphasize the importance of students’ satisfaction with their institution. Students who are satisfied with the institution will consider their choice to have been the right decision.

Several factors influence students’ belief that they have made the proper decision. One factor is interaction with faculty. Research indicates that faculty are a possible source of influence on student retention. According to Cohorn & Giulliano (1999) Pascarella (1985), and Terenzini & Pascarella (1980) as cited in Boutler (2002, p. 2) “Interaction with faculty also appears to be an important factor in academic adjustment. Studies show that the frequency and quality of student non-classroom discussions with faculty are significantly and positively correlated with academic achievement.” Informational student-faculty contact was associated with persistence in college, according to Pascarella (1980) as cited in (Boutler, 2002, p.2). Boutler (2002) found that students’ perceptions of their instructors as caring about and supporting them are positive predictors of academic adjustment; however, previous research indicates that student do not interact frequently with faculty during their freshmen years. The findings from the 2002 Administration of Your First Year (YFCY) National Aggregates given to 24,824 full time freshmen students at four-year institutions across the country found the Student-Faculty Interactional Factor to be very low. Forty-one point one percent only interact with faculty during office hours one-two times per semester, 57.9% said that they never interact with Teaching Assistants during office hours, and 63.9% said they only interact with their advisor or counselor one or two times a semester. The YFCY National Aggregates indicate that

significantly less than half of the respondents felt uncomfortable getting to know faculty. Based on this previous research this study will include questions evaluating students' expectations and experiences with faculty interaction and its' association with persistence, and will examine if and how support influences students' apparent fear of interacting with faculty (Sax et al., 2002).

Students' self-perception of how well they are adjusting to their new college environment may also impact support and retention. Boutler (2002) found self-perception of intellectual ability to be a positive influence on adjustment in college for both men and women, as would be consistent with research by Ratcliff, (1991) and Tinto, (1993). Students who think positively about themselves may have higher rates of success and retention. Rather than focusing on intellectual academic ability, this study will examine whether students' social skills influence adjustment. Boutler (2002) found that self-perception of social acceptance by peers failed to have a significant influence on adjustment; however, I am not convinced that because one study finds no correlation, that one does not exist at all. The experience of this researcher has demonstrated that self-perception of social acceptance by peers is indeed important.

Another approach to research concerning the question of how friendships are perceived is to solicit data from both members of a friendship dyad. Bagwell et al (2005) studied 51 dyads of close friends by means of questionnaires designed to explore the impact of perceptions and expectations freshmen had regarding the support they would enjoy from future friendships at the university as compared with actual lived experience. The study sought to determine whether friends' perceptions of their relationship are realistic and correlated with adjustment. Meeting freshmen's expectations is vital to retention. One large part of meeting freshmen's expectations is helping them create realistic ones. In the YFCY National Aggregates more than half of the

survey respondents felt “completely” successful in developing friendships with other students during their first year. (Sax et al., 2002).

Bagwell et. al. (2005) note the importance of understanding that friendships are subject to individual feelings. The YFCY National Aggregates found nearly 80% of students said they interact with friends on campus on a “daily” basis whether by phone, via email, or Instant Messenger (Sax et al., 2002). This study will explore whether freshmen have consistent views of friendships over the course of their first semester. If that is not the case, then how do expectations surrounding friendship change? Finally this study will explore how expectations about the university change if the expectations regarding future friendships discussed above are not met. Do students leave the university if their expectations of the university, especially in terms of friendship and support, are not met?

The most important variable in this study is support. Cutrona et al. (1994) as cited in DeBerad (2004, p.6) discovered “Total level of social support was a significant independent predictor of academic achievement, which confirmed our hypothesis and adds to previous literature relating to social support and college academic achievement.” DeBerad et al. is the foundation for this study the aim of which is to further examines why and how social support factors into retention. If social support does in fact have a strong influence, as DeBerad et al. and others suggest, both the timing and source of that social support are key variables in understanding how the university can most effectively support students.

Students can receive support from a variety of people. One source of support for many students is a mentor. The UConn First Year Experience program includes a student mentor as well as a faculty instructor who can act as a mentor/class instructor. Border et.al (2005), as part of a larger study at the University of Arizona, solicited data from 112 first-year students. They

had them complete self-report scales and investigated the relationship between university-based mentoring experiences and first year Latina/o students' perceived comfort in the university environment. The study found that perceptions of having a mentor were significantly positively correlated with comfort in the university environment. Bordes and Arredondo said that students who reported having a mentor had more positive perceptions of the university environment (Bordes and Arredondo, 2005). These results are similar to those found by Gloria et al. (1999) and Gloria and Kurpius (2001) as cited in Bordes and Arredondo (2005). Bordes and Arredondo also found that the perception of having a mentor made a difference to the Latina/o students in the study, and the ethnicity of the facilitator did not matter. Mentors are significant to this study because students might consider faculty, parents, or counselors in this study to be mentors, and also because mentors have a significant influence on student satisfaction. In fact in the YFCY National Aggregates almost one-third of the respondents interacted with family members on a daily basis. This is significant because family members may be acting as mentors across the country, and it is the opinion of this researcher that universities need to emphasize and focus on the importance of on-campus mentors for students.

Brissette et al. (2002) distributed two questionnaires, one at the beginning and one at the end of the semester, to 89 students and investigated the extent to which social support and coping account for the correlation between greater optimism and better adjustment to stressful life events. The study involved college students of both genders completing measures of perceived stress, depression, friendship network size, and perceived social support at the beginning and end of their first semester. Brissette et al. indicated that other researchers had similar results. Also, "individuals who possess a greater number of relationships with friends, family members, coworkers, and neighbors report less distress and greater positive affect, regardless of their levels

of stress than those who possess less of these relationships,” according to Cohen & Wills, 1985 (Brisette, 2002, p.102). Categories of support for this study were selected and the support contacts identified based on Brissette et al. (2002), which in turn was based on Cohen & Wills (1985).

Brissette et al. (2002) also found that greater increases in perceived social support were reported by students who were more optimistic with a reflection of change in perceived support on campus and were independent of the perceived social support off campus. This raises the issue of students receiving support on campus from friends, faculty, and counselors versus off campus from their parents, which will be examined in this study.

Finally, friendship network size and greater optimism were correlated at the beginning of the semester, but did not predict greater increases in friendship network size over the course of the semester. According to the YFCY National Aggregates students’ actual experiences in college often fall short of their expectations especially regarding, among other things, participating in clubs. First-year students who spend more time studying, partying, and socializing with friends feel more overwhelmed and depressed. This study will explore whether the friendship network size students expect will be a predictor of level of difficulty getting support.

Another aspect of support is the length of support. Hays (1986) conducted a 12-week long study, on 89 males and females, which investigated the development of social support networks between college students. Hays found that residents living in dormitories had more friends than commuters. Hays also found that relatives provided high levels of all support functions, including informational and emotional support, but the support decreased significantly over time. Levels of support provided by students, although originally lower than that provided

by relatives, remained stable over time. His research also suggests that intimacy of relationships progressed over time and the connection between relationships changed. At Time One new acquaintances and fellow students in the freshmen's network were strongly correlated with college adaptation but there was no correlation Time Two. The level of support provided by students as compared to relatives will again be measured in this study to determine whether findings are similar to Hays.

Finally this study will explore how students' feelings of isolation, loneliness, and having someone to trust or confide in affect their satisfaction and retention at the university. Wheeler et al. (1983) found that loneliness among college students was negatively related to the amount of time spent with females. Wheeler et al. thought this might help explain why the male freshmen included greater proportion of cross-sex members in their networks than did females.

The number of new acquaintances entering the freshmen's networks emerged as the network feature most highly associated with college adaptation at Time One, yet was not significantly correlated with adaptation later on, according to Hays. This finding indicates that freshmen come in looking for support networks, and once those networks are in place the more stable networks that provide the more stable support are more effective than those that are constantly fluctuating. (Hays et. al., 1986). This study will explore both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of friendship and support to understand the influence of friendship and support on university connection and retention better.

Before proceeding to the next set of studies, I will provide a brief summary of the influence of the literature on the specific variables chosen for and examined in this study.

Most students who drop out of universities do so during their first two years. Vincent Tinto at Syracuse University, a leading researcher in the area of university retention rates, found

that 75% of the students who drop out of college do so within the first two years, and the greatest proportion of these drop out after the first year, as found by Tinto (1993) and Mallinckrodt and Sedlacek (1987) as cited in DeBerard et al. (2004). Students are the foundation of universities. Without students the institution of the university as such, ceases to exist. Lyn Boutler quotes from McGrath & Braunstein (1997) Tinto (1993) that: “Successful adjustment to college during the first year is an area of increasing concern for most institutions of higher education” (Boutler, 2002, p. 1).

Retention is defined as: Keeping students enrolled from one year to the next.

Furthermore freshmen class attrition rates are typically greater than the rates of attrition during any other academic year and are commonly as high as 20-30% according to Mallinckrodt & Sedlacek (1987) as cited in Deberad et al. (2004).

On average the national rate of retention is 74%. The rate of retention at the University of Connecticut is 92% (Evanovich, 2006). Although this number is significantly higher than the national average, this researcher believes it can be higher still. Retention can be improved by increasing the support provided to students, which will in turn increase the students’ sense of connection and thereby impact retention. If areas of improvement can be identified and positively addressed at such an institution as the University of Connecticut, whose retention rate is already above the national average, applying the theory outlined here to other institutions almost guarantees positive results in cases of institutions whose rate of retention is lower.

Research indicates that there are many different attitudes concerning retention. Retention is the responsibility of both the individual and the institution. Tinto (1993) claims the individual must make a commitment to meet the individual’s needs. Boutler (2002) found that students’ perceptions and expectation entering the university can influence their success and adjustment at

the university. Given the breath of prior research from the likes of Tinto and Boutler this study will examine individual freshmen's expectations of support from the university and the actual availability of that support from the university.

Field research seems to indicate that the university can drastically improve existing support systems for students by focusing on student friendship, connection, and support. With a better understanding of the types of support and the people providing that support universities in general, and the University of Connecticut in particular, can increase retention. Tinto (1993) finds that retention efforts should focus on actively engaging students, faculty, and administrators. Tinto emphasizes students must establish personal bonds with other members of the institution in order to make the proper connection with the university. Tinto also finds that there are complex forces influencing successful adjustment. Based on Tinto and his seminal work, the variables to be examined in this study are the level and frequency of support available to students. The two main variables identified as a means of testing this hypothesis are **Types Of Support** and **Types Of People Providing Support**. The types of support identified are: **Emotional Support**, which is defined as: Persons helping the respondents feel better about themselves, giving positive feedback, etc. The second type of support is **Instrumental Support**, defined as: Persons helping the respondent accomplish particular tasks or activities. Third, **Informational Support** is defined as: Persons providing information the purpose of which is to furnish the respondent with choices, which they are free to pursue independently. The types of people providing support are **Friends, Parents, Faculty, and Counselors**.

Retention involves more than just the first two years. In accordance with the results of Tinto (1993), Young (1992), Boutler (2002) finds as follows: "In general, only 44% of 4- year higher education institution students complete their degree programs." (Boutler, 2002, p. 1) The

University of Connecticut realizes the importance of retention during the first two years and strives to increase retention through the First Year Experience Program and their new Retention and Graduation Task Force. The task force is charged with "...develop[ing] a set of data-driven and research-based recommendations to improve student retention and graduation rates (Evanovich, 2006, p.3). The university also recognizes that retention and graduation involve more than keeping students the first two years and now has a new initiative for all students, which is called "Finish in Four." (Evanovich, 2006, p.4)

In order to study this problem in greater depth it was necessary to solicit the opinions of first year students as a means of understanding the factors involved in their satisfaction with and desires to remain at the university. In order to gather data most effectively two questionnaires were designed and distributed, one at the beginning of the semester and one at the end of that same semester. The questionnaires were designed to test the following hypotheses:

- 1) Freshmen who make friends on campus feel more connected to the university than freshmen who report having fewer friends.
- 2) Freshmen who feel more connected to the university report stronger feelings of support than freshmen who do not feel connected.

Method

Participants

The research participants in this study were a sample of freshmen at the University of Connecticut. The freshmen participating in this study were enrolled in a First Year Experience or FYE class at the university. “With over 3,000 new students entering the University of Connecticut each year, many individuals share the same questions, concerns, and anxieties. First Year Experience helps new students at UConn face their challenges and fears and provides students with support to overcome their obstacles.” (<http://web.uconn.edu/fye/index.htm>) The FYE class provides support for freshmen during their transition to a new university through giving students a class where they can ask questions, share, and discuss. Eighteen FYE classes were randomly selected to participate in this study. Students in the FYE classes varied in terms of age, sex, race/ethnicity, and major based on the diversity in the freshmen class entering the university. The only requirement for a student to participate in the study was enrollment in the FYE class. Research was conducted on the freshmen class as opposed to sophomore, junior, or senior classes because previous research (Tinto, 1987) suggests that freshmen entering college go through a major transition during their first semester.

Two surveys were distributed as part of this study. The first questionnaire was distributed to all 18 of the randomly selected FYE classes. There were 169 students from the FYE classes who chose to complete and return the first survey. The second survey was only distributed to 15 out of the 18 randomly selected FYE classes; however, 185 students completed the second survey. A total of 80 students completed both the first survey and the second survey.

Measures

The surveys used consisted of 64 questions. The first survey asked freshmen about their expectations for their first semester at the university, and the second questionnaire asked if those expectations were fulfilled. Thirteen questions of each survey asked freshmen about general expectations for the university. Examples of these questions include: “What are you looking forward to most about UConn? How many hours a week did you spend participating in extracurricular activities at UConn?”

Forty questions focus on support. Support was divided into emotional support, instrumental support, and informational support. The support questions attempt to gauge the level of support students receive from friends, faculty, parents, and counselors. Examples of support questions include: “How easy or hard was it to get instrumental support from friends at UConn? How often did you get instrumental support from friends at UConn?” These questions were answered on two types of four-point scales either ranging from “very easy” to “very hard,” or “never” to “very often.” The questionnaire concluded with three questions on students’ satisfaction with the university. Examples of satisfaction questions include: “Would you recommend UConn to a friend?” and “Do you expect to stay at UConn for the remainder of your collegiate career?”

Procedure

The same procedure explained below was used for both the first survey and the second survey. Both surveys were conducted during the fall semester. The first survey was distributed to FYE classes within the first three weeks of classes between September 5 and September 26 and all surveys were collected by the beginning of October. The second survey was distributed

during the last three weeks of the semester from November 14, 2005, until December 9, 2005. All of the second surveys were collected by December 16, 2005.

The researcher distributed the surveys to each class by going to each FYE class during the last ten minutes of class and explaining the purpose of the research while the instructor was present. The students in the class also received an informational sheet explaining the study. The survey was distributed after the researcher's explanation and distribution of the informational sheet. Students were then given the option to complete the survey after class ended and return it to the researcher or take the survey home, complete the survey during the week, and then return their survey to their FYE instructor the following week. The researcher collected all the surveys from the FYE instructor.

The survey was reviewed by the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students consented to participating in the study by returning the survey. Students who did not want to participate did not have to return the survey. There was no extra credit or class credit for completing the survey. Students' participation was completely voluntary and confidential. Students created an arbitrary four-digit number to be used by the researcher to connect student responses to the first survey with their responses to the second survey.

There was only one major difference in procedure between the distribution of survey one and survey two. Most if not all of the students for the first survey chose to complete the survey at home during the week and return it the following week. However, due to several possible factors that will be further discussed in the Limitations section of this paper, several students chose to complete the second survey after class rather than take the survey home.

Results

I will proceed by examining the results of this study in several sections. First I will examine results of Time One separately, then Time Two results, and finally compare results between Time One and Time Two for the subset of students who answered both questionnaires. Rather than giving specific correlations, as I go through the results, I will report only significant correlations. Thus, each correlation noted is statistically significant at least the $p < .1$ level, with most well above that.

I will present several results and discuss them immediately afterwards and then present more results with discussion continuing that way throughout the main results section. The end of the results section will include a general discussion of larger themes.

Questionnaire One Results and Analysis

Importance of Taking Time in Forming Relationships

Students need to put time into their friendships. Making friends does not occur overnight, nor does it occur by sitting alone in one's dorm room. "Difficulty making friends" had a significant negative correlation with "time spent hanging out with friends." Students who did not make friends did not hang out with them. The more time students spent hanging out with other students the more likely students were to get to know other students and then be able to form friendships, at least according to students at Time One.

"Time spent hanging out with friends at UConn" was negatively correlated with "difficulty making friends at the university." This finding further emphasizes that the more time students spend with friends the less difficulty they will have making friends. Students are telling

their fellow students that they cannot expect that solely because they are on a college campus they will meet people. Students must surround themselves with people and interact with those people. “Time spent hanging out with friends” also had a strong negative correlation with “difficulty getting help from friends for interpersonal problems.” I believe many students understand the need to surround themselves with new students in order to meet people. “Time spent hanging out with friends” also had a strong negative correlation with “difficulty getting help from friends for interpersonal problems.” Students understand they need to interact with other students in order to make friends, but students do not know how to interact with the students once they are surrounded by them. Taking time to spend with other students is only the first step, and many students want to take the time to meet new people but do not know what to do when spending the time with them.

Extracurricular Activities

One of the manners by which students can surround themselves with their peers is through involvement in extracurricular activities. “Level of difficulty making friends” was positively correlated with “level of difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities.” Students who had difficulty making friends had difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities as well. Logically following the previous findings, if students who have difficulty making friends do not go out and make the effort to meet people, they are definitely also not going to go out to do extracurricular activities. Overall it is important to get the students who are having difficulty making friends involved on campus, because they are probably the same students who are likely NOT to go try and get themselves involved in extracurricular activities.

Getting involved in extracurricular activities, according to Time One data, not only allows students to meet other students but also allows students involved in the extracurricular

activities to develop supportive relationships. This is demonstrated by the positive correlation between “level of difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” with ‘level of difficulty receiving all types of support and decision making help from friends.’ Students who have difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities will also have difficulty getting support from friends. Students involved in extracurricular activities or having less difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities will also have less difficulty getting support.

Finally, getting involved in extracurricular activities is not only about meeting other students, and not only about getting support, it is also about feeling like an individual on campus. “Level of difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” correlates positively with “level of difficulty being a person and not just a number.” “Level of difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” also correlates positively with “difficulty getting help when needed.” This finding reemphasizes the expectation freshmen have of the importance of getting involved in some activity on campus. Getting involved on campus will enable students to get help when needed. Getting involved will allow students to feel like an individual supported within a much larger university community.

Level of Difficulty Making Friends Correlations with Trust and Confidence

Another essential finding at Time One was the strong positive correlation between “level of difficulty making friends” with “difficulty finding someone to confide in.” “Level of difficulty making friends” was also positively correlated with “level of difficulty finding someone to trust.” The correlation between “level of difficulty finding someone to trust” was also a strong positive correlation with “difficulty finding someone to confide in.”

These correlations indicate that students are forming friendships based on people they can trust and confide in. “Difficulty finding someone you trust” was also correlated with difficulty

getting all types of support from friends. “Difficulty finding someone to confide in” correlates with all types of support from friends as well. If students can trust and confide in someone then they can be friends. If they can be friends they can go to the friend for support. Students will not go to the people for support whom they do not trust or confide in. Creating connections that allow students to build trust and confidence will build friendships and also build students using support from other students. First Year Experience programs can provide students the opportunity to build this trusting and confiding relationship immediately upon students’ entrance into the university, within the context of the First Year Experience class, so that students have someone to go to when they need support. The First Year Experience program needs to focus more time and effort on building these trusting and confiding relationships within the class, between the students in the class, the instructor, and the mentor so that these relationships in the class lead to friendships and ultimately to support.

“Level of difficulty making friends” was one of only a few variables to be significantly correlated with “satisfaction to attend the university” at Time One. Making friends means finding someone to trust and confide in, and trust and confidence are essential to students feeling comfortable at the university. Friendship and university satisfaction are positively correlated because friends are the people students can trust and confide in and therefore go to for support. Trust and confidence in are precursors to friendship, friendship is the precursor to support, and students feeling supported means increased satisfaction with the university.

“Level of difficulty making friends” was correlated strongly with difficulty getting emotional, instrumental, informational, or help making decisions from friends. Difficulty making friends as mentioned above means students will not have someone to go to for support.

“Difficulty making friends” was also correlated with “difficulty getting respect from classmates.” Students’ lack of friendship can have a continual downward affect on students in many aspects of their lives. Lonely students, without friends or even with only a few friends, are not respected because other students see the lonely students alone and perceive that nobody likes them. Students who have difficulty making friends begin to feel like their classmates do not respect them. Often times I think college students isolate other students who appear to be alone because it feels like everyone else is doing it. Brissette’s (2002) study focuses on the importance of perception. Wheeler’s (1983) study focuses on loneliness, and both studies come to the conclusion that the perception of loneliness and isolation, even if not actually real or in reality not as severe as students perceive it to be, can have a negative affect on satisfaction. Students who are isolated fall into a helpless mentality and lose their drive to seek support at the university.

Without having anyone to trust, students do not receive support from other students. Without receiving any type of support or help from other students, students who are having difficulty finding someone to trust start losing respect for their classmates. Students walking around campus feel like nobody supports them, nobody helps them make decisions, nobody is their friend, and they have no extracurricular activities to participate in, and then cannot find someone to trust or confide in, feel miserable about themselves, and lose respect of their classmates.

Over the course of time frustration of not having you’re the respect of one’s classmates builds up the frustration in the students who are not receiving any support and may cause them to leave the school or lose interest in their education. This may explain why 6-8% of students leave sophomore year (Evanovich, 2006).

Trust and confidence in other students is part of developing relationship and takes time to build. At least at Time One there are already positive correlations between trust and confidence and support from students' parents. "Level of difficulty finding someone you trust" correlated positively with "level of difficulty getting emotional support from parents." "Level of difficulty finding someone to confide in" also correlated positively with "level of difficulty getting emotional support from parents." Students' parents' emotional support made a difference in students' ability to find someone to trust and confide in. College is a time of emotional transition for students. Students need the emotional support of their parents. Students are unsure of what kind of support they will be receiving from their peers, but the parents can be their backbone. The first six weeks can be like a rollercoaster for students, and having their parents behind the students emotionally can make a difference.

Expectations

Students' expectations influence their actions toward friends, as Brissette et al. (2002) found that greater increases in perceived social support were reported by students who were more optimistic. Students act in terms of friendship on their expectations. If all students feel like they can make friends then they will have less difficulty actually making them.

Time One, "level of difficulty making friends" was negatively correlated with "number of friend expect to make at UConn." Students who had more difficulty making friends expected at the beginning of the semester to make fewer of them. Students who expected to make more friends had less difficulty making friends.

These results demonstrate that about two weeks into the semester students already have a general sense of how capable they are of making friends. The first two weeks of the semester are

therefore critical. Students after two weeks have set out expectations for themselves for the rest of the semester of how capable they are at either making many friends or only a few friends.

Generally the data also indicate students who are having trouble getting one type of support are also having trouble in all areas of support from friends. Students who are not going to get one type of support from friends are not going to get any type of support from friends. Either friends are supportive and students use their friends for support, or friends are not supportive and students do not go to them for support. The data indicates a divide between those students who are either getting support for everything, probably because they made friends or feel they can make friends, and the students who are already off in the direction of struggling probably because they did not make friends, or feel they cannot make friends.

Time One data also shows correlations between different types of support. One example is “often getting emotional support from friends” is positively correlated with often getting emotional, instrumental, and informational support from faculty. This correlation indicates that students who go for emotional support to their friends are likely to also often approach faculty for different types of support. These correlations indicate one type of students who goes out to get support when necessary from whomever can provide the help. Students who often go to get emotional support from friends also get the support from them and others. Support from friends provides a secure base for students so that students can go experiment on broadening their support by approaching faculty. Support builds on itself. One positive experience and one base of support, whether from parents, friends, faculty or counselors, allows students to try to expand their network of support further. However the reverse can also be true. Negative experiences with support can compound and build a wall inhibiting students from further trying to get

support. These correlations between emotional support and other types of support do not include level of difficulty, only how often.

Positive correlations also existed between “often getting instrumental support from friends” and often getting instrumental support and emotional support from faculty. “Often getting instrumental support from friends” was correlated positively with “often getting decision making help from faculty.” Also “often getting decision making help from friends” correlated positively with often getting emotional, instrumental, and informational support from faculty. Students expect that it will be easy to get different types of support from faculty and that they will have access to the faculty often. This expectation is probably due to previous experience in high school where students had strong close relationships with faculty and much smaller class sizes. It will be interesting to see if the ability to get support as often as students could in high school remains in college with larger classes. This data indicates students at least expect to be able to interact often and receive support from faculty.

Students also have strong expectations for correlations between frequency of friend support and frequency of parent support. For example, “often get emotional support from friends” correlated positively with “often getting emotional support from parents” and “often getting instrumental support from parents.” Students expect often to be able to get support from parents. I think this is a further indication of the importance parents have for freshmen. Students do not want to be alone in their new environment, and people involved previously in their lives, especially parents, are the people freshmen need to have for support going into this new experience.

Friendship at Time One was significant to overall expected retention. Difficulty and frequency of informational, emotional, instrumental, and difficulty getting decision-making help

from friends were significantly positively correlated with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.” Students need to be build a base of friends as a resource to have to go back to in the times of need for support. Parents also are necessary factors in support.

Specific Relationships to Support by Faculty, Counselors, and Parents

Support trends were similar across faculty, counselors, and parents. Difficulty and frequency getting one type of support from any of the support personnel listed above correlated with difficulty getting another type of support from that same person. This was true for friends, faculty, counselors and parents. For example, faculty, similar to friends, had positive correlations between difficulty getting one type of support and difficulty getting all other types of support. Therefore difficulty getting instrumental support from faculty would be correlated with difficulty getting emotional and informational support from faculty as well. The same was true for any of the correlations.

Another major trend across all of the data for faculty, counselors, and parents was more correlations in terms of frequency, the “how often” questions than the difficulty, “how difficult” questions.

Faculty

Students enter college with many of their faculty expectations based on the faculty they knew from high school. College and high school faculty, due to several factors, one of which one is definitely the size of the class are very different.

Participants reported more correlations of faculty-specific measures with difficulties receiving support from other support personnel and networks than friends. For example difficulty getting emotional and instrumental support from faculty both correlated with “difficulty getting help making decisions from counselors.” Frequency of support from friends

correlated only with frequency of other types of support from either friends or faculty. Frequency of faculty support correlated with frequency of support from counselors and parents. Interestingly most of the faculty support correlations were between faculty and counselors and less between faculty and parents. Correlations existing between faculty and counselors are likely a result of both faculty and counselors being on campus. Students' at Time One are new to campus, and therefore their relationships with both faculty and counselors are still developing.

Finally "difficulty getting emotional support from faculty" and "difficulty getting instrumental support from faculty" were both positively correlated with "difficulty being treated as a person and not just a number" and "difficulty getting help when needed." Faculty data showed that "difficulty getting emotional support from faculty" was also correlated with "satisfaction with decision to attend UConn." Faculty definitely can have an impact on students, and students' expectations for support from faculty impacted their decision to attend UConn. Difficulty getting help from faculty for interpersonal problems and difficulty getting help from counselors for academic or interpersonal problems all correlated with difficulty being a person and not just a number, difficulty getting help when needed and satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.

Counselors

Counselors were the only support personnel to be correlated with support from all other people. Support from counselors was correlated with expectations to have support often and difficulty getting support from all other types of social support-- friends, faculty, and parents. Support from friends correlated mostly with friends, support from faculty correlated with mostly counselors and parents, and support from counselors correlated with support from all three other support people. For example, "often getting emotional support from counselors" was correlated

with often getting emotional and instrumental support from friends. Difficulty getting emotional and instrumental support from counselors correlated positively with difficulty getting emotional, instrumental, and informational support from faculty. Often getting emotional or instrumental support from counselors correlated with often getting instrumental, informational, and help making decisions from parents.

Why difficulty and frequency of support from counselors correlates with all other types of support personnel is a fascinating question. Keeping in mind at this point of the semester most students likely have not yet met with counselors on campus, they still have these expectations and feelings. Counselors are responsible to help in situations with friends, parents, and faculty. Usually by the time a student approaches a counselor the student has already had some type of difficulty receiving support from friends, faculty, or parents. For many students counselors are the last people to go to for support. Students who have difficulty getting instrumental and emotional support probably came to the counselor because they already had difficulty getting instrumental or emotional support from faculty or parents. The perception to students that counselors are available for support is probably what increases correlations about counselors with other types of support. Students expect to go to a counselor with a problem in their life in which they need to make a decision. Difficulty getting emotional and instrumental support from counselors correlates with difficulty getting help when needed. Difficulty getting help making decisions from counselors is correlated with difficulty finding someone to talk to in an emergency. "Difficulty getting help making decisions from counselors" positively correlates with "satisfaction with decision to attend UConn."

Parents

Parents provide the support base and security which students need to be able to reach out and build new relationships when they enter college. Parents also had strong correlations with difficulty getting help making decisions. “Difficulty getting help making decisions from parents” positively correlated with difficulty getting all types of supports from counselors and also with difficulty getting help making decisions from faculty. Support from parents provides a base of support to build off of with faculty and counselors. Often getting informational support and instrumental support from parents as well as “difficulty getting help making decisions from parents” are critical factors in students receiving the support they need at the university

Support from parents correlated mostly with other parental, faculty, and counselor support and did not correlate with friend support. Although students do not want parents too involved and impeding on their sense of independence, they still need parents.

Overall both difficulty getting emotional support and difficulty getting help making decisions from parents correlated with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.” Parents should be the base for sound decision making for the students. If students have trouble getting emotional support or help making decisions from parents, students are going to have little to fall back on when they enter UConn.

Brief Summary/Discussion of Time One Findings

As I have stated throughout the analysis, level of difficulty getting involved was correlated with almost everything. It was correlated with support from all friends, faculty, counselors, and parents as well as difficulty getting respect from classmates, help from friends, faculty, and counselors for academic or interpersonal problems, finding someone to talk to in an emergency, and difficulty finding someone to trust or confide in. Obviously from these data a

student who has difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities or in making friends is going to have difficulty getting support. However, unlike other support variables, “difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” does not correlate with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.”

Questionnaire Results at Time Two

Similarities Time One and Time Two

Many correlations were similar in comparing the responses of those who completed either Time One or Time Two questionnaires. Similar correlations from the two times focused around either the characteristics of friendship or the characteristics that made students satisfied with their decision to attend UConn. Characteristics such as spending time with friends, trust, confidence in, and respect are essential to a friendship. For example “difficulty making friends” was negatively correlated with time spent hanging out with friends both Time One and Time Two. Time is essential to friendship. Students who are having more difficulty making friends are probably not spending much time trying to hang out with friends. Data indicates the need to make a time commitment to making friends. Friendship does not just happen over night and by chance.

Trust and confidence was another example of a correlation at both Time One and Two. “Level of difficulty finding a friend” was positively correlated with “level of difficulty finding someone you trust” and “level of difficulty finding someone you can confide in.” Trust and confidence in someone are essential factors in friendship. Trust and confidence are not something one can have in a friend at Time One and no longer have in a friend at Time Two; they are necessary throughout a relationship. “Level of difficulty making friends” was correlated with “difficulty getting respect from classmates” both Time One and Time Two. Respect is

another example of a quality expected in friends throughout friendship. Furthermore “difficulty getting respect from classmates” and difficulty getting help from friends for an academic or interpersonal problem were both correlated with “satisfied with decision to attend UConn” and “would recommend UConn to a friend” at each time. The manner in which one student treats another, the respect one student shows another, and the support in the relationship will connect directly to the student’s satisfaction with the university.

Students’ also had consistent expectations for what they wanted from UConn in order to be satisfied with their decision to attend. Students wanted to be able to get support from both faculty and friends. Support from friends was correlated with support from faculty, because students want it to be easy to get support from both faculty and students. Difficulty getting emotional, instrumental and help making decisions from friends were correlated with satisfaction with decision at Times One and Two.

Difficulty getting one type of support was correlated with difficulty and frequency getting another type of support from friends or faculty. There is a divide between students who seem to be able to get all types of support and those getting absolutely no support. The same could be said for either counselors or parents. Either students were having difficulty getting one type of support, in which case they had difficulty getting all types of support, or students did not have difficulty getting support, in which case they had no difficulty getting any type of support.

Several variables correlated both Time One and Time Two with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.” Again, many of these correlations were consistent both times because students know entering the university what they absolutely need to get out of it to be satisfied. Some of the correlations with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn included: “difficulty getting help from faculty for an interpersonal problem,” “difficulty finding someone

to talk to in an emergency,” “difficulty being a person and not just a number,” “difficulty getting help when needed,” and the list could go on. The focus is that students do not just want friends to be able to say they have a certain number of friends. Students want real relationships. Overall students are most satisfied when they can get the help they need. They would like to be able to get help mostly from friends. If they could get the help they needed from friends every time that would be great. In reality that does not happen all the time, and students being aware of that use support from other people, and that is why support from faculty and counselors is also correlated with satisfaction. The most important variable in terms of satisfaction with the university is getting help when needed. Someone must be there when the student needs help, and the student must know whom that person is to contact and feel comfortable enough in the relationship to contact that person.

The study found difficulty being a person and not just a number correlated with academic and interpersonal support from friends, an even stronger correlation with faculty and the strongest correlation with counselors, but no correlation with parents. Students’ treatment as individuals is essential to success. If students do not feel like a person from a counselor they will probably not feel like a person on campus at all. Also interesting is how parents had no correlation with “difficulty being treated as a person and not just a number.” Help from parents for an academic or interpersonal problem did not make the students feel like anymore of an individual on campus. Parents could be giving the support and not helping the student feel like an individual because the proximity of the person giving support to the person receiving support matters. Students need a support network on campus. A support network off campus, while important, does not help the students feel like they are individuals and have a place on campus.

In general all types of “difficulty getting support from friends” was correlated with satisfaction to attend Uconn. Most types of support from counselors were correlated with satisfaction to attend Uconn. However correlations from faculty and parents were much lower than friends and counselors in terms of satisfaction to attend UConn.

Differences in Correlations from Time One to Time Two

Many correlations that existed in the data set Time One changed Time Two. The most fascinating correlation at the end of Time Two with “satisfaction to attend UConn” was “number of friends made,” which had a strong negative correlation with “satisfied with decision to attend UConn.” Initially one would think the more friends the student has made at the university the more satisfied the student would be at the university, but this research indicates otherwise. The number of friends does *not* matter nearly as much as the quality of friendships does. Students need friends who they can go to for support, or go to in the time of an emergency, or go to and trust and confide in. Students do not just need friends as numbers. Students need friends who treat them as if they are individual people and not just numbers.

Another interesting change from Time One to Time Two occurred between difficulty making friends and extracurricular activities. Time One, “difficulty making friends” was positively correlated with “difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities,” but at Time Two the correlation was negative. The false assumption behind the Time One correlation was that because difficulty making friends Time One was correlated with difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities students who are shy do not reach out to other students. Time Two data suggests that is not true. Difficulty making friends does not at all relate to difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities. “Level of difficulty making friends” was negatively correlated with “time spent participating in extracurricular activities.” Getting involved in

extracurricular activities may be important but it is not a direct correlation to friendship.

Students can make friends in the residence hall, dining hall, or at class, but do not necessarily have to make all of their friends at extracurricular activities.

Getting support was very important to students and strongly correlated with trust at Time One. Difficulty finding someone to trust was correlated with difficulty getting all types of support from friends, faculty and counselors as well. Trust is essential for a student to develop support from any of the support networks. Interestingly the correlations between trust and support were higher at Time Two than at Time One, indicating trust was an even larger factor in support than students expected.

Correlations in terms of trust Time One are mostly centered on friends and parents. Time Two, after student have been at the university a couple of months, trust and difficulty support shifted away from correlations with parents and toward correlations with faculty and counselors. The amount of students' emotional support need filled by parents begins to decline. Students are moving away from the initial need for parent support and reaching out for connections within the university. Time Two trust was not correlated with difficulty getting either academic or interpersonal help from parents. This is a further sign students are looking for someone other than their parents to connect and use as a support base on campus.

The correlations for trust and confide in mirror each other. Difficulty with trust and difficulty with confide in are closely correlated. Similar to trust for Time Two, difficulty finding someone to confide in was correlated with difficulty getting help from friends for an academic or interpersonal problem, "difficulty getting help from faculty for an interpersonal problem," "difficulty getting help from a counselor for an interpersonal problem," but there was no correlation again for parents. Difficulty getting either academic or interpersonal support from

parents Time Two or other types of support from parents Time One had no correlation with trust or confide in. Students are moving away from parents and establishing themselves as individuals on campus.

Also, Time Two differed from Time One in correlations of difficulty getting support from friends and difficulty getting all types of support from faculty. At the beginning of the semester students underestimated the difficulty getting support from faculty. As the semester progressed and students became more involved in their classes, they realized support from their professors was necessary. Students expected support from faculty to be much easier to get than it turned out to be. This is probably due to experiences they had interacting with teachers in high school, which as mentioned earlier is a completely different world compared to college.

Changes also occurred from Time One to Time Two in terms of support from counselors. “Often difficulty getting support from friends” was correlated with “often getting support from counselors” at Time One. At Time Two not only was “often getting support from counselors” correlated with friends but also difficulty getting support from counselors was correlated with friends. As students spend more time at the university, they begin to realize the importance of university support personnel like faculty and counselors. As students understand the support personnel, they also realized that getting support may be more difficult for them than it was in high school. Students came to the realization that support will not come knocking on their door; rather they will have to take initiative and seek support out.

The data suggest that instrumental support and emotional support are the two most important types of support when it comes to satisfaction with the university at the end of the first semester. Time Two emotional support is also strongly correlated with difficulty finding someone to talk to in an emergency. When thinking about the definitions of emotional and

instrumental support, emotional being defined as when a person helps one feel better about oneself, gives positive feedback etc, and instrumental support defined as when people help someone accomplish particular tasks or activities, it makes some sense that these are the most important types of support at the end of the first semester. Informational support was positively correlated with “satisfaction with decision to attend the university” at the beginning of the semester because a new student in a new place needs information. Before students can go about getting help doing things (instrumental support) and getting help feeling better (emotional support), students need people to give informational support to help them do things on their own. Once the student settles into the university the support necessary shifts toward emotional and instrumental support, help actually doing things and getting support with feelings.

In general friendship support became more important as the semester progressed in comparison with faculty support. Time One faculty support had more correlations than friend support with other support personnel i.e., students, parents, counselors. Time Two faculty support had fewer significant correlations than friend support across other support personnel. This is not to say that faculty support was less correlated Time One than Time Two, rather less correlated in comparison to support from friends Time One compared to Time Two. Friendship support had more correlations Time Two than did faculty support, whereas at Time One faculty had more correlations than friend support.

Similarly, there were changes from Time One to Time Two related to counselors. Time Two “difficulty getting emotional support from counselors” was strongly positively correlated with difficulty getting instrumental and informational support from friends as well as difficulty getting all types of support from faculty. Similar to Time One, at Time Two support from counselors was the only support correlated with all other types of support. Students see

counselors' support as a support network that will always be there. Counselors are reassurance that support exists. Therefore if students cannot get support from counselors students feel they are unlikely to get the support from anywhere, or anyone else.

At Time One "difficulty help making decisions from counselors" was correlated with "satisfaction with decision to attend UConn;" however, at Time Two difficulty getting emotional support from counselors was correlated with satisfaction to attend UConn. Time Two difficulty getting instrumental support from counselors was also correlated with satisfaction with decision to attend UConn. Instrumental support is correlated with "satisfaction with decision to attend UConn," but informational support is correlated with "finding someone you can trust and confide in" but not with satisfaction to attend UConn. Informational support is a logical correlation for trust because the more good information students get the more likely they are to trust someone.

Difficulty getting help from a counselor for an academic or interpersonal problem also correlate with difficulty getting help when needed and was less strongly correlated with satisfaction with decision to attend UConn at Time Two. This correlation can be more logically reasoned out as the counselors' job is to support the student and therefore if the student does not have this base line support it is understandable how a student could be extremely unsatisfied with the institution.

Overall difficulty getting support from counselors was correlated significantly with difficulty getting help solving academic or interpersonal problems and with all other supports-- friends, faculty, students, and parents. Getting or feeling the ability to get support from counselors was extremely important; even if most students do not go to the counselors themselves; just having the feeling of a counselor there for support is important.

At Time Two parent do not have as strong correlations with other variables surrounding support as counselors or faculty. Again this may be a result of students trying to separate as much as possible from parents yet still needing parents for support. Difficulty getting informational support and help making decisions from parents nonetheless did have low correlations with difficulty getting help when needed and satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.

Students who Completed Both Questionnaires

A) The following relationships were significant at both times but higher at Time One

Time One, one type of support from friends was correlated with all other types of support from friends. However in data from students who completed both Time One and Time Two the correlation between one type of support with all other type of supports from friends actually dropped from Time One to Time Two. Students realized that although getting different types of support from friends, who they knew, was easier than going to a counselor there are different levels of difficulty depending upon the type of support. It is probably easier to ask someone for informational support than it is to ask someone for emotional support.

Another correlation that was higher at Time One than Time Two was the “difficulty getting help from faculty for an academic problem” with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.” This may indicate that support from faculty, although important to students, is not of utmost importance, at least freshmen year, in connection with “satisfaction with decision to attend UConn.” Support from friend is probably more important in terms of correlation with “satisfaction to with decision to attend UConn.”

Time One correlations between “difficulty finding someone you trust” and “difficulty finding to confide in” with “often getting emotional support from friends” were strong. Time

Two the correlations were significantly correlated with difficulty getting emotional support and not with often getting emotional support.

Time One there were also correlations with trust and confide in and difficulty getting emotional support from faculty and Time Two there were no such correlations. Trust and confide in were in general, however, correlated both Time One and Time Two.

“Difficulty finding someone to trust” and “difficulty finding someone to confide in” were correlated with “satisfaction with decision to attend the university” at both Time One and Time Two, however, trust was correlated higher Time One than Time Two with “satisfaction with decision to attend the university.”

B) The following relationships were significant at both times but higher at Time Two

In general students underestimated the importance of informational support at Time One. Time Two informational support was correlated with “difficulty being a person and not just a number,” and with “difficulty getting support from friends.” Good information turned out to be more important than freshmen expected.

Time Two “difficulty getting respect from classmates,” “difficulty getting help from friends for an academic problem,” and “difficulty getting help from friends for interpersonal problem” were all significantly correlated with “satisfied with decisions to attend UConn.” These correlations all increased significantly from Time One. These correlations directly support the hypothesis that students who have friends that can help them with problems are more satisfied with the university.

“Friends before applied to UConn” correlated with “influenced student’s decision to attend UConn” Time One but much more significantly Time Two. Students relied more than expected on the friends they had before they applied while they were making new friends and

making the transition to UConn. The actual influence friends had on the decision to attend UConn was probably around the correlation at Time One or less; but, as students found it more difficult than they expected to make new friends in a new environment, by the end of the first semester, they really valued the friends they had from home whom they could use as support during their transition.

Support from parents was also correlated with difficulty getting support from other sources of support Time One but more significantly correlated Time Two. Students entering college want to separate from home. At the same time students have relied at least somewhat on their parents for the past 18 years. Therefore although students may not report it at Time One, at Time Two students realize the significance of still having their parents around, at least by phone, to go back to for support.

Similar to the findings of both Time One and Time Two, trust was extremely important in making friendships for students who completed both questionnaires. Time One students' trust was positively correlated with "level of difficulty making friends at UConn." Here, too, the correlation was stronger at Time Two. Students entering the university knew trust was important in friendships but it was even more important than students expected.

There were lower correlations with counselors Time Two compared to Time One. Time One confide in was correlated with often getting instrumental support. Time two there was no correlation.

Correlations between "getting support from parents" and "having someone to trust and confide in" were higher Time Two than students expected Time One. For example the correlations between "difficulty getting emotional support from parents" and "difficulty finding someone to confide in" increased from Time One to Time Two.

Time Two correlations between “level of difficulty finding someone to trust” and “level of difficulty finding to confide in” with “difficulty getting help making decisions from parents” increased as compared Time One. Students probably realized over the course of the semester that they needed to trust and confide in their parents more than they expected.

Time One “level of difficulty finding someone you trust” and “level of difficulty finding someone you confide in” was not correlated with “difficulty getting help from a parent for an academic problem.” Time Two the correlations were drastically increased for both trust and confide in. Again this is another indication of how parents were more important throughout the semester than students expected.

Both Time One and Time Two “difficulty finding someone you trust” and “difficulty finding someone to confide in” were both correlated with “difficulty finding someone to talk to in an emergency.” Time Two the correlations were even stronger than Time One. These correlations are consistent with the importance of finding someone to trust and confide in and the importance of having someone to talk to in an emergency. . This data set confirms having someone to trust and confide in are critical to students feeling capable of getting help in an emergency.

“Difficulty finding someone to trust” and “difficulty finding someone to confide in” were correlated with “satisfaction with decision to attend the university” at both Time One and Time Two, but “difficulty finding someone to confide in” demonstrated a higher correlation with “satisfaction with decision to attend the university.” Time Two than Time One.

Time One “level of difficulty making friends at UConn” was negatively correlated with “time spent hanging out with friends.” Students knew they would have less difficulty making friends at UConn the more they spent the time trying to hang out with friends. However, Time

Two the correlation with “level of difficulty making friends at UConn” and “time spent hanging out with friends” doubled, meaning that students underestimated the importance of just spending time with friends and how that would affect building friendships.

While students knew the importance of support from friends when entering the university, they underestimated the magnitude of the correlations between level of difficulty making friends and getting support from friends. For example at Time One “level of difficulty making friends at UConn” was positively correlated with “difficulty getting emotional support from friends.” At Time Two the correlation increased. At Time One level of difficulty making friends was positively correlated with difficulty getting help making decisions from friends, At Time Two that correlation also increased.

C) Relationships which were significant at Time One but not at Time Two

Students had several expectations of faculty, parents, counselors, and friends at the beginning of the semester that turned out not to be true at the end of the first semester. Some examples are students expected “difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” to be correlated with difficulty getting all types of support from friends. Students expected “level of difficulty making friends at UConn” to be correlated with “difficulty getting help from a counselor for an interpersonal problem.” The most significant misconception students had was that the more difficulty they had getting involved in extracurricular activities the more trouble they would have getting support. None of these correlations existed at Time Two. All of these expectations were false. Students were probably able to build friendships and get support outside of extracurricular activities.

Time One students had high expectations for the involvement of their parents. For example “level of difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” was positively

correlated with “difficulty getting emotional support from parents.” “Difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” was also positively correlated with “difficulty getting help from parents for interpersonal problem.” None of these correlations existed at Time Two. This is not to say that parents were not important at Time Two, because other correlations indicate it and I believe and argue strongly that they were, but parents were not important in students getting involved in extracurricular activities.

Time One “level of difficulty getting involved in extracurricular activities” was correlated with difficulty getting help from counselors for academic and interpersonal problems. Time One there were also high expectations between one type of support from friends was correlated with all other types of support from friends. There were also strong correlations supporting this in the individual Time One and Time Two data sets looked at individually as well. However, in the data from students who completed both Time One and Time Two the correlation between one type of support with all other type of supports from friends actually dropped from Time One to Time Two. The same can be said for correlations between different types of faculty support. One type of support from faculty Time One was correlated with all other types, Time Two although they were while still correlated the correlations were reduced by about half.

Time One students expected difficulty getting faculty support to have strong correlations with difficulty getting support from counselors. Time One there were several expectation surrounding faculty and correlations with satisfaction to attend UConn and difficulty being treated as a person and not just a number. Time Two students reported faculty did not have that many actual correlations but rather the support from friends was much more important. Students

expected faculty to play a much larger role in their lives than faculty actually did possibly due to the large role faculty played in high school compared to university.

Time One level of difficulty finding someone to trust and confide in was significantly correlated with trust and confide in with getting help from a counselor for an interpersonal problem, but at Time Two there was no correlation. “Level of difficulty finding someone to trust” was negatively correlated with “level of difficulty finding someone to confide in” and negatively correlated with “time spent hanging out with friends” at time one. Time Two, however, there were no correlations. This is an extremely significant change. Coming in, freshmen expect to spend a lot of time with their friends, however in the end the amount of time they spend with friends does not necessarily mean that they will have someone to trust or confide in. The amount of time put into the friendship does not matter. The quality of the friendship does. Freshmen enter the university thinking they need to spend a lot of time with people to make friends. Freshmen think they need to go out to parties with friends, but in the end that can leave freshmen very empty, and by the end of the first semester they know that. Students need to get to know a few quality friends and be able to trust and confide in them. Again supporting this finding Time One “often get emotional support from friends” correlated negatively with “level of difficulty finding someone you trust and confide in,” but by Time Two those weren’t correlated. This again shows that the frequency of support does not necessarily increase the trust and confidence; it is more about the quality of the relationship.

D) The following relationships were not significant at Time One but were at Time Two

There were many correlations Time Two that freshmen did not expect Time One. One such example is “friends before applied to the university,” which at Time One had no correlation with difficulty getting help making decisions from friends. Time Two friends before applied had

a significant positive correlation with help making decisions. This is another example in which students expected their friends from home to be important, but when coming to a new environment freshmen relied even more than they expected on previous friendships. In the new environment freshmen do not have the connections or the trust to ask people on campus for help making decisions: therefore, they turn to the people they know from home.

The correlation between “friends before applied to UConn” and “time spent participating in extracurricular activities” increased only slightly from Time One to Time Two. Friends before applying to the university therefore did not influence students’ likelihood to participate in extracurricular activities, as the data suggested from students who only completed either Time One or Time Two.

“Classmates from high school coming to UConn” was not correlated with “time spent in extracurricular activities” Time One. Time Two the correlation increased drastically. Students do not want to admit once they enter a new environment they still rely on previous connections. They want to be independent of their old environment and support. However, as soon as the students come to a large campus and new environment like UConn data shows they go right back to the friendships they had prior to the university and use those friends as their first line of support when they get to the university.

Another example of the importance of previous friendships is “classmates from high school coming to UConn” correlated with “time spent participating in extracurricular activities” Time One, and Time Two the correlation increased. Students again underestimated the importance of previous friendships or relationships before they entered UConn and the impact that would have on their involvement at UConn.

“Classmates from high school coming to UConn” Time One had only a low correlation with “influencing decision to attend UConn.” Time Two the correlation was more significant. Students expected to go out and meet new people when coming to UConn, but while in the process of doing that they needed a secure base to work from and return to for support. The secure base appears clearly to be friends from high school or friendships developed before the student comes to UConn.

There were higher correlations between trust and confidence with faculty Time Two when there were no correlations Time One. The increase in correlation with faculty makes sense, as many students probably had to interact with faculty more often than in high school and may have been more intimidated/had more difficulty doing so because the class size is larger but the material is harder. It probably took more trust and confidence to approach faculty in college because of the larger classes and the amount of power the teacher holds.

Time Two correlation of “level of difficult finding someone you trust” and “difficulty getting instrumental support from parents” was strong, while there was no correlation Time One.

Time One “level of difficulty finding someone you trust” and “level of difficulty finding someone to confide in” was not correlated with any types of support from faculty. Time Two level of difficulty finding someone to trust and confide in was correlated with all types of support from faculty.

Time One time spent hanging out with friends had no correlation with often getting emotional support from friends. Time Two the correlation was significantly positive. Students did not realize the importance friendships would have on getting support from friends.

Therefore, although the separate Time One and Time Two data show many relationships, and comparisons across them give some indication of differences over time, the direct

comparisons of Time One and Time Two in the same persons, for this subgroup that answered both questionnaires, shows that there are many shifts in attention and focus between the approximately twelve weeks between the questionnaires.

Conclusions and General Discussion

Overall this study found trust and confidence in someone on campus were vital aspects of becoming friends with that person and building a supportive relationship. The study also found the university needs to focus more on the individual students and promoting interactions and experiences that providing these students with the opportunity to find and build a friendship or mentoring relationship to help the student transition into the university. The friend or mentor will drastically increase the student's satisfaction with the university. The study also found that although students may not want to acknowledge it, parents and friends from home provide an essential base of support allowing students to branch out and make new connections while having a secure base to turn in the need of help. Many of the students' expectations are carried over from high school and into college. Finally and most basically students need the support in emergency situations, or the feeling they are able to get support when absolutely necessary, and most basically to feel the decision to attend the university was the a good choice and they are satisfied here

The study relates to Ratcliff (1991) and Tinto (1993) as cited in Boutler (2002, p.1), who state the importance of interactional factors that relate to experiences the students have entering the institution. This study found that students interacting with other students impacted students' ability to make friends and therefore receive support. The study showed interaction with friends to have strong positive correlations with support and that in order to get support freshmen must take the time to spend time with their friends. These two findings lead me to believe students

need to know more about how to build supportive relationships. They also relate to the YFCY National Aggregates finding that 80% of freshmen interact with friends on a daily basis. Overall the study found students want and need support but appear confused when it comes to actually building supportive relationships at a new college campus.

Limitations

The study is limited by the sample size and procedures. One-hundred and sixty-four students completed the first questionnaire and 184 completed the second questionnaire; however, only 80 completed both. This means there were many students who completed one of the two questionnaires but not both. The researcher hypothesizes the response rate increase in the second questionnaire due to distribution of the second questionnaire at the end of the semester. FYE classes at the end of the semester concluded before the allotted 50 minutes, and many students chose to spend the extra 5-10 minutes after class and complete the questionnaire and turn it in immediately. Students also had this option at the distribution of the first questionnaire but as a result of it being the beginning of the semester most classes went the full 50 minutes and students probably did not want to spend the extra time after class to complete the questionnaire and took the questionnaire home. Several students who took the questionnaire home probably forgot to bring it back.

It is also possible that students once completing the first questionnaire and understanding the questions did not want to complete the second questionnaire or did not want to take the time to complete the second questionnaire.

Also due to distributing the survey in FYE classes I had to work in cooperation with different class instructors and coordinate times and schedules to distribute the survey in each class. This turned out to be an arduous, time consuming process, which limited the ability of the researcher to distribute the survey to more FYE classes. Survey completed online or distributed in a large lecture hall might have been a more effective way to reach students in a faster, more efficient manner.

The questionnaire examined several areas of support within the university and was completely voluntary. It is possible that students who are not satisfied with the university either because they are not getting the support they want or for any other reason might be less likely to want to sit down and spend time completing a survey for the university or about the university. This may slightly bias the results to be more strongly in favor of students who are satisfied at the university.

Additional factors limit the scope and generalizability of this study. The study was conducted at a research extensive public university and focused only on freshmen. The sample of freshmen used in this study was freshmen enrolled in a First Year experience class. There are freshmen on the campus at the University of Connecticut not enrolled in the First Year Experience class. Although first year experience classes are becoming more popular at universities across the country, not all universities have such a program. First Year Experience was designed to help freshmen with their transition from high school to college and might influence freshmen's responses in categories of support

Implications

Support played a critical role in students' satisfaction with the university. Looking totally at the numbers can be deceiving. Eight percent leave during the first year and an additional 6-7% of students will choose to leave the university during their sophomore year. The numbers show the university is doing a great job keeping students. Then again on second thought they should be. Students make a choice to come to the university. Students research their decision, and when students apply to the University of Connecticut chances are they want to come here. If they want to come they should want to stay. A 92% retention rate can be deceiving. Students are staying at the university even though they are not getting the support they anticipate and need. The university needs to provide better individual support.

These results appear to show the university may be over-programming. Freshmen indicated it is not the number of programs but the quality of interactions with people that will increase friendships. Programs are great. It is important to have events for students to have a place to go and hang out at night with their friends, but programs are for the most part not the place for students to build friendships. Students need one to one time with each other building friendships. For many students even if they have the friendships they need the support out of the friendship. Support means students have someone to get help when they have academic or interpersonal problems, or when students are stuck in an emergency. The university can increase retention if every student has the support he or she needs.

One excellent way to provide support is through mentors. Although this study did not use the word "mentoring," many of the responses to the questions indicated students are looking for a mentor type figure in their lives. The First Year Experience classes have a mentor in each class and a faculty facilitator, both of whom are supposed to help the students transition. But,

most of the class time, and I can share from personal experience, is about getting freshmen aware of the other groups and organizations and introducing them to important people. While this is all important and provides informational support, freshmen in this questionnaire said although information is important they can find what they need when they want to. With technology as it is today freshmen do not need more information; they need more connections and more friends. The FYE classes spend too much time introducing freshmen to campus and not enough time fostering the mentoring and supportive relationships.

The classes also do not talk about friendship and about how to form friendships. The classes often mention the importance of getting connected but never go into the description of how. It is too often assumed freshmen will just make friends and the discussion is never continued as to how that happens.

Finally, the roles of parents and counselors are not discussed in most of the college student literature nor in the FYE classes. This study found it is important not to forget about parents and counselors. Parents and counselors are the backbone of support. Parents are the base of support from the past and counselors have the professional role to provide a foundation of support for the future. There are strong correlations with students being more able to go out and make friends and get support on campus if they have the support of parents. Students also expect to have the support of counselors if they should need it. The FYE classes and universities need to focus more not only how to build a supportive friendship with friends but on also making sure the parents are supporting students. If the parents are not supporting the student the university needs to make sure that there is some type of counselor there supporting the student, because this is what the student expects.

Finally the research, discussion, and application of support needs to be given over a long-term four year continuum. Freshmen in this questionnaire clearly report the importance of having friends, counselors, parents, or faculty there for support, and even though this study is only on first semester freshmen, it is highly unlikely the importance they note does not continue throughout their college careers. Students need someone to support and mentor them, so why stop mentoring after one year. At the University of Connecticut there is a First Year Experience program and a Senior Year Experience program. There is nothing for sophomore and junior year students. These are the years students select a major and possibly a career choice. Students as they approach junior year need faculty for research opportunities and, if not that, definitely recommendations. Supportive relationships are necessary throughout college. If the university wants to increase retention and support for students the university should form support systems and networks for students throughout their four years in college. One mentor, one source of support can make a world of difference for the student and for university retention.

More research needs to be focused on the importance of friendship in the college experience. It is assumed that all students have friends when they enter college and make more when they arrive. Often I hear people say peers are the number one influence on college students, or peers will make the biggest impact on students in college. I agree this is true, but there are many different kinds of friendships, and they clearly have an impact on students' experiences at the university.

Another overall finding from this data is that parents do make a difference in students' support. Students will have more difficulty finding someone to trust and confide in if they do not get help from their parents when the student has problems. Support from parents in terms of someone of support for academic problems, informational support, help making decisions can

make a difference in students finding someone to trust and confide in. Students have very high expectations because of high school.

Broader support needs to be further studied as well, specifically the changing roles of friends and parents but faculty as well. These people can be the mentors for students and make a difference in whether a student chooses to stay or leave a university. These are also likely to be the people students call in an emergency situation. It is important to understand what builds these relationships and how the university can spend more time fostering these relationships.

Finally it would be interesting to look at support along gender lines. Are females more open to the emotional support and do they go out and seek it more often than males? Some of my preliminary findings say this may be true, and there is some literature in the field indicating this as well. Further research can be done to explore the impact of gender.

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Questionnaire For First Semester Freshmen FYE Classes- Part 1

This questionnaire is for an undergraduate honors research project. The last four digits of your people soft number you put below will not be used to identify you but will be used again on another questionnaire you will complete at the end of the semester to correlate your answers. There are no right or wrong answers. Please circle the answer that best describes your opinion. Thank you for your participation.

Some of the questions use the terms “emotional support,” “instrumental support,” and “informational support.” Emotional support is when persons help you feel better about yourself, give positive feedback, etc. Instrumental support is when people help you to accomplish particular tasks or activities. Informational support is when people give you facts or information to help you be better informed so you can do things on your own. Please keep those definitions in mind when you answer those questions.

Last 4 digits of Peoplesoft Number: _____

1) What are you looking forward to most about UConn?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Meeting new people | 2. Classes | 3. Extracurricular activities |
| 4. Social life | 5. Dorm Life | 6. Getting Away from home |

2) What are you least looking forward to about UConn?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Meeting new people | 2. Classes | 3. Extracurricular Activities |
| 4. Social life | 5. Dorm Life | 6. Leaving Home |

3) Did you have friends at UConn before you applied to UConn?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. NO |
|--------|-------|

If you answered Yes to the question above, did this influence your decision to come to UConn?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

4) Did you have classmates from high school who were coming to UConn?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. NO |
|--------|-------|

If you answered Yes to the question above, did this influence your decision to come to UConn?

1. Yes
2. No

5) How easy or hard do you think it will be to make friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

6) Where do you think you will make the most friends on campus?

1. In your residence hall
2. Class
3. At club activities
4. Intramural sports
5. At another location

7) How many hours a week do you expect to spend hanging out with friends?

1. Less than 2 hours
2. Between 2 and 5 hours
3. Between 5 and 10 hours
4. More than 10 hours a week

8) How easy or hard will it be to get involved in extracurricular activities at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

9) How many hours a week do you expect to spend participating in extracurricular activities at UConn?

1. Less than 2 hours
2. Between 2 and 5 hours
3. Between 5 and 10 hours
4. More than 10 hours a week

10) How easy or hard will it be to find someone you can trust at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

11) How easy or hard will it be to find someone to confide in at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

12) How often do you think you will feel alone at UConn?

1. Once
2. Once every week
3. Every day
4. A few times a week
5. Never

13) How often do you think you will feel isolated at UConn?

1. Once
2. Once every week
3. Every day
4. A few times a week
5. Never

14) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get emotional support from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

15) How often do you expect to get emotional support from friends at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

16) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get instrumental support from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

17) How often do you expect to get instrumental support from friends at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

18) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get informational support from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

19) How often do you expect to get informational support from friends at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

20) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help making decisions from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

21) How often do you expect to get help making decisions from friends at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

22) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get emotional support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

23) How often do you expect to get emotional support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom

3. Often 4. Very often

24) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get instrumental support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

25) How often do you expect to get instrumental support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom
3. Often 4. Very often

26) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get informational support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

27) How often do you expect to get informational support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom
3. Often 4. Very often

28) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help making decisions from faculty members at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

29) How often do you expect to get help making decisions from faculty members at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom
3. Often 4. Very often

30) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get emotional support from professional counselors at UConn?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

31) How often do you expect to get emotional support from professional counselors at UConn?

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Seldom |
| 3. Often | 4. Very often |

32) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get instrumental support from professional counselors at UConn?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

33) How often do you expect to get instrumental support from professional counselors at UConn?

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Seldom |
| 3. Often | 4. Very often |

34) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get informational support from professional counselors at UConn?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

35) How often do you expect to get informational support from professional counselors at UConn?

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Seldom |
| 3. Often | 4. Very often |

36) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help making decisions from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

37) How often do you expect to get help making decisions from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

38) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get emotional support from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

39) How often do you expect to get emotional support from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

40) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get instrumental support from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

41) How often do you expect to get instrumental support from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

42) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get informational support from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

43) How often do you expect to get informational support from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

44) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help making decisions from your parent(s) while you are at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

45) How often do you expect to get help making decisions from your parents while you are at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

46) How easy or hard do you think it will be to have the respect of your classmates at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

47) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from friends at UConn for an academic problem?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

48) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from friends at UConn for an interpersonal problem?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

49) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from faculty or staff members at UConn for an academic problem?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

50) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from faculty or staff members at UConn for an interpersonal problem?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

51) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from professional counselors at UConn for an academic problem?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

52) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from professional counselors at UConn for an interpersonal problem?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

53) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from your parent(s) for an academic problem you are having at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

54) How easy or hard do you think it will be to get help from your parent(s) for an interpersonal problem you are having at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

55) How easy or hard will it be to find someone you could go to talk with about an emergency at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

56) Who are you most likely to go to if you have an emergency at UConn?

1. A faculty member
2. A friend on campus
3. A friend off campus
4. A parent or guardian
5. Someone not mentioned above

57) How many new friends do you expect to make at UConn?

1. 1
2. At least 5
3. Between 5 and 10
4. Between 10 and 20
5. More than 20

58) How easy do you think it will be to be treated as a person and not just a number?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

59) How many times do you expect to go home during your first semester?

1. None
2. One
3. Between 2-5 times
4. Between 5- 10 times
5. More than 10 times

60) How easy or hard do you expect it will be to get help at UConn when you need it?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

61) How satisfied are you with your decision to attend UConn?

1. Extremely satisfied
2. Very satisfied
3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not very satisfied
5. Not at all satisfied

62) Are you a Connecticut resident? 1. Yes 2. No

63) Are you: 1. Male 2. Female

64) (Optional) Please mark the ONE group that best describes your ethnicity:

1. African American
2. Hispanic/Latino
3. American Indian/ Alaska Native
4. Asian or Pacific Islander/Asian Pacific American
5. Caucasian
6. Bi/ Multi- racial
7. Other

Questionnaire For First Semester Freshmen FYE Classes- Part 2

This questionnaire is for an undergraduate honors research project. The last four digits of your people soft number you put below will not be used to identify you but will be used to connect your answers with the questionnaire you completed at the beginning of the semester. There are no right or wrong answers. Please circle the answer that best describes your opinion. Thank you for your participation.

Some of the questions use the terms “emotional support,” “instrumental support,” and “informational support.” Emotional support is when persons help you feel better about yourself, give positive feedback, etc. Instrumental support is when people help you to accomplish particular tasks or activities. Informational support is when people give you facts or information to help you be better informed so you can do things on your own. Please keep those definitions in mind when you answer those questions.

Last 4 digits of Peoplesoft Number: _____

1) What were you looking forward to most about UConn?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Meeting new people | 2. Classes | 3. Extracurricular activities |
| 4. Social life | 5. Dorm Life | 6. Getting Away from home |

2) What were you least looking forward to about UConn?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Meeting new people | 2. Classes | 3. Extracurricular Activist |
| 4. Social life | 5. Dorm Life | 6. Leaving Home |

3) Did you have friends at UConn before you applied to UConn?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. NO |
|--------|-------|

If you answered Yes to the question above, did this influence your decision to come to UConn?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

4) Did you have classmates from high school who were coming to UConn?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. NO |
|--------|-------|

If you answered Yes to the question above, did this influence your decision to come to UConn?

1. Yes

2. No

5) How easy or hard was it to make friends at UConn?

1. Very easy

2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard

4. Very hard

6) Where did you make the most friends on campus?

1. In your residence hall

2. Class

3. At club activities

4. Intramural sports

5. At another location

7) How many hours a week did you spend hanging out with friends?

1. Less than 2 hours

2. Between 2 and 5 hours

3. Between 5 and 10 hours

4. More than 10 hours a week

8) How easy or hard was it to get involved in extracurricular activities at UConn?

1. Very easy

2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard

4. Very hard

9) How many hours a week did you spend participating in extracurricular activities at UConn?

1. Less than 2 hours

2. Between 2 and 5 hours

3. Between 5 and 10 hours

4. More than 10 hours a week

10) How easy or hard was it to find someone you trust at UConn?

1. Very easy

2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard

4. Very hard

11) How easy or hard was it to find someone to confide in at UConn?

1. Very easy

2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard

4. Very hard

12) How often did you feel alone at UConn?

1. Once
2. Once every week
3. Every day
4. A few times a week
5. Never

13) How often did you feel isolated at UConn?

1. Once
2. Once every week
3. Every day
4. A few times a week
5. Never

14) How easy or hard was it to get emotional support from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

15) How often did you get emotional support from friends at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

16) How easy or hard was it to get instrumental support from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

17) How often did you get instrumental support from friends at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

18) How easy or hard was it to get informational support from friends at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

19) How often did you get informational support from friends at UConn?

- 1. Never
- 2. Seldom
- 3. Often
- 4. Very often

20) How easy or hard was it to get help making decisions from friends at UConn?

- 1. Very easy
- 2. Somewhat easy
- 3. Somewhat hard
- 4. Very hard

21) How often did you get help making decisions from friends at UConn?

- 1. Never
- 2. Seldom
- 3. Often
- 4. Very often

22) How easy or hard was it to get emotional support from faculty members at UConn?

- 1. Very easy
- 2. Somewhat easy
- 3. Somewhat hard
- 4. Very hard

23) How often did you get emotional support from faculty members at UConn?

- 1. Never
- 2. Seldom
- 3. Often
- 4. Very often

24) How easy or hard was it to get instrumental support from faculty members at UConn?

- 1. Very easy
- 2. Somewhat easy
- 3. Somewhat hard
- 4. Very hard

25) How often did you get instrumental support from faculty members at UConn?

- 1. Never
- 2. Seldom

3. Often 4. Very often

26) How easy or hard was it to get informational support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

27) How often did you get informational support from faculty members at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom

3. Often 4. Very often

28) How easy or hard was it to get help making decisions from faculty members at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

29) How often did you get help making decisions from faculty members at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom

3. Often 4. Very often

30) How easy or hard was it to get emotional support from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

31) How often did you get emotional support from professional counselor at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom

3. Often 4. Very often

32) How easy or hard was it to get instrumental support from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

33) How often did you get instrumental support from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom
3. Often 4. Very often

34) How easy or hard was it to get informational support from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

35) How often did you get informational support from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom
3. Often 4. Very often

36) How easy or hard was it to get help making decisions from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

37) How often did you get help making decisions from professional counselors at UConn?

1. Never 2. Seldom
3. Often 4. Very often

38) How easy or hard was it to get emotional support from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

39) How often did you get emotional support from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

40) How easy or hard was it to get instrumental support from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

41) How often did you get instrumental support from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

42) How easy or hard was it to get informational support from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

43) How often did you get informational support from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

44) How easy or hard was it to get help making decisions from your parent(s) while you were at UConn?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard
4. Very hard

45) How often did get help making decisions from your parents while you were at UConn?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Often
4. Very often

46) How easy or hard was it to have the respect of your classmates at UConn?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

47) How easy or hard do was it to get help from friends at UConn for an academic problem?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

48) How easy or hard was it to get help from friends at UConn for an interpersonal problem?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

49) How easy or hard was it to get help from faculty or staff members at UConn for an academic problem?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

50) How easy or hard was it to get help from faculty or staff members at UConn for an interpersonal problem?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

51) How easy or hard was it to get help from professional counselors at UConn for an academic problem?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
| 3. Somewhat hard | 4. Very hard |

52) How easy or hard was it to get help from professional counselors at UConn for an interpersonal problem?

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Very easy | 2. Somewhat easy |
|--------------|------------------|

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

53) How easy or hard do was it to get help from your parent(s) for an academic problem you were having at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

54) How easy or hard was it to get help from your parent(s)for an interpersonal problem you were having at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

55) How easy or hard would it be to find someone you could go to talk with about an emergency at UConn?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

56) Who would you be most likely to go to if you have an emergency at UConn?

1. A faculty member 2. A friend on campus

3. A friend off campus 4. A parent or guardian

5. Someone not mentioned above

57) How many new friends have you made at UConn?

1. 1 2. At least 5 3. Between 5 and 10

4. Between 10 and 20 5. More than 20

58) How easy do you think it will be to be treated as a person and not just a number?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy

3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

59) How many times did you expect to go home during your first semester?

1. None 2. One 3. Between 2-5 times
4. Between 5- 10 times 5. More than 10 times

60) How often did you go home during your first semester?

1. None 2. One 3. Between 2-5 times
4. Between 5-10 times 5.) More than 10 times

61) How easy or hard was it to get help at UConn when you needed it?

1. Very easy 2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat hard 4. Very hard

62) How satisfied are you with your decision to attend UConn?

1. Extremely satisfied 2. Very satisfied 3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not very satisfied 5. Not at all satisfied

63) Would you recommend UConn to a friend?

1. Yes 2. NO 3. Undecided

64) Do you expect to stay at UConn for the remainder of your collegiate career?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Undecided