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ABSTRACT

In order to determine whether the characteristics and perceptions of adults over 21 years old differ significantly from those of college age students, a study was made of 1,178 (about 20 percent) of the 5,532 full-time day students enrolled at Diablo Valley College during fall 1971. Subjects were selected by stratified random sampling methods, with the stratification based on six age-sex groups: ages under 22, 22-30, and over 30, for each sex. Data for the study were gathered from the students' academic records, responses to a mailed questionnaire, and followup interviews. The older students, particularly older females, proved to be more traditional in their attitudes toward the educational process. At the same time, their academic records demonstrated greater seriousness of purpose, persistence, and higher academic achievement. These findings indicate that some currently popular educational practices may no longer be appropriate as larger proportions of students beyond the usual college-going age enroll in regular programs. Questionable practices might include: unstructured, student-centered teaching styles; minimization of course requirements; emphasis on personal counseling; dropping of traditional grading systems, and custodial administrative attitudes. The survey instrument is appended. (Author/NHM)

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Adults as Regular Community College Students:
A Comparative Analysis of Some of
their Characteristics and Perceptions
and those of College-Age Students

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

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Adults as Regular Community College Students:
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Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Background

The primary motivation for this study derived from concern about the suitability of many existing community college programs and services in light of the enrollment of older persons, especially women, as a growing proportion of the colleges' regular daytime student bodies. It was noted that, traditionally, most aspects of a college's regular day operations (as distinguished from its evening or adult education programs) have been established to serve a college-age (under twenty-two years of age) student clientele. The question that naturally followed, therefore, was whether the older students differ sufficiently from the younger students for their increasing numbers to have serious implications for a community college's current evaluation and future planning of its activities.

An extensive review of the literature revealed that, while students in general have been the subjects of research for many years, older students (i.e., those twenty-two years of age and over) seldom have specifically been studied other than in the context of adult education. This was found to be the situation especially for older female students. Moreover, even where

pertinent data may have been gathered in the course of other studies, there seemed to be little evidence of comparative analyses having been made to identify possible differences between subgroupings of students on the basis of age and sex.

In the absence of empirical evidence to the contrary, therefore, it was hypothesized that there might be differences between the student age-sex groups of which the community colleges should be aware. Based on this hypothesis, several questions were posed to which the study was designed to obtain answers.

The single college chosen as the site of the study was reasonably typical of the moderately large, suburban two-year institutions of which there were about fifteen in California at the time of the study. The study sample consisted of 1,178 (about 20 percent) of the 5,532 full-time day students who had been enrolled at the college during Fall 1971. Individual subjects were drawn from the population by stratified, random sampling methods, with the stratification based on six age-sex groupings (i.e., ages under 22, 22 to 30, and over 30 for each sex).

Data for the study were gathered from the students' academic records on file in the Registrar's office of the college; by means of a mailed questionnaire (sample attached); and by follow-up interviews with samples of the questionnaire respondents and non-respondents. These data were processed by computer to determine differences among the student age-sex groups in academic performance and in their perceptions of several aspects of their experiences while attending the

college. The statistical significance of observed differences was tested by chi-square and by calculation of Z values where applicable.

Findings

The findings that resulted from the study have been summarized and are presented below in the form of answers to the three primary research questions.

Question 1. How do older persons perceive their experiences as regular community college students?

Findings

1. A majority of the persons twenty-two years of age and over who responded to the survey questionnaire indicated generally favorable perceptions of the aspects of their community college experiences that were specified in the study. In addition, most seemed to feel that what they had studied at the college had considerable relevance for their current occupations. The females were especially strong in expressing the latter opinion.

2. The older group tended to be quite satisfied with their ability to enroll at the college in courses in which they were interested, and with the practical value of what they had taken. The strongest views in this respect came from the over-30 females, who apparently were very well pleased with the availability of what they considered to be courses suitable for them.

3. Favorable attitudes also were expressed toward required courses, especially with regard to the perceived benefits gained from

required general education courses. Reactions to the suggestion that they might have liked more freedom to choose courses on their own were more mixed, but a small majority still seemed to prefer the existing system of course requirements.

4. The older respondents inclined toward a conservative or more traditional point of view in their perceptions of teaching styles and learning environments. In other words, they expressed preferences for regular class attendance and for being given definite assignments by their instructors, rather than being left to study more independently. Furthermore, although majorities did indicate a liking for discussions and an unstructured style in classroom instruction, these were small, and sizable percentages strongly disagreed with these concepts. Over-30 females were particularly emphatic in expressing these contrary views, with 55.2 percent feeling that they had learned more from lectures than from discussions and 65.5 percent disapproving of the unstructured style (34.5 percent strongly so). Use of audiovisual materials as classroom teaching aids, on the other hand, was perceived by a very large majority (84.3 percent) of the older group as having helped them to learn.¹

5. Relations between students and faculty were generally perceived by the older respondents as having been good. There was a significant difference between the males and females in this age group, however, with the females feeling much more strongly than the males that their instructors had made their classes stimulating. The

over-30 females also were exceptionally strong (90 percent) in perceiving their instructors as having been interested in student problems.²

6. The achievement of relatively high grades was not seen as being especially difficult. A majority of the older respondents, in fact, seemed to place considerable value on grades. They also indicated a preference for the A-F system of grading over credit-no credit. A small majority, however, did express interest in taking a course even though grades and credit might not be given for it, and they appeared not to have been very dependent on grades to evaluate their progress during a semester.

7. A fairly large majority (60.9 percent) felt that they had needed counseling when they started at the college; an even larger majority (82.7 percent) seemed to have been satisfied with the availability of counselors; and majorities also apparently approved of the quality of the counseling they had received.³ The perceptions of the females in the over-30 age group, however, evidently were heavily influential in establishing the older group's seemingly strong satisfaction with counseling at the college. For example, 92.8 percent of the over-30 females disagreed with the questionnaire statement that counselors knew little more than the students about courses and occupations, which was considerably more than for the 22-and-over age group as a whole (67.9 percent).

8. Neither student activities, such as social events, nor the student government seemed to be of much interest to the older

respondents, with the possible exception of the over-30 females, who showed a little more interest in the student government than did the others.

9. Although in responding to the questionnaire most of the older group appeared to feel that they had been adequately informed about the nature and availability of student services, the follow-up interviews raised some doubt about this, at least with respect to financial aid. Several of the interviewees admitted that they could have used some financial help while attending the college, but only one had sought and obtained it; and even in this case the available information apparently had not been complete.

10. No particular difficulty or lack of knowledge about college rules governing student behavior was expressed in the questionnaire responses of the older group. As a group they were inclined to be satisfied with the rules as they were. During the follow-up interviews, however, suggestions were made (within the context of answers to other questions) that the college should be more strict in controlling student conduct in classes (especially with respect to language used) and in the library and other study areas.

11. Nearly two-thirds of the older respondents had had to study almost every evening while attending the college, but a still larger proportion (70.9 percent) had not found it hard to study at home. Most had frequently used the College Library for research and study. Relatively few (44.6 percent), on the other hand, had used

the Audio-Visual Center regularly. A small majority (51.8 percent) also indicated that out-of-class assignments often took more time than they had available.⁴

12. There was some evidence that some of the older respondents had had conflicts and inconvenience in reconciling their personal affairs with the requirements of college attendance. The majority, however, indicated that they had had no serious problems. In this regard, the females seemed to have had less trouble than the males. The follow-up interviews tended to corroborate these questionnaire-based findings, but from a slightly different perspective. According to those interviewed, many had had difficulties in coordinating full-time jobs and home responsibilities with their college attendance. They did not perceive these difficulties as problems, however, because they had foreseen most of them when deciding to return to school and had felt equal to dealing with them. In other words, the consensus of the older respondents seemed to be that some conflict between personal affairs and college attendance was inevitable and should be solved or accepted before a student enrolls.

Question 2. In what ways and to what degree do these perceptions differ from those of other regular community college students, especially those of traditional "college-going" age?

Findings

1. Although most of the survey respondents, regardless of age or sex, exhibited favorable perceptions of their college experiences generally, the older group was much the stronger in perceiving

relevance between their studies and their current occupations. Strongest of all in stating this opinion were the age 22-and-over females.

2. The older respondents were significantly more satisfied than the younger group with being able to enroll in the courses they wanted. They also were much more pleased with what they had taken, especially required courses, and, conversely, were considerably less favorably disposed toward the idea of greater student freedom in course selection. Furthermore, although not statistically significant, the older group seemed to have more appreciation for the educational value of required general education courses than did the under-22 age group.

3. There were significant age-sex differences in reactions to certain teaching styles and learning environments. The younger respondents tended to be more receptive to so-called innovative approaches, such as unstructured classroom situations, and independent study. The older respondents, on the other hand, especially the over-30 females, seemed to prefer more conventional styles of teaching and regular class attendance. There was remarkable unanimity among the groups, however, in reacting favorably to classroom use of audiovisual aids and in preferring to be given specific study assignments by their instructors.⁵

4. There were practically no significant differences between the groups in expressing favorable reactions toward student-faculty relations. The only important difference directly relevant to the

research question was the very strong perception on the part of the over-30 females that their instructors were quite interested in students' problems. Less relevant, but interesting, was the finding that the females as a whole were significantly more emphatic than the males in perceiving their instructors as having made their classes stimulating.

5. In perceptions of grading practices, there again were few differences of major significance among the age-sex groups. The principal finding was that there appeared to be widespread acceptance and support by all the groups of the more traditional (including A-F) grading systems. One difference with statistical significance, however, was the indicated tendency of the older respondents to be less dependent upon grades to determine how well they were progressing during a semester. The females as a group also indicated more willingness than the males to take a course without grades and credit.

6. While all of the age-sex groups responded favorably toward their experiences with counseling at the college, the older group was significantly more favorable in reacting to the availability of counselors and the counselors' knowledge of courses and occupations. The over-30 females were exceptionally strong in the latter perception, which may have materially raised the general level of favorableness of responses for the older (22-and-over) age group. A sizable proportion (17.6 percent) of the under-22 respondents, on the other hand, felt that the counselors knew little more than they

did about courses and occupations. The supplemental interviews revealed that the most critical views of counseling appeared to be held by the younger students who had transferred to other institutions. The interviews also indicated that the older respondents may have had less information about and less contact with the counseling staff than had the under-22 age group. Further analysis and comparison of the questionnaire responses produced the finding that the females of all ages were significantly more convinced than were the males that they had been able to get the counseling and guidance they needed to plan their programs.

7. The older respondents were significantly less interested than the younger ones in the usual student activities, such as social events, although none of the age-sex groups showed much enthusiasm. The 22-and-over age group also appeared to be less satisfied with the suitability of most student services for their needs. In addition, the interviews indicated that the older group seemed to have received less information about available student services, especially financial aid, than had the younger group. With regard to the student government, an almost unanimous lack of interest was expressed by all groups, except for the over-30 females, who exhibited sufficiently more interest to establish statistical significance at $p < .02$.

8. Very large proportions of all of the age-sex groups had had little difficulty with the college's rules, and they did not feel that there were too many restrictions. They also did not think that

the college should be more strict in regulating student behavior. There were some significant differences between the older and younger groups, however, to the extent that the older group had had less difficulty with the rules and had a somewhat stronger desire for greater strictness, especially in relation to conduct in classes and study areas.

9. With regard to personal study habits, the 22-and-over age group indicated that they had had to study outside of class significantly more than those under age 22. In addition, the over-30 respondents had made greater use of the Audio-Visual Center than had the others. The 22-and-over females also appeared to be somewhat more consistent users of the college library.

10. Significantly more of the older group than of the younger group had had difficulty with conflicts between their personal affairs and their college schedules, but the females of all age groups reported less trouble than the males. Furthermore, the females were less likely than the males to feel that pressures of their personal affairs added to the difficulty of their college work. The females also were more satisfied that the existing college library schedule was convenient for them.

11. Although relatively few of the respondents in any of the age-sex groups apparently had felt in need of financial assistance to attend college, significantly more of the older group than of the younger indicated that they had. The further indication, however, was that they had not looked to the college as a source of

help to the extent that the younger people had.

12. In expressing general perceptions of the college, the older females were least likely to think it was too much like a high school. The older group as a whole also was less likely to perceive the daytime class schedule as favoring the younger unemployed student. With regard to choosing the same college if they were to start over again, a significantly larger proportion of the older respondents than of the younger ones indicated that they would. The interviews confirmed these questionnaire findings.

Question 3. Are the academic characteristics of the older students significantly different from those of the younger students and, if so, in what ways do they differ?

Findings

1. The mean total number of semesters enrolled at the college by members of the older age-sex group was greater than for the younger group. Most of this difference was attributable to the relatively high average (almost six semesters) for the older males. Females, young and old, had attended fewer semesters on the average than the males in their corresponding age groups.
2. Termination of enrollment of the older students was less likely to coincide with the end of the school year (in June) than it was for the younger students.
3. While there was no significant difference between the under-22 and 22-and-over age groups in the mean number of units completed per semester, the over-30 females had a very significantly

higher mean (13.27) than all of the others in the sample.

4. The mean grade point average of the older group was significantly higher than for the younger group. Furthermore, the mean for the females as a group was higher than for the males, and the older (22-and-over) females had the highest mean GPA of all: 3.08.

5. Both males and females in the over-30 age group received fewer W grades per semester than the under-22 age group. The over-30 females were exceptionally low with a mean of less than one W per three semesters enrolled.

6. The older males and females were awarded a higher proportion of AA degrees and vocational certificates than were either sex in the younger group. The older females had received the largest proportion of AA degrees in combination with certificates.

7. Six semesters after having been enrolled at the college full time in day classes, the older females were the most likely of all the age-sex groups still to be enrolled at the same college (23.1 percent). Both males and females in the older age group were much less likely than the younger ones, however, to be enrolled at some other college or university (35.0 percent vs. 52.2 percent, respectively) six semesters later.

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that, in all age and sex groups, the majority of the respondents expressed overall satisfaction with most of their experiences as students at the project

college. This is consistent with the results of earlier studies, such as those by Astin,⁶ Goldsen,⁷ Monroe,⁸ and others, who found that students generally have shown favorable attitudes toward the colleges they attended. Berg even determined that "students who had dropped out [of community colleges] during the first semester and those who entered on probation and had been disqualified at the end of the first semester reflected positive feelings."⁹

Within these general expressions of satisfaction, however, some significant differences among the student age-sex groups were distinguished by this study. These differences lead to the following conclusions, which are believed to be of importance to a community college in evaluating and planning its programs and activities:

As older students, especially females over thirty years of age, comprise an increasing proportion of regular community college enrollments, there will tend to be:

1. Less demand for and acceptance of loosely organized, unstructured teaching styles; informal seminar-type classes; and undirected or independent study.
2. Increased acceptance of and appreciation for course requirements, especially those related to general education.
3. Less tolerance for what is perceived by the student to be careless or poorly planned instruction.
4. More demand for accountability of both students and instructors in accomplishment of educational objectives.

5. Increased insistence upon practical, as opposed to personal or psychological, counseling.
6. Continuing lack of enthusiasm for departures from traditional systems of grading and certification.
7. Greater student motivation and persistence in the pursuit of educational goals, accompanied by a higher level of scholarship and seriousness of academic purpose, as reflected in higher grade point averages and achievement of formal recognition, such as degrees and certificates.
8. Less need for traditional student activities that emphasize entertainment in the form of early-post-adolescent social events, such as "rock" concerts, dances, etc.
9. Less dependence upon the institution for solution of personal problems related to enrollment and attendance.
10. Continuing need for financial aid, but in forms suitable for and acceptable to older persons.

Implications

In light of these findings and conclusions, it appears to be imperative that a community college give weight to the age-sex mix of its student body in self-evaluation and planning. Any self-study must include provision for sampling the perceptions of the various constituent groups of the regular day enrollment.

Furthermore, faculty members must be conscious of the prospect of greater heterogeneity in classrooms already noted for this characteristic in the community college. In the future, however,

the major problem may relate more to the teaching style of the instructor than to the diversity of the backgrounds and learning abilities of the students. This is because the loose, student-centered, "do-your-own-thing" style adopted during recent years by many instructors, especially the younger ones, was shown by this study to be less satisfactory to older students. In fact, the study seemed to indicate a desire for a much more structured, directive, and instructor-centered environment than many writers in the more restricted area of adult education have proposed.

Closely related to heterogeneity of attitudes toward learning environments as classroom problems are the seriousness of purpose, demand for stricter accountability of both students and instructors, and desire for and achievement of generally higher traditional grades and other forms of scholastic recognition that will accompany enrollment of larger proportions of older people in regular courses. Perhaps a partial solution to these problems, at least as far as multiple-section courses are concerned, may lie in Warren's suggestion¹⁰ that some sections might offer different approaches to learning environments that are tailored to the attitudes of the several potential clienteles distinguished by this study. At the very least, and including single-section courses, the individual instructor's style and classroom atmosphere should be made quite clear well in advance to all so that the student may make a knowledgeable choice prior to enrollment. Although the study results indicate that this already was being done to some extent by

the informal exchange of information among students, it should be adopted as an official and formal procedure of the faculty and institution. Furthermore, as Warren also suggests,¹¹ the instructor who attempts to "straddle the fence" on this issue by combining both explicit and flexible styles in the same class probably will satisfy neither the students nor himself.

The counseling staff also must seriously reconsider the nature of its programs and emphases. While the results of this study did not reveal any major dissatisfaction on the part of the majority of older students, there was evidence during the interviews of impatience with the emphasis on personal and psychological counseling; and yet the tendency of many counselors in recent years has been to move in this very direction and away from program guidance and advisement. The evidence of this study indicates, therefore, that this tendency may have to be reversed, if the growing number of older students on campus is to be adequately and properly served.

In this connection, the study findings also showed that the level of the older students' apparent satisfaction was heavily influenced by the extraordinarily favorable opinions of counseling expressed by the older females, especially those over age thirty. This high regard quite possibly resulted from the special facilities and services provided for this group as a part of the women's re-entry program that was instituted at the college during the Fall 1971-Fall 1973 period covered by the study. It would be well,

therefore, for the regular counseling staff to consider what was being done by this special program in relation to what is generally available in counseling services, especially for older males.

The college also should seriously reexamine the continued validity and desirability of the move toward nontraditional grading systems, such as "pass-fail" and "credit-no credit." Not only did this study show a considerable rejection of the concept by the older students, but by a majority of the younger students as well. For whatever reason, charges about the ill effects of traditional grades did not appear to be supported by the results of this study. Moreover, the experiences of the project college and other institutions with departures from A-F grading and the results of recent studies of the subject¹² raise many questions about the adverse affects of "non-grades" on certain groups of students, especially the "new students" in community colleges, in which the older group and women are included.

Interest in and support of student activities and student government always has been low in community colleges. At the project college, the study indicated that interest is likely to drop still further as the proportion of older students increases and there is no essential change in the existing pattern, which at most colleges is a derivative of the custodial function: entertainment to make the college "[more] attractive than a park, a neighborhood youth center, or the street."¹³ It appears that there is a pressing need, therefore, for research by those responsible for

directing student activity programs to determine what form they should take to be relevant and of value to older students. In particular, the nature and form of student government should be overhauled to stimulate the interest and direct participation of the older students and especially the older females.

With regard to student services, a reevaluation of current practices also would seem to be in order, although the study results presented a generally satisfied reaction on the part of the older students. The overall impression gained from the study, however, was that older students tend to be much less dependent upon the institution for help with their college-related personal affairs. In addition, they seem more diffident in seeking such help when it is needed. For these reasons, therefore, the necessity for continuation of the services, at least in their present form, needs rathinking. This is particularly true in the case of financial assistance, where the need undoubtedly exists, but for which the study indicated that at least communication of availability to older students (perhaps accompanied by changes in basic eligibility requirements) is badly in need of improvement.

Final Words

To sum up briefly, the results of this study indicate that the older students in the sample of the project college's full-time day enrollees presented a picture of being more traditional and conservative in their attitudes toward the educational process than

their younger contemporaries. This was shown especially by the older females. At the same time, their academic records demonstrated greater seriousness of purpose, persistence, and higher achievement, at least according to such conventional measures as grades, degrees, and certificates. The general implication for practice to be drawn from these findings, therefore, is that some of the movements in higher education that have become popular in community colleges in recent years may no longer be appropriate or acceptable as larger proportions of students beyond the usual college-going age enroll in regular programs. Included among the areas that may be questionable are unstructured, student-centered teaching styles; minimization of course requirements; emphasis of "personal" counseling at the expense of program advisement; dropping of traditional grading systems; and the in loco parentis or custodial attitudes intrinsic in many student activities and services programs.

While it was recognized early in this study that generalization of the findings and conclusions might be limited by the choice of a single college as the site of the investigation, the remarkable similarity, in the instruction area, at least, of results of a nationally-based study recently reported by Warren¹⁴ indicates that the present study is valid and may have considerably broader application than originally expected. Warren's study, which was based on a survey of the reactions to college of over 6,000 students at twenty-seven community colleges across the United States, determined that students in the twenty-two-and-over age group differed

significantly from those under twenty-two in preferring instructor-centered (explicit requirements, lectures, competitive grading) to student-centered (loosely organized classes, no formal texts or assignments, informal seminars, noncompetitive grading, relaxation of academic requirements) teaching styles.¹⁵ Furthermore, Warren noted the seeming paradox that the students who preferred the student-centered style (i.e., the majority of the younger students) appeared to be "much more dependent on the institution than the instructor-centered students (i.e., the majority of the older ones)."¹⁶ The parallel between these findings, based on data gathered in early 1970, and those of the present study is remarkable.

As indicated above in connection with the implications of this study, it is believed to be essential that community colleges engaging in self-studies for evaluation, planning, and to meet accreditation requirements take into consideration the differing viewpoints of the various age and sex groups that make up their regular student bodies. In anticipation of this outcome, a secondary purpose of the present study was to develop a procedural model for the guidance of colleges which might wish to engage in a similar study. For those who are interested, the methodological details may be obtained from the author of this paper.

It is hoped that the results of this study (and the procedural model) will be of assistance to community colleges generally. At least within the State of California, the researcher highly recommends that, as other colleges conduct similar studies which contrast older and younger students in regular programs, they freely exchange the results through existing organizations, such as the Northern California Community College Consortium for Institutional Research (NORCAL) and its Southern California counterpart (SCIRA) in order that as broad a segment of the community colleges as possible may benefit from the results, since all potentially will be affected by the changing student "mix."

Footnote References

¹ While the follow-up interviews confirmed the general satisfaction with instruction at the college, they did elicit some criticisms from the older respondents of a lack of rigor and demand for student accountability on the part of some instructors.

² Although the interviews confirmed the satisfaction with the faculty in general, some rather serious unhappiness was expressed in connection with the classroom conduct and apparent teaching capability of certain individual instructors.

³ These findings based on the questionnaire responses were somewhat at variance with the subsequent interviews which revealed that the older respondents appeared not to have had much direct contact with the counseling staff and, in fact, had been somewhat diffident in seeking such help. In addition, it seemed that the satisfaction related more to experiences with certain individual counselors rather than to the program as a whole. The interviews also brought out criticisms of too much emphasis on psychological and personal counseling and not enough on career guidance and program advisement.

⁴ Despite these apparently heavy demands on the older respondents' available study time, the results of the follow-up interviews indicated considerable sentiment for more stringent academic demands on students and that greater accountability should be required for completion of assigned work.

⁵ Although not testable for statistical significance, the supplemental interviews also indicated that the older respondents felt more strongly than the younger ones that instruction should be more rigorous and demanding of students.

⁶ A. W. Astin and R. J. Panos, The Educational and Vocational Development of College Students (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1969), p. 38.

⁷ R. K. Goldsen et al., What College Students Think (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1960), p. 2.

⁸ C. R. Monroe, Profile of the Community College (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972), p. 205.

⁹ E. H. Berg, "Selected Factors Bearing on the Persistence and Academic Performance of Low Ability Students in Four California Junior Colleges" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1965), pp. 160-162.

¹⁰ J. R. Warren, "Adapting Instruction to Styles of Learning," Findings, I, No. 1 (1974), 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² K. P. Cross, Beyond the Open Door (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971), pp. 37, 43-44.

¹³ A. M. Cohen et al., A Constant Variable (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971), p. 183.

¹⁴ Warren, "Adapting Instruction." The data were gathered from the test administration of the "Student Reactions to College" questionnaire referred to in Chapter II of this study.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

Survey of Former Students

Will you please help us to evaluate and improve the services DVC provides for its students? Your responses to the items on this survey form will give us much valuable information about what the students' opinions of the College and its programs are. We plan to use this information to identify areas where changes are needed.

Please complete all of the items as indicated and return the completed form to Diablo Valley College in the enclosed envelope.

PART A - Present Status

1. What is your present occupation? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time DVC student | <input type="checkbox"/> Working full time (including military) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time DVC student | <input type="checkbox"/> Working part time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student at other college or university | <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time homemaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time student at other college or university | <input type="checkbox"/> Parttime homemaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____ |

2. Does what you studied at DVC relate to your present occupation? (Check one.)

- None A little Somewhat Very much

PART B - Experiences at DVC

Instructions: -Below are some statements that a student might make about his or her experiences while attending DVC. Based on your own experiences, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by circling one of the letters which are at the right of each item and stand for the following

SA= Strongly Agree A= Agree D= Disagree SD= Strongly Disagree

Example:

I didn't have to register to be a student at DVC. SA A D **SD**

Statements

- | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 1. Usually, I was able to enroll in the courses I wanted. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2. It was not very hard for me to get an A or B grade in most of my classes. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3. I learned more in classes with instructor-led discussions than I did in the usual lecture-style classes. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 4. The registration schedule and procedures were very inconvenient for me. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 5. Through other students, I found out who were the best instructors and tried to get into their courses. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 6. I knew what I wanted to do when I started at DVC, so I didn't need any counseling. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 7. I liked it when some of my instructors used an unstructured, "loose" style in their classes. | SA | A | D | SD |

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8. I didn't really know whether or not DVC had any rules for student behavior.	SA	A	D	SD
9. It would have been better for me if I could have taken all of my classes on one or two days per week, instead of spread out over Monday through Friday.	SA	A	D	SD
10. Few of the courses that were available were suitable for what I went to DVC to learn.	SA	A	D	SD
11. A counselor usually was available at a time convenient for me.	SA	A	D	SD
12. It was not much of a problem to fit my college schedule into my personal affairs.	SA	A	D	SD
13. I didn't know enough about the availability of such student services as job placement, financial aids, health, etc., to be able to use them if I had wanted to.	SA	A	D	SD
14. I didn't have any particular difficulty with the college's rules or regulations governing students.	SA	A	D	SD
15. I had to study almost every evening while I was attending DVC.	SA	A	D	SD
16. I discovered many interesting things in what I thought would just be dull required courses.	SA	A	D	SD
17. Whenever possible, I used the materials in the Audio-Visual Center in the Library.	SA	A	D	SD
18. My instructors usually were readily available for discussion when I had problems.	SA	A	D	SD
19. I attended DVC only to take courses, and student activities, such as social events, were of no interest to me.	SA	A	D	SD
20. I was not able to get the counseling and guidance I needed to plan my program.	SA	A	D	SD
21. There were too many restrictions on the behavior and activities of students.	SA	A	D	SD
22. I needed financial help to attend DVC.	SA	A	D	SD
23. Poor advice from a counselor caused difficulty for me.	SA	A	D	SD
24. It was very hard for me to study at home.	SA	A	D	SD
25. If audio-visual materials (recorded tapes, TV, photo slides, etc.) were used in class, they were interesting, but they didn't help me very much to learn the subject.	SA	A	D	SD
26. The college work by itself was not hard, but, with the personal things I had to do, it became difficult.	SA	A	D	SD

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27. The hours and days the College Library was open were not convenient for me.	SA	A	D	SD	47
28. Not many of my instructors made classes very stimulating.	SA	A	D	SD	48
29. In my opinion, DVC was not strict enough in regulating student behavior.	SA	A	D	SD	49
30. I wish that all of my courses had been graded on the "credit-no credit" basis instead of "A to F".	SA	A	D	SD	50
31. Most of my instructors tried very hard to make sure all of their students learned the course material.	SA	A	D	SD	51
32. I would have liked more freedom to choose the courses I really wanted, rather than having to take required courses.	SA	A	D	SD	52
33. I often used the College Library for reference and study.	SA	A	D	SD	53
34. The grades I received didn't mean much to me because I was more interested in satisfying myself that I knew the subject.	SA	A	D	SD	54
35. I preferred being given definite assignments by my instructors, rather than being left to make my own plans for reading and studying.	SA	A	D	SD	55
36. I would recommend DVC to a friend of my age who was considering going to college, full time.	SA	A	D	SD	56
37. In my opinion, the counselors didn't know much more than I did about the courses and occupations in which I was interested.	SA	A	D	SD	57
38. I would not have been much interested in a course if I did not get a grade and units of credit for taking it.	SA	A	D	SD	58
39. Most of my instructors did not seem to be aware of or interested in the problems a student might have.	SA	A	D	SD	59
40. Most student services (job placement, financial aid, health, etc.) were not suitable for my needs.	SA	A	D	SD	60
41. The atmosphere of the campus was more like a high school than I think a college should be.	SA	A	D	SD	61
42. I often didn't know how well I was doing until I received a grade on a mid-term, a paper, or some other assignment during the semester.	SA	A	D	SD	62
43. Many of the courses I took were unrealistic and had little practical value.	SA	A	D	SD	63

44. The administrative offices of the college seemed cold and impersonal in dealing with students.	SA	A	D	SD
45. I am glad that I had to take the required general education courses, because they helped me to learn something more than just my major subject.	SA	A	D	SD
46. I would have preferred to have been able to study more on my own and not to be required to attend so many regular classes.	SA	A	D	SD
47. If I were to start over, I would choose DVC again.	SA	A	D	SD
48. The regular daytime class schedule seemed to be designed mainly for the younger unemployed student.	SA	A	D	SD
49. Many times reading and other assignments outside of class took more work than I had time for.	SA	A	D	SD
50. What the student government did was of little interest to me.	SA	A	D	SD

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Thank you for your help. Please return this form in the enclosed envelope.

If you wish to add any written comments, you may do so in the space below.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

MAY 7 1976

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES