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A qualitative study to determine the effect of the new Maytag Student Center on the campus life at Central College in Pella, Iowa, 1991

Elizabeth May Hadler
Iowa State University

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A qualitative study to determine the effect of the new Maytag Student Center on the campus life at Central College in Pella, Iowa, 1991

by

Elizabeth May Hadler

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department: Professional Studies in Education Major: Education (Higher Education)

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

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1991
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

For many years, student affairs professionals were considered the regulators and managers of students' lives in the absence of their parents. This "en loco parentis" approach provided the justification for having student services in higher education for many years (Hurst, 1987). But times have changed and student personnel workers have shifted their emphasis from controlling students, to serving students, to the current emphasis on student development (Winkler, 1985). Student affairs professionals are discovering that their contributions to the college campus are unlimited in such areas as services, activities, and counseling.

Student affairs professionals are beginning to define themselves as educators with a responsibility to help students acquire necessary skills, knowledge, and resources in order to maximize the college experience. In this transition, professionals are realizing that weaknesses discovered at institutions are sometimes due to the environment and not always caused by the student (Hurst, 1987). As a result according to Conyne (1983), more attention is being turned to system blame rather than victim blame. Thus, a relatively new concept has arisen, "campus ecology"--how to adapt the environment to the student (Winkler, 1985).
James H. Banning (1989, p. 219), professor of psychology at Colorado State University, describes seven basic steps to the ecosystem design process as a methodology to design and manage campus ecology. Those seven steps are the following:

1. Designers, along with community, select educational values.
2. Values are translated into specific goals.
3. The environment is designed to reach the desired goals.
4. The environment is fitted to the student.
5. Students' perceptions of the environment are measured.
6. Students' behaviors as a result of environmental perception are monitored.
7. Data of the environmental design's successes and failures, as indicated by students' perceptions and behaviors, are fed back to the designers so they may continue to learn about student-environment fit in order to design better environments.

But the initial intent of higher education still should not be overlooked--that of academics, and it need not be using the ecosystem approach as well as applying the involvement theory. Through studies at Brigham Young University (Sorenson, 1987), researchers found that students learn and develop best through participation and involvement. Astin (1984, p. 52), who developed the Involvement Theory, stated that "the amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program." Astin
defines involvement as the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience and creates five basic postulates to the involvement theory. In the involvement theory, Astin emphasizes active participation of the student in the learning process. Research further suggests that learning will be greatest when the learning environment is structured to encourage active participation by the student which links back to the importance of campus ecology. As with the ecosystem approach, the involvement theory is concerned with behavioral mechanisms or processes that facilitate student development. The involvement approach helps the student affairs professional to focus on what the students are actually doing and then to discover a "hook" to get them more involved (Astin, 1984).

One "hook" that is used at some institutions is the student union which was originally established to meet the recreational and social needs of the students (Angell, 1928). Student unions have been in existence since the early 19th century, but their role in student life has been studied very little (Webster, 1982). In fact, facilities on college campuses have rarely been studied and looked upon as having an effect on the learning environment. But with the new emphasis on campus ecology and adapting the institution more to the student, more importance will be placed upon the design and structure of educational facilities. As mentioned earlier and
evidenced by in the review of the literature, environment does appear to have an effect on students' college life. Along with studies of educational facilities go the planning and organization of them as a campus-wide project as well in order to involve the campus community. Thus in studying student unions, campus ecology and the involvement theory are very helpful tools. As Banning (1980) explained, campus ecology deals with the interaction between the campus environment and the students as a whole community. In contrast, Astin's Involvement Theory (1984) relates to the individual student and the behavioral mechanisms that facilitate the development of the student. With both of these approaches the students as a whole as well as the individual student are considered.

As a method for improving the campus life and providing an increasingly positive environment at Central College in Pella, Iowa, a new student union, the Maytag Student Center, was completed in 1990. Official planning for the two million dollar Maytag Student Center began in 1988 and was funded by a significant contribution from the Fred Maytag family along with contributions from alumni and friends. The Center was designed to house various services and activities such as a snack bar, recreation room, meeting rooms, offices, and the post office in order to accommodate the college community. This thesis will explore and study the effects of the new student union on the learning environment at Central College. In doing so, the students, faculty, and administration will
provide input through interviews and surveys conducted on campus.

Need for the Study

The study was concerned with determining the effects of the recently constructed Maytag Student Center at Central College in Pella, Iowa upon the learning environment of the college. Many times facilities are designed and constructed at universities and colleges and there is rarely any type of follow-up to determine the effects of the structure. As Banning (1989) points out in the seventh step of the ecosystem design process, data of the environmental design's successes and failures should be fed back to the designers, so they might continue to learn about student environment-fit in order to improve it.

The Maytag Student Center has been utilized by the students, faculty, and administrators for one total school year. Thus, it was an ideal time to study the initial effects of the student center on the student body as well as on the faculty and administrators. This information will be very useful when designing future facilities as well as to possibly improve the current structure. Instead of looking at buildings as static objects, they need to be considered flexible and able to be improved.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of Central College students, faculty and administrators toward the new Maytag Student Center. The initial objectives and goals for the new facility were obtained from the designers through personal interviews then used to determine if those aims have been met in the opinions of the users of the facility through questionnaires. Thus, qualitative methodology was used to produce descriptive data of the participants' written or spoken words (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). It was not the author's intent to carry out statistical tests such as t-tests, chi-square tests, etc. but instead to limit the study to developing concepts, insights, and understandings from data patterns obtained through surveys and interviews.

It is hoped that the findings from this study will aid in making future decisions regarding student centers and other educational facilities provided at universities and colleges. Furthermore, the implications of this study will be useful for Central College in improving its facilities. The general feeling at Central College, as expressed by Bill Hinga the Vice President of Student Affairs at Central College for 26 years, was that the new Maytag Student Center had been an outstanding addition to the campus. There had been, however,
no systematic research on the effects of the Maytag Student Center to support that assumption.

Research Questions

1. Do the students, faculty, and administrators at Central College feel that the students, faculty, and administrators on campus during the planning stages of the Maytag Student Center were able to provide input into the initial designing of the Center?

2. Does the Maytag Student Center at Central College encourage involvement and participation by the students, faculty, and administrators?

3. Are the goals established by the designers of the Maytag Student Center at Central College being achieved according to students, faculty, and administrators?

4. Does the Maytag Student Center at Central College have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus according to students, faculty, and administrators?
Limitations of the Study

The subjects involved were those senior students, faculty, and administrators, at Central College in Pella, Iowa in the fall of 1991. Only one college was studied, so generalizations of these results to other college or university settings would be premature. Future research would be necessary in order to relate findings to other institutions more specifically.

Definition of Key Terms

Campus Ecology: The interaction between the college student and the campus environment (Banning, 1980).


Organization of the Study

The first chapter of the study presented a basic introduction and purpose. Chapter II will review literature in related studies and articles. The third chapter will describe the methodology and instrument used to derive the findings, and then those results are presented in Chapter IV.
In Chapter V, a discussion of the findings will precede a final summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research. References, acknowledgements, and appendices will then conclude the study.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Obtaining a college education in America has grown in importance over the past several years. Americans place a high value on education as a means for self-development and hopefully for upward mobility (Lystad, 1973). The students of the 1940s and 1950s placed importance on education as a key to economic success and upward mobility, whereas the young people of the 1970s began to look to the college or university to teach them more about themselves and about society. Lystad (1973) explained that in the 1970s students began valuing college as a maturing experience and a time of assessing personal feelings and practicing independence. A 1970 female graduate from York, Pennsylvania stated that the college experience had yielded a broadening of her attitudes and values (Lystad, 1973, p. 59).

Thus new demands have been placed upon the educational system as a result of the increasing complexity of the American society. Colleges and Universities are being looked upon to serve an ever increasingly diverse population that continues to stray from the traditional population of white middle-class 18-24 year-old students in the past (Johnson, 1989). Thus, concern has not only been generated towards formal content of the subject matter taught, but also with the extent to which the educational process has an influence upon
the attitudes and values of the students (Gottlieb and Hodgkins, 1968).

Concern over academic standards in higher education is not a new concept. As early as the 1920s, Robert Angell (1928) studied the students at the University of Michigan and believed that students had no truly vital concern with the search after knowledge and learning. He firmly believed that extracurricular activities actually interfered with the students' learning. But in the 1920s, the primary work of outside the classroom activities, such as student development, were to be done by regular faculty, along with teaching. This created a load that was quite heavy and possibly had a worse effect on faculty than on the students. The primary work of student development was initially intended to be handled by regular faculty, until separate bureaus such as Offices of the Dean were gradually established to ease the burden on the faculty (Parker, 1978).

Fenske (1980) described three developmental themes in the history of American higher education most relevant for understanding the evolution of the student services profession: (1) The shift in emphasis from religious to secular concerns, (2) the expansion in size and complexity of institutions, and (3) the shift in faculty focus from student development to academic interests. In the early periods of institutional growth, student service personnel allowed academic faculty to believe that their role was central, and
student service personnel were content to play peripheral and supportive roles. In other words, student personnel's basic position was to react and to preserve the status quo of educational systems (Delworth and Piel, 1978). Historically, student affairs was created to free scholars from management functions and take burdens such as discipline off the shoulders of the president of the institution. Student affairs basically came about in order to provide support for the main mission of the institution— that of the classroom (Johnson, 1989).

The initial responsibility of the student affairs professional was to act in place of the students' parents and thus the creation of the en loco parentis doctrine. They were to administer just and necessary discipline in order to ensure that each student's behavior was becoming to a lady or a gentleman. Student personnel became more so identified with controlling and disciplinary functions rather than educational or growth facilitating functions (Parker, 1978).

Gradually student development personnel moved from en loco parentis to concern with establishing an environment in higher education that challenged and supported individuals to increase their total effectiveness, not with adjusting to or being controlled by the institution (Parker, 1978). Thus, as Winkler (1985) emphasized, student personnel workers have shifted their emphasis from controlling and disciplining students to helping students develop.
Cross (1975) presented three different models of egalitarian education:

Model 1: The Remedial Model
Model 2: The Educator's Model
Model 3: The Pluralistic Model

In the Remedial Model, the institution attempts to "correct" individual differences at the point of entry into college. Students were expected to change and to adjust to college, thus student affairs were frequently perceived as change agents. In the Educator's Model, individual differences begin to be recognized as an educational challenge. In this model the institution attempts to devise multiple processes and treatments that will reduce or eliminate differences upon exit from the college. At this stage, a connection begins between student affairs and instruction of student development which leads to Model 3. In the Pluralistic Model, equality and individual differences can co-exist compatibly, and students can enter college with differences and exit with different competencies. If lifestyles of learners cannot be adapted to the college, no harm is done by putting some of the burden for adjustment on the college.

Thus a new emphasis has been placed on student development towards the coordination and integration of the total campus environment toward growth and development as a democratic community. As Banning (1980) explained, student services must direct energies toward the management of campus ecology in
order to free itself from the role of maintaining the status quo. Delworth and Piel (1978) emphasized that we are moving away from the static position of changing students and not the environment toward a developmental perspective approach which defines a student-services role. This role recognizes the necessary growth tasks of late adolescence and early childhood and provides opportunities to facilitate such growth.

At the 3rd annual Campus Ecology Symposium at Colorado State (Winkler, 1985), the student affairs professionals stressed that behavior is a function of the interaction between a person and the environment. Clyde E. Sullivan, director of counseling at Brigham Young University, stated that campus ecology is based on the assumption that "what a person does as a thinker is profoundly influenced by what happens in an emotional and social setting". In past years, if there was a sense that the student and the environment did not "fit", the student faced the responsibility of change. With the ecosystem approach, student affairs professionals identify ecology of the campus as the target of the diagnosis and intervention (Hurst, 1987).

As earlier introduced, Banning (1980 and 1989) described seven basic steps to the ecosystem model based on the ecological perspective which provides a methodology to design and manage the campus ecology. Banning recognized the fact that the qualitative nature of campus environments must be examined and the ecological relationship between students and
environment must be recognized. An ecological approach helped to correct the overemphasis on working with individual students. Banning (1980) expanded and further explained his seven step model in the following way:

Step 1: Valuing: Values of the environment are collectively developed by faculty, students, and staff. These values relate to the behaviors intended for the environmental inhabitants.

Step 2: Goal Setting: Values of the environment are translated into more specific goals. In moving from value statements to specific objectives management by objectives is commonly very useful.

Step 3: Programming: Goals and objectives established in step 2 are translated into programs or activities. In order to allow and encourage students to undertake critical development, institutions should provide a variety of programs as well as sufficient support and appropriate reward.

Step 4: Fitting: Due to the wide range of individual needs, programs activities must fit the campus to the student. Some single uniform programs may be fitted to meet
the needs of most, while other activities need to be designed to specific groups or individuals.

Step 5: Mapping: Original goals developed by the campus are compared to students' perceptions measured concerning the campus.

Step 6: Observing: Student behavior is observed in the campus environment and compared with the perceptions of the environment and the goals of the campus. If the design is successful, the correspondence between goals, behavior, and perceptions will be high.

Step 7: Feedback: All of the information and data gathered are fed back through the design process in order to review the previously selected values. Necessary adjustments may be initiated to help ensure the intended outcome.

These seven steps are interdependent, so each individual campus would begin at the step appropriate for their particular situation. According to Banning (1989), most of the college design processes begin at step five, because the campus is already in existence. Furthermore, this ecosystem model is a participatory design strategy based upon the conviction that all people impacted by a space have the moral
right to participate in its design. At the Campus Ecology Symposium at Colorado State (Winkler, 1985), the student affairs professionals emphasized that participation by all (administrators, faculty, students) is a key to the campus ecological work and strongly suggested encouraging as many individuals and/or groups as possible to get involved in the decision making.

The ecosystem model's process is utilized to identify shaping properties in the campus environments in order to design out dysfunctional features and to design in features that facilitate student educational and personal growth. Delworth and Piel (1978) further explained that programs can no longer be developed strictly to help individual students adjust to the demands of college life as in the past. This old approach suggested the automatic acceptance of the environmental status quo. Institutions must now begin viewing campus environments as mutable and systematically examining ways to modify it.

Robert K. Conyne (1983), Student Affairs and Counselor Education at the University of Cincinnati, also presented general competencies needed in campus environmental design. Those seven competencies included:

1. Theoretical competencies: Knowledge of campus ecology incorporates a basic developmental domain of student, environment, and management.
2. Communication competencies: The need for good presenters, listeners, and supporters able to communicate ideas effectively with individuals and with groups of various types.

3. Applied research competencies: Practitioners must have the ability to design and implement correct methods for gathering relevant data and translating the data to meaningful information.

4. Group facilitation competencies: Being able to work in group settings.

5. Consultation competencies: The ability to collaborate with client systems.

6. Training competencies: The ability to teach participants design skills.

7. Action research competencies: Integrating research and action in the best possible way to facilitate the environmental change.

Theoretical competency is basically the knowledge of campus ecology and is accomplished through competencies two through six. Action research competency incorporates and extends competencies two through six. Evaluation of the campus ecology along with necessary feedback then creates an endless loop of continuing institutional growth which is healthy for the institution as well as the students, faculty and administrators.
Clarke (1987) conducted a study which evaluated a mode of student interaction with the environment that would help guide the process of program development toward greater congruence. Ecological congruence implies that values, attitudes, needs, and goals of the students can be expressed and developed in the campus environment. Clarke suggested that the question of congruence between students and environment may mean the difference between improved organizational health and gradual decline of an institution as well as between student persistence and withdrawal. Clarke found in his study that in the ecology of the campus, demands are imposed on the students' attention by the environment. But the environment also supplies programming support arranged so students can work toward satisfaction by interacting with aspects of the system around them.

In a related study, Witt and Handal (1984) investigated whether person-environment congruence has a stronger relationship to satisfaction than either personality or environment alone. The researchers defined congruency variables as an integration of a specific personality variable with a specific environmental variable, and congruency variables are unique to each environment in which they are measured. From this study, Witt and Handal found that environment had the strongest relationship to satisfaction and accounted for more common variance with satisfaction than either congruency or personality.
As Banning (1980, 1989) stressed in his ecosystem design process, establishing goals and values is an essential element for success. But where should these goals and values arise?

In 1981, Brigham Young University (Sorenson, 1987) began an effort to rethink the institution's mission statement in order to focus more on the broad, balanced development of the total person. Student personnel professionals felt that the nation as a whole had lost sight of the basic purpose of education. They found that often times, student affairs isolated themselves from other segments of the college through the introduction of a student development model which weakens student affairs' ability to affect the education of the student. Sorenson (1987) suggested that ideal goals would be to incorporate student development into the institution's curriculum and to integrate and synthesize institutional issues and student affairs. This institutional mission must be supported by student affairs in order to really be a part of the institution and to be most effective. Sorenson emphasized that it is vital that student affairs respond positively to issues facing the institution, and, in particular, the intellect and academic mission of the college. Smith (1982) stated that institutions that share a sense of purpose and values are more likely to create a stronger educational environment often referred to as institutional connection. The true mission of the student affairs, along with the institution, should be to create an environment which
supports education and development of the whole person.

This holistic, humanistic approach to education is not a new one. The Student Personnel Point of View of 1937 (Saddlemire, 1980, p. 26) stated that the "philosophy (of the holistic approach) imposes upon educational institutions the obligation to consider the student as a whole... It puts emphasis upon the development of the student as a person rather than upon his intellectual training alone". Thus, even as early as the 1930s, practitioners believed that education needed to reach the whole student. The Carnegie Foundation report by E.L. Boyer (1987) urged academic and nonacademic functions to become more closely related in order to accomplish the essential mission of colleges and universities as it pertains to the development of the whole student.

Cynthia Johnson (1989) emphasized that often times colleges and universities lack a clear mission and are confused about who should govern them. In establishing and directing a mission, participation by faculty, administrators, and students is essential. Parker (1978) stressed that student personnel workers must stay close to the mainstream of the educational enterprise, the instructional function, in order to be involved in the total campus environment. Student service staff must recognize that facilitating student development should also be a total institutional commitment calling for the integration of teaching and student services staff (Saddlemire, 1980).
Banning (1980) emphasized that historical concern directed toward individual students must be broadened to include the total campus ecology. An attitude of involvement must accompany the new concern for total ecology. In order to avoid the impersonal manipulation of many by a select few, campus members must be encouraged to participate.

Complimentary to Banning’s Ecosystem Design Process (1989), but a theory that dealt more with the individual student was Astin’s Involvement Theory (1984). In the Involvement Theory, Astin was concerned with behavioral mechanisms or processes that facilitate student development. The five basic postulates to the involvement theory are the following:

1. Involvement refers to investment of physical and psychological energies in various objects.

2. Different students manifest different degrees of involvement to different objects.

3. Involvement has quantitative (how many hours) and qualitative (whether student "absorbs") features.

4. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in the program.

5. Effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement.
Four and five are key educational postulates which provide clues for designing more effective educational programs for students (Astin, 1984).

Furthermore, factors that contribute to students remaining in college suggest involvement. Significant environmental factors which help retain students include; student's residence, social fraternities and sororities, extracurricular activities, honors programs, and on campus jobs—just to name a few. Involvement is characteristically minimal at community colleges where chances of dropping out are much greater. By being involved, students are more likely to experience satisfaction with their college life, especially in areas of student friendships, social life, faculty-student relations, and institutional reputation (Astin, 1984).

Student emphasis on social relationships generates goals that are carried out with the social context of the institution. This social realm provides a vehicle for student emphasis on personal development, personal success, and thus contributes to the decision to persist in college (Clarke, 1987). Clark (1968) found that where students remain in the same college for four years, their relationships with each other and the faculty have that much more time to grow and ripen. Combine this time with conditions such as on-campus living and faculty involvement, and very likely the result will be four years of community-like participation.
According to Goldberg (1980) students today want to feel that they have an opportunity to influence administrative decisions that affect them. Students view themselves as consumers, investors, and members of the close-knit college environment as well as learners. This involvement in the administrative process makes students very aware of the constraints, financial and others, under which the institution operates and helps them to better understand the system. Student input and involvement can be of invaluable assistance to administrators in the performance of their responsibilities and should not be seen as a threat to their authority. Encouragement of student involvement can strengthen future alumni support and thus increase positive involvement for the institution (Goldberg, 1980).

Student services staff recognize that advocating student involvement on campus encourages student growth and development. In order to help students contribute to the campus community, student personnel should seek opportunities for involving students in making a wide variety of campus decisions (Saddlemire, 1980). Delworth and Piel (1978) found that students' ideas about desirable changes and reactions to proposed redesigns are essential to ensure that the redesigns will have a maximum positive impact.

To be involved, students, faculty, and administrators should be included and participate in the planning process of facilities. When they are involved in such planning,
students, faculty, and administrators usually become excited about the change rather than doubtful. In a study conducted at Michigan State University (Propst, 1976), the satisfaction and proficiency of the direct physical environment on the satisfaction and proficiency of its users was measured. Facilities are not commonly included in a discussion of improving education, mainly because they are thought to be static and unimportant. Yet from the experiment, researchers at Michigan State University found that: (1) Facility design gracefully encompasses diversified character of daily life, (2) writing off obsolete environment pays off in improved productivity and in satisfaction and proficiency of the users, and (3) facilities are important economic ingredients in organizational life and exert a significant positive influence on the work (study) process (Propst, 1976). Information from other groups and offices in the campus community is essential for the estimation of the probable far-reaching consequences of projects and for the determination of the most appropriate method of intervention. The work is definitely interactive in the sense of involving the variety of persons with differing roles and functions in the university (Delworth and Piel, 1978).

As early as the 1920s, the main aim of the student union was to bring together in a wholesome and democratic way all the persons of each sex on a university campus. The tendency of those days was to provide buildings designed to meet the
recreational and social needs of the students, so unions were established to do so (Angell, 1928). Student unions have obviously been around for quite some time on college campuses, but very little research has been done on them. In a study conducted at the University of Maryland, College Park (Webster, 1982), the programs and services at the student union were evaluated. Results of the study indicated that the student union was viewed as a comfortable place providing services for differential needs, and the union provided a coordinating link between student affairs and academic offices in a comprehensive and meaningful way. Richard Gorham (1981, p. 74) stated that "Learning is and will continue to be influenced by its physical environment." He went on to add that people have the ability to learn in negative environments, but they will learn best when provided with a more conducive and positive environment.

Delworth and Piel (1978) emphasized that something personally significant happens to students when they attend college and it appeared to be influenced both by student characteristics and the characteristics of the college environment. Therefore the college environment must be studied as carefully as the student in order to understand the process of student development throughout college. Americans in general are greatly influenced by their physical environment, so the college community is likely to be effected very similarly. As stated previously, very few studies have
been conducted concerning the effects of the campus environment on learning, but that trend is changing. Wilson (1990) reported on a survey conducted by the American Council on Education of 308 college presidents that a majority of them felt that inadequate facilities for campus gatherings were a moderate to major problem of college campuses today. Concern appears to be increasing over the effects of educational facilities on college campuses.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were obtained from the senior students, faculty, and administrators at Central College who utilized the Maytag Student Center. Central College is a private, four year, coeducational, liberal arts institution affiliated with the Reformed Church of America. Central is located in Pella, Iowa, a Dutch community of approximately 8,700 people which is 40 miles southeast of Des Moines, the state capital. The Pella community annually celebrates their Dutch heritage with the Tulip Time Festival in early May. This event attracts thousands of tourists from all over the country to Pella. Some events at the festival include street washing, parades, crowning of the Tulip Queen and various presentations.

Central College consists of a 130 acre campus with 31 major buildings enrolls approximately 1,750 undergraduate students which includes around 225 on overseas campuses. The college is built around a pond in the central-east portion of the campus which provides the students a place to skate in the winter and to watch the ducks on warmer days. There is also a chapel on campus which provides Thursday afternoon and Sunday morning services.

Although a relatively small institution, Central College offers very diverse and unique opportunities for students. For example, no student at Central is labeled "undecided" if
they enter the college without a definite major their freshman year. Instead, students enter the exploring program which allows them to take courses in a variety of disciplines for a broad liberal arts education. This program provides students with the opportunity to explore various interests before declaring a major at the end of their sophomore year. In 1990, more than one-third of Central freshman enrolled as Exploring students.

Likewise, Central College offers an Honors Program which provides thought-provoking discussions and extensive research from participating students, faculty, and administrators. Students have traditionally been competitive on the national level through this program. For example, in 1989 a Central College student was one of fifty chosen out of 1,200 nationwide to participate in the prestigious London School of Economics. Only two Americans were accepted the year before, and they were both from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Along with Exploring and Honors Programs, an extensive overseas program is also used to meet the institution's goal of providing a global education. Central college offers eight overseas programs at study centers in England, China, Wales, The Netherlands, France, Austria, Spain, and Mexico. Almost half of Central students study overseas before graduating. The institution values innovation, risk-taking and helping students see all possibilities that lie ahead.
Central College includes 19 departments which offers undergraduate majors in 33 subject areas. Pre-professional programs in Law, Health Sciences, Ministry, Engineering, and Architecture are also offered.

Student involvement is considered a key to the Central College community. More than one hundred students work in the student activity office helping to develop programs their classmates will enjoy. Central offers unique activities such as an annual Lip Sync contest and Lemming Day races along with a variety of on-campus programs and athletic programs among the best in NCAA Division III. As one student explains, "We have so many nationally recognized programs in the arts, forensics, and athletics. It shows how well-rounded Central is. And these quality programs help make a name for our school, too."

The student-faculty ratio at Central College is 16/1 which is another high priority of the institution. Professors have published many books and articles, but they are at Central because they love to teach. Professor's success in the classroom is what counts, because teaching always comes first. At Central College, faculty accessibility is a real point of difference.

Nearly all of Central's facilities have been built or renovated in the past 15 years. Improvements have included; an athletic complex, a new facility for communication and
theater majors, spacious labs for science courses, and town houses for plush on-campus living.

In 1988, plans began for a new student center facility to be constructed on the campus. This $2 million facility began with a significant gift from the Fred Maytag Family Foundation with the remainder of the costs financed through the generosity of thousands of Central alumni and friends as part of the college's "Crowning of the 80's" campaign. A building committee was established by then President Kenneth Weller which consisted of three administrators, three faculty, and three students. The Maytag Student Center replaced the old student union which had been added onto three different times and finally demolished. Included in the building are: offices for Student Personnel, Counseling, the Student Unions and Student Senate, several conference rooms, post office, book store, recreation room, video lounge, and Grand Central Station (snack bar with jukebox and dance floor). The layout of the Center can be found in APPENDIX A. As an administrator noted, "Reuniting these elements in a new centrally located facility has greatly contributed to the quality of campus life." The Maytag Center provides a place for students to meet, exchange ideas, and relax, and it is a hub for campus life. Also, campus groups and organizations can receive exposure to the entire Central community as the Maytag Center is alive with students and faculty.
As presented earlier, the purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of the Central College students, faculty, and administrators toward the new Maytag Student Center. In meeting this purpose the following research questions were used: (1) Do the students, faculty, and administrators at Central College feel that the students, faculty, and administrators on campus during the planning stages of the Maytag Student Center were able to provide input into the initial designing of the Center? (2) Does the Maytag Student Center at Central College encourage involvement and participation by the students, faculty, and administrators? (3) Are the goals established by the designers of the Maytag Student Center at Central College being achieved according to students, faculty, and administrators? (4) Does the Maytag Student Center at Central College have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus according to students, faculty, and administrators?

Instrument

In order to analyze these questions and to test the effects of the new facility at Central College, Bill Hinga, Vice President of Student Affairs for 26 years at Central and head of the Maytag Student Center building committee, was interviewed in order to obtain the designer's actual goals and
objectives of the Maytag Student Center. These goals and objectives along with parts of Banning's ecosystem theory (1989) and Astin's involvement theory (1984), were then used to formulate a survey questionnaire (see APPENDICES D and E) for the senior students and for the faculty, and administrators. The seniors were given the survey at Central since they were at Central when there was no union and also in order to keep the number of questionnaires at a manageable level. Surveys were used for the students, faculty, and administrators instead of interviews in order to obtain a broad portrayal of the perceptions of those groups instead of just a select few.

The survey questions were designed to fit each research question and were directed to either the students and/or the faculty and administrators. Two similar questionnaires were formulated. One questionnaire was given to students consisting of 19 open-ended questions, and the other was given to faculty and administrators consisting of 17 open-ended questions. The questions were open-ended in order to allow the respondents to comment and elaborate as much as possible. In the surveys (refer to APPENDICES D and E) questions 1-3 pertained to the first research question on both surveys; questions 4-7 related to the second research question on both surveys; questions 8-14 on the students' survey and questions 8-12 on the faculty and administrators' survey pertained to the third research question; and questions 15-19 on the
students' survey and questions 13-17 on the faculty and administrators' survey related to the fourth research question.

On Wednesday, September 18, 1991, the survey questionnaires were sent by campus mail to all faculty and administrators on campus and placed in each student's mailbox. The participants were then asked to return the forms through campus mail (free of charge) by Thursday, September 26. Classes had only been in session at Central for one week, so it was anticipated that the students, faculty, and administrators would be less busy. The data received were then qualitatively analyzed by grouping and comparing the various responses of the students as well as the faculty and administrators. Each question was analyzed separately on each form, thus all of the responses to question one of the students' questionnaire were compared to the other students' responses on question one and likewise with question two and so on. The same procedure was used to analyze the faculty and administrators' responses. After accumulating, analyzing and summarizing the responses to each question, the cumulative responses were then used to refer back to the four original research questions.

As Taylor and Bogdan (1984) explained, qualitative methodology refers to research that creates descriptive data from persons' own spoken or written words. The qualitative researcher looks at settings as a whole rather than reducing
those groups to variables. In studying the effects of the Maytag Student Center, the author was concerned with obtaining a detailed understanding of other peoples' perspectives and treated each perspective equally, thus suggesting a qualitative approach. In qualitative research, the researcher should obtain first-hand knowledge of social life unfiltered through concepts, operational definitions, and rating scales (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). The author conducted this study in order to learn more about the perceptions toward the Maytag Student Center. Siedman (1991) explained that in qualitative studies the inquiry is being conducted in order to learn more about complexities of which researchers are not totally aware, so the design and even the focus of the research have to be seen as emergent.
CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

Introduction

Chapter IV is organized into four different parts. Part one deals with the responses to the survey of the faculty and administrators, part two summarizes the responses of the students, part three summarizes the responses of Bill Hinga, Vice President of Student Affairs at Central College for 26 years, to the interview questions, and part four deals with the interview of Dr. Kenneth Weller, President of Central College from 1969-1990.

The findings relate to the following four research questions:

1. Do the students, faculty, and administrators at Central College feel that the students, faculty, and administrators on campus during the planning stages of the Maytag Student Center were able to provide input into the initial designing of the Center?

2. Does the Maytag Student Center encourage involvement and participation by the students, faculty, and administrators?

3. Are the goals established by the designers of the Maytag Student Center at Central College being achieved according to students, faculty, and administrators?
4. Does the Maytag Student Center at Central College have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus according to students, faculty, and administrators?

Faculty and Administrator Responses

A total of 138 questionnaires consisting of 17 open-ended questions were mailed to faculty and administrators who had been at Central for at least one year and 47 were returned. As a follow-up to encourage more responses, reminders were placed in the daily Central College newsletter as well as encouragement through personal contact.

Questions 1-3 dealt with the first research question: "Do you feel that the students, faculty, and administrators at Central College were able to provide input into the initial designing of the Maytag Student Center?" Most of the respondents were aware of the committee which was made up of representatives from all three groups, but still felt that most involvement and decisions were administrative. The most common response was that they could give an opinion, but it would not carry much weight. One faculty member reported sending a memo to the committee during the planning stages and it went unanswered. Many of the respondents did not express any real concern about providing input since the committee was established specifically to plan the facility, and they could always talk to a committee member.
The second question; "Does the Maytag Student Center encourage involvement and participation by the students, faculty, and administrators?" corresponded to questions 4-7 on the survey. The respondents expressed various types of activities at the Center in which they were involved, such as; coffee time, lunch, meetings, admissions functions, entertainment alternatives, and videos in the Van Emmerick Studio to name a few. They also regarded the Grand Central Station (snack bar) as a very convenient place to meet with other faculty and administrators as well as with students. Various opportunities to meet faculty, administrators and students at the post office, in the bookstore, and buying snacks were considered to be an advantage. From the faculty and administrators' point of view, the Maytag Student Center had a very positive social impact. As one respondent commented, "Without participation there is no community. Central College is considered community".

Questions 8-12 on the questionnaire corresponded to the third research question; "Are the goals established by the designers of the Maytag Student Center being achieved?" These survey questions were formulated from Bill Hinga's interview. There were various opinions regarding the attractiveness of the Center. Some felt that the Center was too ornate, had a lot of wasted space and some expressed a dislike for the Dutch interior, while others expressed feelings of comfort in the environment and attractiveness to the openness. Furthermore,
the facility was considered very functional by many and one that encouraged interaction.

The Center was considered a very good meeting place or gathering spot and also provided a relaxing-stress release atmosphere. Many of the respondents considered the Center the best informal spot on campus but yet in a very professional atmosphere.

In regards to entertainment, the faculty and administrators considered that aspect of the Center definitely triggered for the students—as they felt it should be. Their main activities at the Center included meetings and other gatherings during the day leaving the entertainment at nights for the students.

The general consensus was that the facility was designed primarily for the students (as they felt it should be), and then for the rest of the campus community. The Center as a recruiting tool for prospective students and families was also expressed as an important aspect of the campus.

Questions 13-17 corresponded with the fourth research question; "Does the Maytag Student Center have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus?" Many respondents expressed the idea that the Center was not necessarily used directly for academics but does aid the education process of the College. For example, the Center was used as the social gathering spot rather than the library, and it also provided students a good study-break area.
Furthermore, the Center contributed to students overall well-being and helped to keep the students on campus. Respondents also commented that the faculty and student interaction was good for the academics of the College.

From the faculty and administrators' perspective there was a positive effect created by the Center due to the creation of a better working environment and uplifting, cheerful climate. Several expressed that the Center tells those not regularly on campus that the College does things well, respects and appreciates fine things, and plans efficiently. The Center added to the feelings of "First Class" as one respondent commented. The art in the Center created various responses. Some disliked it, some liked it, while others have never really noticed it. As a symbol of pride towards the Maytag Student Center, many expressed their desire to "show it off" to visitors, and considered it the best student center they have ever seen anywhere. One respondent commented that the Center "creates respect and responsibility which enhances students' desire to achieve and do well not only in school but also in life".

Student Responses

A total of 290 questionnaires were sent to senior students at Central College, and 62 were returned. This survey consisted of 19 open-ended questions and covered the same four
research questions. As previously mentioned, daily reminders were placed in the Central College newsletter along with personal contact in order to encourage the students to return the questionnaire. Despite these efforts to increase the number of responses, the number of questionnaires returned remained low which will be discussed in the Discussion of the Findings section.

In reference to the first research question; "Do you feel that the students, faculty, and administrators were able to provide input into the initial designing of the Maytag Student Center?" most of the students responded that it was basically an administrative decision. As with the faculty and administrators, most of the student respondents were aware of the nine member committee but also thought that their voice would not be heard.

Questions 4-7 pertained to the second research question; "Does the Maytag Student Center encourage involvement and participation by the students, faculty, and administrators?" Many of the respondents expressed the positive aspect of having so many services all in one place—making the Center the core of the college. Many recorded participating in activities such as; movies, meetings, games, and comedy acts and expressed the enjoyment of being able to socialize with so many people all in one place. Many described the Center as a great common meeting place and a convenient "hang-out" spot.
From the students' responses to number 7, it was very apparent that the involvement and participation was important. One student stated that, "College is involvement, and it gives you a sense of belonging." Several students noted that the more involved you are, the more people you meet. The students expressed their satisfaction with the social aspects of the Center, then explained the importance of the social aspect in being involved in the College. Many were also in clubs and organizations which have regular meetings in the Center.

The third research question; "Are the goals established by the designers of the Maytag Student Center being achieved?" was covered in questions 8-14. The students considered the Center very inviting and attractive with its cleanliness, openness, and homeliness. They also expressed pleasure in the relaxed environment and comfortable furniture. Several mentioned the fact that it is a great place to meet since everyone's mailbox is in the Center. A select few expressed concern over the elegance, but more felt it was very appealing and a great place to go for entertainment. The students overwhelmingly considered the Center more as a supplement to their leisurely activities and as a place to go between classes.

Students commented that the Center is very comfortable but it is still not "home". They expressed satisfaction in regards to the television, furniture, and nice bathrooms.
Most of the students still gave the impression that they use the Center as a place to relax as they would home.

Students basically felt that the Center was designed for them first, prospective students next, and then the rest of the campus. The general consensus was that it was built with all of the campus community in mind.

Questions 15-19 corresponded with the fourth research question; "Does the Maytag Student Center have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus?" Throughout those five survey questions, the students commented that the Center was the place to socialize rather than the library where they study. Thus they considered the Center important to their academic life as a supplement. Several students described the Center as a stress-release area indirectly creating a more positive aspect to the learning climate. The art work had little effect on the students, other than they expressed a real dislike for the sculpture outside the Center.

Students expressed satisfaction that the Center offered them a variety of things to do and services essential to their academics. Many described the Center as a wonderful addition to the College and a great building to "show off" to visitors and parents. In response to question 19, "Are you proud of the Maytag Student Center?" one student wrote, "Yes. A lot of time, effort and money was obviously put into it."
Interview with Bill Hinga

In order to develop an appropriate and effective questionnaire concerning the effects of the Maytag Student Center on campus life at Central College, Bill Hinga agreed to be interviewed. Mr. Hinga, Vice President of Student Affairs at Central College for 26 years, was appointed as chairman of the nine person committee (three faculty, three administrators, and three students) which was organized by then President Weller. Thus, Mr. Hinga was very involved in the planning of the Center from start to finish.

In discussing the purposes of the Maytag Student Center, he described the old student union which had been added onto three different times, thus creating problems of old and new additions. As a result, the fire marshal eventually closed part of the building, and after the architect review it was determined that the building was not worth rebuilding.

The major purposes of the Maytag Student Center discussed by Mr. Hinga were that it be the gateway of the campus and thus provide a gathering spot for all of the campus. In so doing, the Center was to be welcoming, attractive, inviting, and radiate the friendly flavor of the campus and the students. By eliminating the "Howard Johnson" concept of the long hallways, the Center sought to be kept "open" and visually acceptable and attractive. Hinga stated, "We stayed away from long corridors. We eliminated hallways so that
students stay in touch visually. Students like seeing each other across the building."

It was the committees' desire to create a warm, friendly, and accessible design with exciting colors and no trendy decor that would date the building. Furthermore, after long debate, the Maytag Student Center included a touch of Dutch accent in accordance with the Pella community. "We wanted it to be an anchor building for the campus," Hinga said. "It needed to fit in with the architectural theme of the campus, yet have its own unique quality and character." Mr. Hinga explained that the committee created the majority of the purposes for the Center. He also stated that he had been anticipating a new student center for 8-10 years.

The Maytag Student Center was developed mainly for the students first and then the campus as a whole. It was intended to be a focal point for the whole campus such as for faculty and administrators' interaction and for various student activities and services. "We hope people think of this as an all-campus building," Hinga said. "Everyone claims ownership. We want it to be a place people are proud of and that they feel good about being here." Many goals and outcomes were discussed by Mr. Hinga in the interview which were then used in the questionnaires established by the author. As stated before, the Maytag Student Center was intended to carry a warm, friendly ambience and also be inviting and attractive. Other purposes included; a meeting
place and gathering spot, an alternate spot for leisure, meeting rooms for campus and community, entertainment at the Grand Central Station (snack bar), a homey feeling, visually appealing, and a source of pride for the students, faculty, and administrators.

Mr. Hinga provided further comments regarding the Center which were also used in the questionnaires. The building was intentionally designed with the post office at the far end of the building so the students would have to walk clear through the Center. Also, the Maytag family provides a grant to purchase art work each year for the Maytag Student Center, and thus it is a way to expose the campus to art work. Finally, in designing the building, cement walls, stone walls, and high ceilings were ruled out in order to avoid "coldness" in the Center.

The Student Life Offices were designed to be located on the second floor away from the major traffic flow but not isolated. The open stairway in the center of the Maytag Student Center made the offices more accessible and encouraged student-administrator contact. "People at other institutions discovered that if stairways are hidden, people aren't as likely to go upstairs," Hinga said. "We wanted an inviting stairway that might serve as a reminder as students enter the building." The offices on second floor included space for the vice president of student affairs, the dean of the students, the career services office, the counseling center, and the
Upward Bound Program. A large clerical work area is also included as well as a conference room. All of these offices are attached according to Mr. Hinga in order to "bond" the department.

Interview with President Weller

Since Dr. Kenneth Weller was the President of Central College at the time of the planning and building of the Maytag Student Center, the author personally interviewed him in order to obtain more background information. Dr. Weller had received the questionnaire and offered to answer any further questions.

The nine member planning committee for the Maytag Student Center was formed in the fall of 1986. Various groups in each category (faculty, administrators, and students) submitted names to Dr. Weller, then he appointed the committee members from those suggestions. From the very beginning, the committee strongly encouraged input for the building through letters, presentations, and personal contact. Opportunities were available for anyone to provide input, but Dr. Weller stated that not a lot of input was provided other than from the committee members. "All groups were represented and all participated," Weller said. "The problem was not to get committee members involved but to get their constituencies aware and appreciative of the quality and quantity of the
input made by their representatives." He went on to add that the committee members solicited input and kept people informed throughout the planning process. "The "program" for the building was well written and regarded by the architect as among the best he had ever seen," Weller stated.

In response to the question of major controversies in the planning stages, Dr. Weller discussed two main topics. As early as 1983, the problem concerning the location of the new facility was being discussed. It was a very political decision with some wanting the new Center in the center of the campus and others wanting it at the east end of the campus. It was finally decided that the facility should be the "Gateway" to the campus, so it was located on the east side of campus. The other major controversy later in the planning involved the furniture in the Center. Instead of the typical crate box type furnishings, the Center was decorated with very plush and elegant furniture. Many faculty and administrators believed that the students did not deserve such fine decor, but it was firmly believed by the designers that the students would act appropriately toward the elegant furnishings. Dr. Weller commented, "The Maytag Student Center really surprised the students with how nice it was." A minor debate dealt with the layout of the Center. The initial design had all of the offices, services, and activities on one floor so as to not isolate any area. But with the open staircase and open-door,
inviting policy, a second floor was designed to suit the entire college community.

Dr. Weller commented that the Maytag Student Center was created mostly to serve students, thus making it a very important building. He explained that 90% of the students live on campus, so the Center was intended to be an attractive place that would keep the students on campus and encourage student activities and involvement. Central College existed for one and one-half years without a student union, and Dr. Weller believed that there was possibly a negative impact on the students as a result. Weller explained, "The new facility in general seeks to support a holistic concern for student life rather than an isolated narrow focus on non-academic activities."

Dr. Weller went on to explain that Central College normally functions on a three-year system for major plans such as the Maytag Student Center. But when long-range planning began for the Student Center, planning was also underway for an athletic fieldhouse. The college decided that the campus was in desperate need of the athletic complex, so it was completed first, but the projects were planned back-to-back instead of maintaining the three-year system. Thus, fund raising was being done for both of the facilities at the same time.

Weller emphasized the high quality of all of the facilities at Central College and the fact that Central has always been able to get a lot out of their money. Around two million
dollars was spent to construct the Center which according to Dr. Weller was a very reasonable cost for the finished product. The Fred Maytag family contributed $750,000 along with various art work as well as having the facility named after the family.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Research Project

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of Central College students, faculty, and administrators toward the new Maytag Student Center. Literature dealing with campus ecology and the involvement theory was the main focus of review, and this literature was then utilized along with the initial goals of the designers of the Center to create questionnaires for the students, faculty, and administrators. The two surveys created by the author consisted of 17 open-ended questions for faculty and administrators and 19 open-ended questions for senior students. The responses were then qualitatively analyzed in reference to four research questions in order to come to a general conclusion.

Discussion of the Findings

The initial input during the planning stages of the Maytag Student Center consisted primarily of the nine member committee made up of three students, three faculty, and three administrators. Bill Hingga and Dr. Kenneth Weller both reinforced the fact that outside input was also encouraged but not a lot was received. The respondents to the questionnaires
were aware that they could voice an opinion, but most did not feel as though it would really matter. The main point was that the campus was fully aware of the committee and why the committee was formed.

The early planning stages of the Maytag Student Center corresponded to steps one and two of Banning's ecosystem design process (1989). As described by Bill Hinga, the designers, along with the campus community, selected educational values then translated those values into specific goals. The designers strived to serve the students along with the rest of the campus community through the Center. In doing so, they set goals to create an attractive facility with various activities and services available which were intended to encourage extra-curricular participation.

The students, faculty, and administrators responded very positively to the questions referring to participation and involvement in the Maytag Student Center's activities and services as well as in college life in general. Due to the wide variety of services offered at the Center, the students, faculty, and administrators all had numerous ways to be involved. As Astin (1984, p. 5) stated in his fifth postulate in the involvement theory, "Effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement." The fact that so many services are located in the Maytag Student Center aided in bringing the campus population together in one focal
point and made it more convenient to be involved. Astin (1984) also noted in the second postulate of his theory that different students manifest different degrees of involvement to different objects. Thus the wide variety of services and activities offered at the Center are more apt to meet the needs of the different students, faculty, and administrators and further encourage participation.

The social aspect of the Center was very important in regard to involvement for the respondents. They all felt it was a great place to "hang out", relax, and chat with whoever might happen to pass by. The emphasis on Central College as a community was very apparent as the Center aided everyone in being involved with others on campus.

The goals and objectives established by the designers and discussed by Bill Hinga, were most commonly expressed as being achieved by the respondents. The participants of the questionnaire were not made aware that some questions on the survey were related directly to the goals of the facility, unless they were aware of them during the planning stages. The respondents overwhelmingly referred to the Center as a gathering spot, core of the college, and the place to just relax. The fact that the post office was placed at the far end of the Center also was mentioned as a key to everyone having to go to the Center everyday--as intended by the designers. Not all respondents necessarily believed that the Center should be quite so ornate, but they did convey that the
facility was very beautiful and welcoming. A goal that Bill Hinga identified that was not achieved was an increased appreciation of art. Very few of the participants responded in anyway to the art work in the Center other than expressing a strong dislike for the sculpture outside. The goal of increasing art appreciation was most likely a long-term goal that will need further exposure, and possibly more effort to make the campus more aware of the value of art.

In Banning's third and fourth steps of the ecosystem design process (1989), he suggested that the environment be designed to reach the desired goals, then the environment be fitted to the students. Overall, the goals established by the designers are being achieved at the Maytag Student Center according to students, faculty, and administrators.

The findings regarding the fourth research question dealing with the effects on the learning environment of the campus were very interesting and encouraging. Those interviewed as well as the respondents to the questionnaires did not feel like the Center was a place to necessarily study to improve the academics of the College, but a source for improving the academics indirectly. Prior to the Maytag Student Center, the library was the place to socialize, chat, and meet friends. After the Center was completed, it became the place to socialize, while the library's main function became that of studying. By providing a place to broaden their college experience the Center aided in developing a more well-rounded
education for the students and was good for faculty-student interaction. Even though the Center was not an "academic" building, the participants agreed that it was a very important aspect of their education and learning environment.

A relatively small percent of the questionnaires were returned—34% by the faculty and administrators and 21% by the students. Efforts were made to increase the number of questionnaires returned by placing reminders in the daily campus newsletter as well as through personal contact and encouragement. Yet from the questionnaires returned, there was a wide range of consistency throughout the responses which could be a representative sample of Central College.

In order to improve the number of participants, a shorter questionnaire could be used along with some motivation to complete the survey. With a long questionnaire, the potential respondents might have felt that responding required too much work. Motivation, such as money or food for example, would provide a reason to complete the survey and shortening the survey would require less work.

Conclusions

The results of the interviews and surveys indicate that the students, faculty, and administrators at Central College are very appreciative of the Maytag Student Center and feel that it meets a lot of needs and wants through numerous facilities,
activities, and services. Despite the majority of the participants not being involved in the actual planning of the Center, most of them were involved in the activities of the facility and feel no resentment for not being involved in the initial stages. From the responses, the students, faculty, and administrators all had needs met by the Center and utilize the facility in very beneficial ways. The most pronounced benefit by all participants was that the Center served as the core of the College and is a common place for all to meet—largely due to the existence of the post office in the Center.

Many of the goals established by the designers were currently being achieved according to the respondents with others still in the initial developing stages—such as increasing the appreciation towards art. The committee carefully established the goals of the Center and designed the facility in order to achieve those goals.

The involvement and participation related to the Maytag Student Center was described by many of the respondents as a place where everyone usually goes everyday. Numerous activities of the Center were described by the respondents which signifies the designers' goal to meet various needs of all the campus community in order to involve as many as possible in the campus life at Central College.

Lastly, the responses were very positive towards the effect of the Center on the learning environment of the campus. Most viewed the facility as a place to relax the mind and body
which they felt was essential in the learning process. The facility also provided a place to just socialize and take the "noisy" aspect away from the library according to the respondents. Overall, the participants viewed the Center as important to the education of the college in providing a more well-rounded environment for learning.

The findings from this study relate well to Banning's (1989) seven step model to the Ecosystem Design Process. In relation to step one, the designers of the Maytag Student Center first selected educational values of Central College then proceeded to translate those values into specific goals (step two) as indicated by Bill Hinga. The Center was then designed by the nine member committee to reach those goals they had established and fit the students in accordance with step three and four of Banning's process. With this study, steps five, six, and seven of the process were carried out. Perceptions and behaviors related to the Center were monitored then accumulated in order to obtain data to feed back to the designers in order that they continue to learn about student-environment fit and level of satisfaction in relation to the Maytag Student Center.

Implications

The results of the interviews and questionnaires demonstrate the relative importance of the Maytag Student
Center on the campus life at Central College. Students, faculty, and administrators all benefit from such a facility when it is well planned and designed with all in mind.

Although academics should come first, the social aspects of college life are also very important and often times improve the learning environment. Providing a convenient place for the campus community to congregate and interact helps everyone to increase awareness of entire campus happenings and to interact with other students, faculty, or administrators. The Maytag Student Center was designed specifically to provide a wide variety of facilities, activities, and services in order to utilize one building as a gathering spot.

From this study, student centers can be designed and constructed in such a way as to meet a variety of needs. However, a student center does take a lot of careful planning and research in order to create a successful facility that will meet the specified goals. The Maytag Student Center was constructed in such a way as to fit the student which is an implication of Banning's ecosystem design process (1989), instead of fitting the student to the environment as has been the common goal in past years.

From the responses, it is also apparent that student centers can have an impact on student learning as well as on the attitude of the campus community. A well designed, constructed, and decorated facility provides a source of
relaxation, participation, and pride which all relate to an improved learning environment and campus life.

Student centers can also serve as marketing tools for prospective students as well as for alumni and community support. Many of the respondents at Central College believed that the Maytag Student Center was a way to attract students to the school and to impress their family or friends. Prospective students, alumni, and community members could all be positively influenced by such an attractive facility as the Maytag Student Center at Central College then continue to spread the word to others. But the fact remains that a lot of time, thought, and effort are necessary in order to create a successful facility.

As a source of "connectiveness" to the institution, students centers can create a positive climate of "community pride" in the entire institution and encourage interaction. Student centers are also effective in making the entire campus community aware of the college's traditions. As a common gathering spot, those involved in such a facility can be impacted and encouraged by pictures, advertisements, and activities of many other happenings on campus. Student centers can really be a source of pride for college campuses if carefully planned and produced.
Recommendations for Further Study

This study included only one college and one student center. In order to determine the effects of student centers on campus life at other colleges, more student centers must be studied and analyzed. The results of this study should not be applied specifically to other campuses but possibly used as a tool to encourage more research dealing with student centers.

Further research at Central as well as at other colleges could also include comparing and analyzing the responses between men and women on the campus, examining the faculty demographics and studying the effects of specific services and activities in relation to the student center. It would also be interesting to investigate the impact of the Maytag Student Center on the community and alumni and the impact the Center will have in the future on the campus life at Central College. An interesting follow-up study would be to interview students who had been at the college for four years and investigate their perceptions of the overall effects of the student center over a longer span of time.

In order to strengthen this study, a larger sample could be taken along with fewer and shorter questions on the surveys in order to obtain more responses. It would also be interesting to compare the responses of various age groups involved in the Center as well as studying the responses of non-traditional students.
Central College is currently underway with plans to construct a new academic building and also to add on a dining room area to the Maytag Student Center. Studies could be conducted in order to investigate the perceptions of the campus community concerning the plans for future development and the perceived impact on the campus of those projects. The dining area addition to the Maytag Student Center is being proposed in order to sustain the Center as the campus gathering spot which could be another source of further study.

There are numerous possibilities of research concerning the Maytag Student Center at Central College as well as with other student centers either directly or indirectly. Qualitative studies are very useful in this context as the researcher can be flexible in how the study is conducted thus treating the research as a craft. A qualitative researcher's task is to capture the process of what people say and do, define their world, and then interpret it (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). These recommended studies would all be very applicable to such methods and then be very useful to the particular campus as well as to other institutions.

The author's main focus in this study dealt with the effects of the Maytag Student Center on campus life at Central College according to senior students, faculty, and administrators. In the qualitative study, the author strived to seek a detailed understanding of other people's
perspectives, relate those findings, then open the door for further research.
REFERENCES


I would like to thank Dr. Dan Robinson for his unending assistance, encouragement, and patience in this study.

In addition, I would like to thank Mr. Bill Hinga and Dr. Kenneth Weller for taking the time to be interviewed and for sharing their valuable insight into the designing of the Maytag Student Center. I would also like to thank the Human Subjects Review Committee for certification of the questionnaires used in this study. Furthermore, I would like to thank all of the students, faculty, and administrators who took the time to complete the questionnaire. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Robert Strahan and Dr. Larry Ebbers, for their time and effort on my behalf, as well as secretary Marva Ruther for all of her assistance.

Much of this work could not have been accomplished without the support and encouragement from my family, my friends, and most of all my husband, Gary. Words cannot express my appreciation to them.
APPENDIX A

MAYTAG STUDENT CENTER LAYOUT
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

Interview Questions: Bill Hinga

1. For what purposes were the Maytag Student Center designed?

2. What (and whose) values fostered those purposes?

3. For whom does the developed structure exist?

4. What were the hoped for outcomes of the Center?

5. Other comments:

Interview Questions: Dr. Kenneth Weller

1. When did the planning begin for the Maytag Student Center?

2. How did you choose the nine person committee for the Center?

3. How much contact did the committee members have with others on campus?

4. What were some major controversies in the designing stages?

5. Other comments:
APPENDIX C

ETTER FOR THE
Central College Students, Faculty, and Administrators:

As part of my graduate work in Higher Education at Iowa State University, I am conducting a study of the Maytag Student Center at Central College. In order to study the effects of the Student Center, I have developed the following questionnaire for Central College students, faculty, and administrators to complete.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance in this study of the Maytag Student Center in order to obtain the most accurate results possible. Please answer each question as thoroughly as possible and do not include your name on the survey in order to keep the data confidential. Then please return the completed questionnaire by campus mail to Elizabeth Hadler by September 26, 1991. Participation in this survey is optional, but I would greatly appreciate you taking 20-30 minutes in order to provide your input.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete the attached survey. After compiling the responses I will release the results so that you may see the findings of the study. If you have any questions feel free to call me at #4102 or contact my major professor, Dan Robinson, at Iowa State at 294-9550.

Thanks for your input,

Elizabeth Hadler

Men's and Women's Tennis Coach, Central College

Dan Robinson

Professor of Higher Education, Iowa State University
APPENDIX D

FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Did you have any input into the initial designing of the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.

2. If you so desired, did you feel that you could provide suggestions for the design of the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.

3. Do you believe that there was student involvement in the designing of the Maytag Student Center? Faculty involvement? Administrative involvement?

4. Does the Maytag Student Center increase your level of involvement in activities at Central College? Please explain.

5. Does the Maytag Student Center increase your ability to socialize with students as well as with other faculty and administrators? Please explain.

6. What activities and/or programs do you participate in at Central College which relate to the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.
7. Is involvement and participation important to you as a part of the life of the Central College campus? Please explain.

8. Is the Maytag Student Center inviting and attractive? Please explain.

9. Is the Maytag Student Center a good meeting place and/or gathering spot? Please explain.

10. Is the Maytag Student Center visually appealing? Please explain.

11. Do you consider the Maytag Student Center a place to go for entertainment? Please explain.

12. For whom do you feel the Maytag Student Center was designed? Please explain.

13. Do you feel that the Maytag Student Center aids in the academics at Central College? Please explain.

14. Does the Maytag Student Center have a positive effect on your attitude towards Central? Please explain.
15. Does the art in the Maytag Student Center increase your appreciation towards art? Please explain.

16. Does the Maytag Student Center have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus? Please explain.

17. Are you proud of the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.

Please provide any further comments.
APPENDIX E

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Did you have any input into the initial designing of the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.

2. If you so desired, did you feel that you could provide suggestions for the design of the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.

3. Do you believe that there was student involvement in the designing of the Maytag Student Center? Faculty involvement? Administrative involvement? Please explain.

4. Does the Maytag Student Center increase your level of involvement in activities at Central College? Please explain.

5. Does the Maytag Student Center increase your ability to socialize with students as well as with other faculty and administrators? Please explain.

6. What activities and/or programs do you participate in at Central College which relate to the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.
7. Is involvement and participation important to you as part of the life of the Central College campus? Please explain.

8. Is the Maytag Student Center inviting and attractive? Please explain.

9. Do you consider the Maytag Student Center a good meeting place and/or gathering spot? Please explain.

10. Do you use the Maytag Student Center as an alternate spot for leisure (rather than bars, etc.)? Please explain.

11. Is the Maytag Student Center visually appealing? Please explain.

12. Does the Maytag Student Center make you feel at home? Please explain.

13. Do you consider the Maytag Student Center a place to go for entertainment? Please explain.

14. For whom do you feel the Maytag Student Center was designed? Please explain.

15. Does the Maytag Student Center in any way aid in your academics at Central College? Please explain.
16. Does the Maytag Student Center have a positive effect on your attitude towards Central? Please explain.

17. Does the art in the Maytag Student Center increase your appreciation towards art? Please explain.

18. Does the Maytag Student Center have a positive effect on the learning environment of the campus? Please explain.

19. Are you proud of the Maytag Student Center? Please explain.

Please provide any further comments:
APPENDIX F

LETTER OF APPROV
August 27, 1991

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

From: Bill Hinga
Vice President for Student Life

Re: Liz Hadler's Graduate Study

Be advised that Liz Hadler has permission to conduct her study of the Maytag Student Center and has the cooperation of this office. If there are further questions, feel free to contact me.
APPENDIX G

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MAYTAG STUDENT CENTER