

A Follow Up Study of Graduates from the UW-Stout Pre-College Program Enrolled in 1995.

by

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Abstract

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(Title)

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The Pre-College program at the University of Wisconsin-Stout is a unique program. The Pre-College program, in recent years, seeks out students from middle and high schools. The students usually range in ages between twelve and seventeen years old. For years the program has sought out and recruited students from various areas. Students are recruited from several areas of Wisconsin such as: Milwaukee, Eau Claire, Black River Falls, and Lac Du Flambeau. Students are also recruited from Minnesota. When the students arrive on UW-Stout's campus, a staff of Multicultural Advisors from the Multicultural Student Services, and UW-Stout students, and professional staff give the students the ability to see what life is like at UW-Stout. The students get a chance to go to "college" courses. The courses range from Technology to

Leadership Skills to Multiculturalism. The students also get the chance to enjoy team-building skills, team projects and roommates in the residence halls. The students also get a chance to have a lot of fun.

The objective of this research is to conduct a follow up study of the graduates from the University of Wisconsin-Stout Pre-College program who were enrolled during the summer of 1995. This study will help to determine to what extent the Pre-College program was valuable from the perspective of the students. The research will explore if the students later enrolled in a post-secondary institution, as is the purpose of the program.

The study will also explore if the students who graduated from the program in 1995 believed that the program had an influence of any kind on the student enrolling in a college or university. Did their grades improve from taking the Study Skills course? Did the Pre-College experience increase or decrease the student's interest in attending a post-secondary institution?

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There are so many loved ones and professional people that I'd like to thank. First, I must thank my God for giving me the courage to continue with my education and to have the sound mind to do something this crazy in the first place. Second, I'd like to thank my parents. Mama, if it weren't for you putting up with my needs in the first place and being the strong woman you are I don't think I would be here now. I love you and thank you very much for all the hard work that you have put into pushing me. Daddy, thank you for all the times you sent me money when I needed it. Poor college students need to have some monetary gifts every now and again. To my one and only sister, Lazelle, thank you for all those times you made me do homework even when I really did not have any, and for being my phone pal when I was so many miles away from home. To my best friend, Andrea, thank you for being there and believing in me and letting me know that I could do all that I dreamed of. To my soon to be husband, Omar, thank you for putting up with my insanity as I tried to finish this study. It is the kind of love and devotion that I pray all people are able to receive one day in their life.

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Katherine Navarre, PhD, I know that you are truly someone dependable. With my deadlines and hard work you have made not only my family's dreams come true but mine as well. Thank you for your assistance.

To all the people who may read this study, please know that I am a product of UW-Stout's Pre-college program. In fact, I am a graduate of the 1995 class. Regardless, of the study and what I may find in this study, the program is beneficial and it did influence me to go on to post-secondary education. I hope that others will get the same opportunity that I and so many others have received. It is truly a great experience.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Pre-college programs such as Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP), TRIO, and UPWARD BOUND, gives students the chance to explore college and careers in science, math, engineering, art, and technology, and to experience the relationship between these subjects and their application to everyday life (WWW.Njit.edu). There are several types of programs pre-college programs. As those listed above are academic pre-college programs. There are also athletic pre-college programs. In the 1980's and 1990's, predominately white colleges and universities focused heavily on recruiting students of color, yet paid little to no attention to retention. There is a summer program that can help any post-secondary institution recruit and retain students of color into their respective schools. The pre-college (hereafter referred to as PC) program is targeted toward students in under-represented groups, mainly people of color. The purpose of this program is to inspire students who normally would not attend a post secondary institution or experience what a higher education is like, now or in the future.

Over the past decade undergraduate enrollment for African-Americans and Latinos has nationally increased by 32% and 98%, whereas the number for Caucasian undergraduates has declined by 1 % (Perna, 2000). During this same time period, an increase of 43% of all African-Americans received bachelor's degrees and an increase of 90% of all Latinos received bachelor's degrees. Although there has been an increase in how many African-American and Latino students attend college and receive a degree, they are still inadequately represented in the total population of undergraduates and bachelor degree recipients. Low income, high-risk, and first generation students are becoming an established part of the population of higher education. PC

helps increase the potential for enrollment, retention, and graduation of students by introducing the academic demands of college life, the social, political, and cultural context of college life, and college resources, services, and structure.

The academic PC program at the University of Wisconsin-Stout is a unique program. In the mid 1990's all the students enrolled in PC were 9th-12th grade high school students. UW-Stout's program in recent years sought out students from middle and high schools. The students usually ranged in age between twelve and seventeen years old. Students were recruited from various areas. Many students came from the "core" of their city. The core of the city is an area that is equivalent to the inner city. The inner city is considered in many rural and suburban areas as the poverty stricken and at times the slum of the city. The core has all of these components including many more that go unseen, like the children who want to make a difference, and those who want to receive the entitlement of an outstanding education. Students are recruited from several areas of Wisconsin, such as: Milwaukee, Madison, Oneida, and Black River Falls. Students are also recruited from Minnesota, such as St. Paul and Minneapolis. When the students arrive at UW-Stout's campus, a staff of multicultural advisors from the Multicultural Student Services program and select Stout students and professional staff from UW-Stout give the students an opportunity to see what life is like at UW-Stout. The students attend courses that are held in classrooms on the campus. These are classrooms where the university's students have classes during the regular school semesters. The classes are aimed toward the students' grade and comprehension level. The students also get the chance to develop team-building skills which are needed for success in higher education. Students learn by having team projects and roommates. They meet the roommates for the first time when they arrive for check-in and orientation.

The program objectives as described by Anthony Queen, the Director of PC at UW-Stout in 1998, were as follows:

- Students will develop their academic skills: reading, writing, math and study skills.
- Students will develop their interpersonal relationship skills and leadership skills.
- Students will compile information on college selection, admission, and financial aid.
- They will identify their strengths and weaknesses and personal interests.
- Students will relate their personal profiles to possible careers and explore one area in depth.

Many political officials and their constituents have wondered if PC programs are beneficial to students who attend them and whether resources should still be allocated to fund these programs. The researcher held the national position with the United States Student Association (USSA), and lobbied several of Wisconsin and many other national leaders regarding funding PC programs reminding all parties that Wisconsin has a plan throughout the University of Wisconsin-System, that aide in the support of diversity and PC programs, this plan is called Plan 2008, which is a diversity plan in all of Wisconsin's colleges. In this plan there is a section developed for programs such as these. In UW-Stout's plan Goal One, Task Two states:

“To increase the number of Wisconsin high school graduates of color who apply are accepted, and enroll at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Each college will offer at least one Pre-College program targeting students of color.”

Are students enrolling in colleges, after participating in this program? Is this a good program? These are two questions often expressed by the public. With sparse research done on UW-Stout's PC program it is the hope that this research will answer these questions. Findings

from this research may lead to more opportunities for students to have a better chance of attending a post-secondary institution.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to conduct a follow up study of the graduates from the University of Wisconsin-Stout pre-college program who were enrolled during the summer of 1995. This study will help to determine to what extent the pre-college program was valuable from the perspective of these students. The research will explore if the students later enrolled in a post-secondary institution, as is the purpose of the program. The study will also explore if the students who graduated from the program in 1995 believed that the program had an influence of any kind on the decision to enroll in a college or university.

Research Questions

There are three research questions that this study addresses. They are:

1. Have students who graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stout pre-college program in 1995 enrolled in a post-secondary institution?
2. To what extent was the program valuable and/or beneficial from the perspective of the students?
3. To what extent did the program influence program graduates in their decision to attend a post secondary institution?

Definition of Terms

The term minority, though used quite frequently, is said to be insensitive by some cultural groups. In some areas the term is statistically incorrect and inappropriately implies being outside the mainstream and hence of less social importance (Palmer & Laungain, 1999). Therefore, it is important to be sensitive to the use of this word while dealing with the students in the Pre-College program. One of the several lessons that are taught at Pre-college is teaching the students about diversity and to be politically correct in terminology. Not only is this lesson taught to the

students coming to the program, but also to the staff who will be working with the youth. It is imperative that everyone dealing with youth understand how influential they are. If the wrong term, gesture, or command is given to a child, it can be internalized and later used again in the wrong context. That is why it is important to explain the difference between culture, ethnicity, and race. Many believe that each term is distinctly different, to believing that each one is interrelated, and more important than the others, to believing that race is meaningless (Wehrly, Kenney, & Kenney, 1999).

American Indian or Alaska Native – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliations or community recognition.

Asian – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, and the Philippine Islands.

Black or African American – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

Culture-All of the learned behaviors, beliefs, norms and values that are held by a group of people and passed on from older members to newer members at least in part to preserve the group.

Ethnicity-An equivocal for race, but is more commonly used to denote common origin. It refers to certain group characteristics with regard to food, work, relationships, celebrations and rituals that separate them from the larger society.

GEAR UP-Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

Hispanic or Latino – A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other Pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam.

Non-traditional student- A student who falls into one or more of the following criteria: low-income, first generation, veteran, or a freshman who is older than 18 years of age.

Post secondary institution-A college or university of higher learning

Race-A division of mankind possessing traits that are transmissible by descent and sufficient to characterize it as a distinct human type, a family, tribe, people, or nation belonging to the same stock; a class or kind of people unified by community of interests, habits, or characteristics.

TRIO-The Federal TRIO Programs are educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes six outreach and support programs targeted to serve and assist low-income, first-generation college, and disabled students to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post baccalaureate programs.

Underrepresented groups-A person falling in the category of not being part of the majority; persons of color, disabled persons, women and homosexual persons.

White or Caucasian – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Limitations and Assumptions

A few limitations are apparent in this study. These are:

1. Students who attended UW-Stout pre-college program may have moved out of the state or may no longer be at the phone number given when they were enrolled in the program.

2. Some students may not be available to participate, due to conflict of schedules.

3. Some students may not remember the program, because it took place over six years

ago.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

This chapter will report on early intervention programs and the types of programs offered. Information will be presented from previous research conducted on national early intervention programs. Lastly, it will present the history of UW-Stout's Pre-college program and how it has evolved into the program it is today.

What is early intervention?

Diversity seems to be a catchword in most colleges and universities for the past two decades. Since the early 1980's there have been a number of programs providing services and resources to encourage disadvantaged youth to finish high school and enter college. The federal law encourages states, local education agencies, community organizations, and private entities to provide a variety of information and support services for elementary, middle, and secondary students at risk of dropping out of school. These services include tutoring, counseling, mentoring, and information to help disadvantaged and at-risk students obtain their secondary diploma and obtain admission into a post-secondary institution. Many programs try to break the financial barrier to post-secondary education by providing information to students about financial aid. Some programs provide students with information on how to fill out Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASA) forms. Many intervention programs offer scholarships to students if they graduate from high school and enter a college. It is the belief of many that early intervention programs will help decrease and eventually prevent dropout rates and increase the number of students pursuing degrees from a post-secondary institution.

Early intervention programs have evolved since their conception. There is a wide range

of programs. Academic outreach programs are different from early intervention programs; they are a subset of the broader concept (Fenske, Geranios, Keller, & Moore, 1997). Academic outreach programs are operated by schools, colleges, and universities. Though both programs have similar goals, they do have slight differences. Academic outreach programs aid at-risk students in planning for higher education, without focusing on specific academic disciplines. Many academic outreach programs recruit at-risk students from their program to be admitted into their institution.

The newest approach to early intervention is that of school-college collaboration, K-16, (Fenske, Geranios, Keller, & Moore, 1997). This program attempts to close the gap between K-12 and higher education. This program is combining the last two years of secondary school with the two years of going to a public community college. This program has been shown to increase the readiness of entering freshmen because they have already gone through the fundamentals of “entering” college.

According to ERIC (1997) early intervention programs are differentiated into six forms:

1. Programs established by philanthropic agencies
2. Federally supported programs
3. State-sponsored programs with matching federal support
4. Entirely state-supported programs
5. Systemic changes involving school-college collaboration, and
6. College or university-sponsored programs

One of the most popular early intervention programs is TRIO. This program is funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Congress established a series of programs to help low-income Americans enter post-secondary institutions and graduate and move on to be a

part of the economic and social life they may not have had the chance to experience. This program wants to ensure equal educational opportunities for all people, regardless of their ethnic background, race, or social economic status. While student financial aid programs help students overcome the barriers of finances to higher education, TRIO programs help students overcome the social and cultural barriers of higher education. Since 1965 there is an estimate of nearly two million students who have graduated from post-secondary institutions with the support and attendance of a TRIO program. Two of TRIO's programs, Talent Search and Upward Bound/Pre-college, are early intervention programs. Both of these programs effectively recruit students in grades six through twelve who have "college potential." Many of these students do not recognize this potential, because of a poor understanding of their academic and career options post high school. Yearly, these two programs keep thousands of promising young multicultural and low-income students in school and highly focused on education and career success.

TRIO Programs at a Glance

There are several TRIO programs. This study focuses mainly on one-Upward Bound/Pre-College, though the following is a quick glance at the programs offered by TRIO.

Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC)

There are over 82 EOC's in America. This program is targeted primarily for displaced or underemployed workers. This program helps people choose a college and gives information on financial aid programs.

Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program

This program, named after the astronaut who died in 1986, encourages students of color and low-income undergraduates to prepare for careers in college teaching. This program is also

one of only a few programs in America that encourages participants to prepare for doctoral study.

Student Support Services

Students receive the service of tutoring, counseling and remedial instruction, until they earn their baccalaureate degree.

Talent Search

This early intervention program helps young people understand possible educational opportunities and options. This program serves students in grades six through twelve, with counseling, information about college admission, scholarships and financial aid.

Upward Bound Math/Science

Over 124 programs are serving students throughout the country to strengthen math and science skills.

Upward Bound/Pre-College

As of 2000, nearly 772 programs throughout the United States are helping prepare students for higher education. In this program students receive instruction in composition, foreign language, literature, mathematics, science and art on college campuses after school, on Saturdays and during the summer.

Eligibility for TRIO Programs

TRIO programs are effective and many students and families depend on these programs. Many low-income families do not have access to information about higher education. These programs provide a liaison to that information. Many of the students who attend TRIO programs are first-generation students. Often when neither parent has gone to college, they can't provide information about post-secondary admission, courses, or financial aid. In some cases the parents

may not value a higher education. That is when early intervention programs come into play. Guidance counselors in middle and secondary schools inform students of the opportunity. Congress has mandated that two-thirds of the students attending must come from families with income under \$24,000 (family of four) where neither parent graduated from college. According to the Directory of TRIO Programs on a national level, 39% of TRIO students are Caucasian, 36% African-American, 16% Hispanic, 5% Native American, and 4% are Asian American. Sixteen thousand TRIO students are disabled.

In Wisconsin, Title I is a federal program that provides financial assistance to local educational agencies to meet the special educational needs of educationally deprived children at the preschool, elementary, and secondary levels. It helps those students improve their educational opportunities by: attaining grade-level proficiency, experiencing success in the classroom, and improving achievement in basic and advanced skills.

These goals are met through supplemental education programs, school-wide programs, and increased involvement of parents and the community. Students at public and private elementary and secondary schools are eligible if they reside in an area with a high concentration of low-income families and are educationally deprived. According to the U.S. Department of Education, educationally deprived children are those whose educational attainment is below the level that is appropriate for children of their age.

Opportunities Offered at PC Programs

The educational and human services offered through Pre-College (PC) programs are distinguishable by the following characteristics:

One-on-One

PC program staff get the chance to know the student on a first-name basis. Counselors have the chance to work one-on-one with each student. PC counselors are dedicated personally to the success of their students.

Strong Relationships

The staff of each PC program creates a climate of support for students as they strive to move out of poverty and dependence. In many of the programs, leadership skills are part of the curriculum. It is the hope of staff that students will utilize these skills to better themselves and succeed in the future. As a result of the strong and positive relationships, many students will later graduate and return to their PC program to inspire other students.

Performance

A specific outcome for each program is clearly defined in each grant proposal. Program directors are held responsible and must meet their objectives each year in order to remain funded. With this incentive, it is guaranteed that the accountability of the program is of a high nature and that each program will strive to improve yearly, giving the students who attend a wonderful chance to experience a remarkable opportunity.

Comprehensive and Cultural

Students receive instruction in areas they may be struggling in at school. In addition, tutorial services and exposure to cultural events and people help broaden their horizons.

Real Life Situations

Like their students, many PC staff had to overcome class, social, academic, and cultural barriers to succeed in higher education. With this history, they can effectively relate to their students and know how to motivate them.

Wisconsin Programs

In Wisconsin TRIO programs are administered by the Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Programs (WEOP). This is part of the Division of Learning Support: Instructional Services in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). WEOP's purpose is to provide help to educationally and economically disadvantaged students to continue their education. This is accomplished through five statewide TRIO programs from seven statewide offices (Ashland, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine, and Wausau):

- Talent Search Program
- Talent Incentive Program Grant (TIP)
- Early Identification Program (EIP)
- National Early Intervention Scholarship and Partnership Program (NEISP)
- Minority Pre-College Scholarship Program

The purpose of the Minority Pre-College Scholarship Program is to provide funds to multicultural students in grades six through twelve to attend PC courses at campuses throughout the state. The program pays for the cost of courses, books, supplies, and room and board. This program gives students a head start in college preparation. According to DPI, the program helps students:

- Build academic skills
- Build self-confidence
- Handle new challenges
- Shape and strengthen basic skills
- Get equipped for success in college and career
- Participate in any post secondary PC program in Wisconsin

Since 1985 more than 40,000 Wisconsin adolescents have experienced their first taste of higher education through the PC program.

The previously mentioned programs are the state programs in Wisconsin. There is a federal program as well; this program is GEAR-UP. This program provides two components, early intervention and scholarships. GEAR-UP provides:

- College awareness and academic preparation activities
- Career, personal, and financial aid counseling
- Mentoring
- Tutoring
- Fieldtrips to college campuses and businesses
- Academic programs
- ACT preparation
- Pre-college programs
- Social and cultural events
- Scholarship resources
- Assistance with admissions and financial aid applications
- Employment opportunities parent workshops
- Professional development

This program provides these outstanding tasks by obtaining these basic objectives, provided by the Department of Public Instruction:

- Providing early information to students and parents about college options, required courses and financial aid, including scholarships;

- Promoting strategies and activities for increased parent involvement in preparing students for college;
- Providing intensive, individualized support to students through mentoring, counseling, and tutoring;
- Providing ongoing staff training and professional development opportunities to help teachers, counselors, mentors, and others raise expectations for all students;
- Establishing strong partnerships that involve a long-term commitment and a meaningful role for each partner in improving students' preparation for college; and
- Designing projects informed by research on effective practices that include careful evaluations to enable continuous improvement and to guide project replication.

Previous Research

There has been sparse research done on Wisconsin's Upward Bound/Pre College programs. There have been some studies done on the outcome of the programs from the students in recent years. DPI now requires that all programs complete a work sheet for each student giving their input on the program and if they view it as successful. This work sheet is required in order for the programs to continue receiving funding through grants from DPI. According to the Education Department General Administration Regulations (EDGAR) section 75.732, recording a program's performance is necessitated. Because of these regulations, there have been few national studies conducted.

The Upward Bound Ten-Year Study of Program Graduates

This study focuses on how many of the California State University, Chico Upward Bound participants persisted in postsecondary education or completed their educational goals. During

1995 there was a tremendous amount of Upward Bound applications across the nation. The Upward Bound staff at Chico established a standard for measuring postsecondary success:

“Forty-five percent of the participants from each Upward Bound graduating class entering postsecondary programs will demonstrate continuous progress or graduate within six years.” (Casey & Ferguson, 2000)

The need for establishing criteria for postsecondary success came about because neither the Higher Education Act nor the Federal regulations define postsecondary success. Forty-five percent was used by California State as a standard because of the following factors (pg. 5):

- Secondary school dropout rates
(36.7% for the area, compared to 11.2% for the nation)
- Low postsecondary sending rates
(41.3% or 23% for the area when the dropout rate is factored, compared to 50% for the state)
- Educational attainment for adult population
(15% for the area, compared to 21% nation)
- Percentage of students in the area meeting the federal government’s “low-income, first generation” criteria. (85%)

The six year time period was based on the average time a degree was earned for low-income students attending California State University. This study was focused on students who attained their educational goal, but no less than a Certificate, Associate, or Bachelor’s degree. Data for this study was conducted over a seven-month period from November 1997 to May 1998. Students who successfully graduated from Chico’s Upward Bound program were tracked through the first postsecondary institution entered from fall 1986 to spring 1995.

There were three phases to the study. Phase one was preparation and research. The researchers gathered files from Upward bound archives. A form was created for updating and collecting additional data. Access to the schools computerized advising system was utilized to conduct research on 117 Chico alumni. The second phase was data verification, where data verification was processed. This process included information about who to contact within the campus registrars office or enrollment verification department. A follow-up letter was sent to various campuses, and signed information release forms were mailed. The final phase was analyzing, editing, and calculating data (pgs. 5-7) .

California State Upward Bound Study Findings:

- The 1986-1995 California State University, Chico Upward Bound participants graduated from high school and entered postsecondary education at a higher rate than all students who fall in the category of non-traditional students.
- More Upward bound graduates entered postsecondary education than students from similar backgrounds.
- Upward Bound graduates had higher rates of staying in one institution than the national population of postsecondary students.
- Many students who have not completed or are not currently enrolled in postsecondary education, indicated they intend to continue progress toward their educational goals.

Overall, this study has shown that students who have entered into the California State University Chico Upward Bound program persist toward their educational goal, or have completed their goal in a single postsecondary institution at a higher rate than the national college-going population.

The Impacts of Upward Bound: Final Report for Phase I of the National Evaluation

Students typically enter the program in their freshman or sophomore year of high school and can remain in it through the summer following high school graduation. This study reports the impact of Upward Bound on students through high school and for some students, their first one or two years in college. To complete this study there were roughly 1500 randomly selected applicants between late 1992 and early 1994. The following questions were the basis of the study (Myers & Schirm, 1999):

- What fraction of eligible applicants choose to participate in the program when given the opportunity? Which ones participate? Why do some not participate?
- What fraction of participants remains in the program until they graduate from high school? Which ones are more likely to remain in the program that long?
- How long do participants typically remain in the program? Do some remain in the program longer than others? Why do some participants leave early?
- In what activities do participants engage while in the program?
- Are some projects better able to retain students than other projects?

The Impacts of Upward Bound Findings:

Moore (1997) has described the key results from this study:

- Upward Bound offers students the opportunity to participate in the program for four years: Nearly 40 percent left during the first year and an estimated 40 percent will be in the program until the end of the 12th grade.
- Upward Bound has small impact on students' high school course taking and educational expectations.

Many of the students who were part of this study were too young to attend college. This study focused mainly on students who entered the program late in their high school years and not those who entered during the 9th grade. The findings suggest Upward Bound did not have an impact on students attending a postsecondary institution, nor the selectivity of the college attended.

- Upward Bound did, however, have a substantial impact on boys, White and Hispanic, and students who were at risk of academic failure.

Upward Bound students earned more credits in the five-core subjects in high school than the controlled group did, and were more likely to attend college and again earn more credits from four-year colleges.

- Participants who remained in the program for more than two years benefited more than those with less exposure.

According to the study, students who left after the 9th grade often experienced a smaller impact or no impact at all due to the lack of constant exposure to program activities.

Overall, this study has shown that from roughly 20,000 applicants to the Upward Bound program, about 16,400 students entered the program. From that 10,600 students remain for at least one year in the program. About 7,200 remain until secondary graduation. Typically an Upward Bound student participates for 19 months and attends nearly 400 sessions of Upward Bound academic and nonacademic activities (Myers & Schirm, 1999).

University of Wisconsin-Stout Pre college Program

As previously mentioned in chapter one, University of Wisconsin-Stout's PC program is very unique. UW-Stout's pre college program is an academic enrichment and career experience for students of color from grades 7-10. According to Mary Riordan, Director of Diversity of UW-Stout, "It's primary goal is to put post secondary education in their future." (1997) Over the

last two decades the program has seen several changes. In 1980, Stout's program began. During this time Stout selected students of color from high schools that had already chosen Stout as their college to attend and placed them in a program called Summer Opportunity Session (SOS). The intent for this four-week program was to give minority students a "jump-start" on their college education by familiarizing them with the campus, with the university's courses of study, and providing them the opportunity to earn four credits (Torres, 1994). Scholarships were available for students of color in 1987, by the Department of Public Instruction, to attend PC programming. It was in 1987 the program changed its focus. To targeting students who had not yet graduated from secondary school. With this new population of participants Stout's goal became to create an experience for under-represented high school students that would motivate and encourage them to stay in school, graduate and recognize that they too could go on to higher education.

University of Wisconsin-Stout Pre college Program Agenda

Over the past twenty years the program has had several different agendas though each included enrichment classes in Math, Reading/Writing, and Study Skills. The agenda also included several different field trips for the students to enjoy. At one point in the PC program students went on an overnight camping trip. This trip provided the students with a sense of community and togetherness right at the beginning of the program and helped them to develop cohesiveness by "forcing" them to live together in an outdoor setting, away from radios, televisions and video games. Now students reside in the residence halls where they share music, bring movies and also share their own video games. In recent years the students go to Minnesota to the Science Museum and to the Mall of America and to end the hot summer day students go to Menomonie's water park and may enjoy a pizza party.

The field trip given to the students from the class of 1995 was a trip to the local zoo and the Crystal Bat Cave. Students were also given the opportunity to experience the town by being involved in a scavenger hunt around Menomonie.

Length of the University of Wisconsin-Stout Pre college Program

Throughout the years Stout's PC program has varied in its length. It has gone from one session for four weeks to four one week sessions. It is still debatable which length works out best for students: having the students involved in one session of four weeks or having a student involved in one two week session. The students from 1995 were on Stout's campus for two weeks.

Participants of the University of Wisconsin-Stout Pre college Program

Stout's PC program has tried recruiting in all ranges of the 6-11 grades. PC in 1995 comprised of students entering the ninth through eleventh grades. For some the experience took place hundreds of miles from home and for others only blocks away from the university. The ethnic/racial composition of the program has often changed, each program having different faces and different cultural background. PC has always reached out to children of all cultures and races. Because Wisconsin and Minnesota are two highly Hmong populated states, Asian American students are frequent participants in Stout's PC program. Another aspect of the program that has been consistent is the gender balance. There usually are more female participants at Stout's PC program. In some cases the girls will out number the boys by 20-30%.

TRIO Programs at the University of Wisconsin-Stout

UW-Stout has six different PC programs. All have specific areas that they address. Below is a list of programs provided by UW-Stout's website:

UW-Stout Boys' Basketball Camps

It Offers: Drill for skill, pressure ball movement, shooting, dribbling, passing, and footwork.

Grade Level: 7-12

Gender: Male only

Program Dates: June

Subject: Basketball

UW-Stout College for Kids in Menomonie #1 & #2

It Offers: An exciting educational experience providing an opportunity to explore new fields, acquire new knowledge and skills, and interact with other students of similar interest and abilities. Courses range from science to art to technology and others. College credit is available to qualified juniors and seniors in high school on selected courses.

Grade Level: Grades K-12

Gender: Code (female/male)

Program Dates: June-July

Subject: Academic, Acting, Art, Computer, Cook, Costume, Craft, Creative, Culture, Dance, Dinosaur, Drama, Draw, Education, Environmental, Fitness Training, Foods, Health, Jazz, Math, Minority, Music, Nature, Nutrition, Outdoor skills, Painting, Photography, Science, Technology, Theater, Theatre, Watercolor, Wellness, Woodworking, Writing

UW-Stout Girls' Basketball Camp

It Offers: Basketball fundamentals. Individual skills include station drills,

shooting, defense, dribbling, and passing skills. This is a drill for skill camp. Session 1& 3: Girls' Shooting; Session 2: Girls' Post Perimeter; Session 4: Girls' Team Camp

Grade Level: 6-12

Gender: Female only

Program Dates: June

Subject: Basketball

UW-Stout Pre College Summer Program

It Offers: Attend classes in the morning. Explore careers such as: Hospitality and Touristy, Graphic Arts, Management, Education, and Technology. This program will enhance academics in the areas of writing, math, and study skills. In Art, the students will learn to express themselves in paint, metal, and clay. The students will find out about tourism and learning to prepare meals in our restaurant. In Technology, the students will think of a product and design it, produce it, and sell it, in addition to discovering lasers. The student will explore careers, live in a residence hall, learn listening skills, and find out who they are.

Grade Level: 7-12

Gender: Coed (female/male)

Program Dates: June-July

Subject: Academic, Art, computer, Cook, Culture, Education, English, Foods, Health, Leadership, Math, Minority, Outdoor skills, Painting, Study skills, Technology, Writing

UW-Stout Soccer

It Offers: Soccer fundamentals. Individual skills include dribbling, passing,

shooting, heading, throw-ins, and defensive team skills include basic positioning and team tactics.

Grade Level: Grades K-12

Gender: Coed (female/male)

Program Dates: June-July

Subject: Soccer

UW-Stout Summer Technology and Engineering Preview at Stout for Girls (STEPS)

It Offers: Because of the lack of women attracted to engineering careers, the University of Wisconsin-Stout sponsors the Summer technology and Engineering preview for Girls, and engineering and technology camp for girls entering the seventh grade. The goal of the camp is to inspire young women toward engineering careers by providing them with a meaningful hands-on introduction to the world of manufacturing at an age early enough to influence their middle school and high school preparation for technical education and careers. Technical activities of the camp focus around the manufacture of radio-controlled model airplanes, exposing girls to a variety of manufacturing processes. Each girl has the opportunity to fly her assembled airplane before taking it home.

Grade Level: Grade 7

Gender: Female only

Program Dates: July

Subject: Academic, Aeronautics, Aviation, Career, Chemistry, College Orientation, Computer, Creativity, Engineering, Flying, Graphics, Industrial Sciences, Journalism, Math, Mechanics, Physics, Problem Solving, Science, Technology

CHAPTER III

Methodology

In this chapter you will read about the methodology used in this study. This will include: subject selection, data collection, instrumentation, data analysis, and assumptions/limitations.

Subject selection and description

There were a total of twenty-one students on the official list for pre-college (PC) participants during the summer of 1995, thirteen females and eight males. There were a few students who attended the program whose names were not on the list. Students from the PC class of 1995 came from Milwaukee, Madison, Oneida, Eau Claire, and Menomonie, Wisconsin. From the original list of participants, the researcher called all phone numbers listed at the time of enrollment in PC. Students whose phone numbers were still active were asked to participate. Those whose numbers had been changed and the new phone numbers were listed, that phone number as well was called. All others (wrong number, unpublished, moved) were not included in this study. The researcher was able to contact eleven students who agreed to participate; only five showed and took part in the interviews. The five consisted of three females and two males. The researcher continued to call the other six students for a period of three weeks to reschedule the interviews. The researcher was not successful in rescheduling the interviews with the other six students.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was comprised of twenty-two questions; these questions were reflections of: memory of the program, cultural experience, academic performance, and college choices.

The first section of questions dealt with the memory of the participants. Participants were asked if they remembered any other students from the program, if they had been in contact with anyone from the program, and what they remembered most from the program. These questions were asked first in order to continue with the interview. In recalling some of the memories and people from the program, it would be easier for the participant to continue with the other questions.

The second section of questions dealt with cultural experience. Questions from this section asked the participant how they felt being on a predominately Caucasian campus and town, how they viewed ethnic groups then and now, and if the participant remembered the racial problem that occurred during the program. During the program there was a large misunderstanding between an African-American young lady and a Hmong young man. This incident had become so large that many of the activities had been canceled and a group discussion had taken place. The researcher wanted to know if the participant had remembered such events.

The third section of questions dealt with academic performance. These questions ranged from the participants' performance when they were in secondary school to their current situation. Also, in this section the participants watched a video tape of themselves that was filmed during the program. During the program the students had an exit interview. Those students who were considered upper classmen had job interviews. These students had to choose between two jobs to apply for: one job being a sales person at a Footlocker shoe store, the other job being a cook manager at a local restaurant. Other students, those who were entering into the ninth or tenth grade, read employment ads of their choice from two different newspapers: the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and the local newspaper. During the program, all students were filmed by a staff

member from the program while doing their interview or reading an ad. None of the students had seen the tape prior to the interview. One of the interview questions asked if the participant felt his/her professionalism had changed since the filming.

The final section of questions dealt with college choice. This section of questions was one of the main sections of the interview process. These questions were asked to find out if the participants' attendance in the program encouraged them to attend a post-secondary institution. Questions asked of the participant: In what way did Pre-college increase or decrease your interest in attending a post-secondary institution? Did the program assist you in the direction of your current career goals? The last question the participants were asked was the question that this study really needed to know, Overall, do you think your experience was valuable? In what ways was or wasn't it?

Data collection

The data for this study was collected by the use of documenting interview answers. This was done in two ways; tape recorder and hand-written notes. All participants signed a consent form giving permission for the researcher to record their answers, and securing their safety and confidentiality. The interviews were held in a place where the setting had minimal distractions. After the end of each interview, the researcher asked the participants if they had any questions for the researcher. The researcher also included information on why certain questions were asked, and what the researcher was looking for in the interview. After each interview, the researcher replayed the tape recording and added necessary notes to the hand-written notes taken during the interview.

Data analysis

This study was descriptive in nature. The purpose of this study was to describe the data collected and to figure out if there was an association between the individual thoughts and feelings of the participants and the pre-college experience, by stating if their feelings effected their decision to enroll in a post secondary institution and if the program was valuable to them. The measurement of the independent variable was to see if the participants had more positive comments on the program versus negative comments. This was determined by body language, tone of voice, and verbal communication used during answers.

Assumptions/Limitations

There were only a few limitations to the interview questions. The participants may not have recalled many of the situations that the questions referred to. The interview questions were broken into four sections. The researcher made the assumption that all students attended college at some point after graduation from the program to the date of the interview. There were not many questions dealing with students who had not gone to college after the program. There was also a limitation on the participant's current situation. There were not many questions dealing with what the students were presently doing, though there was enough room for them to elaborate with their answers. There was a question in the interview that asked if the participants were working in their chosen career field.

CHAPTER IV

Results

This chapter will present the results of the answers that the participants gave during the interview process for this study. The demographic information and descriptive statistics will be reported first. Data collected on each of the research questions will then be given.

Demographic Information

At the time of enrollment the sample for this study consisted of 3 seniors and 2 juniors, 0 sophomores and 0 freshmen. The 3 seniors were made up of 1 male and 2 females; juniors consisted of 50% male and 50% female. In this population 3 participants considered themselves African-American and 2 Bi-racial (African-American and Caucasian).

Data Collection

The first objective listed in this study was to determine if students who graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stout (UW-Stout) Pre College (PC) program enrolled in a post secondary institution. The response from the interviews indicated that all the participants enrolled in a post secondary institution. Four students enrolled in a university (four-year) and one student enrolled in a technical college (two-year). Of the universities selected, three were Wisconsin Schools (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin-Parkside and University of Wisconsin-Madison) and one university was in Minnesota (Winona State University). None of the students have completed a degree as of the interview. One student was one semester away from receiving an Associates Degree. Many of the students reported they had many hardships while in school. One student had to take a semester off of school because of the birth of her child. Three students reported they had been put on academic probation more than once. One student was dismissed from school and not allowed back into the university. Though

all students stated they want to continue with their education, only two were still attending school.

The second objective of this study was to determine to what extent the program was valuable and/or beneficial from the perspective of the students. The PC experience was different for each participant. What skews the outcomes of the program from person to person? One student found the program to be “a lot of fun and a chance to get away.” This student also reported that she desired more work, more concrete study and academic courses. Another student thought the experience was good. The student reported gaining some self confidence while being in the program. Yet another student reported the experience as beneficial and fun. This student reported the PC experience gave them a view on the “real world”. This student thought high school was not the real world. Furthermore, this student also stated she learned more about herself and who her real friends were. A fourth student reported the experience as positive. This student states “any camp outside of your parent’s perception is healthy.” This student also reported that he was able to be accepted by a large group of strangers. The last student reported the experience as fun. This student stated the program brought forth a new light for racial togetherness.

The last objective of this study was to determine to what extent the program influenced them in their decision to attend a post secondary institution? All participants reported they already had the notion to go onto post secondary education. They all reported that the program did not influence them either way, though they did have fun while being in the program.

CHAPTER V

Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter will present a discussion of the results from this study along with conclusions. The chapter will conclude with some recommendations.

Discussion

According to the research findings, there was a strong positive correlation between students attending post-secondary education and students finding the Pre College (PC) experience beneficial. Participants reported they all enjoyed the program and that it was “fun”. Nearly half of the students reported they were able to make valuable decisions about their lives. They were able to look at themselves in a different light, as one participant said. However, there was a negative correlation between attending post-secondary education and the PC program influencing this decision. All students reported they already had considered post-secondary education, though many of them did not know what institution they wanted to apply to. The results of the study showed that the students enjoyed the program and would recommend PC programs to families and other students. The experience did not have the impact of putting post-secondary education into their plans, because they were there prior to the program.

Conclusion

Although the sample size was small, the results concur with previous research of students attending post-secondary education. Most students who attend a PC program do enroll in a post-secondary institution. Some students may not have received the degree yet, due to many different circumstances depending on the student. Though the students enjoyed the program and later enrolled in a post-secondary institution, Stout’s PC program did not influence them in making that decision. Students enrolled in the program had already decided to enroll in a post secondary

education. Students reported they were able to experience new friends, a new town, new ways to discover who they were, and ways to work on their personal growth, and exposure to different cultural groups. All of which is part of the plan in the PC programs objectives.

Recommendations

Several suggestions are offered for UW-Stout's PC program. These are:

1-Stout should reach out to populations of students that don't foresee post-secondary education in their futures in order to serve a group that is more in need of the program.

2-Implement academic courses and college admissions and financial aid applications in the program so that at least 80% of the program participants understand the process of applying for a school.

3-Implement a tracking and follow-up system to monitor post-secondary progress of participants.

4-Implement an ongoing evaluation system employing both formative and summary measures which provides data to determine the effectiveness of the program in meeting its objectives, in determining the impact of services on students, and in charting progress of students in developing the skills necessary for success in secondary and post-secondary programs of study.

5-Reach out to more students in the Hispanic/Latin American population.

6-Reach out to more students in the physically challenged population.

There is always room for improvement in any Upward Bound/TRIO program, and throughout the decades all programs experience substantial modifications. It is this researcher's opinion that PC programs are beneficial in many aspects. Because of Stout's PC program this researcher was able to obtain a Bachelor's and Masters Degree from UW-Stout. If more PC

programs were available to youth in the core of their cities, those who believe that being involved in negative street life is more beneficial than attending school, would change their beliefs and lives. Knowledge is power and all children regardless of their culture, ethnic background, race, gender, disabilities, or economic status deserve the chance to have the opportunity to have such power in their lives.

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Appendices

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- 1-What part of the program do you remember most, and why?
- 2-Do you remember the staff? Do you remember any students?
- 3-Who, if anyone, left an impression on you from the program? (Staff or Student)
Why did this person leave an impression on you?
- 4-Have you been in contact with anyone from the program? If so, for what reasons were you in contact with that person?
- 5-Have you visited the campus since the program?
- 6-How did the experience of being on a predominately Caucasian campus feel?
- 7-Were you surprised with the diversity of the group?
- 8-Do you remember the racial problems that occurred during the program? What do you think happened?
- 9-Has your view of different ethnic groups changed since the program?
- 10-After watching yourself on the videotape, do you feel that your professionalism has changed?
- 11-Did the exit interviews teach you any new or better job seeking skills?
- 12-Did your grades improve from taking the study skills course?
- 13-What have been some of the biggest setbacks in your education since the program?
- 14-What have been some of the biggest successes in your education since the program?
- 15- In what ways did Pre-College increase or decrease your interest in attending a Post-Secondary institution?
- 16-Do you, or have you attended a Post-Secondary institution?
A- How long after graduation from high school did you attend a Post-Secondary institution?

B-Was the campus similar to UW-Stout?

C-Was that experience reflective of what Stout displayed college to be like?

D-Did you take time off/breaks during your schooling? If yes, why?

E-Have you received a degree yet? What is your major?

17-What were your reasons for not attending a post-secondary institution?

18-Did the program assist you in the direction of your current career goals?

19-Do you have a job in your chosen career choice?

20-Do you believe that programs such as this should continue?

21-Would you recommend these programs to parents/students?

22-Overall, do you think your experience was valuable? In what ways was or wasn't it?

Peer encouragement for education?	y	n
Help from H.S. personnel w/college admissions activities	y	n
Use tools to prepare for college admissions tests	y	n
Grant/loan offers	y	n

CONSENT FORM

This research examines the feelings, reactions, and behaviors common to the Pre-College experience. The goal of this study is to evaluate the Pre-College program by participating in an interview with the researcher. Before conducting the interview, I would like you to read and then sign the consent form, indicating that you understand the potential risks and benefits of participation, and that you understand your rights as a participant. If you have any questions please contact Yazmene L. Thomas at 414/873-5947 or Dr. Ed Biggerstaff at 715/232-2410.

RISKS

There are little or no risks to you in participating in this research. Your responses are completely confidential.

BENEFITS

Although the results of this study may be of benefit to the University of Wisconsin-Stout, there is no direct benefit to you by participating in this research.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESPONSES

Your answers are strictly confidential. Only Dr. Biggerstaff and myself will have access to the raw data.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW OR DECLINE TO PARTICIPATE

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. Should you choose to participate and later wish to withdraw from the study, you may discontinue your participation at this time without incurring adverse consequences.

I attest that I have read and understood the above description, including potential risks, benefits, and my rights as a participant, and that all of my questions about the research have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby give my informed consent to participate in this research study.

Signature _____ Date _____