Community and campus culture: out-of-class involvement at a midwest liberal arts college

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Community and campus culture: Out-of-class involvement at a midwest liberal arts college

Price, Jerry Mark, Ph.D.
Iowa State University, 1992

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Community and campus culture:
Out-of-class involvement at a midwest liberal arts college

by

Jerry Mark Price

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department: Professional Studies in Education
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Approved:

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For the Graduate College

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1992

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER ONE</th>
<th>OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the problem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the study</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis overview</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER TWO</th>
<th>REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student involvement</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic/social integration</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-faculty interaction</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to diversity</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus culture</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the review of the literature</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER THREE</th>
<th>RESEARCH METHODS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research methods</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data sources</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing trustworthiness</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical issues</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting the data</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER FOUR</td>
<td>RESULTS OF THE STUDY: OUT-OF-CLASS INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the setting</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International studies</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics and recreation</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student organizations</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured activities</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus ministries</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic involvement</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER FIVE</th>
<th>RESULTS OF THE STUDY: FACTORS AND CONDITIONS INFLUENCING STUDENT INVOLVEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The college mission</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-church relationship</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A familiar environment</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A homogeneous environment</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER SIX</th>
<th>DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors and conditions influencing involvement</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How campus culture encourages involvement</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How campus culture discourages involvement</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Undergraduate students attend college to learn and grow, and when they have earned their degrees they expect to be educated. But what does it mean to be an educated person? In its report on the quality of the undergraduate educational experience, the Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education (1984) stated that institutions of higher education should "produce demonstrable improvements in student knowledge, capacities, skills, and attitudes between entrance and graduation" (p. 15).

Certainly a college education involves the acquisition of knowledge and information through a formal course of study. However, the characteristics of an educated person are not limited to cognitive development alone (Blimling, 1981); educators also must be concerned with the total development of the student. Indeed, college students expect their education to broaden their experience, and help them develop into more knowledgeable, liberal, open-minded people (Moffatt, 1991). Therefore, in addition to gains in students' cognitive development, an undergraduate education should enhance growth in students' self-confidence, persistence, leadership, empathy, social responsibility, and understanding of cultural and intellectual differences (Boyer, 1987; Study Group, 1984).

Opportunities to facilitate students' development are not limited to the classroom and the college's formal undergraduate curriculum.
The time students spend outside the classroom also "profoundly shapes the form and quality" (Boyer, 1987, pp. 292-293) of their undergraduate experiences. Out-of-class opportunities can challenge students to broaden their educational interests, engage themselves in their own education, and learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Out-of-class opportunities also can enhance growth in students' self-confidence, leadership, empathy, social responsibility, and understanding and appreciation of cultural and intellectual differences. Institutions that provide quality out-of-class experiences find that students can learn as much from their peers and others outside of the classroom as they do inside (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, Andreas, Lyons, Strange, Krehbiel, and MacKay, 1991). Clearly, students' learning is enhanced by involvement in opportunities that actively engage them, out of the classroom as well as in (NASPA, 1987).

**Statement of the problem**

If a student enrolled for 16 credit hours studies two hours per week for each hour in class, then she or he devotes 48 hours per week to academic coursework. If that same student sleeps 50 hours per week, then 70 hours remain to devote to other activities and interests (Boyer, 1987). Students can spend these 70 hours students available outside the classroom in any of a multitude of involvement opportunities (Astin, 1984). Examples of these opportunities include social activities, intellectual interests, community service, cultural interests, student organizations, recreation, and employment. In
addition, students can enhance their educational experience by interacting with other students, and developing and enjoying friendships (Lyons, 1990). All of these involvement opportunities have the potential to contribute to a student's growth.

Although out-of-class involvement opportunities have the potential to contribute to student growth, the impact of these opportunities on students and their environment also can be negative if not nurtured carefully. Indeed, students' out-of-class environments are rarely neutral; they can either help or detract from students' social and intellectual development (NASPA, 1987). For example, opportunities that exclude or isolate certain groups of students inhibit integration into the campus community and distance the students from the academic and social communities of the institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). While purposeful involvement in the college experience can enhance learning, involvement opportunities also can be too comfortable and protective; programs and activities that fail to engage or challenge students may actually inhibit growth (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

The opportunities in which students are involved—and the extent to which they are involved in these opportunities—impact their level of personal and cognitive growth. Astin (1985) defined student involvement as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (134). The more energy students devote to their academic experience, the more they grow:
The more time and effort students invest in the learning process and the more intensely they engage in their own education, the greater will be their growth and achievement, their satisfaction with their educational experiences, and their persistence in college, and the more likely they are to continue their learning. (Study Group, 1984, p. 17)

If students grow through investing their time and effort in the learning process, they will increase their growth potential by investing that time and effort outside the classroom as well as in.

For this out-of-class learning to occur, both the institution and the student must contribute. A dynamic relationship exists between the institution and the student: institutions must work to provide quality out-of-class involvement opportunities, and students must choose to take advantage of them. Banning's (1989) theory of campus ecology accurately describes this relationship. In campus ecology, the focus is not just on the individual roles of the student and the institution, but on "the nature of the collegiate environment and the transactional relationship between students and their environment" (p. 54). How does the institution and students work together to promote students' out-of-class learning?

Astin (1987) addressed the institution's role in this dynamic relationship in his "talent development view of excellence." The premise of talent development is that "excellence lies in the institution's ability to affect its students favorably, to enhance their intellectual and scholarly development, and to make a positive
difference in their lives" (p. 14). Like Banning (1989), Astin (1987) advocated institutions' developing and nurturing a quality learning environment and students' seizing opportunities in this environment: "In an ideal educational environment, we have an institution with a talent-development conception of its own excellence, and a highly involved student who is exerting significant effort in the learning process" (p. 15).

However, what is the student's role in this dynamic relationship between the institution and the student? The initiative of the student--that is, the extent to which she or he takes advantage of available learning opportunities--is critical to her or his growth and development. As Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) noted:

The impact of college is not simply the result of what a college does for or to a student. Rather, the impact is a result of the extent to which an individual student exploits the people, programs, facilities, opportunities, and experiences that the college makes available. Students are not merely the recipients of institutional effects. They themselves bear a major responsibility for the impact of their own college experience. From this perspective it is the individual student who perhaps most determines the extent to which college makes a difference. (pp. 610-611)

However, how can institutions encourage students to "exploit" these out-of-class learning opportunities? What determines how students will spend their discretionary time? Students will invest
their time, talents, and energy in those involvement opportunities that they see as meaningful. That is, students' involvement decisions are influenced by their own personal goals, and by the opportunities available on campus that they feel will help them fulfill those goals (Ory & Braskamp, 1988). Therefore, institutions must work to create involvement opportunities that students find meaningful.

One way in which institutions can facilitate student involvement is through its policies and practices. Virtually every institutional policy and practice—in regard to both academic and nonacademic issues—affects the ways in which students use their time and the amount of effort they devote to learning (Astin, 1985; Study Group, 1984). Astin (1984) asserted that "the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement" (p. 298). Institutions must develop and modify their policies and practices so that these policies and practices encourage rather than discourage student involvement.

Considering the critical impact of student involvement, it is important that institutions develop and maintain campus environments that provide quality out-of-class involvement opportunities and encourage students to seize the opportunities. However, before institutions can do so, they first must understand how the present environments encourage student involvement. As a result, it is necessary for colleges and universities to examine their students' out-of-class involvement opportunities and the factors that influence student involvement.
Purpose of this study

The purpose of this study was to examine and describe the out-of-class involvement of students at Central College, a small, private, midwestern liberal arts college. Specifically, this study had two objectives:

1. This study examined and described students' out-of-class involvement opportunities as well as student, faculty, and staff perceptions of student involvement.
2. This study examined and described factors and conditions that influence students' out-of-class involvement.

The specific research questions used in this study will be developed in greater detail in Chapter Three. Interviews were conducted with students, faculty, and staff to learn about students' out-of-class involvement opportunities. In addition, the study included analysis of relevant documents and observations of campus facilities, activities, and interactions in order to gather background information on the institution and to develop additional questions and areas of inquiry.

Thesis overview

The remainder of this report is divided into five chapters. Chapter Two provides an overview of the literature on student involvement, including topics such as the integration of students' academic and social experiences, interaction between students and
faculty, students' exposure to diversity, student culture, and student leadership development.

Chapter Three describes the research methods used to implement the study, including data sources (including interview respondents), data collection, data analysis, specific research and interview questions, and issues of trustworthiness and ethics. Chapter Four and Chapter Five describe the results of the study; Chapter Four discusses students' out-of-class involvement opportunities and Chapter Five discusses the factors and conditions that influence student involvement. Chapter Six contains a discussion and interpretation of the results as well as recommendations for the college and for further research.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The following is an overview of the literature on student involvement. A careful review of related literature establishes evidence of the significance of the study for practice and policy, and defines and delimits the important intellectual traditions that guide the study (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). In addition to the literature on student involvement in general, this review encompasses research on other topics that are related to and influence student involvement, such as the integration of students' academic and social experiences, interaction between students and faculty, students' exposure to diversity, student culture, and student leadership development.

Student involvement

"Learning is not a passive process. Students learn most effectively when they are engaged with their work in and out of the classroom" (Lyons, 1990, p. 31). In examining the conditions of educational excellence, the Study Group (1984) identifies the following fundamental principle: "the amount of student learning and personal development with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program" (p. 19). This principle is reinforced by the following conclusion by Pascarella and Terenzini (1991): "one of the most inescapable and unequivocal conclusions we can make is that the impact of college is largely determined by the individual's ability of
effort and level of involvement in both academic and nonacademic activities" (p. 610).

**Benefits** There are many benefits to students who are actively involved in their learning. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found that growth areas associated with student involvement include subject matter learning, development of cognitive skills, bachelor's degree attainment, educational aspirations and graduate school attendance, and increases in self-perceptions of learning.

One significant benefit is increased retention. Mable and DeCoster (1981) state that students' investing time in their own educational pursuits promotes retention and growth. In a study of retention of first year students at a residential university, Pascarella and Terenzini (1983) found that "the quality of the students' interactions with the college environment subsequent to enrollment is a more important factor in persistence than the characteristics the student brings to college" (p. 225). Christie and Dingham (1991) report that involvement in extracurricular activities made the difference for some students in their persistence to their second year of college.

Involvement in out-of-class experiences also provides opportunities for students to develop important skills and practice socially responsible citizenship (Fitzpatrick, 1988). Student affairs programming for students can complement curricular efforts in developing crucial skills, including the "ability to read, to analyze, to concentrate, to write, to think critically, to speak, to debate, to make
decisions, to improve self-image, to understand one's own feelings and the feelings of others, and to respond in a socially responsible manner" (Fitzpatrick, 1988, p. 193).

Out-of-class involvement also contributes to students' growth by facilitating their social integration through increased opportunities to meet and develop friendships with other students and linking them with their college environment (Christie & Dingham, 1991). In their study, Riahinejad and Hood (1984) found that participation in various types of extracurricular activities, such as campus activities, recreational activities, and work experiences, led to growth in the area of students' interpersonal relationships. Academic units may be able to reduce student burnout by providing out-of-class involvement in academic activities. A study by Neumann, Finaly-Neumann, and Reichel (1990) reports that a "key for reducing students' burnout and its negative consequences is for faculty and administrators to expand opportunities for students to be involved in interesting activities in their own programs, for example, departmental forums, seminars, and special events" (p. 30).

**Types of involvement** Student involvement can assume many forms. Purposeful student involvement includes, but is not limited to, devoting considerable energy to studying, working in an on-campus job, participating actively in student organizations, spending significant time on campus, and interacting with faculty members and peers (Study Group, 1984; Astin, 1984; Astin, 1977). In a study of college life at Rutgers, Moffatt (1991) found that students participated
in what they called "outside-the-classroom learning" (p. 59). Students identified a variety of outside-the-classroom learning activities:

Some are linked to formal learning or to other officially sponsored activities, to high culture as it filters down to undergraduates—browsing through the books in the library for a few student scholars, doing 'homework' in subjects particular students enjoy, attending the occasional concert or poetry reading or evening lecture, having one of the intense philosophical arguments in which most students still engage but which they no longer call 'bull sessions.' (p. 59)

On-campus employment can be a positive form of student involvement. Anderson (1981) found that students holding a campus work-study job performed higher academically and had stronger educational goals compared to non-working students. Another opportunity for out-of-class involvement is through intercollegiate athletics. Ryan (1989) found that participation in intercollegiate athletics was associated with a high level of satisfaction with the overall college experience, motivation to earn a college degree, and the development of interpersonal skills and leadership abilities.

On-campus housing provides an excellent opportunity for positive out-of-class learning activities. Clarke, Miser, and Roberts (1988) stated that programming on the residence halls helps first year students organize their own efforts and focus their attention on goal setting and goal attainment. Christie and Dingham (1991) found that residence halls benefitted students by helping them integrate into the
institution's social system. Living on campus enhanced the students' opportunities for integration in four ways: meeting other students, developing student friendships, gaining information about social opportunities on campus, and shifting away from high school friends (p. 419). Living on campus also appears to help students academically as well. Students living in residence halls are more likely to achieve higher grades and experience less academic difficulty than students who live off-campus (Blimling, 1989; Nowack & Hanson, 1985).

**Special populations** Involvement in out-of-class opportunities may be particularly helpful to special populations of students, such as first year students. In their study of first year student persistence, Nelson, Scott, and Bryan (1984) found that students who did not persist after their first year experienced poor social integration. Those first year students who withdrew were less likely to participate in activities and less satisfied with their social life. Upcraft and Gardner (1989) identify involvement as the key to first year student success: "To succeed, freshmen must be committed to involving themselves in the intellectual and extracurricular life of the campus. To help them succeed, institutions must provide enriched opportunities for such involvement" (p. 4).

Students of color also stand to benefit from out-of-class involvement. In their study of full-time African American students, Cross and Astin (1981) found that African American students' degree of involvement in campus life correlated highly with persistence. Livingston and Stewart (1987) report that African American students
expressed a much stronger need for special programs and activities, and that involvement in extracurricular activities played an important role in their adjustment to the institution. Programming areas that appeared to be particularly attractive were those that addressed practical and personal matters, such as career planning, effective speaking and listening, study skills, and leadership. Pounds (1989) advocates the new African American students be actively involved in all aspects of campus life, including economic, career, social, and physical development, cultural and political groups, and leadership roles in diverse organizations.

Bean and Bradley (1986) found that women also can benefit from involvement. In their study, women's involvement in residence hall programs and other out-of-class activities resulted in increased satisfaction with college and increased academic performance.

**Academic/social integration**

An important component of student involvement is the relationship between in-class and out-of-class activity. The two halves of college ought be complementary, and students should experience a healthy balance between academic and college life (Moffatt, 1991). Positive interaction in both areas is essential to full development of the student (Tinto, 1987). "The more one's social experience reflects and reinforces one's academic experience, the greater will be the possibilities for intellectual development" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 159). On the other hand, if students' out-of-class experiences are not positive, the result can be arrested social or
psychological development that can "effectively eliminate the
motivation and ability to perform academically" (Lyons, 1990, p. 28).

In their study of involving colleges, Kuh et al. (1991) found such
a balance between academic and student life. Involving colleges
demonstrated "blurred boundaries between in-class and out-of-class
learning and personal development opportunities" (p. 128). Although
how these institutions succeeded in blurring these boundaries may
have been different, "what is important is that students, faculty, and
staff recognize that student learning and development are seamless
processes" (p. 146). Moreover, students' perceptions of their own
learning reflected this seamlessness: "students do not partition what
they learn into experiences from the classroom, laboratory, library,
residence, and other activities. Rather these events and activities
blend together in students' minds" (pp. 183-184).

In a study on critical thinking, Pascarella (1989) found that
students' engagement in both the intellectual and social experiences
of college positively influenced the development of critical thinking
ability, although intellectual experiences and social experiences
separately had no significant impact. Pascarella (1989) suggests that
"intellectual or cognitive development in college may be the result of
an integrated total experience rather than the outcomes of
involvement in specific isolated experiences.... The whole may indeed
be greater than the sum of its parts" (p. 25). Similarly, Bean and
Bradley (1986) found that policies and programs that enhance the
integration of students' academic experience into the out-of-class
experience—such as out-of-class contact with faculty and academic support programs—resulted in improved academic performance of both men and women.

**Other benefits** In addition to improved academic performance, there are other benefits of students' integration of their social and academic experiences. Ory and Braskamp (1988) identify social/academic integration as a factor in increased student satisfaction with the institution. Walsh (1988) discusses a student development program for first year students that involved both academic and student services; this program included such components as self-assessment, academic planning, career planning, time management, decision making, and familiarization with campus resources. Walsh (1988) found that students in this program experienced greater satisfaction with their collegiate experience in addition to better academic performance. Erwin and Kelly (1985) found that a program designed to facilitate academic and student development interaction contributed to dramatic gains in students' confidence between their first and senior years.

Considering the above benefits of student involvement, it is not surprising that successful integration into the institution's academic and social systems has been associated with increased student persistence, especially between the first and second years (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1987). In a study on first year student persistence, Pascarella and Terenzini (1983) found that academic and social integration had important direct effects not only on persistence
but also on institutional and goal commitment. Similarly, Titley (1985) states that the more unified the student's college experience, the more likely that institutional environment will develop and sustain the staying qualities critical to retention.

Implications for student affairs staff  The campus environment should reflect this sense of connectedness between students' academic and social lives. Institutions should "be more intentional in making formal connections between the curriculum, teaching, and student life" (Dalton, 1989, p. 184). In a survey of campus presidents, El-Khawas (1989) reported that developing closer links between the classroom and out-of-class activities was identified as an important key to improving campus life. Boyer (1987) appeals for a campus that is intellectually and socially integrated, where all parts of the campus are brought together into one community of learners.

The undergraduate college should be held together by something more than plumbing, a common grievance over parking, or football rallies in the fall. What students do in dining halls, on the playing fields, and in the rathskeller late at night all combine to influence the outcome of the college education, and the challenge, in the building of community, is to extend the resources for learning on the campus and to see academic and nonacademic life as interlocked. (Boyer, 1987, p.17)

If institutions are to address effectively this need for integrating students' experiences, academic and student affairs staff must agree on a total program that includes both curricular and social systems
Success depends on cooperation and contributions on both sides. Student affairs staff must be willing to share with faculty and academic administrators their awareness of the world in which students live (O'Brien, 1989). "Artificial organizational barriers... must give way to more fluid, open, and responsive organizational structures," (Murphy, 1989) including collaboration on committees, workshops, projects, meetings, programs, services, task forces, and department staffing (Murphy, 1989; O'Brien, 1989). The institution's central administration also must contribute to this collaboration through providing opportunities for people in both areas to work together cooperatively and providing various forms of recognition to underscore the comprehensive nature of the institution's mission (Murphy, 1989).

Mitchell and Roof (1989) identify two building stages for student affairs staff to create effective collaboration with academic affairs. First, student affairs staff should "shift faculty perceptions of student affairs from 'bread and circuses' to human development" (p. 281); staff should create opportunities to educate faculty in the ways they contribute to student development, spotlighting student affairs as a profession rather than a collection of activities for students. Second, staff should "validate the student affairs' contribution to academics" (p. 281). Student affairs staff should articulate and advertise the relationship between student affairs programming and academics; in addition, staff should show faculty that they identify with the institution's educational mission, specify how student affairs programs
are designed to contribute to institutional goals, and devise research to assess how and to what extent the programs are integral to the fulfillment of the institution's mission (pp. 281-282).

**Activities that foster connection**  
There are a number of out-of-class activities that integrate academic experiences, such as debate teams, language clubs, publications, performance groups, political clubs, and international exchange groups (Study Group, 1984). In addition, the Carnegie Foundation (1990) identifies an 'out-of-class curriculum' (p. 14) that creates a shared sense of intellectual excitement; this curriculum includes lectures, informal debates, singing groups, orchestras and bands, theater productions, dance concerts, the student radio and newspaper, literary journals, and film societies.

Collaboration activities between academic and student affairs can assume many various forms. Eickmann (1989) identifies a number of examples of collaboration, including teaching and learning opportunities (assist in classroom activities, graduate assistantship arrangements, internships, and workshops); joint research activities; publications for administration, faculty, and staff; surveys, assessments, and other evaluation projects; orientation of new students and staff; committee memberships; co-sponsorship of campus events; and joint participation in institutional projects.

One way institutions can connect the academic and social components of campus is through learning communities. Learning communities are small subgroups of students characterized by a
common sense of purpose (Astin, 1985). These learning communities build a sense of group identity and cohesiveness, and encourage continuity and the integration of diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences (Astin, 1985).

A learning community successful on many campuses is honors programs. Students in honors programs integrate their academic and interpersonal activities and express more growth during their first year in college (Ory & Braskamp, 1988). Honors programs students also show significant gains in interpersonal self-esteem, intellectual self-esteem, and artistic interests (Astin, 1984).

Another way to integrate students' social and academic experiences is through their living environment. Upcraft (1985) states that residence hall programming contributes to the personal development of first year students: "students who attended these programs improved their intellectual and socio-emotional development significantly more than nonattenders. In general, social, educational, and sexuality programs had the most impact..." (p. 329-330).

Student residences that incorporate "systematic and purposeful efforts to integrate students' academic and social lives (for example, living-learning centers) in ways that extend and reinforce learning in other areas" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 654) appear to have greatest impact on students change. Rowe (1981) describes a living-learning center as a residence unit that seeks to integrate the
students' academic experience with their living environment. Rowe (1981) identifies six goals of living-learning centers:

1. Provide opportunities for students to pursue an academic lifestyle;
2. Encourage interdisciplinary study;
3. Foster peer support for learning;
4. Allow students input in and control over curriculum and programs;
5. Encourage close student-faculty relationships;
6. Bridge the gap between cognitive and affective development.

Programming in living-learning centers reflect the character of its academic experiences and remain consistent with the center's educational and developmental goals; programming opportunities can include faculty lectures, round-table discussions, language tables, crafts instruction, theater groups, field trips, and human growth workshops (Rowe, 1981, p. 59). To succeed, living-learning centers require support from both academic and student affairs to develop facilities, services, ongoing faculty participation, and programming funds (Rowe, 1981).

Clarke, Miser, and Roberts (1988) identify three approaches to integrating students' academic experience into their living environment:

1. Living environment facilities can be designed as living-learning structures, which include both residential and
academic components, such as classrooms, credit courses, and academic support services;
2. Faculty can become more involved, taking an active role in academic programming in the residence halls;
3. Living units can be organized around academic and/or vocational themes. (p. 7)

Clarke, Miser, and Roberts (1988) found that all three programs appeared to be associated with student satisfaction with the academic experience, including the established curriculum, contact with faculty, general education requirements, and the variety of courses available. Moreover, this intensity of student effort appeared to produce more active engagement with other academic aspects of the institution, including involvement in formal study groups, class participation, social skill development, increased cultural awareness and attendance at cultural events, and appreciation of the arts.

Student-faculty interaction

A significant contributor to academic and social integration is student-faculty interaction. In their synthesis of research, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found that students' informal contact with faculty is linked positively with the following wide range of outcomes: subject matter learning, perceptions of intellectual growth, increases in intellectual orientation, liberalization of social and political values, growth in autonomy and independence, increases in interpersonal skills, gains in general maturity and personal development, identity status and level of ego functioning, educational aspirations and
attainment, orientation toward scholarly careers, and, for women, interest in sex-atypical careers.

Pascarella, Terenzini, and Hibel (1978) reported that students with frequent interactions with faculty in non-classroom settings tend to perform better academically than predicted from pre-enrollment characteristics, while students who seldom meet informally with faculty tend more often to achieve at lower than predicted levels. Volkwein, King, and Terenzini (1986) found that students' campus experiences and interaction with faculty proved three times more influential in student growth than their backgrounds, prior experiences, or goals. Faculty participation in students' lives is essential to complete the campus community (Hennessy, 1981). Hennessy (1981) identifies five reasons why student-faculty interaction is important; specifically, student-faculty interaction:

1. fosters a total sense of community;
2. establishes an academic climate in students' out-of-class life;
3. maximizes the use of resources;
4. creates a unity of purpose; and
5. integrates students' educational experience. (p. 17)

Student-faculty interaction contributes to students' personal as well as intellectual and academic growth. Frequent interaction with faculty also has been associated with satisfaction with college (Astin, 1984; Astin, 1985; Pascarella, 1980) as well as students' intellectual competence, sense of autonomy, and sense of purpose (Chickering, 1969). Erwin and Delworth (1982) found that student-faculty
interaction contributed to the development of students' sense of identity; students reported that interactions with faculty and other adult role models stimulated inner thinking and helped them formulate conceptions about themselves. In their study of faculty contact in residence hall settings, Clarke, Miser, and Roberts (1988) found that faculty involvement with students increased the students' interest in active social relationships as well as academic goals; faculty contact in the residence halls was associated with increases in satisfaction with college, collegial attitudes toward peers and professionals, and social involvement as a form of recreation.

**Benefits** One of the most greatest benefits of student-faculty interaction is its influence on student persistence. Research has found that schools with high retention rates have high faculty-student interaction (Tinto, 1987; Pascarella, 1980). On the other hand, low levels of personal interaction with faculty--especially those occurring outside the classroom or faculty member's office--are associated with students' voluntary withdrawal (Tinto, 1982).

The impact of some institutional qualities or characteristics on students often is a product of that characteristic's influence on facilitating student-faculty interaction. For example, Pascarella (1985) found that attending large public institutions inhibits the impact of college; however, the impact of institutional size is an indirect one in that large institutions tend to have less student-peer and student-faculty interaction. Pascarella, Terenzini, and Wolfe (1986) found a similar link in their study on orientation programs. They found that
the largest factor in the success of orientation programs was with "the extent of extracurricular involvement and informal contact with faculty during the freshman year" (p. 170).

Student-faculty interaction is particularly helpful for new students. Upcraft and Gardner (1989) identify student-faculty contact as one of four key elements of the campus climate that enhances first year student success (along with student-peer interaction, on-campus housing, and extracurricular activities). The experiences of first year students who interact with others in the academic community are enhanced, while "those who are isolated from peers, staff, and especially the faculty will get much less out of their college experience--or fail" (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989, p. 4).

Volkwein, King, and Terenzini (1986) found similar results in their study of transfer students. Transfer students' interactions with faculty significantly enhanced intellectual growth; moreover, this growth was influenced by student-faculty relationships "characterized by faculty interest and concern, rather than by frequent contact" (p. 427). Kuh, Schuh, and Thomas (1985) also advocate this point of "quality over quantity" in regards to student-faculty contact, and recommend that faculty seek out students "on their own turf" (p. 35).

**Quality of student-faculty interaction** Beal and Noel (1980) also discuss the issue of the quality of student-faculty interaction. They state that interaction opportunities must be more than just available; they must be emphasized, fostered, and made visible to the students. Chickering (1969) identifies four conditions for student-
faculty relationships that foster development: accessibility, authenticity; knowledge, and ability to talk with students (p. 244-247).

Although virtually all forms of student-faculty contact are beneficial, interaction focusing on intellectual topics, academic matters, student career concerns, artistic interests, and values issues appear to have the greatest impact (Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977). Kuh, Schuh, and Thomas (1985) advocate early student-faculty interaction consist of get acquainted activities such as eating together or attending campus events; eventually, these contacts should progress to more intellectual interactions such as campus lectures, discussion groups, tutoring sessions, and educational and cultural programs.

Kuh et al. (1991) drew the following conclusions about student-faculty interaction at involving colleges:

1. Out-of-class contact, when it occurs, is usually directly or indirectly related to academic activities or concerns;
2. Two faculty cultures exist as far as out-of-class life is concerned: student-centered faculty who are involved with undergraduate students, and faculty who are not involved with undergraduates;
3. Changes in the faculty reward system and institutional expectations are altering faculty roles and priorities;
4. Students perceive faculty to be available and involved with them, particularly in the academic arena;
5. Faculty members are generally satisfied with their work and their institution; they like their students and give their time and talent to them. (pp. 174-175)

Although a few contacts were initiated by faculty, most were initiated by students. When out-of-class contact did occur, it was often "after class" contact that attempted to tie class material to "real world" issues (p. 174). Other contacts focused on major-related activities or clubs, undergraduate research, or undergraduate teaching assistantships.

Implications for institutions With the strong evidence supporting the benefits of student-faculty interaction, many researchers are urging institutions to facilitate greater interaction. Upcraft and Barr (1990) recommend that institutions "make faculty aware of the powerful influence of the out-of-class environment on the academic achievement and retention of students, and increase their involvement in the out-of-classroom life of students" (p. 297). Tinto (1987) recommends that educators focus long term retention strategies on facilitating continuing, personal contact among students, faculty, and staff, and designing extracurricular programs that draw students and faculty together over common interests. This may be particularly important for first year students. Upcraft and Gardner (1989) acknowledge that on many campus full-time, tenured faculty rarely teach first year students; Upcraft and Gardner (1989) recommend that experienced faculty get involved with first year students as soon as they arrive on campus, including inside the
classroom. Livingston and Stewart (1987) also encourage faculty to increase the amount of contact they have with minority students outside the classroom as well.

One effective way to increase student-faculty out-of-class contact is through intentional interaction programs in the living environment. Clarke, Miser, and Roberts (1988) found that faculty involvement in residential programming "can support both personal and academic development and, potentially, provide a medium in which both faculty and residence hall staff can discover mutually supportive roles and a common goal: the illumination of opportunity in the college experience" (p. 12). Kuh, Schuh, and Thomas (1985) identified five components of successful residence hall-faculty interaction programs; successful residence hall-faculty interaction programs require:

1. institutional support, both symbolic (e.g. recognition and awards) and financial (e.g. travel funds);
2. effective coordination, usually accomplished through a small core of faculty with credibility and the respect of colleagues, students, and residence life staff;
3. participating faculty who are mature, empathetic, well-known and respected, tenured, persistent, able and willing to commit time, and possessing previous out-of-class experience with students;
4. a structured orientation program that briefs faculty regarding program purposes and expectations; and
5. planned morale maintenance activities that sustain faculty energy and interest. (pp. 31-32)

One example of an effective faculty-living environment program is the faculty/staff floor affiliate program (Jackson & Stevens, 1990). In this program, residence hall floors "adopt" a faculty or staff member who becomes that floor's affiliate, participating in a variety of activities; typical activities in this program include meals, decoration of floor rooms or common areas, events at the home of the affiliate, attendance at sports events, recreational activities, and unstructured visits by the affiliate. Students benefit from the program:

They are exposed to exemplary adult role models. Through informal conversations, affiliates are often in the position to help students integrate their classroom and their extracurricular experiences. Affiliates help students make connections between their majors and career aspirations, and what they want to do with their lives. (Jackson & Stevens, 1990, p. 8)

Faculty must be encouraged to look beyond their particular disciplines or departments and acquire a more holistic view of students (O'Brien, 1989). "Faculty development programs and other initiatives can help to promote a more holistic approach to student development and to understanding the nature of education" (O'Brien, 1989, p. 286).

A strong relationship between student affairs staff and faculty can help faculty understand students' out-of-class experiences and facilitate better student-faculty interaction. Mitchell and Roof (1989)
identify three components of the institutional environment that encourage partnerships between faculty and student affairs:

1. Faculty and administrators are familiar with student affairs philosophy--"partnership aspirations will be more readily fulfilled if familiarity is high and the student affairs division presents a clear and consistent professional orientation"; 
2. Institutional values reward faculty for participating--"if participation in your programs is rewarded by the institution, faculty will be more likely to collaborate"; and 
3. The institutional power structure supports faculty and student affairs partnerships--"by identifying powerful faculty faculty and groups, you may be able to infer additional institutional values (e.g. adherence to a particular philosophy) as well as target your efforts toward those likely to influence others." (p. 280)

Toy (1985) echoes this call for reevaluating faculty reward systems. To get faculty more involved with students, institutions must show their commitment to student-faculty interaction change how they reward faculty; in addition to monetary rewards, other forms of reward can include reduced teaching loads, promotions, tenure, and general recognition within the campus community. Similarly, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) suggested that institutions identify ways to give faculty members "more incentives to become involved in students' learning both in and out of the classroom" (p. 650).
Exposure to diversity

Just as students experience greater learning when they are challenged inside the classroom, exposure to challenges through out-of-class experiences also contribute to student growth and development. "The potency of colleges and universities for influencing student change and growth appears to lie in the exposure they afford their students to diversity, presenting opportunities to explore, peer and adult models to emulate, and experiences that challenge currently held values, attitudes, and beliefs" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 59). Interactions with peers of diverse backgrounds may have even greater impact on student identity and self-esteem than interaction with faculty (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Institutions must make an effort to educate their students on other cultures. "The importance of learning and understanding other world cultures must be communicated.... The vast majority of students are inadequately informed about the interdependency of the world in which we live, and seem to have little interest in learning about it" (Welty, 1989, p. 25). Fitzpatrick (1988) stated that multicultural awareness benefits students "by providing knowledge of the world, making connections between lives and events in the world, and supplying the opportunity to use human relations skills" (p. 193). Chickering (1969) found that student development was fostered by a living environment that includes students with a diversity of backgrounds and attitudes, as well as opportunities for significant interchange with each other.
Exposing students to and challenging them with diverse perspectives encourages greater creativity, effectiveness, and problem solving (Manning & Coleman-Boatwright, 1991). According to Leafgren (1981), it is the task of educators to find ways to reach students, "to challenge them, to jolt them out of their ruts so they will revile their ways of looking at things. Students will thus be required to generate new perspectives and systems of response" (p. 24).

Kuh et al. (1991) stated that "pluralism enriches campus life by valuing the traditions, lifestyles, and values of diverse groups.... A multicultural learning community also allows students to learn about themselves by exploring their racial or ethnic heritage and experimenting with different lifestyles" (p. 64). In their study, they found involving colleges expect students to do more than merely tolerate differences among students and their cultures and backgrounds; involving colleges "advocate pluralism, a state in which cultural, ethnic, sexual orientation, and other differences are encouraged, understood, protected, respected, and celebrated throughout the community" (p. 64).

Exposure to diversity is becoming more and more critical for colleges and universities in the United States, which by the year 2000 will be approximately one-third non-white (Upcraft & Barr, 1990). In the coming years, "our society will become increasingly heterogeneous and diverse in its value.... We may be entering a period in which our differences become more important than our commonalties" (Upcraft & Barr, 1990, p. 7).
As a result of this demographic trend, institutions can expect to see an increase in diversity on their campuses. It is important, therefore, that colleges and universities create opportunities for students to interact in settings that are rich in diversity of race, religion, age, gender, culture, physical ability, language, nationality, sexual orientation, and lifestyle (Lyons, 1990; Livingston & Stewart, 1987). In facilitating students’ growth through exposure to diversity, institutions must take a proactive approach:

Colleges and universities must not only respond to its disparate needs of an increasingly heterogeneous student body but also develop strategies that will acknowledge and celebrate differences in cultural heritage, life goals, and expectations of students of color and other underrepresented groups. Thus, while diversity reflects student characteristics, the pluralism imperative demands that campus communities establish meaningful patterns of interaction that encourage understanding, respect, and appreciation of these differences. (Kuh, 1990, p. 86)

Kuh et al. (1991) identified four areas of commitment necessary for an institution to become a multicultural learning community:

- advancement of knowledge and intellectual understanding of differences among groups of people;
- encouragement of interaction among members of different subcommunities (ethnic, cultural, gender-based, academic living groups);
• promotion of the appreciation and valuing of commonalities across all students;
• building on commonalities while acknowledging the important and unique contributions that members of different groups can make to the academic community. (p. 294)

Although a multicultural learning community made up of multiple subcommunities has great potential for student growth, it is not without its risks of conflict. It is important that institutions not ignore these conflicts but attempt to use them to students' educational advantage (Kuh et al., 1991).

Campus culture

A campus's culture and subcultures greatly influence the quality of students' educational experience. Peterson and Spencer (1990) identified three major features of culture:

• culture serves to emphasize an organization's unique or distinctive character, which provides a subordinate meaning to members;
• culture is deeply embedded and enduring;
• culture is not malleable, changed primarily by cataclysmic events or through slower, intensive, and long-term efforts. (p. 6)

Kuh and Whitt (1988) defined culture in higher education as "the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in any institution of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions
on and off campus" (p. 13). They identified four layers of analysis of culture: the external environment, institution, subcultures within the institution and within other subcultures, and individual actors and roles.

The external environment includes regional, economic, social, and occupational factors. "Institutions are continually evolving, shaped by interactions between conditions in the external environment and the needs and concerns of groups within the institution" (p. 42).

The key aspects of institutional culture include "how faculty and students spend their time, with whom they interact, what people 'perceive' the culture to be, and the manner in which the norms and values of the institution shape behavior in the midst of crises" (p. 49). Institutions have a distinctive ethos, "an underlying attitude that describes how faculty and students feel about themselves; this attitude is comprised of the moral and aesthetic aspects of culture that reflect and set the tone, character, and quality of institutional life" (p. 47).

The following are seven features of institutional culture: historical roots; the academic program, including curricular emphases; personnel core; social environment, especially the influence of dominant student subcultures; artifactual manifestations, such as architecture, customs, ceremonies, and rituals; distinctive themes transmitted by the institutional ethos, norms, and sagas; and individual actors (p. 53).

Subcultures are groups within the institution with a common experience that develop a similar view of the institution and their
place in it (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Faculty, students and administrators comprise the three major institutional subcultures. Kuh and Whitt (1988) identified three types of subcultures that may exist within a dominant culture: enhancing, orthogonal, and countercultural. An enhancing subculture "adheres to the institution's core values more fervently than the rest of the members of the college" (p. 50). An orthogonal subculture accepts the values of the institution plus a separate, unconflicting set of values particular to themselves. A countercultural subculture "poses a direct threat to the values of the institution" (p. 50).

The student subculture on campus is its own distinctive culture, sometimes containing a few or many subcultures itself. The student culture or subcultures are particularly influential on many aspects of students' college experience, including what they learn, because they determine the kinds of people with whom students spend time and the values and attitudes to which they are exposed (Kuh, 1990). Kuh and Whitt (1988) defined student culture as "a set of beliefs, attitudes, and values shared by all (or most) students in a particular institution" (p. 84). Student cultures affect students' perceptions of their work and social lives as well as their professional and personal goals (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Chickering (1969) found that:
The student culture defines the acceptable working agreements between students and institution. It sets the framework for attitudes and activities with which the student responds to the
opportunities and frustrations, the freedom and constraints, the ideals and the disillusions, provided by the institution. (p. 155)

Students' relationship with subcultures are primary forces influencing all aspects of their personal development; the amount of this influence is amplified as the frequency and intensity of contact increases (Chickering, 1969).

Kuh (1990) identified three elements of student subcultures. First, "the normative-value system must be shred by some group of persons who are in persisting interaction"; second, "the normative-value system must differ from the normative-value system of the encompassing student culture"; and third, "the group must employ mechanisms for social control" (p. 50). The influence of student subcultures on students' is complicated. Values of some groups on campus may conflict with the values of the institutional culture, yet, at the same time, many subcultures generate an important sense of loyalty to their respective groups as well as to the institution as a whole (Kuh, 1990).

Kuh et al. (1991) found that at involving colleges "most student subcultures promote student involvement in activities that complement the institution's educational purposes" (p. 184). However, the influence of student cultures is not necessarily positive. "Indeed, there is evidence that at some colleges and universities the dominant student cultures have been estranged from the intellectual life of the institution" (Kuh, 1990, p. 47). When the values of the peer culture is in conflict with those values tied to the academic mission of
the institution, the peer culture's impact often prevails: "the peer culture can usually trump anything promoted by the college" (Dalton, 1989, p. 183). Particularly vulnerable is the student's sense of identity:

Identity is best developed by ranging freely through varied situations, testing one's reaction to them, by trying different roles with varying degrees of commitment and investment, and by receiving clear feedback uncontaminated by others' stereotypes and unclouded by one's own anxieties. But where status is accorded to only a limited set of roles...and when the range of situations for approved activity is limited, then development of identity suffers. (Chickering, 1969, p. 156)

A number of factors contribute to a culture's or subculture's impact on students. Kuh (1990) identified four conditions that can increase groups' influence on the behavior of its members:

- large institutions whose groups have relatively small numbers of members;
- homogeneity of group members' attitudes and interests;
- group membership being viewed as important by participants;
- isolation of group members, with infrequent opportunities for interaction with persons outside the group. (pp. 49-50)

Since the peer culture has great influence in shaping student values and attitudes, the challenge for educators is to understand the impact on students, identify and confront those values issues in the peer culture that conflict with the institution's educational objectives,
and develop effective intervention strategies. (Dalton, 1989).
"Assessments of student culture are essential for determining the
effects of college and university life on students and the sources of
variation related to higher education outcomes" (Kuh, 1990, p.52).
Institutions should study how students spend their time;
understanding where students place their physical and psychological
energy will provide insights into what they are learning (Dalton,
1989).

Kuh (1990) recommended the following approach to assessing
student culture:

Any attempt to describe student cultures, and the influence of
student cultures on learning, must take into account an
institution's environment, the reference groups to which a
student belongs, and the characteristics that students bring to
the institution.... Assessments also must discover the content of
activities and behavior attributes that are valued and rewarded by
a group and those that are discouraged. (pp. 52-53)

Baird (1988) advocated a similar approach. He recommends
that future research move toward "the identification of the
psychological and social processes that create the environment" (p.
45). Specifically, he suggests examining how informal groups are
formed, how cohesiveness operates, how peers influence one another,
how people become identified with their group and college, how social
judgements are formed, and how the social roles on campuses conflict
with or reinforce each other. Baird (1988) also suggests that
researchers look beyond the obvious reference groups—such as students in a particular residence hall, major, or organization—which may or may not have any true social interaction and cohesiveness; research projects that examine the real norm and peer groups would be very valuable in distinguishing between students' involvement in a particular group and that group's saliency.

**Leadership development**

Student learning is enhanced through involvement in out-of-class leadership opportunities. Leadership opportunities can be either formal (e.g. involvement in student government or holding a leadership position in a student organization) or informal (participating in the process of establishing community or organization programs, policies, procedures, standards, or norms). Gardner (1990) contends that well-conceived out-of-class leadership experiences provide one or more of the following:

- Opportunities for students to experience the shared responsibilities of group action, and to learn the skills required to make a group function effectively.
- Opportunities for students to test their judgement under pressure, in the face of opposition, and in the fluid, swiftly changing circumstances characteristic of action.
- Opportunities for students to test and sharpen their intuitive gifts and to judge their impact on others.
- Exposure to new constituencies.
Exposure to the untidy world, where decisions must be made on inadequate information and the soundest argument does not always win, where problems rarely get fully solved or, once solved, surface anew in another form. (p. 168)

Addressing the issues of citizenship and leadership includes addressing social issues. "Co-curricular activities offer the opportunity for developing and challenging knowledge being learned and can be a setting for skills development and knowledge regarding social issues..." (Fitzpatrick, 1988, p. 193). These can include issues such as alcohol and drug education, sexuality, racism and sexism, volunteerism, and academic integrity (Dalton, 1989).

Student participation in out-of-class leadership activities can contribute significantly to an understanding and appreciation of civic responsibilities and the skill development needed for students to practice socially responsible citizenship (NASPA, 1987; Fitzpatrick, 1988). In a study on humanitarian and civic values, Pascarella, Ethington, and Smart (1988) found that the undergraduate experience had a significant, unique impact on students' humanizing of values, and that "involvement in social leadership opportunities during college was particularly salient in its influence on student development" (P. 429). Furthermore, a major conclusion of this study was that a student's involvement in these social leadership experiences had a potentially significant, positive influence on the importance the student attached to civic and humanitarian activities after college.
Out-of-class leadership activities also have been associated with students' increased abilities in career planning. Priessler and Hadley (1992) found that "students who hold cocurricular leadership roles revealed more positive attitudes about careers and enhanced abilities to look ahead when making career choices" (p. 119). On the other hand, students without such leadership experiences demonstrated less positive attitudes, less knowledge, and less ability to plan for careers.

Student leadership experiences appear to have significant impact on students' growth and development regardless of the characteristics of the institution (Schuh & Laverty, 1983). As a result, it is not necessarily important where students are involved in these experiences, just that they are involved. Although there are opportunities to develop leadership skills in the classroom, the opportunities are much greater through out-of-class experiences (Gardner, 1990). Lyons (1990) urges institutions to create opportunities in which:

[Students] can be given real responsibility--allowed to err and fail and to make significant changes in the institution's traditional fabric.... Students can accept real responsibility for their adjudication, and they can assume significant roles in establishing and reviewing policies, especially those pertaining to student life. (p. 32)

Hennessy (1981) advocates involving students in the process of establishing community standards and norms. "The involvement of
students in the normative process is crucial. If they are shunted out of the normative process, apathy, alienation, and disruption are likely to follow" (p. 19). Kuh et al. (1991) found that at involving colleges students are given the responsibility for learning and maintaining community standards. Involving colleges:

   Encourage student responsibility and freedom of choice.

Students are trusted and expected to be responsible for handling violations of community norms. For the most part, students are given the freedom to learn from their own decisions, experiences, and, in some cases, mistakes. (p. 137)

Evidence of this student responsibility can be found in honor codes, housing policies, and practices regarding student initiative.

An example of a community of students establishing and maintaining its own standards is the just community (Ignelzi, 1990). The just community is:

   [A] participatory democracy in which students and advisors share power and authority in setting their own community norms and making decisions that affect the community. This includes setting shared standards of behavior within the community, and addressing situations where those standards are violated. (Ignelzi, 1990, p. 193)

The just community serves two purposes: first, "it invests students in the process and outcome of their community discussions"; second, "it encourages increased ownership in and, consequently, adherence to community norms and decisions" (Ignelzi, 1990, p. 194).
The following components are crucial to maintaining a successful just community:

- active yet voluntary individual participation;
- community meetings that provide the framework for important ethical discussions and decisions;
- involvement by the entire community membership, not just elected representatives, in the resolution of issues;
- small communities that facilitate participation by all individuals;
- self-determination and maintenance of the students' own environment, with their sharing in meaningful decision-making authority and responsibility;
- de-emphasis of the authority role of the advisor, who serves as an educator and ethical advocate;
- shared responsibility by community members for holding each other accountable to established norms and practices. (Ignelzi, 1990, pp. 193-195)

The just community provides a context for students to consider and discuss real-life ethical issues, and make their own ethical judgments and choices.

In addition to contributing to the management of their own communities, students also can develop leadership skills through participation in the overall institutional governance. Blimling and Schuh (1981) state that students expect to be involved in policy development, program planning, and fiscal management; furthermore,
institutions can obtain crucial information from students' perspectives as consumers. Kuh et al. (1991) found that at all involving colleges students play an "active and substantial role" in institutional governance (p. 325). Moreover, these roles occur at a level within the institution where students can exert true responsibility and influence.

Another example of students' assuming responsibility at the institutional level is at Northeast Missouri State University (Krueger & Heissere, 1987). At NMSU, students get involved in various institution-wide educational issues, with students serving in academic discipline activities and on academic committees. The students also are involved through the student government, which passes resolutions regarding a number of academic issues including library hours, dead week, academic standards, academic programs, study facilities.

Therefore, since leadership activities provide opportunities for student development, colleges and universities should "institute real mechanisms for student inclusion, energy, and contribution in campus governance to arrange collaborative, creative decision making that generates excitement among students for their education" (Mable & DeCoste, 1981, p. 109). Kuh et al. (1991) recommend that institutions examine the number and type of leadership positions available to students in departmental or social organizations or clubs as well as various student and institutional governance bodies. In addition, developing leadership opportunities may be particularly
helpful and important for students of color and other ethnic groups (Pounds, 1989).

In addition to providing leadership involvement opportunities for students, institutions should make certain that the students—and not just the professional staff—are involved in the designing and implementation of programs and activities (Kuh et al., 1991). Students should have ample opportunities to initiate their own learning:

Institutions should not attempt to create all involvement opportunities for students. Students are encouraged to become involved not only by the number and kinds of clubs and organizations available but also by the degree to which they are encouraged to develop and implement their own activities that are consistent with the institution's mission and philosophy. (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 318)

Summary of the review of the literature

"Students learn most effectively when they are engaged with their work in and out of the classroom" (Lyons, 1990, p. 31).

Students' learning and personal development are directly proportional to the quality and quantity of the students' involvement in their education, both inside the classroom and outside (Study Group, 1984). Student involvement facilitates students' integration into the institution's academic and social communities, and can lead to increased cognitive and personal development, as well as enhances the students' chances of persisting toward their degree.
Student involvement can assume many forms, including, but not limited to, studying, working in an on-campus job, participating actively in student organizations, spending significant time on campus, and interacting with faculty members and peers (Study Group, 1984; Astin, 1984; Astin, 1977). Student involvement can be particularly helpful to special populations—such as first-year students, students of color, and women.

An important component of student involvement is the relationship between in-class and out-of-class activity. The two halves of college ought be complementary, and students should experience a healthy balance between academic and college life (Moffatt, 1991). The campus environment should reflect this sense of connectedness between students' academic and social lives. Institutions should "be more intentional in making formal connections between the curriculum, teaching, and student life" (Dalton, 1989, p. 184).

There are a number of out-of-class activities that integrate academic experiences, such as debate teams, language clubs, publications, performance groups, political clubs, and international exchange groups (Study Group, 1984). To address effectively this need for integrating students' academic and social experiences requires cooperation and contributions from both academic and student affairs staff.

Collaboration activities between academic and student affairs can assume many various forms. Among the most successful have been honors programs and structured academic programs within the living
environment. Other examples of collaboration, including teaching and learning opportunities; joint research activities; publications for administration, faculty, and staff; surveys, assessments, and other evaluation projects; orientation of new students and staff; committee memberships; co-sponsorship of campus events; and joint participation in institutional projects (Eickmann, 1989).

A significant contributor to academic and social integration is student-faculty interaction. Students' informal contact with faculty is linked positively with the following wide range of outcomes: subject matter learning, perceptions of intellectual growth, increases in intellectual orientation, liberalization of social and political values, growth in autonomy and independence, increases in interpersonal skills, gains in general maturity and personal development, identity status and level of ego functioning, educational aspirations and attainment, orientation toward scholarly careers, and, for women, interest in sex-atypical careers (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). Student-faculty interaction opportunities must be more than just available; they must be emphasized, fostered, and made visible to the students (Beal and Noel, 1980). Although virtually all forms of student-faculty contact are beneficial, interaction focusing on intellectual topics, academic matters, student career concerns, artistic interests, and values issues appear to have the greatest impact (Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977).

Just as students experience greater learning when they are challenged inside the classroom, exposure to challenges through out-
of-class experiences also contribute to student growth and development. Institutions can influence student change and growth by exposing students to diversity, presenting opportunities to explore, peer and adult models to emulate, and experiences that challenge currently held values, attitudes, and beliefs (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Demographic trends indicate that institutions can expect to see an increase in diversity on their campuses. It is important, therefore, that colleges and universities create opportunities for students to interact in settings that are rich in diversity of race, religion, age, gender, culture, physical ability, language, nationality, sexual orientation, and lifestyle (Lyons, 1990; Livingston & Stewart, 1987).

A campus's culture and subcultures greatly influence the quality of students' educational experience. Kuh and Whitt (1988) define culture in higher education as "the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in any institution of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus" (p. 13). The student culture or subcultures are particularly influential on many aspects of students' college experience, including what they learn, because they determine the kinds of people with whom students spend time and the values and attitudes to which they are exposed (Kuh, 1990). The student culture may complement or be in conflict with the larger institutional culture and the educational
purposes of the institution. Therefore, the challenge for educators is to understand the impact on students, identify and confront those values issues in the peer culture that conflict with the institution's educational objectives, and develop effective intervention strategies. (Dalton, 1989).

Student learning is enhanced through involvement in formal and informal out-of-class leadership opportunities. Student participation in out-of-class leadership activities can contribute significantly to an understanding and appreciation of civic responsibilities and the skill development needed for students to practice socially responsible citizenship (NASPA, 1987; Fitzpatrick, 1988). Since leadership activities provide opportunities for student development, colleges and universities should "institute real mechanisms for student inclusion, energy, and contribution in campus governance to arrange collaborative, creative decision making that generates excitement among students for their education" (Mable & DeCoster, 1981, p. 109). In addition to providing leadership involvement opportunities for students, institutions should make certain that the students--and not just the professional staff--are involved in the designing and implementation of programs and activities (Kuh et al., 1991).

This review of the literature on student involvement provided the theoretical and philosophical foundations for this study on student out-of-class involvement by guiding the development of research questions and areas of inquiry. A discussion of the research methods used in the study follows in Chapter Three.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODS

Research questions

The following research questions were generated from the objectives of the study as discussed in Chapter One. Sub-questions were inspired by the Involving Colleges study, which identified "a constellation of factors and conditions that seem to encourage a high level of student participation in the life of the institution and in their own education" (Kuh et al., 1991 p. 263). These factors and conditions included mission and philosophy, campus culture, campus environment, policies and practices, and institutional agents. Since these factors and conditions were found to influence student involvement in out-of-class learning at other institutions, they served as a catalyst in the formation of specific research questions for this investigation:

1. How are students involved out of the classroom, and what are student, faculty, and staff perceptions of this involvement?
   a. What student organizations are available to students?
   b. What do students do for enjoyment?
   c. What leadership opportunities are available?
   d. What is the living environment like?
   e. What do students do in their free time?
   f. What role does the international studies program have on campus?
   g. How are students involved through the church?
h. What activities and opportunities connect in-class experiences with out-of-class experiences?

i. How, and to what extent, do students and faculty interact outside the classroom?

2. What factors and conditions, if any, influence students' out-of-class involvement?

a. What is the relationship between academic and student affairs?

b. To what extent are there cultural, ethnic, sexual orientation, and other differences on campus? How is this diversity celebrated?

c. How does the campus culture and subcultures affect student out-of-class involvement? Campus culture refers to "the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in any institution of higher education" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 13).

d. How does the institution's mission and philosophy affect student out-of-class involvement? Mission refers to the broad, long-term purpose of the institution (Welzemandback, 1982), while the institution's philosophy refers to its "values, assumptions, and beliefs about human potential, teaching, and learning" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 41).

e. How does the campus environment affect student out-of-class involvement? Campus environment refers to physical, social,
and other campus conditions and influences that affect student growth and development (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 99).

f. How do the institution's policies and its operational practices affect student out-of-class involvement?
g. How do faculty affect student out-of-class involvement and experiences? Professional and other staff? Other students?

Research methods
The methods of inquiry for this study were qualitative. In qualitative research, the researcher 1) is primarily concerned with process rather than products or outcomes; 2) is interested in meaning; 3) is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis; 4) becomes intimately familiar with the phenomenon being studied, usually through fieldwork (Merriam, 1988). The data are not conveyed through numbers, but through words providing "detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors; direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts; and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records, and case histories" (Patton, 1980, p. 22). The primary data source in this study was respondent interviews; observations and document analysis essentially served as secondary sources. Data sources are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

The purpose of this study was to examine and describe how students are involved outside the classroom, and to identify any factors and conditions that influence this involvement. This required
examining students' experiences from multiple subjective
perspectives and understanding how all of the parts work together to
form a whole. Qualitative methods were chosen for this study because
they can provide greater sensitivity to many of the subtle and fine-
grained complexities of college impact than more traditional
quantitative approaches, and because they are particularly well-suited
to the complex settings and processes of student life on campus
(Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Whitt, 1991). Qualitative research
assumes that the world is a subjective one, a function of personal
interaction and perception in need of interpreting rather than
measuring (Merriam, 1988).

Data sources

The sources of data included interview respondents, settings,
and documents.

Respondents The respondents included nine professional
staff (three women, six men), seven faculty members (three women,
four men), and twenty-five students (15 women, 10 men). The
respondents in the study were selected to acquire as many and as
varied perspectives on student involvement as possible. The initial
respondents were selected from three categories: 1) chief
administrative officers (president, academic dean, vice-president for
student affairs); 2) professional staff who work directly with students
(dean of students, director of student activities), and 3) student
leaders (student body president, student newspaper editor, resident
assistants).
These three categories were chosen as starting points for the following reasons. The president, academic dean, and vice-president for student affairs were interviewed to understand the broader college goals and objectives regarding out-of-class learning, and to examine their perceptions of student involvement. The dean of students and director of student activities were interviewed because they were the staff likely to observe and experience students in out-of-class settings and activities.

The student leaders were selected because their positions on campus potentially (but not always) provide exposure to the breadth and depth of students' involvement. The student body president and the student newspaper editor were interviewed because these positions potentially have insights into campus activities and involvement opportunities, current campus trends and issues that are important to students, and into the student culture in general. The resident assistants were interviewed because they work closely with students in the living environment, thus potentially have first-hand knowledge of students' attitudes and perspectives about many campus issues and opportunities; as paid student staff, they also are somewhat more familiar with college policies and practices than other students.

In addition to the students and staff, interviews were held with faculty members, students of color, first-year students, and students at random. Faculty were interviewed to gain their perceptions of students' out-of-class involvement; of particular importance here was the relationship, if any, between students' in-class and out-of-class
lives. Students of color frequently perceive and experience campus life in ways that differ from those of "majority" students; therefore, students of color were intentionally sought for interviews to explore these perspectives. It is particularly important to understand how students are encouraged to become involved in out-of-class experiences (if, indeed, they are encouraged at all); first-year students were interviewed to understand their perceptions of their early experiences with out-of-class involvement.

In an attempt to capture the perceptions of some "typical" students (i.e., those who were not selected in advance because of their specific role on campus), interviews also were held with students selected at random. These students were selected by random from among students "hanging out" on campus (in the residence halls, campus grounds, the student center, etc.).

During the discussion with respondents in the initial interviews, other potential respondents emerged as a result of snowball sampling (Dobbert, 1984), which refers to the identification of additional key persons through contact with previous respondents. When, during an interview, additional areas needing to be explored emerged, I enlisted the help of previous respondents to identify appropriate persons with whom to explore these new areas. This snowball sampling resulted in the following additional interviews:

- the campus chaplain was interviewed to explore further the relationship between the college and the church as well as the role of the church on campus;
• an athletic coach was interviewed because of the significant visibility and role of athletics on campus;
• the director of admission was interviewed to explore in greater detail the demographics of the student body as well as recruiting policies and strategies;
• international students were interviewed to explore their perceptions of the campus's international emphasis as well as their perceptions of student involvement in general;
• students who had studied abroad through the institution's international program were interviewed to explore their perceptions of the international studies program and its effect on student involvement on campus;
• the counseling and orientation staff were interviewed because they were frequently identified by previous respondents as staff who were closely involved directly with students through orientation activities, awareness programming (rape, substance abuse, etc.), and individual counseling and support efforts.

Observation A secondary source of data was observations, which entails "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 79). Since behavior is reflective of deeper values and beliefs, observation was used to learn about the behaviors of students, faculty, and staff and the meaning attached to these behaviors (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Observations served as secondary data sources because they were used primarily to generate interview questions or to
examine first-hand specific activities and events described by interview respondents. While observing, observation summary sheets were used to take notes on the activity being observed and its relevance to the study.

Most observations in this study were spontaneous, and were conducted in settings that revealed significant student interaction and activity, such as the student center (lounge, snack bar, staff and student offices, and various other areas), residence halls, chapel, theater, gymnasium, student dining hall, library, a popular student "hang-out" in town, and campus grounds in general. In addition to these spontaneous observations, several structured activities were observed as well, including a Saturday dance, multicultural fair, volleyball game, and commencement ceremonies.

Documents Another secondary source of data was documents, which are printed and other materials relevant to the study, including archival records, personal papers, photographs, and physical artifacts (Merriam, 1988). Documents were used to provide background information on the institution—particularly information on its students and their out-of-class activities and involvement opportunities—and to develop additional questions and areas of inquiry.

The following key documents were requested for review in advance and were provided by the vice-president for student affairs. The undergraduate catalog, organizational charts for the institution and for the student affairs division, a student affairs staff roster, and sections on student life from the institution's most recent
accreditation report were reviewed to gain an broad overview of the institution and its staffing; again, particular attention was paid to the student life division and its staff as they are most likely to work with students outside of the classroom. Information and data on student demographics and attrition were reviewed to gain an understanding of students' backgrounds and characteristics as well as the reasons students choose to leave the college.

Admission publications and the recruitment admissions video were reviewed to gather further information about the college and to examine how its features and characteristics are presented to prospective students; particular attention was given to how out-of-class involvement opportunities were presented. The student handbook was reviewed to gain an overview of students' out-of-class involvement opportunities as well as policies relating student life and conduct. The student newspaper also was reviewed to gain further understanding of out-of-class opportunities; in addition, the newspaper was examined to identify whether there were any "hot" issues being addressed by the students, and how these issues are being communicated to students through the newspaper.

In addition to the requested documents, I asked the vice-president of student affairs to provide in advance any additional documents that might provide insight into student involvement or student life in general. The following documents were included in the advance materials at the discretion of the vice-president for student affairs: a promotional publication on the international studies
program, a publication on the student center, a statement from the college on student drinking, and a parents handbook.

As was the case with respondents, during the course of the study other documents emerged that provided insights into students' out-of-class opportunities, thus were important to review. These documents included a daily announcement bulletin, a daily flyer publicizing campus activities, and a publication on campus ministries. The announcement bulletin and the flyer publicizing campus activities provided helpful information on out-of-class opportunities, as well as how these opportunities are communicated to students. The campus ministries publication provided information regarding how students were involved in the ministries program, as well as additional background regarding the relationship between the college and the church.

**Data collection**

Since qualitative research is not a linear process, data collection and analysis were conducted concurrently. Emerging insights from the data were used to guide further data collection (Merriam, 1988). Patterns and themes that began to emerge in the interviews with respondents--and, to a lesser degree, during observation and document analysis--led to new sources of data (usually new persons to interview) and the development of new questions and areas of inquiry. This process continued throughout the study until new patterns in the data as well as prospective interview respondents virtually ceased to emerge.
Data were collected through respondent interviews, document analysis, and observations. Data collection was completed by means of a human instrument (the researcher). Since the data required analysis and interpretation as the study progressed, the human instrument was selected for data collection because the researcher was capable of analyzing and interpreting the subtle meaning underlying the data (Merriam, 1988).

**Interviews** The primary method of data collection was interviews with prearranged individuals and groups, as well as impromptu interviews with students as permitted through informal contact in the student center, residence halls, and campus grounds. The interviews were semistructured (Marshall & Rossman, 1989); that is, I used a list of pre-set questions to guide the interviews, but was not bound by this list. This allowed me the flexibility to respond to the situation at hand, and to pursue additional relevant areas and topics as they emerged during the interviews (Merriam, 1988).

Sixteen individual and nine group interviews were held, for a total of forty respondents. Each of the initial respondents were interviewed individually to allow for focused, in-depth discussion with each individual. Most of the subsequent interviews were group interviews in an effort to interview more people in a limited amount of time; schedule conflicts between respondents and me necessitated several individual interviews.

All respondents were interviewed one time only, with the exception of the vice-president for student affairs, who was
interviewed twice. The vice-president was interviewed a second time to discuss emerging trends in the data, particularly those trends that had not yet emerged when he was first interviewed.

Interviews with the initial respondents were arranged by the vice-president for student affairs. Most subsequent interviews were arranged by the vice-president for student affairs or the dean of students; however, the director of admission helped arrange interviews with international students and returned study abroad students. Students selected at random were not pre-arranged.

Most interviews were held in a mutually convenient location, usually the Student Center; however, some professional staff were interviewed in their campus offices. Each interview usually lasted from 45 minutes to an hour, and occurred within a six-week period. All respondents were asked to complete and sign a consent form giving permission to use the data collected. This consent form outlined the purpose of the study and the intended uses of the data. In addition, the consent form informed respondents of their option to withdraw from the study at any time; none did so.

The interviews were recorded by means of a mini-cassette tape recorder to ensure accuracy and accessibility of the data. All interview tapes were transcribed on computer, resulting in both a hard copy as well as computer file of the data. The tapes were transcribed as the study progressed, so that a review of previous transcripts could guide the direction of future interviews. Although some notes were taken during the interviews, most of the new ideas
and directions for further inquiry resulted from reviews of previous transcripts. Interview summary sheets were used to note briefly the information covered in the interview, the main issues or themes that emerged, any questions or new areas to explore that were raised, and any other interesting or relevant data. Minimal notes were taken during interview in an effort to reduce any distraction to the respondent or the interviewer; rather, I made notes on the summary sheets immediately following the interview.

Interview questions were generated from the purposes of the study. Since the inquiry began by focusing on the five factors and conditions identified by Kuh et al. (1991) as encouraging a high level of student participation in campus life, these five factors and conditions also guided the creation of interview questions. A list of the specific interview questions asked follows (these questions are intentionally general, and were not necessarily asked using these exact words):

1. What is special about this institution? Kuh et al. (1991) recommended asking this question to elicit the respondents' "diverse impressions and perceptions" (p. 400) of the institution.

2. How would you describe the institution's mission? This question was asked to determine to what extent respondents' perceptions of the institution's purpose was consistent with its written mission.
3. How is the mission consistent or inconsistent with campus activities and behavior? The purpose of this question was to determine the degree of consistency between the institution's mission and the behavior of students, faculty, and staff.  

4. How do new students learn about campus expectations? This question was asked in order to identify what policies and practices are in place to help new students adjust to the campus environment, and to determine how new students learn about and are integrated into the campus culture.  

5. What cultural, political, and social opportunities are available to students? To what extent do students take advantage of these opportunities? The purpose of these questions was to understand to what extent the campus provides and encourages participation in these types of involvement opportunities, and to what extent students embrace them.  

6. To what extent do students feel comfortable with the campus environment? This question was asked to determine whether the campus environment facilitates and encourages student involvement and risk-taking.  

7. Are there places where students interact informally? Where? To what extent are faculty and staff present? The purpose of this question was to determine to what extent the campus environment facilitates and encourages interaction between and among students, faculty, and staff.
8. How (if at all) are students encouraged to participate in the
campus community? This question was asked to determine to
what extent the institution facilitates student involvement and
encourages students to embrace involvement opportunities.

9. To what extent are student leadership positions available and
sought? The purpose of this question was to determine what
opportunities are available for students to assume some
responsibility for their environment and to develop important
leadership skills.

10. How are new students made to feel welcome? This question
was asked to determine how and to what extent new students
are encouraged to become full members of the campus
community.

11. To what extent are students expected to be responsible and
self-directed? How do students learn this? The purpose of this
question was to examine the institution's expectations of
students regarding assuming responsibility for their own
behavior and involvement, and to determine how these
expectations are communicated.

12. To what extent are women, students of color, and
international students included in the student community? This
question was asked to determine to what extent all students are
embraced as members of the campus community and are
encouraged to become involved.
13. To what extent are faculty involved with students outside of class? The purpose of this question was to understand the nature of student-faculty interaction, and to determine to what extent lines between in-class and out-of-class learning are blurred.

14. Why do students choose to enroll here over other schools? This question was asked to determine what institutional characteristics students initially found attractive, and to understand students' expectations of their college experience.

15. How do students spend their free time? The purpose of this question was to identify students' preferences in regards to both structured and unstructured involvement opportunities.

16. How would you describe the student out-of-class experience? In what ways is it positive and in what ways detrimental? This question was asked in order to understand the values of students, faculty, and staff as they pertain to various student involvement opportunities.

As the study progressed, and specific patterns and themes began emerging from the data, I relied less on the above interview questions. That is, some issues and topics being examined in the interviews emerged as more and more important, while others clearly became less fruitful. Therefore, as these important patterns and themes emerged, questions asked subsequent interviews became more focused on these topics and the less fruitful areas were abandoned.
Observation Data collected from observations were recorded on observation summary sheets, which included a description of the event or activity, its significance to the study, and the identification of any themes, issues or questions that emerged. My role during observation was one of participant and observer, spending considerable time in the setting and learning about daily campus life (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). However, for the most part I was a close observer but removed participant; that is, I walked the campus grounds, toured facilities, and observed both planned and spontaneous activities, yet remained apart from the action and initiated little interaction with students, faculty, and staff.

Documents Data collected from documents were recorded on document summary sheets, which included a description of the document, a summary of its content, its significance to the study, and the identification of any themes, issues or questions that emerged. Data from the documents were used to familiarize myself with the institution, its students, and campus life in general; to provide a context for other data gathered from the study; and to generate ideas and questions for inquiry.

Data analysis Data analysis involves bringing order, structure, and meaning to the data, and the development of conceptual categories or theories that interpret the data for the reader (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Merriam, 1988). Analysis of the data in this study was inductive. In inductive analysis, the researcher builds from specific raw units of
information to subsuming categories of information in order to develop questions and working hypotheses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While deductive analysis attempts to find data to match a theory, inductive analysis attempts to discover a theory that explains the data (Merriam, 1988). The processes involved in the data analysis were unitization and categorization.

**Unitization**   Unitization is the process of identifying units of information that will be used as the basis for defining categories (Merriam, 1988). Units must be heuristic, meaning that they contain information relevant to the study, and must be the smallest piece of information that can stand alone (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, units of information included phrases, sentences, and paragraphs (Merriam, 1988) that communicated a specific idea or theme regarding students' out-of-class experiences or factors and conditions affecting those experiences. Examples of units can be found in Appendix F.

Once an interview was transcribed, one copy of the transcript was printed onto contact paper, which had a sticky backing that could be peeled off. Units of data were identified on the transcripts printed on the contact paper; the units then were cut out, peeled off of the contact paper, and then attached to white 3" x 5" index cards. These index cards were coded to identify the tape number, the transcript page number, and the type of respondent.

In addition to the data collected from interviews, units of data from observation and document analysis also were recorded by hand
onto different colored index cards. Observation data were recorded on yellow index cards indicating the location of the observation, and document data were recorded on green index cards and coded to identify the document analyzed and the page number (if appropriate). The three types of data were recorded on different colored index cards for easy distinction among the different types of data during the analysis; having different colored cards proved helpful when trying to locate a particular piece of data from an observation or document. However, the primary use of observation and document data in this study was in data collection; in data analysis, observation and document data units served mostly to support that data collected from interviews.

**Categorization** Categorization is the process of identifying themes and creating categories from the units of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The process involved reviewing each index card containing a unit of data one at a time. The first card constituted the first category; the second card either fit into the same category as the first, or began a new category. Subsequent cards were handled in the same manner until all cards were reviewed.

After the first review of the data, 77 categories were identified; these categories were concrete and descriptive, representing 77 specific topics of information. During a second review of these categories, categories began to fit together into distinct themes or concepts; as a result, the categories were rearranged into 33 categories that were less descriptive and more abstract. A third
review of the categories resulted in 13 categories that represented emerging themes. These categories then were reorganized and divided into two sets of categories: one set describing students' out-of-class involvement (eight subcategories), and the other set describing the factors and conditions that affect students' out-of-class involvement (five subcategories). Lists of the categories can be found in Appendix G.

Establishing trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the study refers to its ability to persuade the reader that "the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Criteria for trustworthiness include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility  For a study to demonstrate credibility, its findings must be credible to the respondents. Credibility in this study was accomplished through triangulation, peer debriefings, and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation refers to the use of multiple data sources and data collection methods to confirm the emerging findings of the study (Merriam, 1988). The data sources in this study included people (40 interview respondents—24 students, nine professional staff members, and seven faculty members), campus settings, and 20 documents; the study also used three different methods of data collection: interviews, observation, and document analysis.
Peer debriefing is the process of discussing the data and emerging themes with a trusted colleague. Peer debriefings serve two purposes: a) they ensure that the researcher is aware of her or his own perspectives and perceptions and the impact they may have on the study; and b) they develop and test subsequent steps and hypotheses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, the chief student affairs officer at another private institution served as a peer debriefer; this person was selected for three reasons: a) his experience in higher education in general and in student life in particular; b) his interest in qualitative research and its use in the study of student life; and c) the strong relationship of trust between him and me which allowed for open discussion. Debriefings occurred approximately every three to four weeks during data collection. The peer debriefer proved particularly helpful in the identification of potential data sources or types of sources (i.e., a specific person or a category of persons to consider for interviewing), and feedback on emerging themes during both data collection and data analysis.

Member checks are debriefings with the study respondents; these checks enable the researcher to test the overall credibility of the study's data, analytical categories, interpretations, and conclusions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks occurred throughout this study. Because most of the respondents were interviewed only once, member checks during data collection were most common at the end of the interviews, focusing on reviewing and confirming the major themes and perceptions that were shared. At the end of the data
collection and analysis process, I met with the vice-president for student affairs to discuss the preliminary findings of the study. Following the completion of the case report, I again met with the vice-president at length to review the findings.

**Transferability** Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of the study may apply to another setting. The reader of the report must be able to assess the similarities between her or his own setting and the setting of the study, and thus determine whether the results are transferable. Therefore, a thick, rich description of the results is necessary to enable the reader to make such an assessment (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, descriptions of data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents are presented as accurately and in as much detail as possible.

**Dependability and Confirmability** Dependability refers to the appropriateness of the inquiry decisions throughout the study; confirmability refers to evidence that the study's findings are based on the data and that the inferences made from the data are logical (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability and confirmability can be established through an audit by an auditor not involved with the research. An audit trail—that is, a collection of the raw data and research notes used during the study—was established; this audit trail included raw data (tapes of interviews, transcriptions, notes from observations and documents, and index cards containing collected data), products of data analysis and synthesis (notes on category development and emerging themes), and process notes (notes on
methodological decisions, research strategies, and research questions) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Ethical Issues**

Despite the pressures of time, people, resources, and energy involved in qualitative research, the researcher should strive to maintain a high level of competence and rigor throughout the study to protect the interests of the institution and the respondents. This means scrupulous attention to the purposes of the research, data management, and systematic data collection (Whitt, 1991). Dobbert (1984) identifies four issues of ethics to be addressed in qualitative research: a) confidentiality, b) honesty, c) responsibility, and d) fair return.

**Confidentiality** Two primary aspects of confidentiality must be addressed by the researcher: confidentiality of the respondents' identity, and the confidentiality of the data collected from the respondent. In this study, the respondents' identities are known only to me; no names are included on the tapes (i.e., names are not mentioned in the content of the tape, nor do they appear on the tape itself). Furthermore, names do not appear on the index cards used during data analysis (these are coded using a combination letter and number code). Names are identified only on the consent forms signed by the respondents and on the interview summary forms for coding purposes.

However, the reader may be able to deduce the identities of some respondents due to the nature of the respondents' position on
campus (e.g., president, dean, vice-president, etc.); the small size of
the campus makes this more likely. All respondents were informed
that every effort would be made to protect their identities, yet most
communicated little concern whether their comments could or would
be traced back to them. The respondents also were informed that
they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that all data
collected from them would be destroyed at that point. No
respondents withdrew.

The confidentiality of interview notes and recordings was
protected by limiting access to only me. The interview consent form
communicated to all respondents that only I would have access to the
interview notes and recordings.

**Honesty** Several issues of honesty must be addressed by the
researcher. First, the researcher must be honest with the
respondents and any other persons involved regarding the purposes of
the study. Second, the researcher must be honest about how the data
is to be used. Third, the researcher must be honest about who will
have access to the data and the results.

The purposes of the study were confirmed in advance and in
writing with the institution through the vice president for student
affairs. This agreement also confirmed that the final report from the
study would be shared only with the institution and with my doctoral
committee. It was also agreed that the report—or a modified product
of the report—would not be used by me for publication or presentation
purposes without prior agreement by the institution. Also, all
respondents signed a consent form that clearly communicated that the study was being conducted as part of my doctoral program requirements.

**Responsibility**  The researcher has a responsibility to consider how the study may affect the institution and respondents involved, anticipate problems, and take steps to avoid any negative consequences (Whitt, 1991). Prior to beginning the study, the research was approved by the Iowa State University Human Subjects Committee. In addition, I met with the vice-president of student affairs to discuss and identify any potential problems or concerns that may arise as a result of the study; the vice-president said he did not anticipate any such problems or concerns. Furthermore, the vice-president said that the institution did not want me to avoid any perceived problem areas on campus (that is, areas that might be seen by some as weaknesses or blemishes of the college). Indeed, the vice-president encouraged me to investigate thoroughly and report on the college's weaknesses as well as its strengths. Since the report will not be made public without the approval of the institution, there is little risk that the report will cast a poor light on the college.

**Fair return**  The institution involved in the study should receive something in return for agreeing to be studied and for assisting the researcher. In this study, the institution's reward was an external review of the college's out-of-class experiences in the form of a copy of the completed case report. In addition, I offered to present
the results of the study to appropriate members of the institution (that is, those designated by the institution) if so desired.

**Reporting the data**

The study is presented as a case report. The report from this study includes a description of the context of the setting, detailed descriptions of students' out-of-class involvement and experiences, and a discussion of the factors and conditions affecting out-of-class involvement and experiences. These discussions and descriptions are communicated through the comments and verbatim quotations of respondents as well as details extracted from observations and document analysis. This report follows in Chapters Four and Five.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS OF THE STUDY:
OUT-OF-CLASS INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

This chapter describes the results of the study in regards to the involvement opportunities available to Central students outside the classroom. During the course of the study, the following eight out-of-class involvement opportunities emerged as significant. These eight involvement opportunities are significant for one or more of the following reasons:

a) the opportunity is exceptionally popular with Central students;

b) the opportunity reflects an involvement opportunity that is unique or special to Central College;

c) the opportunity reflects an important quality within the institutional culture or student culture that influences involvement.

The order in which these eight involvement opportunities are discussed was guided by the three criteria above. The first four opportunities discussed--international studies, athletics and recreation, student organizations, and unstructured activities--are discussed first because they represent the most popular involvement opportunities with students. The next opportunity--campus ministries--follows because it reflects an opportunity that is special to Central. The last three opportunities--academic involvement,
leadership, and entertainment—are discussed last because they reflect important qualities within the institutional culture or student culture.

With several opportunities, however, more than one of the three criteria applies; for example, an involvement opportunity may be unique and special to Central, and also be extremely popular with students. Specific reasons for the inclusion of each opportunity is addressed in the section discussing that particular opportunity. These results are prefaced by an overview of the study's setting.

**Introduction to the setting**

Central College is a private, four-year liberal arts college located in Pella, a town in central Iowa. The college enrolls approximately 1,800 students, virtually all of whom are full-time undergraduate students. The college attracts the vast majority of its students from the immediate midwest, with approximately 80 percent from Iowa itself. The composite ACT score of the student body is approximately 25. Central originally was founded in 1847 by the Baptist Convention, but since 1916 has had a strong affiliation with the Reformed Church in America.

Pella is a town of approximately 8,000 residents. Like the college, the town's history and heritage includes a close affiliation with the Reformed Church in America. Pella is very strong and stable financially, with a predominantly white collar population. The town also has a very large Dutch community. A review of the town telephone directory reveals that there are twice as many Gosselinks as
Joneses, four times as many Van Wyks as Johnsons, and three times as many Steenhoeks as Smiths.

The remainder of this chapter describes the involvement opportunities available to students outside the classroom.

**International studies: "Everybody who comes here goes overseas"**

The international studies program emerged as a critical area of student involvement for all three of the reasons discussed above. The international studies program is exceptionally popular with Central students, with over 40 percent of the student body studying abroad. The program also is an involvement opportunity unique to Central College; few small liberal arts colleges have developed and continue to operate eight overseas study centers. Furthermore, the students' involvement in this program—particularly their involvement upon their return to campus—reflects an underlying cultural value of the institution that influences student involvement.

Despite its small size, Central College offers its students extraordinary opportunities through overseas study. Where many small institutions make study abroad opportunities available to students through partnerships with larger institutions or international consortia, this college has founded and continues to operate international programs in eight centers around the world. These centers are extensions of the Pella campus. In addition to using faculty from institutions near the study abroad site, the centers also use Central faculty who take a leave from the Pella campus to teach overseas. Central's international studies office handles all of the
students' accommodations, often housing students together in a hostel or other large facility.

During the 1990-91 academic year 81 Central students studied abroad in one of its seven study centers: London, Granada, Paris, Vienna, Carmarthen (Wales), Leiden (The Netherlands), and Meridan (Mexico); the eighth center, located in China, began operating in the fall of 1991. Overall, almost half of Central's students study overseas before they graduate. The college's home campus and eight international centers operate on a three term system providing the flexibility for students to work overseas study into their academic program.

The international studies program has become a prime recruiting tool for Central. For many students the opportunity for overseas study is one of the most important reasons for attending the institution. The president of the college said, "I think some are definitely attracted by our involvement in international programs." Indeed, several students identified the international studies program as the main reason they enrolled in the institution. Even those who are not attracted by the overseas opportunities soon learn how important international study is the institution's student culture. One student described one of his early visits to campus:

When I came as a freshman... one of the first things they said to me was, 'Where do you want to go overseas?' I didn't even consider that. I think the kid who gave me a tour--I don't even
remember who it was--he said everybody who comes here goes overseas.

Besides attracting prospective students, the international studies program is viewed by many students, faculty, and staff as an opportunity to expose students to new views and perspectives. The dean of students said the international studies program is one of the ways the college tries to challenge students with new perspectives:

> I think for most [students], [the benefit of overseas study] is their own internal growth, and they talk about discovering that the U.S. is not the center of the world, and 'by golly those people want the same things out of life that I want.'

The director of admission said that he felt the international studies program gives students "the opportunity to broaden themselves." One faculty member said, "The number of students that go on those programs I think just benefit unbelievably."

Many respondents said that exposing students to new ideas and perspectives is particularly important to this campus because most of Central's students are traditional age Caucasians from Iowa. The dean of the college described how study abroad students get to experience diversity first-hand:

> There are lots of opportunities for students to experience diversity by going on the international program, and since 40 percent of our students in a particular graduating class will have studied abroad, may of them get that experience in a way they wouldn't get if they were on a campus like Stanford.
Several faculty members said that the international study program is an attempt to provide an opportunity for the homogeneous student body to experience greater diversity of people and thought—a diversity students would not find on campus. A resident assistant offered a similar comment: "I think that's part of the education here at Central. I think that's one of the reasons we've gone into such a big international studies program is because of the value you get from [exposure to diversity]."

Furthermore, several respondents commented that the international study experience not only facilitated growth among those students that studied overseas, it also contributed to the addressing the issues of diversity on campus. Commenting on the college's efforts to promote diversity education, the vice president for student affairs said, "We're trying to stay on top of what the contemporary issues are, and, of course, our international studies program makes it a natural for us to deal in some of these topic areas." The director of admission said that he believed sending so many students on the international study programs helps foster an appreciation for individual differences on campus. He added that the skills needed to adjust to a new culture overseas can be used to learn to appreciate different cultures back on campus as well as the United States in general.

However, several students who had studied overseas shared a considerably different perspective from those described above. For some, the impact the impact of their study abroad experience was short term. One student said,
I think it makes a difference because when I first got back I totally saw everything here in a different light, superficial to me. I didn't like a lot of the people here but now I'm just kind of back in it. It doesn't really affect me. It wasn't like a long term sort of thing.

Another study abroad student agreed, saying that the effect of studying overseas diminished shortly after returning to campus.

Despite the personal growth many students experience through their overseas study, there is no structured effort to extend this experience back to the campus. One faculty member stated,

If we have an international focus, then I think we need to be doing things.... I think it could play a bigger role. My perception is, walking on campus, you don't know that we have an international emphasis. Yes, we have lots of foreign flags hanging out in front of one building. But you don't see it when you walk into the union. You don't see international art, really. You don't see international foods. You don't see it.

The dean of students believed that one of the reasons students' overseas experience is not carried back to campus is that most students return to the United States during the summer; as a result, the initial enthusiasm from the experience has waned before the students actually returns to Central. Nonetheless, the dean of students said that she wishes the returning study abroad students were more interested in creating a greater international presence on campus:
"[Returning study abroad students] don't play as significant role as I would like them to."

A member of the Coalition for a Multicultural Campus (CMCC), a student group that focuses on greater cultural understanding, also said she wished the returning study abroad students were more active on campus: "One of the things we've discussed in CMCC is that there's not a whole lot of interaction with people who have gone overseas and come back. They don't really talk about their experiences and you have such a valuable resource and it's not being used on the campus." She went on to add, "It doesn't seem like there's an outlet" for students to discuss their overseas experience.

However, several of the students who had been overseas clearly did not desire an outlet to share their international experiences with others. One student said it was not her mission to internationalize the campus: "People don't appreciate that. It has to be your own individual experience." Indeed, some students commented that study abroad students who openly share their experiences may be seen as showing off; as one students said, "Some people just carry it a little bit too far." Another student elaborated on this point: "I hate it when people come back and act like, 'Oh, you guys have just been in Iowa this whole time.' They act like kind of a cut above, like they've seen the world now. That really disgusts me." Nonetheless, this same student went on to acknowledge, "It really disgusted me even more before I went overseas. Now I can at least relate. There's some truth to it."
Summary of international studies

The college has developed and continues to operate eight international study centers. The international studies program is a major reason many students choose to attend the college, and almost half of the student body will study overseas at one or more of the centers before they graduate. In addition to its educational benefits, the overseas experience also provides an opportunity for many students to be exposed to different cultures—an opportunity that is not readily available on their homogeneous home campus. However, once students return from their overseas study experience, they usually do not continue their international interests on campus in any visible way; in fact, several study abroad students indicated that sharing one's international experiences openly on campus could be construed as showing off. As a result, the fact that almost half of the student body has studied overseas is not easily detected just by being on the campus.

Conclusions regarding international studies

The international studies program is a great attraction for Central College and offers a tremendous opportunity for its students. Studying overseas provides students with a first-hand opportunity to experience new cultures and different views of the world. As a result, through the international studies program Central encourages and facilitates students' immersing themselves in this learning and personal growth opportunity.

However, the learning opportunity seized overseas stands in stark contrast to the learning opportunity that is missed on campus.
The encouragement of students to become involved and immersed in international education is not apparent on the campus itself. There is no visible evidence that the institution facilitates the continuation of students' overseas experience to the campus setting. Just as important, however, is the fact that the returned study abroad students themselves are reluctant to share their experiences on campus. Their concern seems to be that their actions will be perceived as elitist. As a result, efforts to use the overseas program to create a more international environment on campus are virtually nonexistent.

The reluctance to create an international environment on campus consistent with the college's international studies program reflects some underlying cultural values. First, although the college provides the opportunity for students to challenge themselves overseas, it does not appear to place the same level of priority on creating the opportunity for students to challenge themselves on campus. There is genuine disappointment that there is not more of an international flair to the campus, yet few initiatives to spark this are evident.

Second, while students seem very interested in challenging themselves through the international studies program, they seem hesitant to challenge each other on campus. They believe that the sharing of their personal experiences overseas with other students would be elitist; indeed, several returned study abroad students spoke unfavorably of students who through their actions and dress "showed
off" their international experience. This belief is somewhat consistent with a general attitude among students that "it is okay to believe or be involved in whatever you want, just don't push it on me." It is unfortunate that these returned study abroad students are not more motivated to share their overseas experiences, and that the larger student body is not more eager to learn about these experiences.

In addition to being unmotivated to share their experiences with other students on campus, there is little evidence that these returned study abroad students are motivated to continue their own international learning. There was no evidence of groups or clubs devoted to following up on students' overseas study, and a well-publicized campus multicultural fair was attended predominantly by international students. These underlying cultural values will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Five.

Athletics and recreation: "Sports are a huge item here"

Athletics and recreation emerged as a critical student involvement opportunity because of its extraordinary popularity on campus. Whether it be intercollegiate athletics, working out at the gymnasium, or a casual pick-up game with friends, students are actively involved in sports and recreation. Moreover, the college's division III intercollegiate athletics tradition is so visible and imbedded in the student culture that it has become a special component of the college's identity. For many students, this involvement in athletics and recreation reflects a continuation of interests they bring with them from their high school or home
environments; this continuation of previous interests reflects another underlying value of the student culture that influences student involvement.

The intercollegiate athletic program has a very visible role on campus. The college has eight men's and seven women's intercollegiate sports which compete in NCAA Division III. As the director of admission said: "Athletics are a big thing around here." One resident assistant gave this assessment of the campus's sports emphasis:

A lot of that has to do with a large percentage of the students are athletes and we do take an interest in each other, and athletes are switching across to different sports to see their fellow athletes compete. Yet also the regular student in the student body is very much a part of the Central spirit and sports are a huge item here."

The prominent role of athletics on campus is by no means new. The vice president for student affairs referred to the college's "proud athletic tradition." He discussed the college's athletic teams successes over the years:

Our wrestling team was fourth in the nation in Division III this year. Our basketball team tied for the conference lead. Our women's softball team has won the nationals and they've been in the top four over the last three or four years. Our... women's track program has had a heyday, won the nationals ten or fifteen years ago.
[In late spring of 1991, after these data were collected, the college's softball team won the division III national championship.]

As mentioned earlier, a large number of students participate in intercollegiate athletics. A coach, who is also a faculty member, said that he felt the high proportion of students participating in the athletic program is a strong contributor to Central's athletic culture:

I think we have a very active, extensive athletic program with our 15... intercollegiate sports, coupling that with a very high participation rate or number in each of those sports. Most of our sports produce junior varsity as well as varsity teams. For example, we have 100 and some odd players out for football. Men's basketball will typically start with 40.... The women's program... is usually around 25 in number, etc.

He estimated that approximately one in every five students participate in intercollegiate athletics; when considering only men, the number is closer to one in three, with approximately one out of six men participating in football alone.

Like international studies, Central's intercollegiate athletics program is attractive to prospective students. As the coach said, "I think in recruiting students we have... a particular kind of advantage, in a sense, that we can draw on the basis of an outstanding or successful athletic program." A resident assistant indicated that he came to Central for the chance to participate in athletics: "Central has had a really outstanding golf program and I played a lot of golf and I was interested in playing golf here which essentially brought me."
In addition, the strong sports emphasis also is attractive to prospective students who have participated in high school or other competitive sports but may not interested in pursuing formal participation in college. As the coach said, many students will be attracted to the college by the sports climate "but not all of them that come to Central are going to come out for athletics." Nonetheless, the strong sports presence on campus enables these students to pursue their interest in sports through intramural sports activities or being spectators at campus sports events.

A critical part of the college's athletic tradition is its philosophy of the student-athlete, which places an emphasis on high levels of student participation. The vice president of student affairs said that the college's past president was one of the drafters of the Division III philosophy, which emphasizes—as the vice president described it—"a non-scholarship, student-athlete kind of approach." He also mentioned that Central was a pilot school in the Division III program; that is, Central was one of the schools selected to implement Division III policies on a trial basis. As a result, the college stopped awarding athletic scholarships two years before being required to do so. According to the vice president, who was also the college's track coach at one time, the non-scholarship philosophy helped spark higher participation rates; as he stated it, he had to stop using station wagons and vans to take the athletes to the track meets—"we took busses."
Also critical to the success of the campus's athletic program is the support of students who are not intercollegiate athletes themselves. As the coach said,

The student body generally takes a high degree of interest in our sports success and our sports program and makes efforts to come to contests, know the athletes, and are involved with the athletic programs across the board in the sense and just being interested fans, supporters, and that kind of thing. I would suspect that you could find that in a particular weekend students will make particular plans to stay on campus because there is a certain athletic event occurring rather than going home.

A student who played on the football team supported this notion of student support: "Of course, football here is a big thing. During the season, it seems like everybody is really supporting you well and at the dances... people are always coming up to you and telling you 'good job' or the DJ will say something about the game." A resident assistant commented on the strong support students show:

I notice that we have a lot of championship teams here at Central in all sports all of the way around, but I think one of the nice things is that maybe the softball team is having an off year and the football team is great. You see just as large of crowds at both events.

According to this student, the students enjoy athletics and want to support their fellow students.
Another critical element of Central's athletic program is the emphasis on the "student" part of the student-athlete. Athletes are just regular students. The coach described the message this conveys during the recruiting of student-athletes: "The message that we try to get across... is that we have a successful athletic program in a very challenging academic environment. Central is a great school."

Many student respondents consistently supported this idea that student-athletes are just the same as other students. When a member of the volleyball team was asked if being a volleyball player was a large part of her identity on campus, she responded,

No, not at all.... I think when you're walking around the campus you don't think 'everybody knows I'm a volleyball player' because you know there's a lot of people who don't.... People don't really care. We know that. You do what you want to do and if people recognize you that's fine, but if they don't, it doesn't matter.

Another student, who was not a member of an athletic team, also described the role of the athlete on campus. She stated that students know each other as students first, not athletes:

Half the time I don't even know who the quarterback of the football team is, and I don't think that's because I'm not interested in football. I think it's because a lot of people don't really.... I think it has something to do with the fact that we know all these people so it's not like you're just a quarterback to us. They're a person.
Although most students agreed that athletes were just regular students, several did feel that, at times, athletes did receive a little more recognition. As one resident assistant said, "It depends on who it is, but if you're like a star player on the team, you're a god—which is at any school." A first-year student shared a similar perspective regarding the football team: "Yeah, they wear their jackets. I do think there's sort of an elitism attached to being on the football team because we have such a tradition of doing well and it's just something that's well respected."

Several respondents commented that student-athletes are not only treated the same by their peers, they also are treated the same in the classroom. One resident assistant said of athletes, "I think they're seen as regular students. In the classroom, definitely, they're seen as regular students." Even the resident assistant who said that star athletes sometimes are considered "gods" on campus, also said, "In the classroom, I think they are treated exactly the same." Another non-student-athlete also supported the notion that athletes--like most other Central students--take their academics seriously: "I know from other students and know from those athletes themselves that they work really hard and they are smart students."

Regarding student-athletes' involvement outside of athletics, one student said, "They do participate in other things." Indeed, several students mentioned that student-athletes also were involved in student government, student organizations, and other campus activities. However, several respondents noted that time demands do
limit the other activities of many student-athletes. One resident assistant said, "When [athletes] are practicing two to three hours a day, they don't have nearly as much free time." As a member of the football team pointed out, time demands are not limited to the competitive season; even during the off-season, student-athletes must keep in shape: "The athletes spend two hours down at the fieldhouse usually lifting or running or something. Most of them try to do it everyday. It just depends on how their schedule works out."

Intercollegiate athletics is a major part of college life at Central, yet a large number of students also participate in athletic recreation as well. Many respondents commented on the role of intramural sports on campus. The director of admission said, "Intramurals are a big part of what happens around here." The campus minister also mentioned intramurals as a popular activity, noting that students involved in campus ministries, the choir, or some other campus organization or activity often will join together to form an intramural team as well. A coach discussed how the intramural program has undergone some changes for the better in recent years: "We have not felt that it has been as good as it ought to be. In fact, relatively speaking, it's been a weaker program of ours." However, growing student demand for intramurals has led to some changes in the program, which included the appointment of a new staff person responsible for intramurals. The coach feels this change has helped: "We're already noticing a whole lot of improvement in the interest in intramurals and participation... recognizing that there's a need and, to a certain
degree, a demand on the part of the students for an extensive intramural program."

While intercollegiate athletics and intramurals provide very structured athletic opportunities for Central students, athletics and recreation are very much a part of the campus's informal daily routine as well. One resident assistant said she felt the college's recreation emphasis was strong because Central attracts students who share these sports interests: "That's the kind of people we have here." A first-year student felt the sports emphasis was a positive one: "It's good, I think... because I'm not a very athletic person but when I came here that's something everyone does here."

Several respondents commented that many students participate in recreation by exercising at the fieldhouse. One first-year student commented, "Between 3:00 and 5:00 you see everyone going to the fieldhouse and they do something. A majority of the people are involved in some kind of sport." Another student said that recreational sports, lifting weights, and other forms of exercise help students relieve stress. One afternoon, the members of the women's volleyball team played a game for fun against members of the football team in the fieldhouse gym. Although not many students were on hand to watch the game, it was obvious that the students playing were enjoying the recreation.

Regardless of how students choose to recreate, the campus is always more active when the weather is nice. One popular form of outside recreation is volleyball. Some residence halls have sand
volleyball courts, which often will be the site of games among friends or perhaps a friendly contest between residents of different halls. Other students just enjoy being outside. The editor of the student newspaper said this of how students spend their free time: "Now that the weather's warm, there are some that play volleyball in the sand volleyball pit, play catch with a baseball or football, or just sit outside in the sun." Similarly, a resident assistant said, "If the weather's nice, a lot of students spend their time walking, riding bikes, sand volleyball, frisbee, laying out, sitting by the pond."

**Summary of athletics and recreation**  Interest in athletics and recreation is very high across campus. Many students participated in sports in their high school and home town communities, and continue these interests in college through participation in intercollegiate athletics. Approximately one in five students--and one in three men--is a member of an intercollegiate athletics team. The athletic program has a strong tradition, with a number of state and national championships in various NCAA division III programs; this tradition is evident in the many trophies, plaques, and photographs displayed prominently and proudly in the fieldhouse.

The college also advocates a strong "student first" approach to athletics, in which the interests of the individual student is placed before winning. In fact, the past president of the college was one of the original drafters of the NCAA division III philosophy which advocates a strong academic emphasis and no athletic scholarships. The student-athletes on campus reflect this philosophy through their
commitment to academics and their active participation in other aspects of campus life. However, many students with an interest in sports continue this interest without joining an intercollegiate team. Many satisfy their athletic and recreation interests through supporting the college teams, participating in intramural sports, working out at the gym, or enjoying casual recreation with friends.

Conclusions regarding athletics and recreation The intercollegiate athletics tradition on campus is an important part of the student culture. Particularly important is the college's commitment to the NCAA division III philosophy. Despite the program's history of winning, its philosophy stresses student participation and involvement over winning. This is evidenced by the high numbers of students going out for the sports teams; clearly students feel comfortable with participation in sports, and feel encouraged to try out. There is no evidence that these successful athletics teams consider themselves as elite and above the rest of the campus. Furthermore, the enormous pride in athletics teams provides a popular opportunity for students to get involved by supporting and interacting with each other.

The student-athletes' high level of involvement in other aspects of campus life also reflects the division III philosophy of participation and involvement. Just as the "average" student feels comfortable trying out for a sports team, members of sports teams feel comfortable participating in other organizations and activities. Indeed, their involvement in a broad range of activities on campus shows reflects
the institution's encouragement to take advantage of other opportunities and to develop other skills and talents.

For the most part, the students' interest in general recreation is an offshoot of the athletics program. Many students were involved in athletics in their high school or home communities. For some, continuing that interest at the collegiate level is attractive; others do not wish to compete in intercollegiate athletics, yet find it rewarding to be in a strong athletic environment. The latter students can continue their athletic interests through supporting the college's athletic teams, getting involved in intramural sports, exercising on a regular basis, or participating in informal recreation opportunities. All of these activities provide students with involvement opportunities that encourage fellowship, enjoyment, and personal wellness.

As mentioned above, many students "carry over" their athletic interests from their high school or home communities. This is representative of another underlying influence on student involvement: the similarity of Central's campus environment to many students' home environment. This factor will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Five.

Student organizations: "There's always some kind of meeting going on"

Student organizations emerged as a critical area of student involvement because of the level of popularity enjoyed by various organizations. Of all campus organizations, a handful emerged clearly as the most popular: organizations involved with social awareness
issues. Students' strong interest in these issues reflects another underlying influence on student involvement: a student culture that is caring and wants to make a difference in people's lives. In addition, since students do not see a connection between these social action activities and the college's Christian heritage and tradition, their involvement in these activities reflects the ambiguity of the college-church relationship and its influence on students. While strong involvement in social action organizations reflects a student culture that is eager to reach out to those who are disadvantaged, weak involvement in multicultural organizations reflects a student culture that is hesitant or unmotivated to reach out to those who are different.

Most of the student respondents stated that there were a number of student organizations and clubs with which students could get involved. One student commented, "There's always some kind of meeting going on." A resident assistant made a similar comment: "We do have a lot of student organizations.... There are a lot of opportunities for that."

Several respondents commented on the nature of student organizations on campus. The vice president for student affairs noted that the college makes it easy for students to form organizations: "It's very easy for groups to get organized, for clubs to form and get approval. Now that bothers some people because clubs don't have to jump through a lot of hoops to get started. All they have to do is show some integrity in their constitution and a willingness to survive, and I endorse that because it allows things to happen without a lot of trial
and trauma." A faculty member noted that it also is relatively easy to find an advisor: "If people have an interest, usually they can find a faculty member who will be supportive of them doing what they want to do." This faculty member also noted that most student organizations consist of "a core group of six or eight or ten at best."

The student organizations reflect a wide variety of interests. However, by far the most visible, and by many accounts the most popular, are those that focus on service and volunteerism. The director of admission described the campus as follows: "This is a very socially aware campus. It's not a radical social activism kind of campus, but I think it's a very aware kind of campus." This awareness is apparent in students' involvement in volunteer activities relating to social issues. As one resident assistant said, "There's a new spirit of community involvement or volunteerism." Another resident assistant commented, "We're tired of being called the 'me generation.' We don't feel a part of that anymore. We think that was people five years ago, and by being involved we're trying to give back, and trying to make a name for ourselves and our generation."

This interest in volunteerism and social action is evident in the popularity of certain student organizations. When discussing popular organizations, students most frequently mentioned Students Concerned About The Environment (SCATE), Action, and Amnesty International. Through SCATE students become involved with projects relating to environmental issues. One first-year student referred to SCATE as one of the largest and most respected groups on
campus. One faculty member said, "I think SCATE's been good because it's created a peer group, a group of students who have given them some focus."

Action provides students with an opportunity to work directly with underprivileged youth. When discussing Action, the vice president for student affairs said, "Action is another group which we have on campus which is strictly dealing with humanitarian activities or other people. They're bringing people to campus on Friday, kind of a Big Brother/Big Sister movement." He also noted that Action was "started by two upperclass students who found a need to go into communities and work with young people and do things for young people in communities."

Amnesty International is an organization that advocates for and raises awareness of human rights issues. While clearly not as large as SCATE and Action, Amnesty International still was identified as an organization popular with students.

As a group these organizations appear to be valued by the college community. The director of admission said of these service groups: "Those groups are meeting regularly and doing things. They're developing a high profile on campus." The student government president made a similar comment: "You wouldn't believe how many people are members of SCATE, Action, and Amnesty. A staff member in student services commented, "SCATE, the group concerned about the environment, gets 40 to a meeting, which I still think is kind of unheard of." Several respondents noted that, in addition to being
popular with large numbers of students, these organizations also are highly respected.

In addition to service-oriented clubs, several respondents also discussed organizations focusing on special populations. However, these organizations were not mentioned as frequently. One of the most visible of these is the Coalition for a Multi-Cultural Campus (CMCC). This organization attempts to address issues important to students of color. One African American student said of CMCC: "At the beginning of the year the group starts out being just minority students or international students, but the more that everyone hears about it, the more the other regular students hear, the more they like to join in." However, several other students painted another picture of CMCC; according to these respondents, CMCC over the years has evolved from a primarily African American membership to an almost exclusively international student membership. Indeed, a cultural fair sponsored by CMCC in the spring was planned almost exclusively by international students; attendance at the event was small, and consisted mostly of international students and a few faculty and staff. A Caucasian student who participated in the fair expressed her disappointment:

People that did the presenting were basically international students which I thought was kind of discouraging. I did it and another girl but that was it. And we're supposed to be broadening our horizons. You would think at least we would want to present.
There were conflicting responses regarding the popularity of CMCC. The director of admission, who advised the group, believed CMCC was "becoming a more and more high profile organization." However, when discussing CMCC, one student commented that the group did not draw much attention, saying, "It's either publicity or people really aren't interested." An international student who identified herself as a CMCC member expressed frustration that the group "is not really known to most students on this campus. I have to say it's not known by most of the faculty either. We don't get a lot of support from the administration or the college in general."

Another group that was talked about frequently was an organization called Advocates for Alternative Lifestyles. Although very small in membership, this organization became quite visible due to its focus on gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues. Many students felt the sensitive nature of this group's focus made members of the campus community uncomfortable. As one resident assistant said of the group: "I know a lot of people were freaking out about that, but then there are other groups on campus that believe in something just as strong but it's no big deal." When asked if there were student organizations that were not as well-accepted on campus, one student responded, "I would say the only difficult organization on campus would be the new one for homosexuals. I think it's basically faculty oriented because most people will not be associated with it, I don't think."

Although there were some rumors around campus about the status of the organization, the vice president for student affairs
confirmed that Alternative Lifestyles was an approved club. Some rumors suggested the administration might want to stop the organization from being approved, but the vice president clarified that "they have a right to form just like anybody else." The student government president discussed the events surrounding the vote on approval in the student senate: "When the issue came in front of the senate, the first vote--when the senate didn't know the group--was something like 22 positive, 17 negative, and one abstaining vote, which was me. We had people from the group come up to the senate and talk about it, had a re-vote--which wasn't for any decision but just to see how people had changed--and surprisingly, it was 39 positive, no negative, and one abstaining."

Another group focusing on special populations is Advocates for Gender Equality (AGE). AGE is an organization that promotes awareness of issues important to women. The campus minister described the group as follows: "It's a women's group primarily, although they have support from some males and some male faculty." However, AGE clearly is not a very visible organization; other than the campus minister, virtually no respondents--particularly no students--mentioned the group's existence.

Although not actually student clubs, the fine arts--particularly the theater and music programs--provide organized involvement opportunities for many students. The director of student activities said the following of these opportunities: "I think something special at private schools is that things like choir, band, drama--there is no
money involved, many times no credit involved. They are just doing it, really, for extracurricular [enjoyment]."

The theater department usually produces three performances each year that get a lot of students involved. Involvement in these productions is not limited to theater majors, but is open to all students. Involvement in these opportunities includes acting, scene design and construction, costuming, and coordination of administrative tasks, such as publicity and ticket sales. Respondents consistently made positive comments about the quality of the theater productions and the theater facilities. As the vice president for student affairs described, "It's a small house, a 200-seat house. It's a nice facility, but they'll be sold out, especially if the first night it's a good play and people go and say, "Hey, it's a good one.' It will sell out."

The music program offers another popular fine arts opportunity for students. Even if students are not pursuing music as an academic major, they are able to participate in music opportunities through singing in a choir or playing an instrument in a band or orchestra. The student handbook lists the following music groups involving students: a capella choir, chamber singers, marching band, wind symphony, jazz ensemble, college-community chorus, college-community orchestra, and instrumental and vocal ensembles. The director of admission described the music program as a strong one that the recruiting staff talk about frequently with prospective students.
Social fraternities and sororities also provide some students with social involvement opportunities. One first-year student said he first "looked down" on fraternities; however, a few months after joining a fraternity, he considered his membership "a real privilege and an honor." He described how he felt being a member:

I just joined a fraternity and that's going to be a real special thing because the brotherhood--the way everybody communicates with one another--it's easy to get along. And if you don't get along you can work that out with each other.

He described the fraternity's involvement in community service projects for the town, including working during Pella's Tulip Festival and raising money for a child care center. He also discussed his conversations with other fraternity members: "From talking with all the other people, the older actives, that's one thing that they're glad they've done. That's one thing that they really cherish. It's hard to describe how close they all are."

While this student clearly had positive feelings about being in a fraternity, he was the only respondent to articulate this positive viewpoint. Virtually all other respondents expressed a different view. One student commented that as a group social Greek organizations were not well respected and did not have a good reputation. One female student described fraternity members as "womanizers." Another student said of the Greeks' reputation: "It's different degrees of negative.... I think just about the entire Greek system as a whole--you always approach it with trepidation." Several students identified
the pledging period as particularly negative. As one resident assistant said, "I think the Greek system can be detrimental like during pledging and that kind of stuff. I think that really works against you.... Some of the things they demand can physically and emotionally wear them down." Even the student who belonged to a fraternity commented that he wouldn't want to go through "hell week" again.

Several respondents also commented that more than other campus organizations Greeks—especially fraternities—carried specific reputations and stereotypes. One resident assistant described these stereotypes:

It gets real basic. There may be a frat[ernity] that includes a bunch of football players and they're known as the dumb jocks, and then you may have another house that has a bunch of guys who seem to have a lot of money and they dress nicer. There are labels that fit on there.

Although a significant number of students expressed negative feelings about the Greek system, for the most part students clearly felt the Greek presence and influence on campus was minimal. Indeed, only about 7-8% of the students are members of fraternities and sororities; furthermore, Greek letters on clothing, jewelry, and other belongings was not at all visible on campus. On more than one occasion, students referred to Greeks as "no big deal." Being in a fraternity and sorority is not a visible part of a student's identity. As one first-year student said, "I can't tell who is and who isn't [a member of a Greek organization]. I don't think that it's really that big of deal on
Another first-year student, when asked what was special about the college, responded, "There isn't a big emphasis on the Greek system." A resident assistant said of the Greek system: "I think most people don't even know it's here because it's so small you almost don't need to." When asked if the Greeks play a big role on campus, another resident assistant responded, "No, and I think less and less all the time."

**Summary of student organizations**  
Student organizations at Central are quite informal; groups are easily formed and easily joined. Clearly among the largest and strongest organizations on campus are those focusing on social concerns, such as SCATE, Action, and Amnesty International. Involvement in these organizations is highly respected on campus. Other visible, yet much smaller organizations are those focusing on issues of multiculturalism, sexual orientation, and gender equality. Fraternities and sororities enjoy a relatively small membership; while many students hinted that these Greek organizations as a whole have a less than positive reputation, most students felt that these organizations had virtually no impact on campus life. Although not actually student organizations, activities such as band and theater also are popular with many students.

**Conclusions regarding student organizations**  
Student organizations on campus are easy to form and easy to join, which facilitates and encourages student involvement. As a result, much of the student body takes advantage of the involvement opportunities provided by student organizations. Clearly, the most largest and most
popular organizations on campus are those dealing with social awareness issues. SCATE and Action, and to a lesser extent Amnesty International, were the organizations most frequently identified by students as examples of strong organizations; furthermore, signs and flyers for these organizations were very visible in the student center and on the rest of campus.

Students' strong interest in these organizations reflects a student culture that values caring and social awareness. These cultural values are consistent with the values many students bring from home, as well as the values espoused by the institution's mission. Surprisingly, students do not see these connections. They view their behavior as distinct and separate from both their traditional family values and the church-college relationship.

While students' high level of involvement in socially aware organizations reflects a student culture that wants to reach out to those who are disadvantaged, students' lack of involvement in multicultural organizations reflects a student culture that is hesitant or unmotivated to reach out to those who are different. While SCATE and Action thrive, CMCC, AGE, and Alternative Lifestyles struggle for support. Although very accepting of all students, the predominantly Caucasian, American student body showed little interest in reaching out to include international students or students of color. Indeed, CMCC, which is a predominantly international student organization, receives little support from students as a whole, and African American students have no formal group or organization on campus at all. In
addition, movements to address women's issues are virtually non-existent. Furthermore, while winning recognition and acceptance relatively easily, Advocates for Alternative Lifestyles seems to have little support beyond formal recognition. The influence of this homogeneous student body on student involvement is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Five.

One other group of organizations deserves mention: social fraternities and sororities. These Greek organizations have very little visible influence on campus involvement, as only a small percentage of students being members of fraternities and sororities. However, their limited participation is significant to involvement in that it reflects the limited need students have for social outlets. While social fraternities and sororities can help students adjust to the campus's social climate, the environment at Central is such that this help is not necessary; that is, students for the most part do not need help with the adjustment to campus social life. If the environment on campus were radically different than what students were used to or expected, this help might be more critical. However, the similarity between the students' home environment and the environment they find on campus makes the transition to campus a much easier one. Again, more discussion on the influence of this similarity of environments is found in Chapter Five.

Unstructured activities: "We just like to kick back"

Unstructured activities emerged as a critical area of student involvement because informal, spontaneous interaction with friends
was highly valued among the majority of students. Indeed, when students were asked how they spend their out-of-class time, these unstructured, informal activities often were mentioned before athletics, student organizations, employment, or other more structured opportunities.

Although planned activities such as athletic and entertainment events are popular, students spend a great deal of time involved in spontaneous, unstructured activities. When not studying, many students said they just like to "hang out"—that is, gather and talk with friends. As one RA described, "Me and my friends, we like to just kick back and have a smoke, shoot the bull or whatever." Frequently, "hanging out" included watching television. One RA commented, "If you ask [juniors and seniors] what they did this weekend, 'I stayed home and watched TV.'" Another student said, "My friends that don't go out to bars... I guess they just hang around and maybe watch Letterman and go to bed."

One of the most common places to hang out is the residence halls. One RA described the halls as follows: "I think that you gain a lot by being a new student and living in the dormitory. It's a chance to facilitate socialization skills, that type of thing. You get to learn to meet people." One first-year student said, "A lot of the times guys up in our dorm... get together at night. If there is anybody that doesn't have something to do, we get together to play cards and shoot the crap." One RA suggested that some students like to hang out with members of the opposite sex: "I think the freshmen and
sophomores... tend to head to the opposite sex dorms." (The residence halls have visitation hours that end at midnight on weekdays and 1:00 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.)

Again, much of the interaction in the halls includes watching television. Watching rented videos is popular; the student government president noted that all of the halls have televisions and video cassette recorders that may be checked out by residents.

Many upperclass students live in college-owned and operated town houses, which usually house 16 students in four suites. Several respondents noted that the town house are very conducive to hanging out. One student commented, "They hang out in the lounges a lot. Especially in the town houses. That's a big difference. Usually it's a clique of 16 people that have similar interests and so forth." An upperclass student who lives in a town house concurred: "They have like a big lounge. I know in our house... it's like a big community thing in the afternoon where we just sit around and talk about our day or talk about the news or whatever."

Most students believed that hanging out in the residence halls is positive because it facilitates student interaction and socialization. However, one RA expressed disappointment that the halls did not provide enough structured opportunities for students. He said, "I think it would be beneficial for the residence hall to do some type of activities." He added that planned activities in the halls might give students constructive involvement opportunities when they have time on their hands; without planned activities, some students are tempted
to become noisy and disruptive when they get bored. The RA said that the disruptive behavior often is influenced by alcohol consumption. He speculated that if students were not bored, they may be less likely to drink alcohol: "If there were some type of facilities or plan for students in the hall then it might take away some of the pressure to drink or whatever."

The main reason there are no planned activities in the halls is due to the emphasis on the student center as the hub of student activity. Planned activities and programs are focused in the student center because of the excellent facilities available in the center; the director of student activities also believes that by concentrating programming efforts in the student center, the college can provide better programs that are still available to all students. The director described the philosophy as follows:

You don't find very much lounge activity or organized activity in the dormitories. It's structured around this facility here--this student center--being the base for activity. The student center has a variety of facilities for students. Although rarely crowded, the game room--equipped with pool tables, ping pong, foosball, video games, pinball machines, and a jukebox--is an attractive option for some students.

While the student center's facilities are appropriate for structured programs and activities, the center also provides a casual atmosphere conducive to students' "hanging out." The snack bar and the large and comfortable lounge areas are very popular places for
students to gather to talk or study between classes. The director of student activities said that student traffic in the center is steady: "From nine in the morning until about two, this place is really very busy. It's difficult to find a place to sit. Starting at 6:30 p.m. at night you'll find most of the area taken by students studying." One student described the student traffic as follows: "During the day everybody studies in here, and between classes it's a huge shuffle going on in here. It's a good place to run into people."

Although many students seemed thoroughly involved in the campus community, many others still felt that involvement opportunities were limited. "There's not like a whole lot to do here" was a comment made by one student, and suggested by many more. Many students attributed this to being located in a small town. An international student commented, "I think that just because of where Central is--located in the small town--there is really not much to do." An RA described the town as follows: "This is a great community and it's a good influence on the college. There are not a lot of sources or resources for kids to get their hands on."

Even the director of student activities suggested that being located in a small town contributed to the success of campus events: "They like going to the event, and in Pella there isn't much better to do than going to the Saturday night event." Indeed, he described how the size of the surrounding community does influence campus programming needs:
The gathering for social entertainment is very necessary to program things like that in a small community. You can't rely on businesses to provide a social entertainment outlet for the campus so we do put a lot of emphasis on... structured social programs.

A comment by one student supported this notion: "They try to do things on campus because in the community of Pella there's not a whole lot you can do." She added that the adage, "you have to make your own fun," is an important one on campus.

However, the director of student activities felt that the structured campus programs provide plenty of opportunities for students. Therefore, he said he had limited patience for those who say there is nothing to do: "There's a lot of variety. And even with all the variety on any particular Friday or Saturday--there's at least five things that they could choose to do--and we'll have many students say, 'There's nothing to do.' No matter how much you provide them, they still have that desire to have more." Although he acknowledged that the planned activities are not all things to all people, he felt students who say there is nothing to do may be making excuses for their own motivation: "I think it's just something that you say when you just don't want to motivate yourself."

Several respondents suggested a link between the use of alcohol and the students' feeling that there is a lack of things to do. One RA commented, "A lot of people drink just because there's nothing else to do. The younger people, most of them, sometimes on Saturday night
if there's not a dance or on Friday there's nothing to do in Pella, so they say, 'Oh, let's drink.' I think a lot of that goes on here." An international student made a similar comment about students' use of alcohol: "I think that it's like what is there to do." Another student described her fellow students' attitude toward of drinking as follows: "That's the only fun there is. There is nothing else."

When asked how students spend their evenings and weekends, students frequently identified town bars as a popular option. As the student government president said, "Uptown is a pretty lively place even though it's a small town," with bars being a "normal" activity for students. Another student described her day as follows: "During the day I either do homework or work. At night, if I get my homework done, I go to the bar a lot." An international student commented, "That's basically the big thing around here is just to go to the bar." Students were not the only respondents that identified the bars as popular. A student services staff member said, "They go to the bars. I don't know how many. I don't hang out at the bars but quite a few go to the bars." A visiting instructor said, "When the studying is done, I think they go to the bar and drink beer and get drunk."

Respondents also noted that the students going to the bars were virtually all upperclass students of legal drinking age. One student said of the bar scene: "I've noticed that by the time people are upperclassmen, that's all they do on the weekends." The student government president described the bars as "pretty popular among seniors at least, and some juniors--legal age, I guess." The visiting
Instructor commented, "They're above age and they're partying--and partying here means that you get drunk on weekends. That's all."

The dean of students said of the alcohol use: "We have far more drinking that I would like to see." She added that alcohol violations on campus constituted the largest number of discipline hearings. Regarding the alcohol situation on campus, the campus minister said, "It's not even that I disapprove of drinking, but just that going out and getting bombed is the activity of the weekend--for that reason only.... It's the kind of proportion it's given." However, several students commented that the attraction of the bars was not the alcohol as much as they socialization. One student commented, "There's a lot of times when you go and you don't go to drink. You just go to see people. That's where everybody goes." Another student said, "I think the bar-going here tends to be more social."

One popular unstructured activity is the ENC--Every Night Club. The student government president described the ENC as follows:

It's exclusively for seniors, and what they do is meet at one of the local bars every week night at 11:00. They get together and basically have a senior class gathering. One selected group will do a skit or something and try and get more people involved. Just hang out for about 15 or 20 minutes to a half hour and then go back home.

The student government president said the ENC usually meets the last four or five weeks of the spring term. The dean of students said she believed that some of the town's taverns give free beer to ENC
members who bring a rejection letter from an employer. One student said he believed some juniors also try to "initiate themselves" into the ENC as well. The student government president agreed with this perception; he noted that the ENC created t-shirts to sell, and "It looks like 80 seniors have signed up for buying a t-shirt, and almost 200 freshmen and sophomores."

Many respondents indicated that underage students also are involved in drinking. As one student said of first-year students: "They try to be like everybody else and try to party a lot." However, underage students do not go to the bars as upperclass students do, usually because, as one RA said, "They're just plain not old enough." When asked if underage students go to the bars, the student government president responded: "Very few. Pella has very strict rules and quite a few bars end up following those." Another student commented, "It would be pretty difficult for them to get in, especially the freshmen. There might be that one lucky night to get in." Virtually all students agreed that the underage students realize they cannot get into the bars. One student said, "They get caught because it's so small and the people carding are usually students here." Another student said that underage students "don't want to jeopardize it for anyone else" by trying to get into the bars with fake identification.

However, just because the underage students rarely go to the bars does not mean they are not drinking at all. As a matter of fact, one first-year student said, "The underclassmen are drinking just as much as the upperclassmen." An upperclass student commented, "It
doesn't matter what age you are, you drink." The dean of students projected that "about 75% of our students here are drinking on a somewhat regular basis." Although the campus is a dry one—meaning no alcohol is allowed on campus grounds—students consistently responded that alcohol was present in the residence halls, town houses, and Greek chapter houses. One first-year student said, "They claim this is a dry campus, which it's definitely not. We can take beer up to our rooms anytime we want. It's just a matter of every so often, someone gets caught taking it up. Every so often someone gets busted. It goes on and it's going to go on." Another first-year student simply said, "There is beer everywhere."

On the weekends, there are a number of informal parties available to students. Indeed, a number of respondents indicated that upperclass students attend these parties rather than the college dances. As one upperclass student said, "I think the older you get, the less you go to the school-sponsored things. Then you go to your parties." However, one first-year student noted the parties are not just for upperclass students: "it doesn't matter how old you are." These parties usually are hosted by upperclass students. Fraternity houses and town houses are common party locations, and during the warm weather the lake is a very popular as well.

Several respondents noted that many students prefer to leave town for their entertainment altogether. An RA said of on-campus entertainment: "You become older and even in college [on-campus entertainment] is just not cool any more. You become 20 or 21 and
you start to drive away to places or to go out on the town to places rather than on campus." Another student said, "On the weekends they get out of here. A lot of people it's more important to have the security of the campus and the well-rounded education but on the weekends they want to get out of here." Some students drive to larger communities. One upperclass student said, "I would say about once a month we go to Des Moines or Iowa City or some other town." Several students mentioned Des Moines as a common entertainment option; however, one RA contested that perception: "I don't think many students leave during the week like to go to Des Moines.... I stay because most of my friends are here, and there are so many things to do here why waste my money to go to Des Moines?"

According to several respondents, the weekends mean going home for many students. Upperclass and first-year students alike commented that "a lot of students go home" on the weekends, particularly those Iowa students from nearby towns. One international student suggested that more than just the Iowans leave on weekends: "For the American students, they usually go home during the weekend."

**Summary of unstructured activities** When students are not studying—which they say consumes a great deal of their time—they prefer simply to "hang out" with friends, usually in the residence halls, townhouses, Greek houses, or the student center. A common activity is watching television or rented movies on video. Many students commented on the limited entertainment resources available in the
small town community; therefore, students often feel they need to make their own fun. Some respondents indicated that students feel they have to go to the town bars for fun because "there is nothing else to do." This attitude was particularly prevalent among upperclass students, who often chose not to attend the campus dances or other structured entertainment events. However, although under age students rarely went to the town bars, many respondents indicated that they still drink -- usually at off campus parties or quietly in their residence hall rooms.

Conclusions regarding unstructured activities Most students at Central take their academic responsibilities quite seriously; however, when not studying, students spend a great deal of time in spontaneous and informal interaction with friends. Much of this interaction among students occurs in the student center. Indeed, the student center is designed especially to promote and encourage student traffic and interaction. Many factors contribute to the high level of activity in the center: the snack bar; the large, comfortable lounges; the center's centrality to campus; the movie theater; the game room; the student mailboxes; and the housing of many important office and student services, including the student activities office, the student personnel office, the career planning and placement office, and the counseling center office. As a result, students constantly are passing through the center, whether it be to pick up their mail, have a sandwich, meet with a student affairs staff person, or just meet a friend.
Because of the campus's strong interest in athletics and recreation, many students enjoy spending free time at the gymnasium. Particularly, in the afternoon, students can be found at the gym playing basketball, exercising, lifting weights, and participating in other recreational activities. As mentioned earlier, involvement in these activities contributes positively to student wellness as well as their interpersonal interaction.

Not surprisingly, much of the spontaneous interaction among students occurs in the residence halls and town houses. However, unlike the student center which has many planned activities to complement the spontaneous interaction, the residence halls and townhouses intentionally do not offer planned programs for residents. This is done so that the student center with its excellent facilities will be viewed as the hub of campus activity. Although the student center certainly serves a vital role on campus, intentional programs and activities in the residence halls would not necessarily compete with those in the center. In fact, activities in the halls could be planned that would complement those in the student center; while programs in the student center serve the student community as a whole, planned programs and activities in the halls could be used to encourage and develop important subcommunities with more specialized interests. Furthermore, planned activities and programs in the halls could contribute to and encourage more unstructured activities and interaction as well.
For many upperclass students, unstructured activities and involvement include going to town bars with friends. Although there are some concerns about alcohol abuse, most students view bars as an opportunity for important social interaction. However, students' going to bars does have a negative impact on involvement in that it perpetuates a division between younger and older students. Since Pella strictly enforces the 21 year old drinking age, few underage students can or attempt to enter town bars. Although most underage students do not feel pressure to model upperclass student behavior, the popularity of the bar scene among upperclass students does significantly reduce the amount of interaction between first-year students and those of drinking age.

Since so many students come from Iowa, and since Pella is in the center of the state, it is easy for many students to go home on weekends. Many do. Although the departure of many students on the weekend does not have a tremendous impact on student involvement, it can hurt some students. Those students who go home frequently may not be motivated to become involved on campus and therefore develop valuable relationships and skills.

Campus ministries: "Worship is an important part of their life"

Campus ministries emerged as a critical student involvement opportunity because it represents the college-church relationship that is such a special and integral part of Central College. However, it is students' lack of involvement in campus ministries that may be most telling. As with other student activities and organizations, involvement
in campus ministries programs is respected by students in general, and the students that participate are representative of the student body as a whole. Yet, on the surface, the small number of students that participate in campus ministries appears inconsistent with the otherwise strong church presence.

The relatively small role of campus ministries reflects two dynamics within the student culture. First, students consider the church's role on campus to be a minor one for the majority of students; to many, campus ministries is simply another involvement opportunity. Second, the students tend to think of the role of the church as separate and distinct from their other involvement; however, they bring to Central values that—although students may not recognize them as such—are deeply imbedded in Judeo-Christian tradition. As a result, students' behavior and involvement may reflect influences from the church that they do not recognize or detect.

The church has a large influence on a few students and a small influence on many. However, even though the relationship between the college and the Reformed Church of America is a very strong one, the influence of the church within the campus community tends to be very ecumenical; that is, the basic tenets of Christianity are emphasized much more than the specific tenets of the Reformed Church or any other single denomination.

In its 1983 report to the North Central Association—a regional accrediting body for colleges and universities—the college indicated that 29 denominations are represented within the student body, with
no more than 18% of the students affiliated with any one denomination. Furthermore, two denominations—United Methodist (18%) and Roman Catholic (16%)—have a higher representation on campus than the Reformed Church in America (15%). In 1983, Lutheran students composed 12% of the student body.

There are many opportunities for student involvement in the campus ministries program. Students assist with campus worship services, which are held each Thursday and Sunday. According to the campus minister, many students participate, especially in the Sunday worship: "I think we have a very active Sunday worship campus church and [services are primarily] led and planned by students. That tells me that worship is an important part of their life." In addition to worship opportunities, a smaller number of students participate in campus ministries through bible studies, discussion groups, chapel experiences, and discussions on issues of faith.

While the campus ministries program itself provides student involvement opportunities, the program also supports many other campus activities and programs. Campus ministries is very involved in planning opportunities for students to discuss social and political concerns. Indeed, SCATE, Action, and Amnesty International each has ties to campus ministries, usually through an overlap of membership or participation in joint activities. The campus minister sees a clear tie between religion and these social issues. When discussing students' involvement in these groups, the campus minister said, "Earth Day, gender equality, and the environmental group are all
organized groups on campus of which many of our students participate out of their religious context." During the crisis in the Persian Gulf, campus ministries helped coordinate a teach-in on the Middle East, which involved hundreds of students.

The president of the college said the students who participate in campus ministries programs may be small in number but feel a strong connection to the program:

I think what you'll find in those kinds of programs is a core group of students—not necessarily too large—but a core group of students who identify strongly with activities and for whom those activities provide particular opportunities for growth.

The campus minister remarked that the students who choose to participate in campus ministries also are involved in many other areas of campus:

I'm always delighted that some of our strongest leaders in the campus ministries program are also on the student senate. They're very active in the music department, the theater department. Many of them are athletes.... We have a good cross-section of people and certainly campus leaders that are leaders in many areas.... I think we get some of our better all-around students in the campus ministry. They aren't the ones who couldn't make it somewhere else.... We have all kinds.

Several respondents supported this idea that the students involved in campus ministries are typical of the student body. One resident assistant said that the students involved in these programs
are not recognized as being especially religious. As the student
government president said, students who participate in campus
ministries are not seen as "Bible beaters."

**Summary of campus ministries** Although affiliated with the
Reformed Church in America, the college takes a very ecumenical
approach to campus ministries. This is due to the ecumenical makeup
of its students. No more than 20 percent of the student body is
affiliated with any one denomination, with several denominations
claiming more students than the Reformed Church.

There is a small yet stable group of students who are involved in
the college's campus ministries programs. Formal ministries
opportunities include worship services twice per week, bible studies,
discussion groups, chapel experiences, and other special events
programs. The campus ministries program also works in collaboration
with other campus organizations on issues of mutual interest and
concern, such as working with the elderly or underprivileged youth.
Although the students who participate regularly in campus ministries
programs are relatively small in number, they often are leaders in
other campus organizations or activities as well.

**Conclusions regarding campus ministries** Students who
choose to participate in campus ministries programs find very
meaningful involvement. The program is led by the campus minister
whose open and accepting attitude is reflected in the program itself.
The college's affiliation with the Reformed Church in America in no
way hinders student involvement in the program; that is, the campus
ministries program is very ecumenical and welcomes participation from any interested student. In addition to worship services, bible studies, and other traditional religious activities, the campus ministries program gets involved with other campus groups to help with social action programs. All of these involvement opportunities are rewarding ones for students.

However, the program's small level of participation and relative lack of visibility on campus reflects a broader student attitude toward the relationship between the college and the church. Students perceive that the campus ministries program represents this college-church relationship--that it is a worthwhile but very small part of their lives. When asked, students say that the church is not visible on campus unless one searches for it, and that the Christian tradition mentioned in the college's statement of purpose has little or no impact on students.

Faculty and staff, on the other hand, see this situation much differently; they believe the influence of the church and Judeo Christian traditions is reflected in students' everyday behavior. Students' open, accepting attitudes toward others and their active involvement in socially aware activities suggest these Christian influences are imbedded in their values, even though the students may not recognize it. This subtle, unrecognized influence of Christian values on students reflects another important aspect of the student culture: the values students bring with them to Central.
When students come to Central, they bring certain values with them from home. Students do not identify these values as Christian or church-related; more likely, they associate these values with their family, school, or community. What they do not recognize is that for most students the values present in their homes and communities are rooted in the church and Christianity. Furthermore, since the vast majority of students comes from similar community environments, these values from home become the dominant values on campus as well. This homogeneity of values will be discussed later in Chapter Five.

*Academic involvement: "Faculty take special care and involve themselves"*

Students' involvement in academics outside the classroom emerged as a critical student involvement opportunity because it reflects the important relationship between students and faculty, which itself reflects an important value within the campus culture. How students and faculty relate to each other reflects an institutional culture that values helping and caring for students. In addition, the level of students' involvement in out-of-class academic activity reveals a characteristic of the student culture as well. Students' limited involvement in academics outside the classroom reflects a student culture that draws a clear distinction between in-class and out-of-class learning.

The extent to which students are involved with classroom and other academic matters outside of class is influenced greatly by the
relationship between the students and the faculty. According to the dean of the college, the role of the faculty does not end in the classroom: "This is a busy faculty. This is a very involved faculty."

Indeed, being available to students appears to be a priority for most faculty members. The vice president for student affairs noted that in student evaluations, "the number one service that they point to year after year is the accessibility and the availability of faculty." The dean of students agreed with vice president's perception: "There have been a number of faculty who have been very, very helpful to students."

Many students also commented on the positive relationship between students and faculty, particularly the faculty's willingness to get involved with students. As one student said, "In my experience, most all of them have been really outgoing. Not every single one, but... as a whole they are really helpful." A resident assistant commented, "I know my professors personally. I feel free to call them at any time." She went on to add: "I think they take special care just to get involved. I know sometimes when you miss a lot of class your professor will call you and ask you what's wrong.... I think they take special care and involve themselves." Another student made a similar comment: "Most of them are very involved, just this year especially. Advisors and other professors within my major just go out of their way for you." One international student remarked, "The faculty is very concerned for us especially with the language barrier." The student government president said this of the student-faculty relationship: "I've never considered students and faculty and administration to be
different.... I see them as one. Going to a professor's house is almost as normal as going to a student's house."

Faculty are involved with students outside the classroom in several ways. The dean referred to faculty serving in formal and informal advisory roles to student clubs and organizations. Indeed, one faculty member commented, "I'm a faculty advisor for at least four organizations on campus."

In addition to getting involved in student activities, some faculty involve students in their own projects. The dean of students commented, "We have a very high number of students who work with a faculty member on research projects." A faculty member stated his department has taken groups of students to participate in professional conferences in Chicago.

Not all of the interaction between students and faculty is related to academic matters. The campus minister noted that some faculty who are active in the church often encourage students to become involved in church activities. One faculty member had this to say about student-faculty interaction: "We have picnics in the fall. We go out to the president's place.... There really is a lot of activity." One student shared how a professor had the entire class over to his home. A resident assistant recalled a recent event in the student center:

They had a band here last night and some of the faculty members were here. I think that's really neat that they like to take part in some of the student activities which is really cool. I
think that way they better understand the students and get a better grasp.

The student government president described a similar informal outing in his academic department:

We just had a senior spring fling and my advisor and a couple of other faculty members were there with about 11 of us seniors. They brought some stuff and we brought some stuff. It was a fun situation. We played football after that. It's very informal among quite a few of our departments.

Although most respondents were very positive about the quality of student-faculty interaction, a few felt it was not strong. When asked about faculty involvement with students out-of-class, the editor of the student newspaper responded, "I don't think there is a lot of involvement." One student believed that the active faculty members were the exception rather than the rule. The student government president felt the amount of student-faculty interaction varied from academic department to department, saying that the faculty in some departments tend to be less outgoing and "hold back." The dean of students said she felt that some faculty were involved with students out-of-class, but added, "I think a smaller number than when I came here 19 years ago." She also noted that some faculty involvement with students could be viewed as detrimental, such as drinking alcohol with students at town bars.

One student felt that faculty interact with students if students "take the initiative. They're not going to come and find you." When
asked whether there were opportunities to interact with faculty outside of class, a first-year student responded, "Not really, unless you make an appointment to go talk with them." A faculty member suggested that students do not take advantage of faculty office hours, which are scheduled for at least one hour per day: "There are a lot more faculty sitting in office hours than there are students showing up to see them."

One visiting faculty member was especially critical of the faculty's role with students, saying, "They are not involved at all.... They're not really interested. They're interested in what the students can do in their class but then after that they're not going to go to anything that the students are doing." However, one faculty member questioned to what extent students want to be involved with faculty outside of class. Of student activities in the evening, he said,

I don't know if it's our place to be there. I don't always feel comfortable. I do in certain ways... but after 6:00 at night the campus isn't necessarily ours. It's more the students'.... To really know where students are coming from means to spend time with them at night on campus in the student union or at the gym or where they're at, and I don't know if we're allowed to do that as much.

The president of the college commented on the value of the integration of students' in-class and out-of-class learning experiences: "I would think that it's very important for there to be a close relationship between what happens in the classroom and what
happens outside the classroom." He also stated that for the students' in-class and out-of-class experiences to be as effective as they can be, these experiences must "proceed with some kind of relationship to the other."

While one way to integrate students' in-class and out-of-class learning experiences is through student-faculty interaction, this integration also can be addressed through programming. The vice president for student affairs described connecting in-class and out-of-class activities as follows:

There are formal ways and informal ways, of course. The formal ways would be speakers, convocations, cultural events, that sort of thing. The informal ways, of course, would be the opportunity for faculty and students to extend discussion in the office or remain in the classroom.

When asked about attempts to connect students' in-class and out-of-class lives, most students, faculty, and staff were able to cite examples of a number of programs and activities. The most frequently cited examples were visiting speakers that related to academic or cultural issues. A number of respondents discussed the college's Cultural Affairs Committee; this committee, which includes both faculty and students, plans appearances by one or two speakers each term. One faculty member said of these speakers: "We have a speaker series that brings people in regularly, often times [these speakers are] very controversial or challenging or different. I think that there is a diversity of thought and opinion there." In addition to these programs
that focus on academic matters, the college offers educational programs on important issues such as time management, stress management, date rape, and suicide prevention.

In addition to the visiting speakers, students also cited language clubs and other academic organizations as opportunities for students to connect their in-class and out-of-class learning. In these organizations, students use skills and knowledge learned in the classroom and apply them in more practical settings. One student commented that "nearly every major" has a club or organization for its students; however, several students said that most of these clubs were inactive. Several respondents identified theater, music, and other fine arts events as popular opportunities on campus. Another student stated that interested students regularly could find poetry readings on campus as well.

Some faculty members stated that they tried to connect students' in-class and out-of-class learning by incorporating contemporary issues into the classroom. As one faculty member said, "I try to incorporate... some of the things that I know about them and try to have them respond.... Something that they've done in AGE [Advocates for Gender Equality--a student organization] or Young Republicans coming into the classroom." However, the faculty member admitted that he experienced limited success getting students to bring issues of importance to them into the classroom. One exception cited was the Persian Gulf war. The dean of the college commented,
During the war there were a bunch of students, who were political science majors for the most part, who organized a faculty-student discussion group that, at one point, probably involved at least two-thirds of the campus on a single day in one way or another. There were presentations and discussions and conversations. That all came out of students. Faculty weren't organizing it. Students were interested and organizing it.

Virtually all of the comments were positive regarding activities that integrated students' in-class and out-of-class learning experiences. However, several respondents expressed concern about the small number of students who took part in these activities. One student cited a recent speaker and multicultural fair, both of which were poorly attended. A resident assistant and the editor of the student newspaper had difficulty identifying specific examples of these programs and activities available to students. A staff member in student services speculated on the poor turnouts for cultural events. She added, "[There] really seems to be a problem getting students to take a real broad-based approach to education.... [Students] go to class and then... fill [their] time with other stuff, not education."

Several respondents also expressed disappointment in the faculty's lack of support for these programs that attempt to integrate students' in-class and out-of-class learning. When one faculty member commented on students' being more concerned with social opportunities that speakers or cultural events, another faculty member said,
I think it's a fair statement to say that they all enjoy having a good time. But then I think the faculty are the same way, too. We don't show up for all of the programs that are available here, whether they're cultural events or speaker events or sporting events.

A visiting faculty member felt that faculty should be encouraged to attend more campus events: "I have had it explained to me that the faculty go to their department things, but, still, I think if it's a liberal arts college, the faculty themselves should be going to more of those events."

Despite the regular availability of programs intended to connect students' in-class and out-of-class learning experiences, several respondents felt that the connection was not a strong one. One faculty member was concerned that students narrowly define student activities as entertainment, and do not see the value in out-of-class learning opportunities:

I don't think it's very well integrated around here... because it's like student-sponsored activities really have nothing to do with academics. So then you have that conflict between students who think that they're paying money for student activities that should be part of the popular culture and entertainment, and then there's the other things which are just work.

The distinction between students' academic and other activities is reflected in the student activities office's philosophy on programming. The director of student activities explained that he
perceives his role as providing entertainment for students, and does not feel that incorporating academics into student activities programming is conducive to quality entertainment. He believes academic programming should be handled by the Cultural Affairs Committee or other appropriate group. According to the vice president for student affairs, the director of student activities has received criticism at times because some people believe "all he's doing is bringing rock and roll to campus." Nonetheless, the director said he feels comfortable responding to his critics:

I tell them, 'You don't go to the financial aid director and tell him how he's got to disperse the money. You trust that this person's going to do it properly. Trust that I'm going to do my job very diligently because I want everything to be a success."

Summary of academic involvement When discussing the relationship between students' in-class and out-of-class experiences, most of the respondents focused on the relationship between students and faculty. The college takes great pride in the accessibility and availability of its faculty, and the responses from students consistently reinforced this perspective. Students communicated that faculty take special care to interact with students.

Faculty are involved with students in formal ways, such as serving as advisors to student organizations; however, respondents did not mention these formal roles frequently, or with much emphasis. Rather, the interaction between students and faculty tends to be very informal, whether it be casual conversations after class or a
department cookout. However, a minority of respondents qualified their praise for faculty involvement with students, saying that faculty will get involved only when students make it a point to seek faculty out. More formal connections between students' in-class and out-of-class experiences take the form of campus speakers, cultural events, or special convocations, usually planned by an academic department or campus committee.

**Conclusions regarding academic involvement** The relationship between students and faculty is a strong one. The faculty are readily accessible; they make an effort to interact with students in both formal and informal ways. This positive interaction between students and faculty creates an environment in which students are comfortable approaching faculty outside of the classroom. The more often students interact with faculty outside the classroom, the more likely it is they will extend their academic interests outside the classroom as well.

Although student-faculty out-of-class interaction is strong, other campus opportunities for students to extend their classroom learning are overlooked. The campus frequently sponsors convocations and guest speakers, yet a small number of students take advantage of these on a regular basis. Furthermore, although many department have academic clubs, most are inactive due to lack of participation.

The strong student-faculty relationship and students' limited involvement in other out-of-class academic opportunities reflect two different values within the institutional culture—both values that influence student involvement. In regards to the positive student-
faculty relationship, the larger institutional culture helps facilitate this relationship by encouraging faculty to be accessible to students and to extend an ethic of care; the student culture helps facilitate positive interaction by encouraging and embracing interpersonal relationships. In this case, both the institutional culture and the student culture contribute to an environment that encourages out-of-class student-faculty interaction, which in turn encourages out-of-class learning.

On the other hand, the students' limited involvement in academic opportunities outside the classroom reflects a value in the student culture that isolates in-class and out-of-class learning from each other. By drawing such a clear distinction between the two, the student culture fails to encourage students to take a broad-based approach to learning, and thus become involved in out-of-class academic opportunities.

Leadership: "Who are the student leaders...? Who are your student leaders?"

Leadership emerged as a critical student involvement opportunity because it reflects underlying values within both the student culture and the larger institutional culture. At Central, the students' attitude toward leadership opportunities—or, more accurately, the lack of them—reflects a passive quality within the student culture; the students appear content to let things happen to them as opposed to seizing control of their own educational experience. The institutional culture, on the other hand, appears to value stability; in other words, while the student culture appears
content to let things happen, the institution seems content with what it is and the way things are. As a result, the institution does not take the initiative to create more leadership opportunities, and students do not push for them.

When asked to what extent leadership opportunities were available to students on campus, the vice president for student affairs responded, "Studies show that small colleges give more opportunity for participation and leadership, and I don't think we're an exception to that at all." He later added, "I think there are abundant opportunities for students to exercise leadership roles, especially as they get into the upperclass level."

One of the most traditional and visible leadership opportunities on college campuses is student government. According to Central's student handbook, the student senate—Central's governing body for students—consists of 40 senators. Half of these senators are elected in the fall and half in the spring; this is done so that first-year students can be involved in the selection of the senators earlier in the college experience. The senate also includes four executive officers: president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The college's 1983 North Central Association self-study report detailed the senate's four areas of responsibility: fiscal management and distribution of student activity fees, membership on major student-faculty committees, supervision of the campus committee and activity programs (including recognizing student organizations), and presentation of the student viewpoint on a variety of campus issues.
According to the vice president for student affairs, the 1990-91 student fee allocation was $136,000, which he described as "a pretty good chunk of change for a small college." The student handbook listed the senate's standing and student-faculty committees. The three standing committees include the executive committee, budget and finance committee, and committee on committees. The eight student-faculty committees include: policy and personnel, cultural affairs, curriculum, student affairs, teacher education, board of publications, internal and cross-cultural programs, and resident student.

The vice president said of the students who choose to participate in student government:

People are interested in [the role they play as student government representatives]. They see it as a responsibility, an opportunity to serve, to get in on some of the decision making processes. [Student government experience] looks good on the résumé. All of those things come into play but [the student government] doesn't suffer from image.

During elections, students write one-page letters of candidacy, and these letters are posted in the student center for students to read. These letters revealed that the candidates had a wide variety of campus experiences. Several were resident assistants; others were involved in theater or campus organizations. A high proportion of the male candidates were student-athletes. The vice president confirmed
this cross-sectional representation holds true with the executive officer positions as well:

If you had to [identify] a common denominator [among] senate officer[s], probably the [only common attribute] would be that they've served in senate in the past. Other than that, it's a flip of the coin.

Although the senate is charged with significant responsibility, student respondents consistently expressed either ignorance or dissatisfaction with the senate's role on campus. When asked what role the student senate plays, one resident assistant responded, "To tell you the truth--none. I think everyone really wants to be on it but to tell you the truth, I couldn't tell you what they do." A first-year student said, "I only knew about two of the people on the elections last week and I wouldn't know what they are doing." Another student said of the senate: "We never hear anything that they do. They don't publicize their activities at all. We don't know what they're doing for us--or not [doing] for us." Another first-year student responded, "Currently you don't see a lot of what they do. They don't seem to interact with students and you really don't hear a lot about what their purpose is. So that sort of thing doesn't really interest me and that's the kind of feeling that I get around campus--that people really don't care one way or the other.

While some respondents indicated that students do not care much about the student government, several others implied that the apathy was related to a more negative impression of the group and its
effectiveness. One resident assistant stated that the student senate president and vice president may be respected, but "you go down any further than that and a lot of people think it's a joke."

At the time these interviews were being conducted, the spring election to select the next year's student senate officers and senators was held. The student senate president candidate ran unopposed. However, the current student senate president did not believe that this indicated a lack of interest in the position. "I see it as a very competitive position," he stated, adding that nine students had run against him. A resident assistant attributed the lack of candidates to publicity: "I think the reason for the low number of applicants was because it wasn't advertised very well. No one knew about it. I found out about it the day before the letters were due."

The fact that student elections were being held did not appear to add to the awareness of student government among respondents. When asked to identify the campus's student leaders, no students mentioned a student senate officer, including the president; in response to this, another resident assistant said, "I couldn't tell you who it is, to tell you the truth." In fact, only one of the nine first-year students interviewed was able to identify the student senate president.

This general apathy regarding the student senate did not surprise the vice president for student affairs. In his view, however, the problem is not one of insignificance, but of visibility; most student government business is conducted in routine meetings and deals with administrative issues. He described the impact of the senate as
"behind the scenes," working on committees and providing input to the administration when needed. As the vice president described, "Basically we work quite compatibly together so that the student government does not have high visibility, because they're not leading the troops in a certain direction, [but] rather managing various tasks." He said that the student government works with the college on issues that do not generate the kind of conflict that may lead to greater visibility: "The issues are such that there isn't a great deal of perhaps the splashy headlines that say, 'President of student government challenges the president of the college' or that kind of mentality."

Regarding the availability of leadership opportunities on campus, one RA commented, "I think there are a lot of groups that you can be involved in where you can be a leader." However, the vast majority of student respondents struggled with the issue of student leadership on campus. When asked whether formal leadership positions were popular or attractive, one student replied, "I don't think anybody pays that much attention." One first-year student who was critical of the student senate also commented that she did not feel that the campus had clear student leaders. When asked what formal leadership positions existed other than the student senate president, the editor of the student newspaper replied, "I don't know." In response to a similar question, a resident assistant said, "In my eyes, I don't know. I would to say, shoot, not many." One faculty member said of leadership opportunities, "I think they're rather limited." She added that often students do not seem to be interested in the ones that are available,
noting that one of the organizations with which she is involved has plenty of members but no students willing to take charge.

Several respondents suggested that informal student leadership roles were more valued and respected than formal ones. That is, students seemed to think of leadership in terms of having the respect of peers within their circle of involvement, rather than holding positions with titles and specific responsibilities. One first-year student, when asked to identify the student leaders on campus, responded, "You see people that you know and look up to but that's about it."

At the suggestion that there may be more informal campus leaders than formal, the vice president for student affairs replied, "Probably in a quantitative sense, you're right. But not in a qualitative sense." He felt that students were more likely to identify students close at hand as their leaders, rather than a student in a campus-wide leadership position. If students were asked, "who are the student leaders," he suggested that "you would probably draw a quizzical look." However, if asked, "who are your student leaders, then they would look to the ... sphere in which they operate and ... come up with an RA, or a club president, or a fraternity or a sorority president, or something like that." A resident assistant made a similar comment when asked to identify the top leaders on campus: "I don't know if I'd be able to identify them because I think they'd be like a leader in one organization, but you don't know if that organization is most popular on campus or what."
The resident assistant position, another potential leadership role, also was discussed. The dean of students described the resident assistant (RA) role as follows: "I think our RAs... don't have a lot of programming responsibilities. Their major function is to help that freshman students adjust." Resident assistants are assigned to residence hall floors consisting primarily of first-year students; floors with upperclass students have hall advisors, students whose responsibilities primarily are administrative.

The resident assistants interviewed offered a variety of perspectives regarding their roles on campus, but none used the term "leader" to describe the role. The roles suggested by one resident assistant included "source of information," "good listener," "someone to motivate them," and "friend." He also said an important role is that of advisor, someone "to help them make those choices with their free time. Free time is a big thing." He also mentioned the responsibility of enforcing college and residence hall policies, noting that this role was more prominent earlier in the school year:

I've always been one to start right out, come out extra hard at them and say, 'Guys, these are my rules and expectations. They're posted, I've told you, I'll tell you again and we'll operate by that.' And as the year goes on, they start to become more responsible for their own bathroom or hall or whatever it may be, and as that starts to happen they monitor each other and you don't have to do as much.
Another resident assistant said that he originally applied for the position because he wanted to serve as a programmer, advisor, and counselor. However, he described the actual role much differently: "Basically, to make sure nobody gets hurt. Basically, to structure the hall to where they are aware of the rules and regulations."

A resident assistant on a woman's floor described her role as follows: "I think that my main role is just being a friend, just being there for questions, comments, just to help." However, she also identified a disciplinarian role, which she described as "not to crack the whip, but to help them know where the guidelines are and help them know when they're overstepping the boundaries and what the consequences would be when they do that." However, she felt some RAs took the rule enforcement part of the position too seriously:

I just don't know why some people get into it. I think some people get into it just because they can say they're an RA and they can tell people what to do.... I don't think it's the way it should be.

A resident assistant on another woman's floor, however, said she put very little emphasis on policy enforcement: "I've got better things to do with my time than go looking for them. Rule enforcement... takes up very little of my time." She felt the main role was like that of a "sister." As she described,

When you're a freshman in a brand new situation, it's the first time out in the world. They're going to have problems adjusting emotionally. So a big part of my job is just being a sounding
board and letting them blow off whatever they need. I'm someone they can kind of look up to. Some people, I'm like a shrink. They can come in and talk or bawl or lay all these problems.

In addition to the sister role, this resident assistant also acknowledged the "bureaucratic" responsibilities of the job as well.

Not only did the resident assistants differ regarding their perceptions of their job, they also differed regarding the RA role as leadership position. When asked if students would see the RA role as a leadership role, one RA responded, "Yes, very much so." However, another RA saw it much differently: "No, I think it's looked at as a joke.... They just see it as someone to enforce the rules and to hand out sheets every three months so that we can fill them out. That sort of thing." He also said students see RAs as "the person that's going to bust them--the hall cop or whatever." He also felt the compensation of $900 per year did not communicate high expectation: "If they wanted a ship-shape RA program where they wanted to really make it clear to freshmen that drinking or whatever... is not accepted, they could pay us more to do that. It's a Mickey Mouse role, really."

Similarly, the RAs differed regarding how attractive the RA position is to students. One woman RA responded, "Yeah, I think there's a great interest in being an RA for some people." Another woman RA shared a different perspective:

I think it's respected, but I don't think it's attractive at all....

Most people, if you talked to them about their RA, there would
be this light that shines in their eye, like, 'Oh, I really like my RA. She really helped me out a lot.' Although it's not really somebody that you'd hang around with or something like that.

One of the men RAs also stated that he believed the position was not very attractive to students: "I think campus-wide I would have to say, yes, the RAs don't get a lot of respect and a lot of people don't admire that position, nor would they want to take that position."

**Summary of leadership** The most formal student leadership opportunity for students is the student senate. Students who seek a senator or executive position in the senate reflect a cross section of the student body--clearly the senate is not dominated by a particular group of students. However, few student respondents referred to the student senate in discussions regarding leadership positions on campus; indeed, many students were critical of the senate. Students consistently stated that they did not know who the senate leaders were or what they sought to accomplish. In fact, only one of nine first-year students could identify (or even attempted to identify) the student senate president who had been in office for almost a year. Administrators, on the other hand, were quite supportive of the senate. They indicated that the bulk of the senate's work was accomplished "behind the scenes" in committees or other advisory roles, where most students could not observe the work being done.

In addition to their ambivalence about the leadership role of the student senate, student respondents also struggled with the larger issue of leadership. When asked to identify campus leaders either by
name or position, few students made an attempt to do so. A small number of students suggested that the leaders of SCATE and other respected student organizations would be considered campus leaders. Resident assistants also differed greatly as to whether their position would be considered an attractive leadership role on campus. The general feeling was that student leadership on campus was a small-scale, decentralized thing, with students identifying with the leaders within their own smaller circles rather than campus-wide.

Conclusions regarding leadership Certainly the student senate has the potential to play a valuable role on any campus. Indeed, the senate serves as the students' voice to the college, allocates significant student funds, and provides students opportunities to serve on important college committees. It is just as certain, however, that the student body at Central does see this value in its student government. The students are not aware of the leadership that the senate is providing; even worse, they do not seem overly concerned about it.

The students' ambivalence regarding the student senate reflects a general uncertainty and confusion regarding student leadership on campus. When asked to identify student leadership opportunities, students struggled. In some cases, it appeared that their difficulty was not that they could not think of one; rather, it seemed that they did not understand the question.

It is not that the campus does not have leaders. There are students active in SCATE, Action, or other organizations whom other students see as student leaders. Nonetheless, these students are
leaders in a microcosmic sense; they are the informal leaders of a smaller circle of students. It is the idea of structured, campus-wide leadership positions that seems nebulous to students.

In essence, students cannot identify campus-wide leadership positions, do not know who holds these positions, and do not push to know more about how they are being represented in the student government. This ignorance about campus leadership and leadership opportunities reflects a true passive quality in the student culture. In regard to student governance, students do not know what is happening in the student senate, are cynical about the senate, yet seem content to let whatever happens happen. Their lack of motivation to learn more about how their interests are being represented reflects a lack of ownership in their educational experience.

**Entertainment:** "**They really like what's happening**"

Entertainment opportunities emerged as a critical area of student involvement because of their immense popularity with a large number of students. Due to Pella's small size, many students feel there are not sufficient opportunities in the larger town community for social interaction with other students. As a result, Central has made a significant commitment to providing social entertainment on campus. Indeed, campus entertainment opportunities were a strong consideration in the design of the student center.

In addition to being popular with students, entertainment opportunities reflect underlying values within the student culture.
Through limited involvement in out-of-class academic involvement opportunities, students show a tendency to separate their in-class and out-of-class learning. The same trend is visible in their entertainment opportunities; students at Central draw a clear distinction between education and entertainment. Furthermore, since virtually all entertainment opportunities at Central are planned and implemented by a professional staff person rather than students, a passive quality within the student culture surfaces once again. Students seem content to be entertained, and do not push to be responsible for creating their own entertainment.

Whether it be in regularly-scheduled activities, such as dances or movies, or once a year events such as the "lemming race" or lip sync contest, students spend much of their evenings and weekends participating in entertainment activities; that is, activities that are provided by the college for the students' enjoyment. When asked about entertainment opportunities on campus, student respondents consistently mentioned three events: weekend dances, comedians, and movies.

There is a dance on campus virtually every Friday and Saturday night, either in the student center or in the dining hall. The Saturday night dance typically is the week's big entertainment event. The director of student activities described Saturday nights as follows:

We have some sort of big event and it's usually based around a dance--but it isn't necessarily a dance--but the dance is always developed into a party so that there's a theme to it. And it's not
the kind of a theme where you come and have to dress up for the theme, but the environment is changed to provide an environment that fits the theme. That generates a different kind of atmosphere each week -- an atmosphere of music, or an atmosphere of decorations or an atmosphere of activity. The dances, like all other campus entertainment events, are free. An activity fee paid by all students through tuition is used to fund the events.

The director of student activities said that the Saturday events are popular: "They've always been successful, and they've just kept building and building." He added that Saturday attendance is usually high: "I'll be disappointed if we have 300 and it goes into the 600 area." He said that attendance is not influenced by the type of the event planned as much as by the time of the year the event is held.

Many students commented that the campus dances were popular with students. One student said, "The Saturday dance is a pretty good one.... They organize a theme dance, a beach party dance, a lip-sync thing, and the Greek Games. That stuff is pretty fun."

Although a few students felt that there was a good mix of first-year and upperclass students at the dances, most students commented that the dances were frequented primarily by first-year students and sophomores; indeed, several upperclass students indicated that they attended the dances regularly early in their college career, but only occasionally go now, and even then stay for only a short time. As one student said, "I never participate. Freshmen and sophomores do a lot
of that. Juniors and seniors generally don't go." An RA commented, "Once you get partway through your career, part of it is that that gets old to you;" this same RA suggested that upperclass students set a tone that the dances are appropriate only for younger students:

I think people's attitude toward it and the word of mouth about it are downgrading and very negative, and a lot of that comes from the upperclass students. It's OK if you're a freshman or maybe a sophomore to be at the dance or to let that serve as your entertainment.

The Friday night dance is intended to serve a different purpose than the large Saturday event. While the Saturday dance is held in the student dining hall, the Friday dance is held in the student center, which holds far fewer people. According to the director of student activities, the Friday dance may include a live band or a disc jockey playing tapes or compact discs, often with accompanying videos. The Friday usually features one specific type of rock and roll sound each week, such as country rock, classic rock, or alternative rock. Thus the dance will appeal to a smaller segment of the student population and draw smaller crowds.

Another popular form of entertainment is live stand-up comedy. Approximately every other week, on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, comedians performing at local comedy clubs are booked for two 45-minute shows each night in the student center. The director of student activities described the response to the performances:
We go from like 75 the first show to 125 to 150 the second show. The next night the two shows you can hardly get into the place. There are always over 200 for each of the shows. They really like that a lot.

Unlike the dances, which had a few critics among students, the comedians received almost unanimous approval from the respondents. Student after student agreed that the comedians drew a large and diverse crowd of students, including a high number of upperclass students. Several respondents indicated that part of the popularity of the comedians was the timing of their performances. As one RA said, having comedians during the week "gives a time in there just to kind of break up the hodge podge of studying. It gives students somewhere to go to hang out for a little bit and get their minds off their studying."

Another form of entertainment popular with students is movies. The director of student activities described the movie facilities in the student center:

We have a film studio which was designed to accommodate video movies, and we do those every night and we get anywhere from 30 to 150 at those. That's what they're designed for. We're not expecting huge turnouts for these. Every night we have these programs and they get a response from the segment of the campus that needs it.

With only one or two exceptions, most respondents indicated that the movies in the student center were well-received entertainment opportunities. In addition to providing movies in the
student center, the college also arranges for students to purchase special passes to the town's theater for the entire year. The director of student activities said that the movie pass was very popular with students.

When commenting on the quality of entertainment available to students, several respondents gave unsolicited credit to the director of student activities. As one RA said, the director of student activities "does such a good job of getting such a variety in here." One of the student services staff commented that the director of student activities "just does an incredible job of providing on-campus things and I think here [the student center] lots of nights during the week, and he's got comedians downstairs and bands and the place is always packed." One faculty member said the director "is very good at providing activities because he's very aware of how small Pella is."

The director of student activities commented that he enjoys his job and takes it very seriously: "My job is one that I love to do.... I've taken it on very professionally." He believes that "professionalism" comes through in his activities, which he describes as "professional as you could get anyplace else for entertainment. Everything is very positive." As evidence of this professionalism, he said he makes it a point to stay on top of trends in technology and the pop culture, and is disappointed when things do not go well:

We had a band this year that I thought was going to be so great and I was really fired up about them. They were excellent, and I think we had 150 people there. And the reason was that this
campus doesn’t like hard rock. It was a hard rock band and I just overlooked that—shouldn’t have had them. It bothered me terribly... that I had not recognized this.

In producing campus entertainment, the director coordinates almost all of the planning himself:

I pretty much structure the events myself. I have a student advisory board that I work with but they really don’t have too much to say on it. I try to keep them in the program outline the way I’ve got it structured. I listen to them very carefully as to what is working and what isn’t working to make sure that everything happens. I don’t rely on a student to produce the event. I’m involved in all of the event.

When asked if students requested to be more involved in planning events, the director said,

I give them the free hand to be involved and they tend not to want to, and it becomes a chore for them. Things are done so well--and I don’t mean to pat myself on the back--but they’re done with such refinement that they don’t have the capability of doing it.

The entertainment programs are funded by monies allocated by the student senate. Each year the director of student activities submits a budget for next year’s programs to be approved by the senate. He believes that the support shown by the senate as well as the college itself is a vote of confidence in how he performs his job:
I accumulated more finances, more equipment, more personnel-the college has been very supportive in it. The student senate came to me this year and asked, 'Do you need any more money?' I said to them, 'I would only be wasting money. Everything is covered. We're well financed, over-programmed.' He attributed this support to the history of success of the programs:

They trust me. The events are handled well. The students respond very positively to them so that it's not like I'm dealing with any conflict here. They really like what's happening and from that they allow me to continue to do it.

When planning programs and activities, the director keeps in mind the college's mission: "My programming is very much affected by that statement of purpose." He takes particular care not to violate the Christian values of the college: "My programs have criteria that they have to fall within. That doesn't mean that I can't show R-rated films, but I don't think that I would blatantly or without any purpose show an X-rated film for any reason." In addition to movie selection, he also considers the college's Christian foundation when working with comedians:

To a degree I ask for some censorship on their part. I always say to them that our students will probably respond not so strongly if you use the F-word. I'm not going to tell you you can't but they are not going to be so responsive.
Although he works in an academic environment, the director of student activities does not attempt to integrate the students' in-class experience into his programming: "My job is totally entertainment, social." For example, when faculty ask that a certain film be shown in the student center, the director wants to be clear how the showing of the film is related to class:

I ask them this one question: 'Is it required for your class to attend?' If they say yes, then I say I will not be involved in it. Anything that makes people come to an entertainment function is not entertainment anymore. I'm not asked to do it other than on a volunteer basis, and then I certainly do involve myself.

The vice president for student affairs said he understands the director's perspective; the director believes other campus groups are more appropriate for sponsoring and planning non-entertainment events:

The religious life program, which is handled by the campus church, brings their speakers and entertainers to campus. [The director of student activities] says, 'That's their role. They don't bring rock and roll groups to campus. I don't bring Truth or the other groups.'

However, the vice president suggested there could be room for more flexibility in this stance:

It's a pretty clear line that I think can be crossed once in a while. To bring a religious group to campus might draw a pretty
good crowd and be entertaining as well as beneficial to the people who attend.

Summary of entertainment  The most visible entertainment opportunities at Central are dances, comedians, and movies. A dance is held virtually every Friday and Saturday night. Most students agreed that the dances were good entertainment; however, a large number of upperclass students indicated that the dances were attractive primarily to younger students, with juniors and seniors rarely attending.

On Tuesday and Wednesday nights each week comedians perform in the student center. Unlike the dances, the comedians' popularity is widespread, with first-year students and upperclass students alike attending. The student center also shows movies nightly in its small theater. In addition, through an arrangement with the town's local movie theater, most students buy a year-long pass to the town's theater.

The funding for the dances, comedians, and movies is allocated by the student senate. However, the responsibility for producing these entertainment opportunities rests solely with the director of student activities, who also manages the student center. Most respondents stated that the director does a great job with these entertainment events. The director states that he takes a very "professional" approach to his position, which he views as providing strictly social entertainment; although students help him with the implementation,
the director always maintains control of the event and makes all of the decisions.

**Conclusions regarding entertainment** The dances, comedians, and movies offered by Central succeed in giving students opportunities for social interaction and enjoyment. The comedians are exceptionally popular with a broad range of students, and the movies—both in the student center and through the arrangement with the local theater—are well received. The appeal of the dances is not quite as consistent as that of the comedians and the movies; for the most part, however, the dances attract a steady group of students. The disadvantage of the dances is that they tend to attract mostly first-year and second-year students; as a result, there is a division created in the interaction between newer students and upperclass students. Nevertheless, the dances, comedians, and movies provide significant opportunities for students to get involved with each other in social fellowship.

These entertainment opportunities are critical to the understanding of student involvement on campus because the role of entertainment reflects important qualities in the student culture as well as the larger institutional culture. One issue is the relationship between entertainment and education. As discussed in the section on academic involvement, relatively few students take advantage of convocations, speakers, and other out-of-class academic opportunities. The same trend is apparent with entertainment; students' entertainment opportunities, while socially rewarding in many ways, are clearly and intentionally isolated from education opportunities.
This distinction between entertainment and education is advocated by the director of student activities, who plans all of the campus entertainment; his perspective is that academic and educational programming is the responsibility of other college groups, and that his role is strictly to provide entertainment. As a result, students have fewer opportunities to establish a connection between their in-class and out-of-class involvement.

Another issue raised by these entertainment opportunities is the relationship between entertainment and involvement; that is, to what extent are students being entertained as opposed to being responsible for their own social interaction. The director of student activities plans and implements all of the dances, comedians, and movies; students assist with some of the implementation, but virtually all of the decision-making rests with the director. This limited role of the students in entertainment reflects a passive quality within the student culture. Students seem content to be entertained, and do not push to obtain more ownership of their own entertainment.

Moreover, this passive role of students also reflects a quality within the larger institutional culture—a quality that seems content with the way things are. While the student culture is not pushing for more ownership, neither is the institutional culture challenging the students to accept more ownership. Since students are satisfied with the current entertainment offerings, there is no motivation on the part of students or campus administrators to make changes.
This chapter has discussed the results of the study in regard to the involvement opportunities available to students outside the classroom. Chapter Five will discuss the results in regard to the factors and conditions that influence student involvement.
CHAPTER FIVE
RESULTS OF THE STUDY: FACTORS AND CONDITIONS INFLUENCING STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Introduction

During the course of the study, five factors and conditions emerged that significantly influence Central students' out-of-class involvement. However, the influence of these factors and conditions on student involvement is an indirect one. At Central the campus culture is the primary influence on student involvement outside the classroom. These five factors and conditions, then, are forces that greatly influence the campus's student culture and larger institutional culture. It is through this influence that the factors and conditions influence student involvement.

This chapter will discuss each of these factors and conditions and how it influences out-of-class involvement. Community is discussed first because it is a manifestation of the campus culture, and sets a foundation for discussing the other factors and conditions. The other four factors and conditions—mission, college-church relationship, familiar environment, and homogeneous environment—are discussed in ascending order of significance. The mission and the college-church relationship primarily influence the larger institutional culture, and have little direct influence on the student culture. On the other hand, the familiar environment and homogeneous environment have a significant influence on both the institutional culture and student culture, thus have a greater influence on student involvement.
Community: "It's just a strong-knit thing"

The college's statement of purpose includes the following:

Our goal is to maintain a learning environment characterized by a sense of community among students, faculty members, and administrative staff members engaged in a variety of approaches to teaching/learning in seeking to develop the widest possible range of human potential in the members of this academic community.

The college president also referred to this community when discussing the college: "What I think is very important and significant is the quality of the community that the college has formed of the people that are here." When asked to identify what makes the institution special, respondents consistently referred directly or indirectly to this quality of community.

This sense of community is difficult to define precisely. When respondents described Central's sense of community, they referred to an intangible feeling or attitude that is shared by those on campus. The characteristics used to describe this sense of community were a comfortable, informal, welcoming environment; a commitment to the well-being of others; and an unconditional acceptance and respect for people in general.

The director of admission said this campus atmosphere helps prospective students feel good about the college: "Getting them on campus is essential, too, and I think that the environment, the mood, the ambiance of the place, the friendliness comes into play." One
student's comment supported this point: "I visited Simpson and BV and I felt like they were more personal here."

An upperclass student referred to the college as a "close community," adding, "What's nice about it is that you walk around and you always see somebody you know." A resident assistant also referred to this closeness: "The specialness is that there's a camaraderie, a closeness as such as you don't feel uncomfortable saying hi to people on campus." The vice president of student affairs made a similar comment:

I can remember some kids who I worked with very closely who live in Chicago area who said the hardest thing to do was to go home and not to say hello to people on the street or people they meet in the shopping mall. It's infectious.

Another RA summed up the atmosphere as follows: "Everyone has a lot of high goals, expectations. Everyone seems to be working hard within a community, and it's a very positive atmosphere."

Indeed, several respondents alluded to home and family when describing the campus community. One resident assistant said, "You have close friendships and everyone knows everybody. It's a real homey atmosphere." The editor of the student newspaper said of the campus: "It's a real close family-type relationship."

The director of admission suggested that the college's church ties contributed to this atmosphere: "The fact that we are affiliated with the denomination gives the college sort of a sense of stability and family community feel." The director believes this "homey" climate is
a positive selling point for the college: "I like to tell people, and the
counselors subscribe to this, that we're a homegrown-made-the-way-
you-make-your-own kind of college. We don't need to shy away from
that because there is a market out there for that." Moreover, he added
that he believes this "homey" climate only will get more popular:
"Frankly, I think that as time goes by and as things become more
technologically complex, a movement will be made back to this kind of
institution that can provide those hometown, homegrown value
systems and support systems."

One student, when asked what makes the Central community
what it is, responded, "Nice people. It's just a strong-knit thing." A
resident assistant made a similar comment about the campus
environment: "There's a unity. A lot of people here say there's not a
unity but I really think there is compared to some places." This
emphasis on the people as the source of community was common.
The president of the student senate said, "I think it's the community
that is special for me." When asked what it is about the community
that makes it special, he replied, "To that I'd say the people."

Central captures the friendly and supportive community
atmosphere in its publications. The Parent's Handbook states,
"Central is a friendly college with many warm and supportive people
eager to help whenever they can." Furthermore, in discussing campus
community, the 1983 North Central Report gave the following
definition:
The many instances, small and large, in which people at the College lay aside their personal interests to help one another, to a pervasive sense of responsibility for the whole College and its programs rather than for a specific department or office, to the practice of democratic discussion and decision, and to the trust of another's good will.

This sense of genuine friendliness and caring was communicated consistently by a majority of respondents. The dean of students' description of the community reflects this environment: "For me what is special is the sense of community that is found here. You've probably heard that before, but there's a genuine concern for people here—for the development and welfare of people."

She also commented that she receives positive comments from parents as well regarding the helpfulness of the campus: "I've had several parents talk to me lately in terms of it feels so good to be able to call and that I get response to the things that I'm concerned about." This comment is similar to one offered by the president of the college: "[I] discern within the campus a capacity of a group of people to care a great deal for each other and to be concerned about each other's welfare which, I think, provides a very positive kind of context for learning."

Students' perceptions were consistent with these comments. One student stated, "There's always someone around. So if you're lost, all you have to do is ask them. Somebody will tell you. Nobody really laughs at you to your face." In explaining why she thought the college
is special, another student said, "The friendliness of the people. When you first come in, especially being Black, you obviously have this perception of people or you're a little bit skeptical. The people are helpful and they're there to help you if you need help. They're easily accessible."

This sense of community is conveyed through the faculty's and staff's interactions with students. These interactions reflect a personal openness and accessibility to students. Often the interactions among the students, faculty, and staff are casual ones; one of the first events of the year for new students is a picnic at the president's house with faculty and administrators. Several students commented that in their day to day experiences it is not uncommon for their faculty to encourage them to attend campus convocations and events. As one student said, "They just don't say, 'You should go,' and then they don't show up themselves. A lot of them are there." This student also commented that one of her professors occasionally calls her to alert her of an event or program that might interest her.

Several students correlated the college's sense of community with its small size. In explaining what makes the college special, one student responded, "I would say its size. I think Central is a place where you get special, personal attention." Another student, who was commenting on the college's caring environment, said, "At a larger college you may not have those types of support networks." Another student speculated that even students trying to break from their small town Iowa roots are more likely to be successful at a small college
because "the bigger institutions will just send you back to where you came from. Here you've got the opportunity to be personal and they'll give you all you can and get you studying wherever you need to go and specialize the programs to what you really want to do."

The dean of the college also acknowledged an expectation that small colleges provide students with more support than larger institutions:

Sometime you get the feeling that the students are saying, 'Well, you don't have to worry about that. Somebody will help you fix that up if it doesn't work out.' I don't know if it's really true or not, but it's that kind of frustration that leads some of our colleagues to say, 'To heck with them. They got themselves into this, let them get themselves out. We made it clear what the expectation was. Why should we help them?' Well, the reason why we help them is that they spend a heck of a lot more money to go here than to go to the University of Iowa. They expect a more personal touch. They expect somebody to be looking over their shoulder and helping them. If they wanted to be thrown into a cold, cruel world with 800 other people in a class, they'd have gone someplace else.

Indeed, several students indicated Central's small size was a major factor in their decision to enroll. As one first-year student said, "One of the things I like about it is that it's in a smaller town, small college. Here you're not a number like in a big institution.... I'm from a farm and went to a little school so I wouldn't be used to big classes
and everything like that anyway." Another first-year student agreed: "That's why I like Central, too, is because it's small and it seems like you know about everyone. On a big university people say, 'How do you know so many people?' But here you get to know faces and you know people. That's what I like." Other respondents drew comparisons to large universities as well. One RA said, "I think you get to know a greater amount of people being that it's such a small college instead of big universities where there's just too many people to know."

One facet of campus life that captures this sense of community is college publications. The best example of this is the "Crier," a one-page announcement bulletin that is posted around 10:00 each weekday morning in campus buildings and student residences. Although published by the student personnel office, the "Crier" solicits announcements from everyone on campus. The tone of the publication is very personal. In addition to announcing group meetings, campus special events, and official college bulletins, the "Crier" also lists birthdays and other personal messages. One issue included the following entry: "Whoever took my small, black umbrella, I want it back!" The director of admission said that the "Crier" is read by most community members: "You'll see a group clustered around it when it is posted in the morning." He also added, "It's funny how simple the dumb thing is, but how essential it is to the operation of this place."

Indeed, the "Crier" has become a part of the campus community's daily routine.
Like the "Crier," the student newspaper, The Ray, has a very personalized tone. The Ray is divided into seven sections: "Opinion", "Feature", "Flash Commentary", "Entertainment", "News", "Big Red Sports", and "Back Page." In many ways, The Ray is a collage of photos and quotes that creates a personal tone. The paper is not a news-oriented publication, instead it relies on feature articles on campus people and events; even the stories in the "News" section more closely resemble feature articles, rather than traditional objective news stories. Indeed, the paper as a whole is not really objective; its tone is usually fun and positive. An exception to this positive tone is an occasional editorial critical of the administration.

Another way in which a sense of community is manifested is the way new students learn about the campus environment. Much of the information students receive about life at Central is learned informally—by word of mouth or through "the grapevine." The dean of students said,

I hear upperclass students saying to new ones, 'Well, why don't you just go talk to so and so.' Or I have student coming in and saying, 'Somebody in my class told me to come talk to you.... I think that attitude is passed on from student to student. You can go in and talk to people.

In describing the relationship between upperclass athletes and first-year athletes, one of the coaches stated, "There's that grapevine that they know is a pretty good network."
However, this grapevine is not always positive. The coach noted that some first-year students use upperclass students to collect information about particular classes to take, adding that, "They listen, not always to their benefit." The dean of students also noted that the grapevine that carries information regarding where to go for help also carries information about which offices are not helpful as well. Furthermore, several students commented on the downfalls of the Central grapevine; on occasion, students' personal business becomes public knowledge. As one student said, "Sometimes people know too much about you--gossipy." Another student stated, "You do something one night and everybody knows about it. It gets around real quickly what goes on."

Another value of the campus community is unconditional acceptance of other people. The 1990-91 Student Handbook includes a section on "standards of behavior" that states the following expectation of students: "respect for the right of an individual to have and express belief and opinion different from another's, including political, religious and social points of view." This expectation is evident on the campus. The vice president of student affairs echoed this expectation: "Everyone is accepted to college irrespective of their background, their religious affiliations, their national origin or their ethnicity--they're all a part of the community. And that's important to us and we believe it." The president of the college tied this sense of an accepting community to the college's religious roots: "The community that is formed by the people who share those values of the
Jewish and Christian traditions tend to be an inclusive community rather than an exclusive community."

Many respondents commented on this notion of a community of unconditional respect and acceptance. One resident assistant commented, "I think... the people that come here have... [a] general respect for each other." A first-year student commented, "People interact with each other and it's not cliquish. It's not a negative sort of place. It's very positive. That's one of the reasons why I chose to come here, because it's very receptive." The dean of the college shared a story that addressed this issue of respect and acceptance. He told of a student who was very involved in high school:

He learned how to be rowdy and to drink beer and horse around. He still did that, but the point was he also liked to play piano and he was pretty good at it. And he liked to write poetry and he was pretty good at that. But he didn't let anybody know there. When he came to college he found it was okay to do those things.... It was all right. he found a place -- he found a community--[in] which the attitude was, 'It's okay to be different.'

Many respondents commented that this acceptance and respect also extended to the types of activities and groups to which students belong. One faculty member commented, "There's probably a couple of organizations that might have a stigma to them, but I think that overall there's a real acceptance of being involved with whatever you want to be involved with." Another faculty member added that he
never heard students "badmouth" other organizations; he also said that if students do not participate in a particular organization, it is because they are not interested rather than because of any negative reputation or stigma associated with that organization. The campus minister shared a similar perspective:

I think, for the most part, there has been a fairly agreeable openness about groups for students to participate in those groups if they wish to.... Students feel that they are free to organize and to do the kinds of things that they're concerned about.

Many students agreed that peer pressure did not discourage students from participating in organizations. One resident assistant said, "I don't think I really know of any group that's looked down upon.... No matter what it is you're working on, people around here respect your right to believe in that." Another student said, "It's not like people think you're a nerd because you're in SCATE." In fact, this student believed that most students held a great deal of respect for students active in SCATE and other socially conscious organizations. Indeed, another resident assistant commented that it is "surprisingly cool on this campus" to participate in organizations involved in social action.

An upperclass student commented that when students do not participate in a particular organization, it is not because the organization is viewed negatively, but usually because of time limitations: "It just usually gets pushed off because everyone gets
caught up in everything else." Another upperclass student, when asked if younger students receive messages regarding how to be in the "in-crowd," responded, "I've never gotten that impression for the most part." Comments from first-year students supported this perception. Most commented that they felt little or no pressure from peers to follow the example of upperclass students. One first-year student stated that students' involvement is more likely to be influenced by their friends' interests than by upperclass students: "If [your friends] have a tendency to [participate in a particular activity], then you do it, but if they don't, then you don't."

**Summary of community** In identifying what was special about the college, respondents consistently referred to a strong sense of community. This community is exhibited in the attitudes of the students, faculty, and staff, and can be described as an atmosphere of sincere friendliness and caring, of unconditional acceptance and respect, and of genuine concern for others. Many respondents suggested a correlation between this sense of community and the college's small size, which is conducive to getting to know people and receiving more personal attention.

This sense of campus community also is reflected in campus facilities and publications. The campus grounds and facilities are well-kept and maintained, revealing both the meticulous care taken by the maintenance and housekeeping staff and the respect students, faculty, and staff show for these facilities. Campus publications also reflect this informal, "homey" sense of community. The "Crier" is a bulletin that is
published each weekday morning and posted all over campus; the "Crier" contains a wide variety of announcements, ranging from important meetings to birthday wishes and other personal messages. Like the "Crier," the "Ray," the campus's weekly newspaper, has a very informal yet positive tone; the majority of the paper consists of feature articles and a collage of fun photographs and quotes.

**Conclusions regarding community** At Central, the term, "community," carries two distinct meanings. In the most tangible sense, community refers to the people on campus--students, faculty, and staff. However, when people refer to a sense of community, they are referring to an intangible feeling or attitude that is shared by the those on campus. The characteristics of this sense of community are a comfortable, informal, welcoming environment; a commitment to the well-being of others; and an unconditional acceptance and respect for people in general. It is in this way that the sense of campus community represents the campus culture.

This sense of community has a significant influence on student involvement on campus. First, it helps new students make the transition to college life more easily; the comfortable welcome they receive from others encourages newcomers' efforts to ask questions and learn about their new environment. This sets a positive tone for later involvement. The comfortable, welcoming environment also contributes to the positive student-faculty relationship on campus; since students feel comfortable approaching faculty outside the...
classroom, it increases the chances that students have to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

Second, the commitment to others' well-being creates a supportive environment for student involvement. Students enjoy supporting each other, whether it be cheering for them at an athletics contest, or going to watch them in a fine arts event. This support not only reinforces involvement in these activities, but encourages involvement in fellowship with each other. Third, the sense of community creates an environment of unconditional acceptance and respect. This is critical to involvement because students do not feel pressure to participate in some activities or not participate in others. The student culture sends the message that whoever you are and whatever you choose to do is okay. As a result, students feel comfortable becoming involved in the opportunities that interest them without the fear of rejection by their peers.

The college mission: "To me it seems like they're trying to make you more than a student—make you more of a person"

The college's mission is articulated clearly in its "Statement of Purpose." There are two fundamental aspects of Central's mission: the college's Christian tradition, and its liberal arts approach to education. The following discussion of the mission is intended to provide a context for understanding the mission's influence on the institutional culture and student involvement.

The "Statement of Purpose" demonstrates that the college's mission cannot be separated from its church ties. The "Statement of
"Purpose" makes several references to the church and the college's Christian heritage. The "Statement of Purpose" begins:

As a college in the Christian tradition, our goal is to have Christian attitudes and values operative within this academic community and between this and other communities, to encourage understanding of the Christian faith and promote dialog between the Christian faith and the various academic disciplines--their perspectives, values, methodologies--and, through teaching and modeling, provide the members of this community with assistance in their private and corporate lives.

Another passage in the "Statement of Purpose" discusses the college's church-related function: "The College has a function in the broader communities of society and the church. The purpose of the mission is to serve as sustainer and critic. As sustainer, the College seeks to create an appreciation and perpetuation of the strengths, values and traditions of our heritage. As critic, the College encourages analysis and judgment of ideas, values, and institutions, and seeks to provide leadership and support in reform."

The mission of the college addresses both educational and religious issues. The dean of students said of the "Statement:" "I think it pretty much reflects the concern and commitment to the church and to values but also a commitment to high standards of education." This dual responsibility to education and the church also is addressed in a brochure on the college's campus ministries program. The brochure states, "We believe it is important to become
aware of and grow in our role as Christians in the world and to integrate a college education into that God-given calling."

Even though the church is an important part of the college's mission statement, when asked to describe Central's mission students rarely referred to the church or any other religious aspect of the college. Their responses focused on the student's total development. One student said, "I think it's just trying to prepare us for the real world." A first-year student responded, "To me, it seems like they're trying to make you more than a student--make you more of a person, well-rounded." One resident assistant summarized his thoughts this way:

We come here as--I'll use the analogy--a piece of clay. And they try to mold us into the most well-rounded individual we can be. They try to facilitate all the possible things that we might experience later or try to make us more aware.

Another student responded, "It has to do with values--clarifying your values, hoping you find a meaningful purpose in life, giving you talents to help you pursue an occupation."

These comments regarding students' total development are consistent with Central's "Statement of Purpose." In the "Statement," the college states that its purpose in regard to students is "to assist them in developing their identities, in discovering and enhancing their unique talents, in clarifying their values, and finding a meaningful philosophy for their lives." In discussing the institution's mission, the president of the college also referred to students' total development:
One of the things about a liberal education is that in a college committed to the liberal education of its students, one is not only putting an emphasis on intellectual development but one is putting an emphasis on the development of that student as a whole person. One is concerned about what is happening to that student in terms of their emotional development, their physical development, and their social and spiritual development.

The second fundamental aspect of the college's mission is its liberal arts approach to education. This liberal arts approach is noted in the "Statement of Purpose," in which the college refers to itself as a "liberal arts college in the Christian tradition." The "Statement" states that the college's goal with regard to liberal arts education is

To expose members of this academic community to the content, organization, assumptions and values, as well as to analytical and communicative skills of a broad range of disciplines, i.e., arts, humanities, sciences, symbolic systems and cultural studies and facilitate activity in these areas at a relatively sophisticated level.

For the most part, student respondents appeared to support the college's efforts to provide a broad, liberal education. Several referred to the general education requirements as a way in which the college provides a liberal education. One upperclass student said he believed the general education curriculum provided a good balance of important academic subjects. Another student said, "I think they do a good job with the overall studies." However, one student felt that the general education curriculum was too broad. She said that students
who do not develop a specific academic or vocational interest "can end up leaving here knowing a little about a lot of things but not a lot about any one thing." She felt this broad approach was not preparing students for a specialized marketplace: "Today's world is so specialized. You have to get deep into one thing."

In discussing the institution's mission, several respondents commented that they felt the college's "Statement of Purpose" was consistent with the attitudes and values held by faculty and staff. When asked whether the "Statement of Purpose" was consistent with the college's mission as perceived by the general campus community, the dean of the college responded, "Certainly more consistent than any of the places I've been." In reflecting on the purposes of the college, the campus minister stated, "I think in a general way [the purposes of the college] are fulfilled." The dean of students agreed: "I think what happens is consistent with [the 'Statement of Purpose']." She also discussed how she was involved in the revision of the "Statement of Purpose;" she described the revision process as an attempt to create a mission statement that captured the essence of the college: "I was here when it was revised several years ago and was part of the struggle to get the wording in, all of it correct.... I think at that time we tried to make it a reflection of who we were."

Summary of the college mission The college describes itself as a liberal arts college in the Christian tradition. Most students described the college mission as trying to help students develop as whole, well-rounded persons, consistent with this liberal arts
approach. Although most faculty and staff saw the relationship between the church and the mission as a strong one, few students said they sensed any real connection between the college mission and religion. Overall, the faculty and staff articulated a clear understanding of the college's mission and purpose, and believed the mission was an accurate reflection of the day to day activity on the campus.

**Conclusions regarding the college mission**

The college's mission has a significant but indirect influence on student involvement. At the core of Central's mission is its identity as a liberal arts college in the Christian tradition; this Christian heritage and liberal arts emphasis compose a critical part of Central's institutional culture. Therefore, the mission's influence on student involvement is felt through its influence on the institutional culture.

Central strives to educate and develop the whole student. That is, the college is concerned with students' development outside the classroom as well inside. This mission is very clear to faculty and staff. They articulate the mission clearly, and have considered how the mission should influence how they work with students. Consistent with the mission, faculty and staff, on an individual basis, are motivated to encourage students to become involved in their education and to broaden their approach to learning.

While the mission invites individual faculty and staff to encourage students' involvement in their own education, the larger institutional culture does not do so as consistently. Some signals sent by the institutional culture suggest that the college is satisfied with the status
quo—that it is comfortable with who it is; as a result, the college makes out-of-class learning opportunities available to students, but does not challenge students to seize these opportunities. In some ways, the college mission reflects this state of satisfaction. The mission seems to be a reflection of what the college is, and what it expects of students, faculty, and staff; however, the mission does not appear to place much emphasis on the institution's role in challenging students and facilitating their total development; to some extent, the mission seems a description of the college as it is, rather than an articulation of an ideal toward which it strives.

College-church relationship: "There's a feeling that it's there, but it's not something that is pushed a lot"

The following discussion of the college-church relationship is intended to provide a context for understanding this relationship's influence on the institutional culture and student involvement.

Although the college was founded in 1853, its tie with the Reformed Church in America was established in 1916. The tie continues to be a strong one today. As the vice president for student affairs states, "We're affiliated with the Reformed Church in America. It's very important to us. It's a part of our history and our heritage." However, the director of admission said that it is important to clarify with prospective students the college-church relationship, particularly since many students are unfamiliar with the Reformed Church in America. As an alumnus of the college, the director of admission recalled his first exposure to the Reformed Church in America:
"That's RCA--I thought it was a record label until I came to Central." Today's students have a similar reaction: "When we tell them we're a part of the the Reformed Church in America, you get that kind of glazed, dazed look."

The clarification of the role of religion on campus is important in the recruiting of new students. The director of admission said, "It's helpful to explain to [prospective students] that this is not a Bible college." He added, "It's an interesting dynamic because our church affiliation is not something that we as an admissions office or a public relations office wear on our sleeve. We don't have banner headlines that say 'church-related college.'" He said the role of religion on campus is so subtle that students who are not aware of the college-church tie may not even notice this tie when they visit campus.

However, if a prospective student indicates an interest in the religious aspect of the college, then the admission staff is able to show it them: "We can explain, we can tell, we can show, we can let them experience and be in touch with people who can make it very clear that there is very much a church presence on the campus." For those students who are not interested, then the feeling is, "It's there and available for you, but it's not going to crammed down your throat."

The church has a visible, although often subtle, presence on campus. The chapel, built in 1982, stands in the middle of campus. During nice weather, classes or student organizations will meet on the grassy slopes surrounding the chapel. At various times the chimes
from the chapel can be heard playing "Kumbaya" and "Michael Row Your Boat Ashore."

However, despite its visual and audio presence, many students feel the church's role on campus is so subtle that it is virtually unnoticed by most students. When asked whether the college's Christian foundations were visible on campus, one resident assistant responded,

Not to me. You really don't see them here except for maybe on Sunday when some people go to campus church and you realize everything in town's closed for a reason. As for the students, I don't see a lot of [Christian influence] in the students.

The editor of the campus newspaper gave a similar response: "There's a chapel service every Thursday at noon and then the Sunday services. But other than that, there isn't a lot." One first-year student summarized the college-church connection this way: "Sometimes the bells play a nice little song, but other than that...."

In several instances, respondents suggested that the religious influence on campus is minimal. In discussing the church's role on campus, the campus minister stated, "Those who don't think that's an important part of college life are vocal about that, and articles in The Ray... suggest that this is not a very religious campus." A first-year student commented, "I don't think Central really does much with religion even though it's a religious college." One upperclass student who raised in the Reformed Church in America described the campus as being "a little more liberal than I expected it to be." One upperclass
student suggested that the college-church relationship should be reevaluated:

I think that the tie to the Reformed Church should either be dropped or do something tangible about it.... It could say that it's in the Reformed tradition or something like that, but as far as that being the underlying value of professors and students here--it's not.

When discussing the role of the church on campus, however, the most common comment from respondents was that the church presence provided students with spiritual opportunities if desired, but the church's did not pervade the campus. The campus minister described the environment as follows: "The religious involvement of students is not pushed out in the forefront." Or as the dean of students said, "We don't beat them over the head with that."

This "we don't beat them over the head" perspective was reflected in students' comments. For example, one first-year student described the church's presence as follows: "It's not something that's jammed down your throat. It's just something that you're made aware of." The editor of the student newspaper said of the campus's Christian values, "There's a feeling that it's there, but it's not something that's really pushed a lot." One resident assistant stated that religious opportunities were available to students, but whether they chose to be involved or not was no big deal. One student said of the religious influence on campus: "You can find it if you go out and look for it." For the most part, student felt the degree to which the
church influence was felt was about right. Becoming involved in the campus's religious life was like participation in other opportunities; as one first-year student said, "If they want to do it, they can do it."

For the most part, there was a significant gap between the students' perception of the visibility of the church on campus and the perception of the faculty and staff. When asked about this difference, the vice president for student affairs said that current students have not had the time to gain a full appreciation of the church's influence on the college:

The students spend four or five years and they're gone. To those of us who perpetuate, [the church's influence] has a deeper meaning than it does to them. So probably the religious dimension of the church has more meaning to the president and administration and many of the faculty than it does to the students. I think it's a relationship that will have a deeper meaning for the students after they leave than it does as they are in attendance right now.

The director of admission suggested that just because the students do not perceive the campus's Christian influence does not necessarily mean they are not affected: "They may not realize they're feeling the Christian influence."

Some staff felt that although students may believe they are not interested in the religious life on campus, the college's Christian heritage is reflected in students' values and daily actions. When asked if students would say they sensed the influence of Christian values, the
vice president of student affairs responded, "If you asked them they would say, 'no.' But if you looked at the way they live, [the Christian influence] is present." He elaborated on this idea:

I also think that the involvement goes into the daily living in the value sense. Most of our students have a religious background, a spiritual sense, that demonstrates the way they feel with other people. I think basically there is a religious orientation within the campus that affects daily life.

Indeed, the influence of Christian values is referred to in the 1990-91 Student Handbook:

The College assumes the students to be adults and will treat them as such. Central encourages mature behavior and responsibility for one's own behavior. A sense of values commensurate with the Judeo Christian ethic is emphasized. Love, compassion, understanding, justice, respect for all persons, responsibility to one's God and neighbor, and honesty are essential to this doctrine.

However, just as students did not recognize the church's influence on the college, neither did they recognize Christianity's influence on their values. One resident assistant acknowledged that many students, particularly those from small towns, often have strong Christian influences in their values; however, she added, "there's enough of us that don't come from that kind of setting that we kind of add to that more of an open mind." Another resident assistant
commented that many student arrive with these strong values, but not all hold on to them:

I think a lot of people, when they get here, they know they have these values and the first month they're very good people and everything, and then the temptation sets in and they tend to leave those values behind. I see a lot of people do that.

Another way in which Christian values are communicated to students is through faculty and staff role modeling. When asked about Christian values on campus, one coach said, "I think we tend to model that kind of life." In addition, he suggested that the coaches also reward students who reflect these values: "Perhaps we tend to admire and pat on the back those kind of kids for their kind of exemplary style of living."

The dean of students said that some faculty and staff try to be good role models to students by showing concern and talking about their participation in their own local church congregations. She also said her discussions with students often provide an opportunity to discuss values: "I talk a great deal about things such as forgiveness and I very explicitly, at this kind of place, can tie that in with what it says about faith and what faith says about forgiveness, what Christianity says about it."

Summary of college-church relationship The college’s ties to the Reformed Church in America is an important part of its history and heritage. However, the visibility of the church and religion in campus life is subtle. Students, particularly, indicated that the role of
the church on campus was not prominent. They considered the campus's religious opportunities just like other involvement opportunities: they are there for those students who are interested, but otherwise no one is going to pressure students to participate. However, several faculty and staff suggested that the college's relationship with the church does exert subtle influences on the students, such that many students may not even perceive it. Some also suggested that students may not sense the religious influences because they have been accustomed to similar influences in their home communities all of their lives.

**Conclusions regarding college-church relationship** Like the college's mission, the college-church relationship has an indirect influence on student involvement. Central's historical ties to the church are deeply imbedded in the college's institutional culture. Therefore, the college-church relationship's influence on student involvement is felt through this influence on the institutional culture.

Just as the chapel is located in the center of the campus, the church is central to the college's mission. However, students do not see this church connection in their everyday lives. They believe it is a very small factor in their decision to attend Central, and a very small factor in their involvement on campus.

Nonetheless, since the college's relationship to the church is such a strong part of the larger institutional culture, the church has an indirect impact on the student culture as well. The church influences institutional expectations of student conduct, and these expectations
influence how students behave and become involved. Since faculty and staff tend to be more aware of the college-church relationship, this relationship influences how many of them interact with students. As a result, student involvement is influenced indirectly by faculty and staff role modeling.

Another indirect way in which the college's church ties influence student involvement is through the connection it makes between the campus environment and the students' home environment. Most students say they did not choose to attend Central because of its relationship with the church. However, they do say that the degree to which they felt comfortable on campus was a major influence. A major reason why students feel so comfortable on campus is that the campus feels so much like their home community; furthermore, for most students, the influence of the church on campus community is similar to the influence of their home church on their family and home community. In other words, the church's influence on students is present, but students do not associate this influence with the church. The church's influence is intertwined with other related values, such as those of family and community; as a result, students have difficulty distinguishing this church influence. Nonetheless, the church is a subtle but steady influence on student involvement because--just as the church is a part of the college's roots--it is a part of the students' roots as well.
A familiar environment: "They'll come to campus and find this is not fundamentally different"

The background of the students contributes to the sense of campus community. For a vast majority of the student body, the characteristics of their home environment are quite similar; moreover, the environment they find at this campus is similar still. As a result, Central students find the campus environment seems familiar because it is so similar to their home communities.

The president of the college stated, "I think what happens a lot of times is students come from, say, a high school in a relatively small Iowa community where the same conditions have already existed, and they'll come to campus and find this is not fundamentally different." When asked whether the campus environment reflects what students are used to back in their home town, the vice president of student affairs responded, "No question about it."

One of the commonalities shared by the students is their Iowa roots. According to data from the registrar's office, in 1990-91 80% of the student body is from Iowa. Although 42 states are represented in the student body, no more than 5% of the students are from any other one state. The dean of students stated, "Most of the students we recruit are basically good Iowa kids with high standards." The director of admission said that, although they recruit heavily in midwestern metropolitan areas, the college "has traditionally served an Iowa population." He cited the availability of the Iowa Tuition
Grant, a need-based state financial aid program, as a major factor in their success in recruiting Iowa students:

A lot of that, frankly, is driven by the Iowa Tuition Grant. To recruit out of state is doubly expensive for us: the expense of sending a counselor to do that territory and the expense incurred in preparing financial aid packages for those students.

Another characteristic shared by many of the students is a small home town. The director of admission estimated that the percentage of students coming from more metropolitan areas as "ten to 15 percent. Maybe as high as 20." However, he added that these metropolitan areas are predominantly in Iowa; since Iowa cities have considerably smaller populations than Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, and other large cities in the midwest, Iowa cities have a different feel than larger metropolitan areas: "It's much more home-grown than metro Chicago, even metro Minneapolis."

Several respondents commented that the fact the campus environment was familiar helped students make the transition from home to college. One of the coaches commented, "There are some feelings that they have such as their confidence in fitting in to a place like this--they're feeling like the rest of the students are like them." One faculty member said, "They feel comfortable with each other."

A resident assistant suggested this commonality of background contributed to the strength of the campus community:

I think the one thing probably that sets Central apart from a lot of other colleges is the type of students we get here, in that they
all come from similar backgrounds—even though we have minority students—and they gel together as one.

Another resident assistant said that students bring to campus similar values and perspectives, "and when they get together then they strengthen that."

Other students stated that the campus's being close to home—both in geography and atmosphere—was a deciding factor in attending the college. When asked to identify the reasons students choose to attend the college, the student body president responded, "I guess the major thing would be proximity to their home town." He added that students coming here would feel "they are in their own community. They are not going into a completely new culture." An upperclass student commented, "It's a safe campus." She further explained that the term "safe" referred to a psychological as well as physical well-being. A first-year student said that he chose the college because it would be a "slower" transition: "Well, for me it's not as big of a change. It's a big change... starting off the year, but I would rather it be the slow change [experienced at Central rather] than [the more abrupt change anticipated with] a big university."

However, for some students the "small town" environment is not attractive. One first-year student, disenchanted with the campus's atmosphere, indicated that she would transfer to another school if it were not for her study abroad plans. She commented, "It's like an extension of high school here." A resident assistant, discussing the campus environment's similarity to that of small towns, offered a
similar comment: "I really can't make any distinction between high school and college. We're adults and yet there's an atmosphere of high school."

While the campus environment attracts students from small Iowa towns, the director of admission noted that the environment has its drawbacks: "We have difficulty recruiting students from metro areas just because of [the small town atmosphere]." He explained, "People who think it's cheesy and need something a little bigger, who want the glitz and glamour, are turned off when they come here."

Since many of Central's students come from similar backgrounds, there tends to be a similarity in values as well. The Parent's Handbook states, "We believe the greatest deterrent to negative performance on campus is the background the students carry to college with them." The president of the college discussed this "homogeneity of values" as it relates to the campus community, saying that the "greater sharing of values makes possible a deeper sense of community." The campus minister elaborated on the students' shared values: "The values would be one of respect for other people and living a productive life and one that was unselfish and caring about others and those sorts of things would be in the majority of our student, consciously or unconsciously."

The students' backgrounds also influence the types of activities with which they will be involved. The vice president of student affairs suggested that students have certain expectations regarding in-class and out-of-class opportunities, and when these students visit the
college they feel it could meet those expectations, "not only academically but also in the out-of-class or extracurricular areas." One faculty member stated, "One of the things that you need to understand is that a lot of students came to Central because they went to smaller schools where they were involved in a lot of activities and they wanted to continue to be active in organizations." The vice president of student affairs echoed this comment:

> [If students were] actively involved in lots of things in high school there's time to become actively involved in those things here. You support your friends who are in the play or on the ball team or in the choir. Those are carryovers.

These "carryovers" are evident in athletics. When asked if the kind of support students show for athletics is similar to the kind of support seen in high school communities, one coach responded,

> That's one of the reasons that our students are interested in our program. They used to be interested in it and it has been an important part of their high school experience to focus on... that particular sport activities. That high school is representing Podunk High School so that's a learned kind of thing that continues here and they do intend to to that. I think that's very important.

He also added that many students from smaller communities are used to being active in athletics and other activities because of the small size of the student body: "Those kids are very used to being active in a whole lot of things in high school. They go out for athletics..."
and they go out for music simply because of the small numbers." The coach's comment is very consistent with a statement about the first-year student class in the Parent's Handbook: "The class shows a high degree of participation in high school activities with particular interest in athletics and music...."

Some respondents suggested that in some ways the students' background may have a negative effect in the classroom. The dean of the college stated that their background may initially stymie assertiveness in the classroom: "The one thing that we don't have as much success with--and that comes out of the fact that the previous acculturation that they've had--and that's they're not too assertive in terms of expressing their own opinions about things." One faculty member referred to "a natural reticence for many people to speak out in class situations. They're afraid of looking stupid or getting put down." A resident assistant's comment supported this perspective:

Well, to be honest, I see a lot of Central students as passively going to class, letting the teacher teach, that type of thing.... I still see a high school environment here. I don't really see people taking charge and being assertive. I have the thought that we're not taught to think on our own. We're taught to think the way they want us to think.

Summary of a familiar environment Since the vast majority of students comes from small Iowa towns, the campus environment feels like a familiar one because it shares many of the qualities of their home town environment. Approximately 80 percent of the student
body is from Iowa, and most of them from small towns in Iowa; no other state is represented by more than five percent of the student body. The similarities in home backgrounds and values contributes to the development of the campus's strong community. Because the environment is familiar, students feel greater confidence regarding the transition from their home environment to college. The campus environment also feels familiar in regard to the types of activities available to them; for many students, the kinds of activities in which they participated at home also are present on campus because so many other students still share an interest in them.

Conclusions regarding a familiar environment This familiarity of environment has a very significant influence on student involvement because it has a tremendous impact on both the college's institutional culture and students culture. One way the familiar environment encourages involvement is by contributing to students' feelings of comfort and belonging on campus. Since students feel more comfortable and at home, they are more confident and willing to take personal risks, including risks to become involved.

This familiar environment also greatly influences the kinds of involvement opportunities available to students on campus. Many students were very involved in their high schools and their home communities; when they come to Central, they find that many of these same involvement opportunities thrive on campus. Therefore, the familiar environment encourages involvement by creating
opportunities for students to carry over their home involvement interests to the college community.

This familiar environment clearly contributes to student involvement because students find the campus comfortable for risk-taking and full of opportunities in interests they have already developed. However, the familiar environment also can inhibit student involvement. By being so familiar, the campus environment may encourage students to take more risks, but it also reduces the number of risks that exist. It is easy for students to pick up their involvement where they left off; in fact, the campus environment makes it too easy for students to continue established interests rather than challenge themselves with new ones. This is a problem that perpetuates itself. The more students find familiar involvement interests on campus, the stronger these established interests will become; as a result, new interests will develop less frequently, so the campus will continue to be attractive only to students with these same familiar interests.

Another way in which the familiar environment inhibits student involvement is through its reinforcement of a passive student culture. In their high school environments, most students participated in highly structured and guided involvement opportunities; they participated actively, but the opportunities themselves were developed and operated for them. In college, however, students usually find more freedom and autonomy to create and develop their own involvement opportunities. Unfortunately, by continuing their interests in familiar involvement opportunities, students are
vulnerable to staying in this passive mode; like high school, many students are content to let someone else provide the opportunities, and will just join in when they are interested. In other words, at times the familiar environment can be too familiar and too comfortable, thus not challenging students to push themselves in new areas of learning.

A homogeneous environment: "I think 99 percent of us are alike"

Having so many students coming from similar backgrounds results in a homogeneous campus. As one resident assistant said of the student body,

I sense that we're very alike. I wouldn't say that we're different or that we vary in any way. I think 99 percent of us are alike in some way. Maybe some people dress different, but even then some of our morals, values, or things we were brought up on or whatever are about the same.

The director of admission acknowledged that the college's primary recruiting market--i.e., small Iowa towns--has small numbers of students with backgrounds other than Caucasian and Christian. A review of the photographs in "A World of Opportunity," one of the admission publications, reflects this homogeneity. This publication contains photographs of 18 women and 21 men; with the exception of one international student and one African American student, all persons shown are Caucasian.

According to the director of admission, approximately one to two percent of the student body are members of ethnic minorities,
and international students are as much as three percent. The vice president of student affairs noted that there was a time when the college successfully recruited students of color from the east and west coasts:

There have been times where we've had a many as 60 to 70 African Americans on campus. We had a Black population of 5 to 7 percent, many of them coming from California.... There was a time when a third of our student body was from New York, New Jersey, or California.

This fact was not lost on current students of color. One African American student said, "We looked into the last 50 years and the population here at Central, and what you find is that 52 percent of the population was from outside of Iowa. There were a lot more Blacks. As a matter of fact, I believe it was between five and ten percent." An international student made a similar comment: "I know that 15 to 20 years ago there were more international, more minority students than there are today. That has changed not only with students, but also with faculty."

Several faculty and staff clearly were not satisfied with the small numbers of staff and students of color currently on campus. As one faculty member said of the homogeneous faculty: "Everybody is concerned sincerely" about the lack of ethnic diversity on campus. Another said, "They've tried and tried to get people [of color] to come but it's just hard to do." The vice president of student affairs commented, "Those are issues we are groping with and we're very
interested in becoming [more] diversified." Indeed, the president of the college discussed his plans for diversifying the student body:

I provisionally set forth a goal of trying to achieve about five to seven percent of our enrollment from the United States' ethnic backgrounds, whether they be Hispanic or African American or Asian. And then I have, in addition to that, suggested that we should try to move toward five to seven percent of the population being international students from other countries.

In discussing the recruitment of students of color, one faculty member asked, "How would you even get them to come here?" The director of admission acknowledged the difficulty recruiting students of color to come to such a homogeneous college. He also acknowledged the challenge of achieving the president's goal of five to seven percent representation of both ethnic minorities and international students:

I think it's realistic if the institution is ready to invest the kind of dollars it's going to take to get the job done. I really do. Those dollars don't necessarily have to take the form of financial aid. Those dollars can take the form of some market research and some strategic planning from an objective source, whether it be a consultant or a firm or whatever, development of recruitment propaganda that will attract and appeal to specifically those kinds of students.

Since the college's current recruiting market is primarily Christian and Caucasian, he also said that the college would have to
make greater investments in staff and travel: "Investing the money in travelling to areas obviously where there are populations of those students and providing the staff that's going to be persuasive and attractive and able to get the job done—it's a significant investment." However, the director noted that these efforts would be "a terrific financial burden for the institution.... Right now is not a time to be risky or taking big chances financially." Nonetheless, he added, "If we make the investment, it's a very realistic goal."

In developing a multicultural campus environment, it not only is important to recruit students and faculty of color, but also retain them. The director of admission said that his staff must be honest with students of color regarding the environment they will find on campus: "We certainly don't hide the fact that they will be a minority here, and we try to provide the sorts of support services that will help them adjust." He also said the staff tries to carefully screen students to make sure that their expectations of the campus are consistent with what they will find.

Retaining diversity among the faculty is difficult as well. In 1990-91, there was one African American faculty member and several international faculty members. One faculty member shared an experience he had with a former faculty member: "When I came here there was one Black man on the faculty. After five years he left and said it was too darned hard being the only Black man in a white community."
Many students discussed the homogeneous campus and its effect on the students. One African American student said that the lack of diversity did not cause "a big problem" for the college. Another African American student, however, gave this response: "Even though I think Central has been good to me, I don't feel like I'm at home all the time because I'm from an environment where there are a lot of Blacks." Another African American student stated that coming from an area with significant ethnic diversity taught her how to interact with people different from herself; this background has helped her adjust to the campus: "The area that I come from is very diverse and has a lot of ethnic groups. You learn to get along with each other and it's just part of your heritage." An international students expressed disappointment at the lack of cultural diversity, particularly because she expected it to be much greater: "Just with their connections with the study abroad program, I just thought... there's got to be more minorities than there are. That, to me, is a negative part of coming here."

Indeed, many international students and students of color have to make an adjustment to the college's homogeneity. However, even though the number of students with different cultural backgrounds is small, for many Caucasian students on campus it is their first time exposed to any kind of diversity at all. Again, the area from which most of the students come have virtually no ethnic diversity. As the director of admission noted, "The students we attract and the resultant environment that we have here is sometimes plain old naive
to multicultural concerns." One of the student development staff members discussed a time when a group of students watched a video on campus racism, which showed footage from larger universities; after the video, students were asked to write their reactions. The staff member recalled:

Most everyone put, 'I'm so glad that Central isn't like that,' and 'We don't have those kind of problems here,' and 'I'm not prejudiced at all.' It was just kind of like they haven't had to confront the issue. This was all so foreign to them—to imagine someone really hating someone that was of another color.

Most international students and students of color believed the main problem with campus homogeneity was that students are not exposed to enough diversity of people, thought, and ideas. One African American student commented, "I think sometimes you get people who have never been around people of different cultures or people that have different ideas than they do, and so I think that presents a problem." An international student said of her interaction with American students:

I don't think that [students' response to diversity] is prejudice. I think that it's more ignorance and not being exposed to any other races or any other cultures different from your own.... Most Iowa students grow up in small towns and it's all white. And not to be exposed to other cultures and other people different from you--when you come to an environment like this,
when you see people who aren't like you—you don't know how to deal with that.

Another African American student made a similar comment about the small-town Iowa students:

They go 18 years of their life without meeting anyone of an ethnic background different than themselves or maybe one Black or one international student that had an exchange for a semester. That's not an adequate dose of what the real world is going to be like.

Furthermore, this student was concerned that students who do not know people of color personally will be influenced by images from the media:

A lot of these students, all they know about Blacks... is what they see on TV and what they read in the newspaper. That's not very good stuff. Any positive cases are so far in between that they don't see it.

Several students stated that the campus's homogeneity was a disadvantage for its students because the campus does not reflect the diversity of the outside communities to which students will move after graduation. One African American student said, "That's the major disadvantage Central has right now. They're cheating the students that come here from Iowa from getting to know what the real world is like." He added, "When they go out into the real world and they see these different people, in a sense, it could be culture shock."

However, this African American student also stated that the problem
was not limited to ethnic diversity; even meeting students from other parts of the country is important. Even as an African American student, he believed that he, too, was at a disadvantage because he was from Iowa and had not been exposed to many people from outside Iowa and the midwest.

Members of the campus community recognized the need to educate students on multicultural issues. One international student stated that she enjoyed the role of educating students: "When I'm in a class and... the only minority in there, I feel good. I have this idea that I'm broadening the horizons of other people." The president of the college said,

I think if, indeed, we are committed to educating our student to be able to interact effectively with students from other cultural backgrounds, then there is also a very compelling educational reason for trying to increase the percentage of minority and international students on our campus.

However, until the college is able to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups, the campus must try other ways to educate the students. The dean of students acknowledged that such a homogeneous campus makes educating students about multicultural issues "much more difficult and sometimes you have to do it much more academically than... otherwise." She also said that the campus uses current international students and students of color in campus programming, such as multicultural celebrations and programs intended to challenge stereotypes.
Although several respondents identified programs and efforts to help educate students on multicultural issues, most felt educating students on these issues was a difficult challenge and that there was more work to be done. The director of admission said,

There are students for whom college provides the first opportunity to see a Black person up close and personal, and that's difficult to deal with because we haven't done as good a job as we could do in helping our majority students to understand and appreciate multicultural [differences].

The president of the college identified some areas that could provide more opportunities for education:

I think we could do more, for example, on the campus to strengthen the international [presence on campus]. I think we could do more on campus in the classroom to cultivate appreciation for people of different cultures and to, therefore, try to develop within students inclusive sensibilities.

Other respondents, particularly students, felt that there was not sufficient effort to challenge students with different perspectives. When asked about the efforts to motivate students to learn about multicultural issues, one African American student responded, "I don't think it's so much that it's done by the college." One faculty member stated if the majority of students are not interested in multicultural programs, then there is not a push to provide such programs, even if they would be beneficial for students: "We definitely seem to cater to
the majority. So if the majority wants this, then we'll have that—rather than what's really the best educational approach."

An upperclass student said that some faculty members at times will challenge students regarding multicultural issues in the classroom, but "as far as being stimulated by other students..., no."

Another student acknowledged that students participating in study abroad programs are exposed to other cultures, but she added,

It kind of skips a step.... You don't meet a lot of people from the different parts of the United States. You meet people from abroad.... You miss an entire ring of people there. So you might come out of Europe being able to relate to someone from Kenya [better] than [someone] from the east side of town. I think they miss an entire step there.

Most respondents agreed that the campus was tolerant of people with ethnic and other differences. One African American student stated, "I think most of the time everyone is pretty tolerant of everyone else. They enjoy and appreciate the differences other people have. Of course, you do run into problems, but I don't think that happens a lot." Part of the reason for this tolerance is the small numbers of international students and students of color; as the dean of the college said of the homogeneous student body, "It certainly doesn't create the kinds of tensions [found] in society in general. You don't have students having to wrestle with those problems."

Since the campus cares so much about its community, it is important to understand how increasing the number of international
students and students of color would affect that community. Of the president's goal to increase the number of both international students and students of color to the five to seven percent range, the dean of the college said,

But we don't want to do it if we cannot do it within the context of maintaining the community, the sense of community that we have. If those people are going to come in and form their own community then it won't do us any good. We've got to find a way to be a model community in which people can be different and retain that identity, yet still be part—a functioning part—of the community.

To what extent are current international students and students of color part of the campus community? Many white respondents felt these students were integrated into the community. One resident assistant said,

People who are in the minority here or come as international students—and we're getting more and more of them—add something to it, and the students who are already here, or per se come from somewhere in Iowa, are interested in finding out more about those international students and they're mixing and sharing with each other.

An upperclass student acknowledged the small numbers of international students and students of color on campus: "I think the [international students and students of color] that are here are pretty well integrated." Another student said, "I do think most of them
integrate very well." An international student stated, "I feel welcome. I don't know a lot of people who don't." One African American student commented said that international students and students of color "make groups for themselves in which they feel a lot more accepted... and then the [majority students on campus] like to come into those groups. So it blooms out and I think that's a help."

Several white students commented that in many cases international students and students of color choose not to be included in the campus's mainstream. One resident assistant said,

I think a large part is that they choose to not be a part of certain activities just because that's not a part of [their experiences]. If they don't like it, they're not going to do it. I don't blame them. That's their choice."

Clearly, however, some students felt international students and students of color were not included completely in the campus community. One upperclass student said of international students and students of color: "Most of them are on the outside." One international student said, "There are [white] students who just don't care, just don't want to make the effort, don't want to meet us half way. They have their own attitudes and they get it from where they come from." A first-year student said of white students: "It's like we're willing to understand another culture, but we're not willing to take it any further than that--maybe try to incorporate part of it. Maybe [students from diverse backgrounds] have something better than we do."
An African American student commented that although he felt accepted by the student body, he did not feel there were many students taking the initiative to learn about him. Another African American student said, "We have a constant battle with not feeling comfortable. And maybe it's not an everyday conscious thing, but maybe it's on a weekend or maybe it's a social thing where you just don't feel like you're quite in." This same student later said,

If you look at it just from the logical standpoint, there are no numbers to force them to feel uncomfortable in any scenario. Even on a one-on-one basis..., if you don't feel comfortable with that individual, what you do is avoid that individual because nine times out of ten you won't have a lot of contact with them anyway unless you're close with them.

Several international students agreed that some students were not motivated to learn about others from different backgrounds. One said that some students "just deal with their own thing. To deal with people from a different culture is sort of a waste of time." Another international student commented, "I think they feel--I don't want to say scared--but with the attitude of 'How do I go up to this person and talk to them? I don't know their values, their attitudes'--that kind of thing." One student said she believed initially that the college's student abroad programs would contribute to a more global atmosphere on campus. However, she said she found the campus different than expected:
They're very famous for their study abroad program, so I guess I expect more. They understand the other culture and the language, but, actually, maybe they have experienced it abroad but they aren't interested in other cultures. That is one of the disappointments.

The perception of several faculty and staff was that international students and students of color who were able to fit into the mainstream integrated well on campus. One staff member in student services commented,

I think there's a real sense [that] if you fit the mainstream look on campus, you get along just fine. Things are okay.... If you're one of the 15 percent [international students and students of color] and you act like the 85 percent [white students] you're very well accepted and you fit right in.

However, this staff member said of students who do not fit in the mainstream "because of your thinking, look, act, whatever--you're in deep shit." One faculty member shared the story of a recent graduate from California, whose appearance and behavior fell out of the mainstream:

Everybody knew her on campus, but she was always an outsider. She was always a little too different for them.... Which is sad because too many people could have learned from her. But I think they were just threatened. She was just a little too different.
A faculty member expressed concern that students were expected to fit in: "I've heard certain people in the administration say that this person has a negative attitude and they've been glad to see somebody that they've changed, have been able to fit in."

Several African American students discussed their experiences on campus. One student said that the small number of African American students on campus hindered interaction between African American and white students:

On this campus, there's so few of us that if you don't feel like associating with us you can go and you can be away from us and you never have to associate with us even though we're here. You don't have to interact with us.

She added that even when there is interaction, the African American students still are aware that they are in the minority:

Most of on the campus are really nice--we be very nice to people. We know there's so few of us we're not going to get any backup if we don't. We are nice, so they sit there and get this image that every single person has to be like the few people that they met and knew.

Another African American student commented that she is uncomfortable at times in Pella: "I would say I feel out of place when I walk into a store." The director of admission said that he heard similar comments from other students of color:

A recurring theme that I hear from both International students and American minority students is that 'we feel like we're guinea
pigs'-we feel like we're on display.' They don't like walking into a place where all the heads turn. They don't like to go into a store where they're followed. It's not just the campus. It's the community.

The vice president of student affairs alluded to similar problems when there were more students of color on campus; even though there were significant efforts to help students adjust on campus, "There still was no community population for them to spill over into. There was not a church that they worshipped in that was like their church at all...."

When discussing African American students, several respondents again referred to students' being expected to fit in. One white student commented, "It's a very special Black person that would come to Central College." Similarly, a faculty member indicated that African American students who come to Central must be able to fit into the white mainstream: "Non-mainstream Blacks do not fit in here."

Another faculty member said African American students "have to be extremely outgoing." A staff member in student services made this analysis:

If you're a Black kid that grew up in the suburbs, fairly wealthy, in an integrated school and you fit in--okay. If you're an inner city kid from Detroit and you look a certain way and act a certain way and listen to the wrong music, you're not going to be here long. It's not going to work.
Like the African American students, international students felt that Americans were not interested in learning about other cultures. One international student commented, "I think there's very few people who are willing to say, 'Hey, I want to learn about you' or let you know about where I come from." She added that the students who do seem to be interested tend to be from the larger metropolitan areas, or have studied abroad themselves.

The dean of students said that she believed some international students were not included as well as into the student community:

International students often will find lack of understanding, and people who expect them to be just like American students.... I think we have very little put down of people who are different, but we may not find it as inclusive to those people. So people will speak to them but they really don't include them in those things.

She suspected that it was not so much because international students looked different as it was language differences: "English ability and the ability to communicate is far more significant. Obviously, some may be put off by a different color, but I really think the other is far more serious." She felt some American students were "not very patient," while others thought of international students, "I'm afraid I won't understand them so it's easier to say hello and pass them by than to talk with them."

Several American students and faculty commented that international students often congregated together in groups. One
American student speculated, "I think they hang out together because they feel like they have something in common with each other, like they can relate to them better." An international student, commenting on why international students often grouped together, supported this student's assessment: "We notice our different cultures and we can understand each other better." However, she noted that international students do not necessarily group by nationality; it often is helpful just to be with other international student who may share the same feelings.

Several respondents discussed another group of students who have experienced difficulty being included in the mainstream of the student culture: gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. Unlike most international students and African American students, homosexual students cannot be identified by other students unless the homosexual students identify themselves.

During the 1990-91 academic year, a group known as Alternative Lifestyles sought recognition from the Student Senate as a student organization. The group's focus is on gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues. One student speculated, "The individuals who are in this club are not necessarily homosexuals or bisexuals. Some of them are just supporters of the cause and advocates of rights for those who share those viewpoints." The campus minister indicated advocating gay/lesbian/bisexual issues was not without its challenges: "There has been a little feeling on the part of the Alternative Lifestyles group, which is the gay/lesbian group, that they have been marginalized and
not accepted." A resident assistant made a similar comment: "A lot of people aren't very tolerant of this group. I know that group feels ignored."

Several students speculated that the Alternative Lifestyles group was going to encounter a conflict with the college due to Central's conservative tradition and church ties. One student said,

I don't know what the future is going to hold for [Alternative Lifestyles], but it's bringing Central's administration and faculty to a crossroads because [the administration and faculty] are going to have to make a decision whether they're going to acknowledge [Alternative Lifestyles] as a group... or if [the administration and faculty] are going to take a closer stand through the church and keep their conservative view.

However, the vice president of student affairs believed students misunderstood the college's and the church's stance on homosexuality. When asked if there were anything that would prevent the college from recognizing the Alternative Lifestyles group, he responded,

No, no, I don't think there's anything that would prevent us at all. In fact, I think their constitutional rights and the law of the land say that they have certain rights that we must uphold, and I believe that very firmly.

He knew that students suspected there would be a conflict with the church on the issue, yet he stated that there was nothing that prohibited the group from forming on campus:
As we look at the church and the action of the church, we went back to the church records and looked at what their positions were on gays and lesbians, and it says that we will continue to study the [issue] and, in the meantime, we will love and try to understand them. So when you look at the rules of the church and you look at the rules of the land, whether you like them or not, it says that they have certain rights and we must uphold them.

Another administrator agreed Alternative Lifestyles's rights must be upheld, yet sounded unmotivated to learn more about the group and its concerns:

We have a group of gay students on campus now who have organized. They've all got to make a big thing out of this now. My attitude is 'Fine. Go do your thing. Don't bother me with it.' But that's not what they want to hear. What they want to hear is that it's all right for them to be that way, and it's all right for them to promote the idea, and it's all right for them to go out and 'recruit people' to promote this notion the same way it would be okay to try and sell pizza.

Despite its challenges, however, most respondents believed that Alternative Lifestyles was gaining acceptance. The campus minister said, "I think [the campus community is] feeling more positive about [Alternative Lifestyles's] role and have been more open about [the group's] involvement in the campus." One resident assistant said,
People I talk to respect people. I have people on my floor that are in [Alternative Lifestyles's]. It was a shock at first, but we respect their strength to come out and do that especially in a Dutch reformed town.... It takes a lot of courage to do something like that. You never know how the community is going to react to something like that.

The student body president commented on students' reaction to this group:

If someone sees a group like... Alternative Lifestyles, then all these beliefs they've lived with for 18 years suddenly a cannonball, 'bang' they're gone right away, even if 98 percent of Central does not subscribe. But if something like that can challenge them to think twice about what they really believe in, hey, their college education is worth it.

Although the student body president said the college's administration thought the student senate would not grant recognition to the Alternative Lifestyles group, the group actually was approved unanimously. Group recognition aside, the vice president of student affairs acknowledged that the college did not endorse the lifestyles advocated by the group because the college felt homosexual lifestyles were inconsistent with the teachings of the Reformed Church: "The only lifestyle we endorse is the Christian lifestyle, by virtue of the position of our church. That's where we are." He added that he also believed that even the students who voted to approve the group did not necessarily endorse the lifestyle advocated: "I don't think it
changed anybody's attitude on gays and lesbians. I think the attitudes that they had then are the attitudes that they still carry." The vice president's viewpoint appeared consistent with the perspective of the student body president, who commented, "I personally could not endorse homosexuality, but I can accept it if someone I know prefers homosexuality."

Another topic that respondents addressed was women's issues. In the investigator's questions to respondents, the term "women's issues" was intentionally broad and vague to allow the respondents' interests and ideas to guide the direction of the discussion. Most respondents who addressed this topic focused on the area of equal opportunity for women; that is, the extent to which women students, faculty, and staff share equally in leadership and other opportunities available in the campus community.

Most women faculty and staff felt the college did not sense that the issue of equal opportunities for women was a problem in need of attention. During a discussion, on the role of women on campus, a female faculty member raised the issue of feminism at Central: "When you compare this campus to other campuses, feminism is zero.... There is no feminist movement on campus." When asked to what extent students deal with the issue of equal opportunity for women students, this female faculty member responded, "The institution itself has not even dealt with that issue. We have not even begun to deal with it."
The campus minister agreed that there was not a very visible movement to promote more opportunities for women on campus. She said several women on campus are concerned about creating more opportunities for women, but their efforts are low-key: "There's kind of a constant underground rumble from many of our faculty women and support staff, like our counseling center, who are trying to keep that issue alive, but it's not a banner waving kind of dimension at this point." The campus minister also raised the issue of feminism, saying that women students do not want to be perceived as active feminists: "[Women students] don't see [being] feminists as a viable alternative for them in the more active interpretation of that word."

The campus minister added that part of the reason women shy away from feminism is the women's backgrounds. Many women have not been informed about these issues: "The students are coming here without having had an exposure to a school or a home life that really encouraged young women to take the leadership roles." She added that the college does not provide enough female role models either: "Under 30 percent now, I think, of our faculty are women. Women fill most of the secretarial roles. We don't role model that very well to our students." She noted that even the student senate has reflected traditional roles: "We have had male student body presidents as long as I've been here. Although there are always women on the student senate, the president has always been a male." However, she acknowledged her own role in helping young women:
I think the fact that I'm here as a female chaplain, which is pretty astounding on a campus like this, shows something. And I work very hard with the students who show interest in the ministry to encourage the women to look into that.

However, the campus minister felt that more movement could be coming on this issue of making certain women on campus are treated equally: "I think there are increasing numbers of young women who are upset that there isn't more [movement on ensuring equality for women] and are working at trying to bring that about." A student organization called Advocates for Gender Equality (AGE) has worked at informing people about birth control, abortion, and other issues particularly important to women. Although the group is small, it has sponsored and supported a number of quality programs for women, including a "women of the 90s" program, an international women's day, and a self defense training workshop for women. These programs were well-received by respondents who were aware of them; however, few respondents mentioned these programs without prompting.

Summary of a homogeneous environment In addition to being a familiar environment to students, the campus also is a homogeneous one. Enrolling so many students from similar backgrounds results in an environment in which the students themselves share many characteristics. Caucasian Americans compose approximately 95 percent of the student population. Attracting international students and students of color to such a homogeneous environment is a
challenge, although the college has a goal of increasing the representation of these two groups to about five to seven percent each. Moreover, retaining students of color—for that matter, faculty and staff of color as well—also is difficult.

Even though the campus does not have a great deal of ethnic and racial diversity, for many of these students from small town Iowa the campus is their first real personal exposure to diversity at all. Many students are concerned that this homogeneity does not adequately prepare students for the diverse nature of the larger society. By necessity, the college's efforts to help students address the issues of diversity are intentional and artificial.

Although the campus community is a warm and accepting one, often international students and students of color do not feel quite at home, simply because their small numbers. Some respondents suggested that international students and students of color who fit into the mainstream of the student body are readily included in the campus community; however, students who are not a part of this mainstream sometimes feel that the community is not reaching out to include them or to understand their differences.

**Conclusions regarding a homogeneous environment** Like the familiarity of the environment, the homogeneity of the environment has a very significant influence on student involvement because of its strong impact on both the college's institutional culture and students culture. Also like the familiar environment, one of the ways this homogeneous environment encourages student involvement is through
helping students feel more comfortable on campus. When students arrive on campus, they not only will find similarities between their home environment and the campus environment, they will find they share many similarities with other students as well. Indeed, with 19 out of 20 students being American and Caucasian, and with 16 out of 20 being from Iowa, students will find they share a great many values and interests. This homogeneity of values and interests certainly contributes to the strong sense of campus community, which in turn helps students feel more willing to take risks to become involved.

However, this homogeneity also inhibits involvement. The lack of students of color and other differences results in the lack exposure to new ideas and perspectives. As a result, the vast majority of students on campus are not regularly challenged by these new perspectives; even when students do encounter international students or students of color on campus, it is easy to retreat into the majority community without really being challenged. Furthermore, since Pella shares this homogeneous composition, there are few opportunities for students to experience the challenges of diversity in the community as well.

The homogeneous environment also influences student involvement by inhibiting the involvement of international students, students of color, or gay/lesbian/bisexual students. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the sense of community on campus is one that values unconditional acceptance and respect. This is true of students of color and other underrepresented groups as well; any student will
be accepted into whatever involvement opportunity he or she wishes. However, there is a distinct difference between acceptance and inclusion. That is, if students of color want to get involved in the familiar involvement opportunities on campus, they will be welcomed; however, if they want to be involved in opportunities outside of this mainstream, the homogeneous majority of students will not reach out to them. All students will be accepted for who they are, but only students who choose the mainstream can expect to be included in the larger student culture.

This chapter has discussed the factors and conditions that influence students' out-of-class involvement. Chapter Six will provide a discussion and interpretation of the results, and offer recommendations based on these results.
CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

Introduction

Chapter Four and Chapter Five discussed the results of the study in regard to students' out-of-class involvement opportunities, and the factors and conditions influencing involvement. In this chapter these results will be discussed and interpreted in the context of the research questions and purposes described in chapter three: 1) examine and describe students' out-of-class involvement; and 2) examine and describe factors and conditions that influence students' out-of-class involvement. Specifically, this discussion will include an analysis of the factors and conditions that influence student involvement (as discussed in Chapter Five), and an interpretation of the campus's strengths and weakness regarding how students are involved (as discussed in Chapter Four).

Factors and conditions influencing involvement

Introduction Chapter Five discussed the factors and conditions found to influence student involvement on campus. The factors and conditions are community, mission, church, familiar environment, and homogeneous environment. In actuality, the influence of these factors and conditions on student involvement is an indirect one. That is, at Central the greatest influence on student involvement is the campus culture. These factors and conditions, then, are forces that have influenced greatly the development of the campus's student culture and the larger institutional culture. It is
through this influence that the factors and conditions influence student involvement. A chart illustrating how these factors and conditions influence student involvement can be found in Appendix H.

The college's mission and its relationship with the church both have been and still are strong factors in the development of the campus culture; the impact of these two forces is more evident in the larger institutional culture than the student culture. However, the similarity between the students' home environments and the campus's environment—as well as the homogeneity of the student body—has a tremendous influence on the entire campus culture, especially the student culture. Unlike the other four factors and conditions, the sense of community is not so much an influence on the campus culture as it is a manifestation of it. The influence of the other four factors and conditions on the campus culture has facilitated the development of this strong sense of campus community. Since the sense of community is such a critical part of the campus culture, its influence on student involvement is very significant.

Therefore, the following conclusions are a discussion of campus culture. Specifically, the discussion will focus on the ways in which the campus culture encourages and discourages student involvement.

**How campus culture encourages involvement**

**Community** The campus culture is manifested through the campus's strong sense of community among students, faculty, and staff. This community facilitates and nurtures an atmosphere of sincere caring and friendliness, unconditional respect and acceptance, and a
genuine concern for others. This sense of community encourages student involvement in several ways. First, the friendly and accepting atmosphere on campus helps make new students feel welcome when they first arrive on campus. This atmosphere helps students feel more comfortable, thus making it easier for them to ask questions and learn about their new environment. This sets a positive tone for later involvement.

Second, the atmosphere of unconditional acceptance and respect communicates to students that whoever you are and whatever you choose to do is acceptable. This encourages involvement by reducing pressure from peers to participate in some activities or not participate in others. As a result, students feel comfortable becoming involved in the opportunities that interest them with very little fear of being judged or rejected by their peers.

Third, the sense of campus community reinforces a commitment to others' well-being, which in turn creates a supportive environment for student involvement. Students feel rewarded for supporting each other; this is reflected most clearly in athletics contests and fine arts performances, where students make a visible effort to support one another by attending these events. This commitment to others' well-being not only reinforces involvement in activities that support other students, but encourages involvement in opportunities that help others in need. The success of SCATE, Action, Amnesty International, and other social action organizations reflects
how the campus community and student culture reward students for supporting others, both on and off campus.

Fourth, in addition to creating a supportive environment, the sense of campus community creates an atmosphere that facilitates and encourages interaction among students, faculty, and staff. The most visible manifestation of this atmosphere is the student center. Students regularly take advantage of opportunities to interact with each other throughout the day at the student center, whether it be playing in the game room, eating at the snack bar, studying in the lounge, or just "hanging out." The design of the center—with its large, comfortable lounges, student mailboxes, and important offices—contributes to this interaction. In addition to the student center, the gymnasium and campus grounds also provide students with excellent socialization opportunities.

Another manifestation of the campus community's encouragement of interpersonal interaction is the positive student-faculty relationship on campus. The open, accepting environment, along with the faculty's commitment to students' well-being, help students feel comfortable interacting with faculty outside the classroom. As students interact with faculty out-of-class, it increases the opportunities for students to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

Fifth, along with encouraging interaction, the campus's sense of community encourages communication among students, faculty, and staff. This is reflected in campus publications. These publications
reflect an informal, comfortable, "homey" sense of communication among community members. The best example of this is the "Crier," which is published each weekday morning and posted all over campus. In addition to being an excellent source of involvement opportunities for students, the "Crier" also reflects how the community values open and frequent communication.

**A familiar environment** One of the most significant influences on both the student culture and the larger institutional culture is the similarity between the campus environment and the students' home environments. More than 80 percent of the students are from Iowa, and a strong majority of those are from small town Iowa. When these students arrive at Central, what they find is a campus environment that is familiar—an environment that feels much like home.

This familiarity of environment impacts student involvement in two important ways. First, the familiar campus environment contributes to students' level of comfort and feeling of belonging on campus. Since students find the environment familiar, they tend to feel more comfortable and at home. As a result, they are more confident and willing to take risks, including risks to become involved.

Second, this familiar environment also influences the kinds of involvement opportunities that thrive on campus. Many students were very involved in their high schools and their home communities; often this involvement included sports, music, and drama opportunities. When these students arrive at Central, they find that many of these same involvement opportunities are available and popular on campus.
Therefore, for many students, Central provides an excellent opportunity to continue previously developed interests in a meaningful way.

A homogeneous environment Another significant influence on the student culture—and, to a lesser extent, the larger institutional culture—is the homogeneity of the student body. With approximately 98 percent of the student body being Caucasian and 98 percent being American, Central students bring with them to campus a substantial similarity of personal characteristics. This creates a homogeneous environment which influences the student culture in much the same ways as the familiar environment; indeed, the homogeneity of the student body adds greatly to the familiarity of the campus environment.

The homogeneous environment influences student involvement by easing students' transition to college life. As with the familiar environment, the homogeneous environment helps establish a sense of belonging; when students arrive and find so many people like them, they feel more comfortable interacting with others. Also like the familiar environment, the homogeneous environment influences the kinds of involvement opportunities available. When students share similar backgrounds, it is not surprising that they would share many of the same involvement interests. The homogeneity of the student body creates a critical mass of students in a number of opportunities, which contributes to the strengthening of those opportunities. Again, it is the students' homogeneity that greatly contributes to the familiarity of
involvement opportunities that new students discover when they arrive on campus.

The familiarity and homogeneity of the campus environment have a tremendous influence on both the student culture and larger institutional culture. While the college's mission and the college's relationship with the church also influences the campus culture, this influence is much more evident in the institutional culture than the student culture. Considering that the mission and the college-church relationship are tightly intertwined, it is not surprising that they influence the campus culture in much the same way. Both influence the culture by adding an element of stability to the campus community. This stability is a result of the administration's and faculty's firm understanding of the college's purposes and its relationship with the church.

The college mission Most faculty and staff are familiar and comfortable with the college's mission, which identifies Central as a liberal arts college in the Christian tradition. Indeed, the faculty and staff appear to have a strong grasp on what the college is all about. Furthermore, their attitudes, perspectives, and actions usually are consistent with that mission; faculty and staff have considered how the mission should influence how they work with students. How does this clarity and consistency of mission contribute to student involvement? By understanding and being comfortable with the liberal arts mission, faculty and staff are motivated to encourage students to become involved in their education and to broaden their approach to learning.
For the most part, however, the college mission's influence on student involvement is an indirect one; that is, the mission influences involvement by strengthening the campus community.

**College-church relationship**  As mentioned above, the college's relationship to the church influences the campus culture in much the same way as the college mission. Like the mission, the college's relationship to the church is well understood by faculty and staff, and they keep this relationship in mind during their daily routine. As a result, the college-church tie is ingrained in the larger institutional culture, which is a critical influence on the campus's sense of community. Therefore, the influence of the college-church relationship on student involvement also is indirect; both the mission and the college-church relationship are critical to the development and maintenance of the larger institutional culture as well as the campus's sense of community.

Another indirect way in which the college-church relationship influences student involvement is through its contribution to the feeling of a familiar environment. As discussed above, the campus environment seems familiar to most students because it reflects many characteristics of their home communities; for most students, the influence of their home church on their home community is similar to the influence of the college-church relationship on the campus community. As a result, the presence of the church on campus, no matter how subtle it may appear to students, influences student
involvement by contributing to the familiarity of the environment and the sense of community on campus.

**How campus culture discourages involvement**

_A familiar environment_ Although the presence of a familiar environment can help students make the transition to college and carry over previous involvement interests, this familiarity can discourage student involvement as well. By being so familiar, the campus environment may help students feel more comfortable, but it also is possible that it lets them feel too comfortable. The availability of already established involvement interests may enable students to continue these established interests rather than challenge themselves by experimenting with new ones.

This problem perpetuates itself. The more students pursue familiar involvement interests on campus, the stronger these established interests become. Conversely, new interests will be pursued less frequently and thus given less opportunity to develop. With established interests always thriving and newer ones always struggling, the campus will continue to be attractive only to students with these same familiar interests.

Another way in which the familiar environment can discourage student involvement is through reinforcing a passive student culture. In their high school environments, most students experienced involvement opportunities that were highly structured and guided by adults; they participated actively, but the opportunities themselves were developed and operated for them. In college, however, students
generally have much more freedom and autonomy to create and
develop their own involvement opportunities. However, if Central
students continue in their familiar involvement opportunities, they are
vulnerable to staying in this passive mode; like high school, many
students are content to let the college provide the opportunities, and
will just join in when they are interested.

The campus's entertainment opportunities are a good example
of this potential problem. Although the dances and movies are popular
with most students, they are very similar to the types of social
opportunities they experienced in high school; moreover, like high
school, these opportunities are completely planned for them. In
essence, students assume a passive approach to their own
programming by accepting what is offered and not involving
themselves in the creation additional opportunities.

Campus leadership opportunities also reflect this passive culture.
Although the student senate represents the students' viewpoint to the
administration, most students do not know who leads the senate,
what issues are being addressed, or how the senate stands on these
issues. Furthermore, they do not seem particularly concerned about
this ignorance; they simply place little value in their governance.
Again, students have elected to take a passive approach to their
governance by allowing unknown others to lead, and not striving to
know how they are being represented. Essentially, they have chosen
to accept whatever happens.
A homogeneous environment The homogeneous environment also can discourage student involvement. Like the familiarity of the environment, the homogeneous environment contributes to the comfortable atmosphere students experience. The lack of students of color and other differences results in students being exposed to fewer new ideas and perspectives. As a result, the strong majority of students on campus are not challenged frequently by these new perspectives. Even when students do encounter international students or students of color on campus, it is easy to retreat into the majority community without really being challenged. Furthermore, since Pella also is very homogeneous, there are few opportunities for students to experience the challenges of diversity in the larger community as well.

Since the campus community and larger community have few persons of color to challenge students, students must make an intentional effort to challenge themselves. The international studies program offers such an opportunity, and many students take advantage of it. However, students do not bring these experiences back to the campus and use them to challenge other students, nor do they get together with other returned study abroad students to continue to challenge themselves. As a result, the students miss an opportunity to expand their horizons.

Another opportunity to challenge themselves is to get involved with CMCC, AGE, Alternative Lifestyles, or other groups that deal multicultural or gender issues. Again, the majority of students choose
not to get involved with these organizations, thus passing up another opportunity to challenge themselves.

The homogeneous environment also discourages student involvement by excluding the interests of international students, students of color, and gay/lesbian/bisexual students. Indeed, the sense of community on campus is one that values unconditional acceptance and respect of all people, including these underrepresented groups; any student will be accepted into whatever involvement opportunity he or she wishes. However, there is a distinct difference between acceptance and inclusion. That is, if students of color want to get involved in the familiar involvement opportunities on campus, they will be welcomed; however, if they want to be involved in opportunities outside of this mainstream, the homogeneous majority of students will not reach out to them.

The relationship between multicultural groups and the general student body also reflects this problem. Most students genuinely believe that these groups should be available on campus for those students who are interested; again, the student culture is one that accepts all students regardless of who they are or what they believe. While there is a place on campus for students who are different, unfortunately that place is rarely in the middle of campus. The student culture accepts students who are different, but it also appears to keep them on the periphery of the campus—it does not reach out to learn from them. In essence, all students will be accepted for who
they are, but only students who choose the mainstream can expect to be included in the larger student culture.

The discussion above focused on the factors and conditions that influence student involvement. The following is an interpretation of the campus's strengths and weakness regarding how students are involved.

**Out-of-class involvement opportunities**

At Central, students are involved in many ways outside the classroom. Below is a summary of the campus's strengths and weaknesses in regard to out-of-class involvement opportunities for students. While the factors and conditions discussed above reflect intangible influences on involvement, the strengths and weaknesses discussed below reflect specific, tangible involvement opportunities for students. However, the strengths and weaknesses do not reflect separate involvement opportunities; that is, the implication here is not that some involvement opportunities are good and some are bad. For the most part, each involvement opportunity has strengths and weaknesses. The following is an overview of these strong and weak components.

An involvement opportunity is identified as strength if it promotes student development through one or more of the following ways:

- it facilitates students' devoting energy to their academic experience (Astin, 1985);
• it broadens students' total educational experience (Blimling, 1981; Moffatt, 1991);
• it helps students learn to take responsibility for their own actions and engage in their own education (Study Group, 1984);
• it enhances growth in students' self-confidence, leadership, empathy, social responsibility, and understanding of cultural and intellectual differences (Boyer, 1987; Study Group, 1984);
• it provides esthetic and ethical engagement (Lyons, 1990);
• it facilitates students' making and enjoying friendships (Lyons, 1990).

Following the discussion of involvement strengths is a discussion of involvement weaknesses. While an involvement strength promotes student development, an involvement opportunity is identified as a weakness if it inhibits student development through one or more of the following ways:

• it distances students from the academic and social communities of the institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1987);
• it isolates students' out-of-class experiences from their academic experiences (Astin, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991);
• it facilitates interactions and experiences that inhibit students' integration into the campus community (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991);
• it creates an environment that is too comfortable and protective (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991);
it fails to engage or challenge students (Boyer, 1987; Study Group, 1984).

Involvement strengths

International studies The institution's international studies program clearly is a very special part of the student experience and one of the strongest involvement opportunities available to students. For a small liberal arts college to develop and operate eight study centers around the world reveals a unique commitment to international education. The institution should be commended for facilitating a rewarding international experience for almost half of the student body. It is not at all surprising to discover that the international studies program is a primary attraction to many students as they make their college plans.

Given the homogeneous nature of the campus, the international studies program provides an avenue through which students can gain exposure to perspectives other than the American, midwestern, Christian, Caucasian one to which they are thoroughly accustomed. Studying overseas contributes to the personal growth of many students in a way that they may otherwise not experience. Students who have studied overseas praise the benefits of the international study experience.

Athletics and recreation Involvement opportunities in athletics are another strength of Central's out-of-class experience. Like the international studies program, intercollegiate athletics touches the lives of many students on campus. Approximately one out
of five students—and one out of three men—participates in intercollegiate sports. Furthermore, intercollegiate athletic teams solicit and receive tremendous support from the students in general, thus involving a majority of the student body. Part of this is due to the background of the students themselves; many students participated in high school athletics and desire to continue those interest at Central, although they may not actually join an intercollegiate team. For many of these students, they satisfy their interests through joining in the campus's support for the athletic teams or by participating through intramural sports, workouts at the gym, or casual recreation with friends.

The college's commitment to athletics is very visible on campus, particularly in the fieldhouse. No visitor to the fieldhouse could overlook the college's athletic tradition. The relatively new, well-maintained facility has a huge display case filled with symbols of the college's athletic tradition: trophies, plaques, photographs of championships teams, photographs of past All-America athletes, newspaper clippings. Moreover, the walls of the fieldhouse--upstairs and down--is lined with more and more photographs of championship teams and individual heroes. Both the display cases and the decorated walls are pieced together carefully and neatly. Furthermore, everything has the feeling of "bigness;" most of the photographs are 8" x 10" or larger, and the newspaper clippings have been reproduced and enlarged. The college's athletic tradition is certainly a strong one, and one in which students and the entire campus community take
great pride. This pride and tradition only encourage continued student involvement.

A major strength of this athletic tradition and heritage is the NCAA Division III athletic philosophy. With the college's past president being a significant contributor to the Division III philosophy, the athletic program has retained a "student first" approach to collegiate athletics. Students who participate in intercollegiate athletics are not just athletes; they are students first and foremost, and their academics are understood to be their top priority. Although a few students referred to a sort of elitism attached to the football team, most students feel that athletes are viewed simply as regular Central students.

In addition, although the demands of practice and training are considerable, many student-athletes enjoy participating in student government and student organizations as well. The philosophy of the athletic department encourages students' becoming involved in other opportunities on campus to contribute to their total development.

Student organizations The nature of student organizations on campus is one that encourages involvement. As a whole, student organizations on campus are easily formed and easily joined. Students with a similar interest find it easy to earn formal recognition as a group from the student senate; furthermore, most organizations on campus are very open, and welcome any student interested to become a member. This casual, informal attitude towards organizations facilitates greater student involvement.
In addition to being easily formed and joined, involvement in student organizations also is encouraged by a student culture that does not label organizations. That is, while some organizations are larger than others, no student organization is labelled as unpopular. The student culture is one that respects students' decisions to participate however they choose without judgement, which makes it easier for students to take risks to become involved.

Several student organizations in particular offer tremendous involvement opportunities for students. Clearly the most popular groups are those focusing on social action. Students Concerned About The Environment (SCATE), which focuses on a variety of environmental issues, and Action, which focuses on helping underprivileged youth, are by the far the most visible student organizations on campus. Another social action organization, Amnesty International, also enjoys significant popularity, although considerably less than SCATE and Action. These organizations provide a wonderful opportunity for students to get involved on campus, learn more about important societal issues, and experience volunteerism first-hand. Students are proud that these socially conscious organizations enjoy such success and popularity on campus, and refer to membership in these groups very positively.

Entertainment The college's commitment to providing quality entertainment for students on campus creates significant opportunities for student to engage in valuable social interaction. Virtually every Friday and Saturday night students can choose to attend
a dance on campus. The Saturday night event is often the big event of
the weekend, and usually is held in the dining hall which can
accommodate more people. Attendance at the big Saturday events can
attract as many as 300 to 600 students, with the Friday night dances
drawing a smaller crowd. The large attendance at the dances suggests
that many students find these social opportunities attractive and
rewarding.

Performances by comedians in the student center are another
tremendously popular entertainment opportunity for students.
Approximately every other week, comedians are scheduled for two
performances each on Tuesday and Wednesday. The shows always are
crowded with students, with some comedians attracting standing
room only crowds. Like the dances, the large crowds at the comedian
performances reflect the value students place on these entertainment
opportunities. In addition, student satisfaction with both of these
opportunities reflect the care and preparation that goes into their
planning.

Movies are another popular form of entertainment for students.
In addition to nightly movies in the student center theater, the college
also has a special arrangement with the town's local movie theater,
which shows more recent film releases. Through this arrangement,
students can purchase a year-long pass to the theater for a very
reasonable fee; over 80 percent of the students purchase this pass.
Unlike the dances and comedian performances, which draw large,
lively crowds, movies provide students with a more low-key
entertainment opportunity. The value in this entertainment
opportunity is not so much social interaction, although this certainly
does occur to a smaller extent; the movies provide students with a
readily available opportunity to get away and relax alone or with
friends.

Unstructured activities

Another strength of out-of-class
involvement opportunities at Central is the energy and commitment
students invest in interpersonal relationships. Informal, unstructured
fellowship with other students is a very important part of the student
culture. Students often refer to this interaction as simply "hanging
out." Not surprisingly, much of this hanging out takes place in the
living environments—the residence halls, townhouses, and fraternity
and sorority houses. Whether it be watching television, playing cards,
watching a rented video movie, or just "shooting the breeze," students
value spending time with each other.

Another popular place where students hang out is the student
center. The design of the center facilitates active interaction. The
main lounge is located in a high traffic area and has plenty of
comfortable furniture conducive to relaxing and talking with friends.
The snack bar area also has a high amount of traffic with students
stopping for a snack or something to drink. In addition to the snack
bar and lounge, the center houses a game room, student mailboxes,
movie theater, student senate office, student activities office, and
meeting rooms. All of these facilities contribute to the center's high
volume of student traffic.
By housing several important offices, the student center also facilitates interaction among students, faculty and staff. Offices located in the center include the student personnel office (including the vice-president of student affairs and the dean of students), the career planning and placement office, the counseling center office, and the director of student activities' office. All of these offices attract student traffic, which leads to increased student-staff interaction. In addition to that of professional staff, the center also sees significant faculty traffic; each weekday morning and afternoon, faculty traditionally gather in the snack bar for coffee and conversation. The student center truly is an active place that facilitates and encourages student interaction with each other as well as with faculty and staff.

Another popular and valuable opportunity for students to engage in interpersonal interaction is recreation. Many students come to Central with a history of involvement in athletics and recreation, and many of these students choose to continue their interests through supporting the college's athletic teams, getting involved in intramural sports, exercising on a regular basis, or participating in informal recreation opportunities. All of these activities provide students with involvement opportunities that encourage fellowship, enjoyment, and personal wellness.

Student-faculty interaction In addition to valuable relationships with other students, students also enjoy a positive relationship with the faculty. Students find that the faculty members are accessible, available, and genuinely concerned about them. Faculty
make a strong effort to involve themselves with students. For the most part, the interaction between students and faculty is informal, consisting of after class discussions, department picnics, or cookouts at a professor's home. Although a few students feel that faculty should take more initiative with students, clearly most students believe that the faculty are concerned, helpful, and available to them. This positive relationship between students and faculty encourages student-faculty out-of-class interaction, which in turn facilitates greater opportunities for students to extend their learning outside the classroom.

Involvement weaknesses

International studies Although the international studies program is one of the campus's strongest involvement opportunities, it also represents an excellent involvement opportunity missed. Despite the fact that almost half of Central's students study overseas, the campus itself has an international void. The extensive international experiences of the students are not a visible part of the campus. A visitor easily could walk the campus and leave without detecting that the college had an international studies program at all, much less one of Central's magnitude.

One way to facilitate the internationalization of the campus is to utilize the experiences of students who have participated in the international studies program. However, students who have returned from studying abroad do not share their experiences with the campus community. Students embrace the personal growth they gain from their experience, but they do not choose to continue that international
experience on campus, nor do they feel comfortable sharing their experiences openly with other students.

Many students describe the impact of their international experience as short-term; this short-term nature of the experience diminishes the students' motivation to continue their experiences on campus. The structure of the overseas centers could be a factor in the students' finding the experience more short-term; in some cases, the use of Central faculty and the housing of students together may shield students from some of the dramatic changes they might otherwise experience. For many students, sharing their international experience on campus is not only undesired, they feel it is resented by other students. Returned study abroad students fear that they may be perceived as elitist, or "showing off."

Another missed opportunity to enhance the internationalization of the campus is the relationship between the international studies program and the college's international student population. Teaming international students and returned study abroad students to promote international awareness and understanding on campus is a promising involvement opportunity. Unfortunately, there is little or no connection--formal or informal--between these two groups. The college has not yet seized the opportunity to extend the success of their international programs to the campus itself.

Student organizations The lack of student support for campus groups focusing on special populations represents another valuable involvement opportunity missed. The Coalition for a Multicultural
Campus, Advocates for Alternative Lifestyles, and Advocates for Gender Equality all are visible groups on campus, and offer valuable learning opportunities for students. Nonetheless, these organizations enjoy limited student support, relying on an active yet small core of students.

While these groups enjoy limited support, African American students have no formal support group at all. At one time, CMCC membership was predominantly African American; however, as international student membership in the group increased, African American membership decreased. Eventually, the group became almost exclusively international students, as it is today. Given the campus's small numbers of international students, students of color, and other underrepresented groups, Central students have few opportunities to become involved with diversity issues first-hand. It is unfortunate that more students are not motivated or feel more encouraged to take advantage of these valuable involvement opportunities.

**Academic involvement** Like CMCC, Advocates for Alternative Lifestyles, and AGE, structured efforts to connect in-class and out-of-class involvement represent missed valuable involvement opportunities. Campus speakers, programs, events, and convocations offer students an opportunity to extend their academic environment outside of the classroom; however, despite their regular availability, they are embraced by only a modest number of students. Students seem hesitant to take a broad-based approach to their education; if not
hesitant, at the very least they are unmotivated. Unfortunately, the positive relationship between students and faculty outside the classroom does not carry over into other out-of-class academic involvement opportunities.

Another way to extend the academic environment outside the classroom is through educational programming in the living environment. Bringing faculty into the residence halls is an effective way to connect students' in-class and out-of-class learning experiences. However, Central intentionally centralizes its programming through the student center. Although the programming done in the center is valuable and effective, programming in the residence halls would provide involvement opportunities that could complement other campus programming and possibly reach a larger student audience.

An important aspect of the relationship between students' in-class and out-of-class involvement is the role of student activities. While there are a number of campus programming efforts to connect students' in-class and out-of-class experiences, these efforts are initiated by academic departments, student services staff, or a particular student organization, not by student activities. This is because the director of student activities interprets his role as one of entertainment, not education. He believes that there is a place on campus for educational programming; however, that place is in the academic departments, campus ministries, and other appropriate
offices and organizations—not student activities. He feels this division of responsibility results in better programming in both areas.

This division of responsibility may help the director of student activities focus on providing quality entertainment opportunities, but it also further isolates students' in-class and out-of-class experiences. As it is, students are not taking full advantage of the campus's opportunities to connect their in-class and out-of-class learning; an effort from student activities to provide and encourage more educational programs could motivate students to involve themselves in these and other opportunities as well. Unfortunately, isolating entertainment from academic learning opportunities is a missed opportunity to help students make connections within their total learning experience.

**Entertainment** In his job of providing students with entertainment opportunities, the director exercises a great deal of autonomy. Although some students are involved in the implementation of various programs, the director always stays in control of the event and makes all of the decisions. He believes the students trust him to provide the best entertainment programs possible, and he can do this only by staying totally in control of the planning. This trust is evident in the funding he receives from the student senate, which finances all of the entertainment programs on campus; each year the director requests a specific amount of money to fund his programs, and each year the senate approves it.
Again, this high level of autonomy allows the director to provide quality entertainment opportunities for students that are well planned and organized. However, just as isolating entertainment from academic opportunities bifurcates students' learning experiences, isolating students from the decision-making process deprives them of the opportunity to involve themselves in the development of potential leadership skills. Encouraging students to take responsibility for more of their own entertainment provides opportunities for them to exercise their leadership and decision-making skills. It also could develop a greater sense of ownership in their out-of-class experience—an ownership that could have a positive influence on other out-of-class learning opportunities as well.

Another disadvantage of the student activities program is its lack of appeal to older students. While most first-year and second-year students enjoy participating in the dances, upperclass students prefer to socialize in town bars or other off-campus opportunities. Although both the dances and the off-campus opportunities often succeed in facilitating students' social interaction, the problem is that they perpetuate a division between younger and older students.

First-year students can benefit from interacting with upperclass students in social settings. Through social interaction, older students can help new students become integrated into the campus's social environment; older student also can help first-year students by modelling responsible behavior. However, the current environment at Central is divided into two isolated social cultures: an on-campus
culture that is driven by entertainment, and an off-campus culture that is driven by alcohol. Perhaps if upperclass students were more involved in the planning of campus entertainment opportunities, these opportunities may succeed in attracting upperclass students as well as first-year students.

**Leadership** The extent to which students struggle with the issue of student leadership reveals another underdeveloped involvement opportunity. Perceptions of the student senate reflect this weakness. The senate does make an important contribution to the campus through allocating student fee funds, staffing committees, and representing the students' viewpoint to the college administration. However, students do not see this contribution. The strong majority of students clearly is indifferent to the student senate and its role on campus. Indeed, most students are openly ignorant both of what the senate does and of who serves on it. Students do not consider student senators as campus leaders; even many of those students who consider the senate president and vice president as campus leadership positions cannot identify the students who hold the positions.

However, it is not as though the campus is without leaders. For many students, the real leadership positions are more informal. The leaders of the larger, more respected organizations such as SCATE and Action are considered campus leaders--although, again, during the study very few students identified a specific person by name. These
informal leadership positions provide outstanding opportunities for students to exercise and development leadership skills.

However, these opportunities alone do not satisfy the students' leadership needs. Students also need formal, visible, campus-wide leadership positions. These positions give students the opportunity to learn about working in a democratic community; students in these positions learn to debate important issues, defend their positions, negotiate for action, and compromise to reach solutions. While this may be happening within the student senate, its benefits are not reaching the rest of the student body. As it is now, the majority of students are not only unaware of the arguments being made, but also the issues being debated.

The lack of formal leadership positions also leads to another concern: lack of student ownership for their educational experience. While the student senate may have a key role in important institutional policies and practices, most students do not see this. Just thinking that the senate is insignificant and ineffective leaves students feeling that their voice is not a viable one. As a result, students feel less ownership in their own educational experience. Students feel there is no one really representing their interests to the college, and seem to accept this. Unfortunately, rather than fight to understand and influence the college's decision-making process, the students have adopted a passive approach that accepts whatever happens.
Recommendations for Central College

Central College offers outstanding out-of-class involvement opportunities for its students. However, in order to improve and expand these opportunities, the college will have to address some qualities and characteristics fundamental to the student culture and larger institutional culture. The student culture is one that greatly values people, yet it perpetuates a sense of passivity in its students. The student culture does not sufficiently motivate students to challenge themselves to experience new ideas and perspectives, or to take an active ownership for their own involvement opportunities.

The larger institutional culture is instrumental in creating and maintaining the strong sense of community that is critical to the campus. However, it, too, has some fundamental qualities that inhibit the development of more out-of-class student involvement opportunities. While the student culture does not motivate students to challenge themselves, neither does the institutional culture do enough to challenge the students. Yet, in some ways the institutional culture does too much for students; students stand to benefit a great deal by being responsible for more of their own leadership and entertainment opportunities. By not providing more opportunities to assume this responsibility, the institutional culture tends to enable the student culture to be passive.

The objective for Central College, then, should be to create an institutional environment that encourages--indeed, expects--students to involve themselves in new and challenging opportunities and to
take an active responsibility in the creation and development of these opportunities. The following recommendations are offered in an effort to work toward this objective:

- The student culture should become more active and assertive in learning about students of diverse populations, and work to integrate them into the culture. The college should create intentional programs and activities through which students of diverse populations can be involved in the diversity education of other students.

- The college should continue to develop its plan to increase the number of international students and students of color on campus. While trying to increase the diversity of the student body is commendable, it is unrealistic to believe that the college can or should reduce its successful recruiting efforts in its primary market of Iowa. Therefore, because of the difficulty in recruiting international students and students of color in Iowa, the college cannot rely on increasing the number of these students as the primary method of educating students about diversity issues.

- The college should make a special effort to nurture the campus's multicultural organizations. This includes the creation and nurturing of a Black student organization to help African American students feel more comfortable and supported as a group. In the beginning, CMCC and other groups may need a disproportionate amount of energy and resources to grow stronger.

- The college should develop regular and frequent opportunities for students to experience challenging and educational programs in
their living environment. Program topics should address diversity, sexuality, and substance abuse issues. These programs should be planned and implemented by trained peer educators. Programs in the student center alone cannot reach enough students on these important issues.

• The college should develop a strong, visible international presence on the campus to complement their international studies program. Structured opportunities should be created for returning study abroad students to share their valuable experiences with each other as well as other students. Developing international communities within the living environments is one possibility.

• The college should create a student committee whose sole purpose is to plan regular out-of-class learning opportunities for students. Even if these programs do not attract large numbers of students, those students serving on the committee will benefit from the responsibility.

• The college should create many more formal, recognized leadership positions. The current student senate positions alone are not sufficient. One possibility is to create a special council or advisory board consisting of leaders from selected student organizations, such as SCATE, Action, and CMCC. Another possibility is to create standing positions on the student senate for these leaders. The campus cannot have too many leadership opportunities.

• The college should increase significantly the visibility of the student senate on campus. As part of this, the administration should
delegate to the senate the responsibility for addressing some of these important campus issues, such as diversity education and leadership development.

- The college should expand on the current social involvement opportunities available to students. The current entertainment opportunities are popular and should be retained, but others should be created that appeal to the smaller subcommunities within the student culture; a special effort should be made to create opportunities that will bring together first-year and upperclass students. These opportunities should be planned and implemented by students; in addition, students should be given more responsibility for the current entertainment opportunities as well.

**Recommendations for further research**

While this study was a broader examination of the relationship between campus culture and students' out-of-class involvement, future studies could focus more closely on the relationship between culture and specific involvement opportunities. Further research could include exploring the following questions:

- How does the presence of diversity influence the student culture? The institutional culture? How does the diversity of the larger community and setting influence campus culture?

- How do students' demographic characteristics influence the student culture? What role does admission recruiting strategies play in developing campus culture?
• What is the relationship between campus culture and the availability of formal student leadership opportunities? Informal opportunities?
  • What is the relationship between structured student entertainment opportunities and campus culture? What is the relationship between education and entertainment?
  • What is the relationship between international education opportunities and campus culture?
  • How does the 21 year old drinking age affect the interaction between first-year students and upperclass students? What influence does this have on campus culture?
  • How do views of the college-church relationship vary between students, faculty, and staff at church-related institutions? How does the institution's relationship to the church influence campus culture?
  • How does the presence of multicultural student organizations influence students' understanding and acceptance of diversity? How does this understanding influence campus culture?

Concluding thoughts

The sense of community that exists at Central College is indeed special. This community is valued by students, faculty, and staff, and has come to symbolize Central itself. It is the heart of the institutional culture and student culture. Clearly, this sense of community is too valuable to lose. Therefore, the intent of the above recommendations is to offer ideas on how to challenge students further within the context of the current campus community—not at the expense of it.
As Central students, faculty, and staff develop programs to address the needs discussed in this study, I recommend that staff not get preoccupied numbers. In many cases, smaller groups or programs will receive a disproportionate amount of attention and funds. This is expected, and it is necessary. For quite some time the student culture has placed almost all of its energy and resources on the very large mainstream, and the institutional culture has enabled it to do so. However, if students are going to be challenged further, they will have to be exposed to new ideas and perspectives outside of this mainstream. For this to happen, these other ideas and perspectives will have to be sought out actively and then nurtured carefully—not just for the benefit of a few students on the periphery, but for the growth and development of all students and the entire campus community.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

RESPONDENT CONSENT LETTER

Jerry M. Price
2901 Meadow Lane
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265
515/223-6384

April 8, 1991

Dear study participant:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of the out-of-class learning experiences of students at Central College. The purpose of the study is to examine and describe the out-of-class experiences at Central College and evaluate to what extent these experiences are consistent with Central’s educational purposes. I believe this study can provide valuable information regarding the learning experiences of students at Central College. As a doctoral student in higher education at Iowa State University, I will use the information learned from the study for my dissertation. A copy of the final report submitted to my doctoral committee also will be given to Bill Hinga, vice president of student services at Central.

I will be interviewing you as part of this study. The interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes, and will be held in a location to be arranged by Bill Hinga’s office. The interview will be taped. The purpose of taping the interview is to help insure the accuracy and thoroughness of the information exchanged in our interview; however, if you prefer that the interview not be taped, I will turn off the recorder. Only I will have access to the tapes, which will be erased following the completion of the study.

No participant’s name will be included in the study’s final report. If it is anticipated that any specific quotation or other information to be included in the report could identify the participant, I will solicit the approval of that participant prior to including the information in the report. You will be asked to sign a consent form prior to the interview. I also will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the study or the procedures prior to our interview. If at any time you request to withdraw from the study, your request will be honored and any data collected regarding you will be destroyed.
Once again, thank you for participating in this study. I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Price
Doctoral candidate
Higher Education
Iowa State University
APPENDIX B
RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM

"AN ASSESSMENT OF OUT-OF-CLASS LEARNING EXPERIENCES"
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine and describe the out-of-class experiences of students at Central College and evaluate to what extent these experiences are consistent with Central’s educational purposes. As part of this study, I would like to interview you to discuss your experiences at Central. The interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview will be taped to help insure the accuracy and thoroughness of the information exchanged in our interview; however, if you prefer that the interview not be taped, the recorder will be turned off.

I, _________________________, understand that

1) the information obtained during this case study will be summarized for the purposes of writing a dissertation as part of the doctoral program requirements in Higher Education at Iowa State University,

2) the recordings and notes obtained during this interview will not be heard or seen by anyone other than the investigator (Jerry Price), and

3) my participation in this study is voluntary; I may withdraw at any time by notifying the investigator (Jerry Price), and all information collected from my interviews may not be used in the study.

I agree to participate in this study according to these terms.

Participant signature:_________________________ Date:________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________ Phone:______
I agree to conduct this research according to the preceding terms.

Investigator signature:_________________________  Date:________

Address:  ____________________________________________

_________________________________________  Phone:______
APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM

Investigator: __________________________
Institution: __________________________
Date of interview: ____________________
Today's date: ________________________
Respondent(s): ________________________

Summarize the information obtained: ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Main issues or themes emerging from interview: _________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Other interesting, illuminating, or important information from interview:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Questions emerging from interview: _____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________


APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION SUMMARY FORM

Investigator: __________________________

Institution: __________________________

Date of observation: __________________

Today's date: ________________________

Description of event or activity: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Significance or importance of event or activity: ________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

Main issues or themes emerging from event or activity: _________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Questions emerging from event or activity: ___________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX E

DOCUMENT SUMMARY FORM

Investigator: ____________________________
Institution: _____________________________
Date: _________________________________

Name or description of document: ____________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Significance or importance of document: _________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Summary of document contents: _________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Main issues or themes emerging from document: ________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Questions emerging from document: ____________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX F
UNITS OF DATA

The following are examples of units of data used during data analysis in the study. Unitization is the process of identifying units of information that will be used as the basis for defining categories (Merriam, 1988). Units of data must be heuristic, meaning that they contain information relevant to the study, and must be the smallest piece of information that can stand alone (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, units of information included phrases, sentences, and paragraphs (Merriam, 1988) that communicated a specific idea or theme regarding students' out-of-class experiences or factors and conditions affecting those experiences.

Once an interview was transcribed, one copy of the transcript was printed onto contact paper, which had a sticky backing that could be peeled off. Units of data were identified on the transcripts printed on the contact paper; the units then were cut out, peeled off of the contact paper, and then attached to white 3" x 5" index cards. In many cases, the unit of data was a response to a direct question; therefore, the question asked was included on the card to provide a context for the unit. Not all excerpts from the text are units of data; requests for clarification or comments not related to the study were not considered units of data.
The following are examples of units of data:

• "But it doesn't seem like there's an outlet for it." [This student is discussing the issue of returned study abroad students' sharing of their experiences on campus.]

• "You wouldn't believe how many people are members of SCATE, Action, and Amnesty."

• "If it's a top forty dance then only freshmen and some sophomores are going to be there. Very few seniors. Bands get a whole bunch of people in there."

The following are examples of excerpts from the text that were not considered units of data:

• "Do you mean in general or personally?" [The respondent is asking whether the question sought her personal experience or her insights into the general student body.]

• "You're such a liar! Just because you judge yourself by my standard of going out every night!" [The respondent is joking with another respondent.]

• "I'm not volunteering anything." [The respondent is joking with me.]
APPENDIX G
CATEGORIES

SET 1
1. How involvement encouraged
2. Diversity
3. Learning out-of-class
4. Academics extended beyond the classroom
5. International studies
6. Why students choose Central
7. Central image
8. Out-of-class experiences
9. Recruiting students
10. Christian values
11. Familiar environment
12. Church presence
13. Homogeneity
14. Community
15. Mission
16. Whole student development
17. SCATE
18. Comedians
19. Entertainment
20. Dances
21. Socialization
22. Action
23. Expectations
24. Student Outreach Services
25. Out-of-class opportunities
26. Campus ministries
27. Faculty involvement
28. Student-faculty relations
29. Student academics
30. Student values
31. War
32. Administrative support
33. Self responsibility
34. Student culture
35. Small school
36. Faculty values
37. Student-faculty interaction
38. Acceptance
39. Homosexuality
40. Alternative Lifestyles
41. Small town
42. Music
43. Theater
44. Residence halls
45. Student center
46. Non-traditional students
47. Inclusion
48. Movies
49. Academic/student life
50. Involvement
51. Football
52. Programming
53. Small town values
54. Leadership
55. Attrition
56. Student organizations
57. Expectations communicated
58. Alcohol
59. Women's issues
60. Greeks
61. Vandalism
62. Parties
63. Unstructured activities
64. CMCC
65. All-American students
66. Social issues
67. Intramurals
68. Well-kept facilities
69. Visitation
70. Change
71. Up town
72. Faculty
73. Academic program
74. Amnesty International
75. Administration
76. Stress
77. Counseling

SET 2

1. How involvement encouraged
2. International studies
3. Whole student development
4. Comedians
5. Entertainment
   21. Socialization
6. Dances
7. Expectations
   24. Student Outreach Services
   33. Self responsibility
8. Campus ministries
9. Faculty involvement
   36. Faculty values
   72. Faculty
10. Student-faculty relations
   37. Student-faculty interaction
11. Arts
   42. Music
   43. Theater
12. Residence hall life
   44. Residence halls
   61. Vandalism
   69. Visitation
13. Student center
14. Movies
15. Academic/student life
   3. Learning out-of-class
   4. Academics extended beyond the classroom
29. Student academics
31. War
50. Involvement
73. Academic program
16. Athletics
   51. Football
17. Leadership
18. Student organizations
   17. SCATE
   22. Action
   40. Alternative Lifestyles
   64. CMCC
   74. Amnesty International
19. Expectations communicated
20. Greeks
21. Parties
22. Unstructured activities
23. Social issues
   39. Homosexuality
   59. Women's issues
24. Recreation
   67. Intramurals
25. Active student body
26. What is there to do
27. Diversity
28. Out-of-class experiences
   25. Out-of-class opportunities
   52. Programming
29. Church relationship
30. Why students choose Central
   9. Recruiting students
31. Alcohol
   71. Up town
32. Community
   7. Central image
   10. Christian values
   11. Familiar environment
   13. Homogeneity
30. Student values
32. Administrative support
34. Student culture
35. Small school
38. Acceptance
41. Small town
46. Non-traditional students
47. Inclusion
53. Small town values
55. Attrition
65. All-American students
68. Well-kept facilities
70. Change
75. Administration
76. Stress
77. Counseling

33. Mission

SET 3

Involvement opportunities
1. International studies
2. Athletics/Recreation
   a. Intramurals
3. Student organizations
   23. Social issues
   17. SCATE
   22. Action
   74. Amnesty International
40. Alternative Lifestyles
293

64. CMCC
11. Arts
42. Music
43. Theater
20. Greeks

4. Unstructured activities
12. Residence hall life
44. Residence halls
61. Vandalism
69. Visitation
13. Student center
21. Parties
26. What is there to do
31. Alcohol
71. Up town

5. Campus ministries

6. Academic/student life

   4. Academics extended beyond the classroom
50. Involvement
73. Academic program
9. Faculty involvement
36. Faculty values
10. Student-faculty relations
37. Student-faculty interaction

7. Leadership
8. Entertainment
   4. Comedians
   6. Dances
   14. Movies
   21. Socialization

Factors and conditions influencing involvement

1. Community
   7. Central image
   30. Student values
   34. Student culture
   35. Small school
   41. Small town
   53. Small town values
   68. Well-kept facilities
   75. Administration
      1. How involvement encouraged
      7. Expectations
   33. Self responsibility
   19. Expectations communicated
   25. Active student body

2. Mission
   3. Whole student development

3. College-church relationship
   10. Christian values

4. Familiar environment
30. Why students choose Central

9. Recruiting students

5. Homogeneous environment

39. Homosexuality

59. Women’s issues

27. Diversity

38. Acceptance

47. Inclusion

65. All-American students
APPENDIX H

FACTORS AND CONDITIONS CHART

MISSION

COLLEGE-CHURCH RELATIONSHIP

FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT

HOMOGENEOUS ENVIRONMENT

INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

STUDENT CULTURE

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

UNCHALLENGING

PASSIVE

MINOR INFLUENCE

MAJOR INFLUENCE