An investigation of nontraditional credit for experiential learning offered to adults in post-secondary institutions

Daniel Wayne Brobst

Iowa State University

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AN INVESTIGATION OF NONTRADITIONAL CREDIT FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OFFERED TO ADULTS IN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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An investigation of nontraditional credit for experiential learning offered to adults in post-secondary institutions

by

Daniel Wayne Brobst

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

Department: Industrial Education and Technology
Major: Industrial Education and Technology (Industrial Vocational-Technical Education)

Approved:

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In Charge of Major Work

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For the Graduate College

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1986
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The constant pressure of post-secondary institutions to search for the ultimate educational delivery system that can be relevant to the needs of the masses has forced the acceptance of reform and innovation as a condition of survival. While struggling through a period of growth, development, and change it has often been difficult to identify the true nontraditional learning programs that are generated by each institution.

However accurate an institution wishes to project nontraditional offerings in a period of change, it is predominantly a condition of institutional philosophy and mission. Yet, the importance of such accurate information will most certainly be a factor impacting future institutional success. As Alvin Toffler (1980) has stated, "We are the children of the next transformation" (p. 25). This suggests that a new era is upon us with an increased emphasis on the effectiveness of educational delivery systems as they relate to the needs of society.

As change is truly the key to the survival of post-secondary education, institutions must be not only cognizant of where they have been but where they must go. Tradition must be preserved only by the tempering of delivery systems that can aggressively attract the students of the future. This strategy reflects an attitude advocated by Donald G. Gwinn (1981) as he advises, "If the old ideas don't work, innovative ones must be found" (p. 13).

Nontraditional learning, as an educational descriptor, has many interpretations. According to Heiss (1973), when describing the position
of nontraditional learning from a national perspective suggested:

Under the rubric of the Open, Extended, or External degree Institutions, a wide variety of specifically designed programs have been introduced that differ from conventional academic programs in the types of students enrolled, in the location of the learning experience, and in the methods of instruction. Generally, the programs are offered for nontypical students such as a special occupational group, housewives, military personnel, or other independent learners who are geographically or economically unable to pursue a program in residence or for those that can study only part-time (p. 36).

The realization during the last decade of the potential of the adult as a student has led to the development and implementation of innovative programs. The primary purpose of such programs has been increased accessibility for adults to post-secondary education. Critical to the continued progress of higher education is the ability to adapt and create innovative delivery systems while maintaining the structural integrity that promotes stability. "This can be exemplified by prior learning programs that have pressed to make the university regime more accessible to adults" (Heeger, 1983, p. 20). Although accessibility is a critical factor in attracting adults, institutions of higher education must not ignore the flexibility that nontraditional education provides. Bowen (1977) expands our insight of nontraditional education by stating:

Open access and strong encouragement would be given to all the people to achieve education commensurate with their capacities. This would be done on the premise that learning is essential both to personal fulfillment and to cultural advancement. The extension of education in this way would not mean that everyone would graduate from a conventional college at age twenty-one but rather that each person would be given the genuine opportunity and encouragement to develop himself during
his whole lifetime. . . . Higher education would be recurrent and would serve adults of all ages from 18 years to 100. (p. 458)

If it is the intent of higher education to search the options of experimental delivery systems for philosophically compatible alternatives to the present traditional structure, the future will provide the adult learner a varied degree of alternatives. Certainly nontraditional educational programs will be experimental or unconventional to what has generally been offered by the institution.

The problem of defining nontraditional learning is not just one of controlling the boundaries of its interpretation, but the fact that a vocabulary has been established within the educational system that has provided terminologies which can be used interchangeably when explaining the same set of conditions. An example is the use of innovation instead of nontraditional. As stated by Wey (1976):

Innovation is used to describe the introduction of a new idea, method, or device in an institution. It may be old hat at other institutions but since it is new at a specific institution it is referred to as innovative (p. 26).

Investigation of the parameters of nontraditional and innovative learning, as defined in post-secondary education, discloses certain common denominators that allow the maintenance of a proper perspective, dependent upon the particular educational situations explored. Whether it be simply new or unique only implies the ability of an institution to adapt. Final success can only be measured by the positive impact upon the student population.
In the absence of a unified source of information identifying the nontraditional activities, many adult learners are not aware of the types of programs that are available to meet their special needs. Since the direction and philosophy of each post-secondary institution is constructed to meet the needs of their respective goals, the degree of involvement in providing nontraditional learning activities to adults will vary. However, those educational institutions that have accepted the commitment and responsibility to provide nontraditional post-secondary credit learning activities to adults will strive to offer options that are relevant, convenient and attractive to the participants.

As stated earlier, accessibility is a critical factor in attracting the adult learner. However, this assumes that adults are aware of what higher education has to offer. This assumption is challenged by Gerald A. Heeger (1983) when he made the comment, "Adults often have little awareness of educational opportunities, and they often are isolated from the networks that lead to colleges and universities" (p. 25).

To address this condition that reflects an uninformed audience, many higher education institutions have been evaluating their marketing and program strategies. The outcome of such evaluations are decisions that address educational needs of the present and future. Many of these decisions are based upon the increasing numbers of full-time and part-time adult students found on the campuses of higher education. As suggested by Ostar (1981) in the Chronicle of Higher Education, "The traditional college-age population--the 18 to 24 year-olds--will peak in 1981, and by 1990 will have declined by five million" (p. 56).
These trends have emphasized the importance of adaptability and change within institutional structure and programming. One attempt in meeting the challenge of declining high school graduates has been the assessment of experiential learning for college credit. This credit can be awarded as college sponsored or nonsponsored experiential learning, dependent upon the assessment policy of the respective institution. Experiential learning (prior learning) has become recognized as another learning process that if properly evaluated may reflect levels of verifiable accomplishments, competence, and earned college credit. This attempt to meet the needs of our adult society will most certainly increase the number of adult students involved in post-secondary education. As Heeger (1983) explains, "The very concept of prior learning is a recognition of the changing learning needs of an aging population, which has been accumulating a far more complex learning background than higher education has had to deal with in the past" (p. 7).

In their never ending search for the perfect combination of programs and processes, institutions of the 1980s are accepting the challenges imposed by limited funds and declining high school graduates. The question of futuristic thinking and planning for change may be exemplified by current institutional practices that address nontraditional programs for the nontraditional student. In support of such change, McLure (1983) states:

As higher education becomes more responsive to adult learners, adult learners will become more responsive to higher education. It may be possible to move reluctant adults more gracefully
past the critical points of their reentry process and facilitate their upward educational spirals and their lifelong engagement with the learning society (p. 14).

Problem of the Study

This study was designed to investigate and compare nontraditional post-secondary students and public/private post-secondary institutions that request or assess credit for experiential learning in the state of Iowa.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is twofold.

1. To assist the adults in their search for institutions in the state of Iowa that offer credit for experiential learning.
2. To assist the post-secondary institutions in the state of Iowa to describe the characteristics and profile of the nontraditional student.

More specifically, the study will:

1. Identify those post-secondary institutions that grant credit for experiential learning.
2. Describe the policy and procedures for students applying for credit for experiential learning.
3. List the maximum number of credits awarded for experiential learning.
4. Identify the assessment process used for evaluating credit for experiential learning.
5. Provide institutional data to those students seeking credit for experiential learning.

Need for the Study

Throughout the history of the United States innovation has been a necessary condition of industrial progress. Equally as important, the willingness to evaluate and implement nontraditional practices within the educational institutions has created a dynamic environment susceptible to positive influence. This aggressive attitude has precipitated changes that allow our educational system to adjust to the needs of the people.

Any reluctance to change can be interpreted as further justification for the evaluation process. Although change may be viewed as an obstacle, it does provide stability and a means to monitor direction. As Johnson (1964) states, "change is required and demanded—not merely for its own sake, but planned change that will provide the means for better serving every citizen in the land" (p. 29).

New, unusual, innovative, experimental, or unconventional programs are examples of the flexibility and change needed within our educational system to prepare for the future. As each and every nontraditional program is rigorously evaluated, tested, revised, and implemented or abandoned, it proceeds in a direction that will allow its existence, eventually, as an acceptable traditional practice. Martin (1968) provides two assumptions for the future:
1. Learning in the twenty-first century will be so radically different from the present educational forms that the way we do things now are not likely to have much transfer value.

2. Content of educational programs in the future will be changed no less radically than the forms: indeed, changed to such an extent that what we teach today may be regarded by educators of the future as negative precedents (p. 9).

If change is to indicate a need to improve the educational decision making of our citizenry, then it is imperative that there be identified relevant options and viable alternatives within the system. The actual availability of these options and alternatives infers the existence of delivery systems that are contrary to tradition; simply nontraditional forms that have permeated from unaccepted traditional practices. As Thrash (1978) states, "institutions must be diverse: they must offer alternative learning forms, options for each kind of student" (p. 462).

The insurance of a healthy educational system is its adaptability to the conditions of society in contemporary times and its ability to change to meet the needs of the future. Such balance can only be achieved by an aggressive administration and faculty searching for those elusive components to improve the quality of the educational product. Keeton (1976) has forecast that:

the post-secondary learning of the future will and should differ markedly from that of today in content and meaning, in timing and accessibility to learners, in systems through which instructional services are delivered, in the balance between experiential learning and informational processing (p. 5).
The nontraditional education movement emphasizes that any person, if they so desire, should have the opportunity and access to an education. This infers that traditional education must begin to eliminate the obstacles for the nontraditional student and examine the functional qualities of the total content delivery system. One example is provided by Bushnell (1973), "State master plans that have been adopted to open the doors to higher education for all candidates, regardless of race, religion, or wealth, have introduced a number of new alternatives for the marginal students that have helped change the traditional concept of higher education" (p. 8).

Cross and Gould (1972) have projected that, "If the opportunity for lifelong learning is to be extended to much broader segments of the population than have ever before been attempted, the barriers that prohibit certain groups of people from participating fully in educational activities must be eliminated" (p. 64).

The acceptance of the concept of nontraditional education by institutions of higher learning has been confirmed in a study by the North Central Association. "85% of the institutions responding agreed that a nontraditional degree program was a logical option within the philosophy and structure of their own institutions" (Andrews, 1979, p. 343). This open-minded attitude will most certainly generate a comprehensive study by institutions as to the compatibility of nontraditional programs to their present structure and goals of the institution. Cangialosi (1981) found that proponents of nontraditional education have been willing to provide position statements such as the American Council on Education.
which "encourages lifelong learning and the maximum use of all educational resources and believes that verifiable educational accomplishments should be recognized regardless of how or where acquired" (p. 39).

Although the percentages and positive support by educational agencies and councils are impressive, the changing or restructuring of traditional education to compliment the nontraditional process must be done cautiously. Only when the benefits to the consumer are obvious should the designs of new delivery systems be implemented.

This direction is substantiated in the Commission of Nontraditional Study--1971 as reported by Milton (1973), "much more data gathering and other forms of research are necessary and that these should be undertaken and completed as soon as possible if sound planning and programming are to result" (p. 77).

"The growth in nontraditional study represents a move toward a 'total learning society'" (Heiss, 1973, p. 36). Yet, in reality, the fragmentation of nontraditional programming within institutions has created a void of information that is not available to the nontraditional learner. This void must be eliminated if institutions expect to compete for the student of the '80s and '90s and strengthen their credibility in society.

Questions of the Study

This study will answer the following descriptive questions.

1. What kinds of delivery systems appeal to the student requesting credit for experiential learning?
2. Are experiential learning students provided with academic advisors or counselors?
3. Are students applying for experiential learning credit full-time or part-time learners?
4. Do post-secondary institutions offer formal instruction/guidance to assist students in applying for credit for experiential learning? (Portfolio Design)
5. Is there institutional transferability of credit for experiential learning?
6. Are there institutional policies/procedures concerning credit for experiential learning?
7. How do post-secondary institutions evaluate credits for experiential learning?
8. Was a Portfolio Design course attended?
9. Was a transfer of experiential credits requested?
10. Is financial aid available to experiential learning students?
11. Was financial aid received?

The following major research questions provided direction for this study:

1. What are some of the common characteristics of students participating in experiential learning credit at post-secondary public and private institutions?
2. What types of assessment systems are utilized in post-secondary public and private institutions?
3. What post-secondary public and private institutions in the State of Iowa award credit for experiential learning?

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference between the characteristics of post-secondary experiential learning students in public and private institutions in the state of Iowa.
2. There is no significant difference between the types of post-secondary experiential learning assessment systems employed in public and private institutions in the state of Iowa.
3. There is no significant difference between the percentage of post-secondary public and private institutions offering credit for experiential learning in the state of Iowa and the national percentage of those listed in the 1980 American Council on Education survey.

Assumptions of the Study

1. Post-secondary institutions in the state of Iowa are the major providers of credit for experiential learning for adults.
2. The procedures for selecting the institutions and nontraditional students are valid for making inferences of the nontraditional student population.
3. The size of the sample will be sufficient to be sensitive to the differences which may exist among independent variables.
4. The survey instrument will be a valid measure for collecting information on post-secondary institutions and students.
5. Respondents will interpret and respond to the questionnaire correctly and honestly.

6. The questionnaire adequately samples information relative to nontraditional learning and the hypotheses of the study.

**Delimitations of the Study**

1. The study was limited to post-secondary public and private institutions in the state of Iowa.

2. The study was limited to post-secondary public and private liaison persons representing the Task Force on Experiential Learning.

3. The study was limited to experiential learning students identified by institutional liaison representatives.

**Procedures of the Study**

1. The topic for the proposal was selected and discussed with committee members.

2. A review of literature related to nontraditional learning was undertaken.

3. The research proposal was submitted to the graduate committee.

4. Appropriate state educational personnel were contacted to gain support for the study.

5. The Iowa Coordinating Committee on Continuing Education for information relating to post-secondary institutions in the state of Iowa was contacted to elicit a:
   a. list of institutions
b. list of institutional liaison representatives

c. list of institutional admissions personnel

6. An ERIC search was conducted to supplement the Review of Literature.

7. An institutional questionnaire was developed in cooperation with the graduate committee to be distributed to the 57 post-secondary institutions in the state of Iowa.

8. The questionnaire was administered in a pilot sample at a two-year public college.

9. The content validity of the questionnaire was verified by graduate committee.

10. The questionnaire was revised and printed based upon the recommendation of the committee.

11. The survey instruments and copies of proposal were submitted to the Human Subjects Committee of the Graduate College.

12. Data were collected by:

   a. survey questionnaire was mailed to liaison representatives from each post-secondary institution.

   b. follow-up letters were sent to institutions two weeks after the initial mailing.

   c. thank you letters were mailed to participating institutions.

   d. certain data on institutional involvement in nontraditional learning activities was collected from the American Council on Education.
13. Statistical models were examined to determine which techniques should be used to test the differences and relationships. An analysis of variance was used with the standard Chi-square test.

14. Data from questionnaires were analyzed.

15. Findings and conclusions were summarized based upon the results of the data analysis.

16. Research results were prepared for publication.

Definition of Terms

The purpose of this section is acquaint the reader with terms that are frequently used throughout this study.

Adult: A person who has reached the maturity level where he or she has assumed responsibility for himself or herself and sometimes others and who typically is earning an income (Hiemstra, 1976, p. 15).

Adult Learner: Any adult who engages in some type of activity, formal or informal in the acquisition of knowledge or skill, in an examination of personal attitudes, or in mastery of behavior.

College Sponsored Experiential Learning: College level learning which occurs in the context of an institution of higher education where the learner is officially registered, with the activity an accepted part of the student's program of study (Workshop: College Credit for Experiential Learning, March 30, 1982, Sponsored by ICCCE, Ames, Iowa).

Experiential Learning (Prior Learning): Learning acquired through life's experiences.
Higher Education: A college level learning process that takes place beyond the secondary education system.

Innovative: The process of making change.

Lifelong Learning: A process of learning that continues throughout one's lifetime, depending on individual needs, interests, and learning skills (Hiemstra, 1976, p. 16).

Nontraditional Delivery Systems: Those systems that are unique to the nontraditional student. May be dependent upon; manner in which information is gathered (media, computers, etc.), the structure of the scheduling (weekend, evenings, etc.), the location of the classes (off-campus).

Nontraditional Learning: Learning that takes place outside of the traditional educational environment.

Post-secondary Institutions: Two-year and four-year institutions that award college credits that may culminate in a degree.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As public and private post-secondary institutions strive to meet the challenge of present educational needs of our society, certain issues must be addressed. With the change in the student age and the demands placed on education, institutions of higher education are reevaluating not only policy and procedures but the fundamental posture of the institution. To insure continuity in the potential transition of the educational process, institutions have continued to emphasize their commitment to tradition while at the same time incorporating flexibility into the institutional structure and policy.

The trend toward diverse curriculum allows the older student to adapt and access their competencies to programs that lead to college credits. Such flexibility has added a new dimension to education while attracting a new audience to institutions of higher learning. This non-traditional student body requires institutions to provide delivery systems of nontraditional study. Nontraditional study, as defined by Cross and Gould (1972) is "a group of changing educational patterns caused by the changing needs and opportunities of society" (p. 1).

Such changing patterns may simply be a redefinition of existing presentation styles. Examples of nontraditional education provided by the Commission on Postsecondary Accreditation include "external degrees, independent study programs, competency based instruction, learning contracting arrangements" (Andrews, 1979, p. 336). Although not new within post-secondary education, these educational options are being packaged
for a changing and more knowledgeable student body.

The struggle for higher education to maintain a positive role in society has created changing values and appreciation for the older students who present their credentials in the form of prior learning experiences. "The very concept of prior learning is a recognition of the changing learning needs of an aging population which has been accumulating a far more complex learning background than higher education has had to deal with in the past" (Heeger, 1983, p. 7).

To inject stability and accountability to learning that has been acquired through life/work experience many institutions are adopting models that will address the assessment of specific competencies. A four-stage learning cycle that exemplifies experiential learning, as described by Kolb (1981) includes "concrete experience; observations and reflections; formation of abstract concepts and generalizations; and testing implications of concepts in new situations" (p. 235).

The ability to accommodate experiential learning into the structure of post-secondary education has required a more critical assessment of traditional education. If academic credit is to be awarded for life experiences outside the control of the institution then appropriate standards, policies and definitions must be set in place. As Wey (1976) has observed, "Experiential learning is used to describe academic credit given for practical experience on or off the campus" (p. 34). Cangialosi (1981) has extended the definition of experiential learning in a classification of extra institutional learning which is defined as:
learning that is attained outside the sponsorship of legally authorized and accredited post-secondary educational institutions. The term applies to learning acquired from work and life experiences, independent reading and study, the mass media, and participation in formal courses sponsored by associations, business, government, industry, the military, and unions (p. 39).

Historical and Global Impact of Experiential Learning

The premise that learning is a life-long process and that the total environment of an individual in the classroom has resurrected values of the past. Wey (1976) has found that granting credit for prior learning, "has direct lineage from medieval European universities as reported by Hastings Reshtall in 'The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages'" (p. 113). Gould (1980) compliments Wey's remarks on nontraditional study and its position in the history of education. "Its earliest roots can be traced back very far (even back to Socrates). They can be traced in this country to the 'lyceums' of the nineteenth century, which were some of our earliest examples of large-scale adult learning" (p. 75).

The questions raised in regard to experiential learning represents fundamental concerns on the part of post-secondary institutions. The issues of quality and credibility will have to be addressed by each institution. These questions will each be answered in an academic perspective that has been established over time with a sensitivity toward tradition. Knowing the value of education is only circumstantial, we cannot ignore the innate ability of people to learn and to be selective in what they remember. John Dewey (1938) observed, "They (people with little
schooling) have at least retained their native common sense and power of judgment, and its exercise in the actual conditions of living has given them the precious gift of ability to learn from the experiences" (p. 50).

"The Council (American Council on Education) believes that verifiable educational accomplishment should be recognized regardless of how or where acquired" (Cangialosi, 1981, p. 39). This belief by the Council that college credit should be awarded for 'verifiable' learning presents a philosophy that conflicted with the educational vision of the 1960s which "was to free students from the dehumanizing atmosphere of traditional universities to make higher education a process of 'intellectual liberation' rather than one of career preparation or narrow academic certification" (Cowley, 1981, p. 10).

With the broad experience of many of today's adult students, comprehensive portfolios can be constructed to reflect their competencies and general knowledge base. With such a document, substance and specificity is given to college-level learning through life experiences. Some of the colleges "that use adaptations of this portfolio method include many of the more than twenty members of the University Without Walls program, the University of Oklahoma, Adelphi University, College of New Rochelle, and Metropolitan State University in Minnesota" (Serling, 1980, p. 43).

The portfolio, which states the students experiential knowledge describes their ability to adapt to value and judgmental decision making, extends the opportunities for educational options. As resource to the potential adult student, Dr. Bear has published a book, How to Get the
Degree You Want, which emphasizes accredited and nonaccredited international institutions that provide degrees outside of the traditional environment.

The Board of Governors Bachelor of Arts Degree Program in the state of Illinois also recognizes that "Colleges and universities are not, however, the only places learning takes place" (p. 6). The Board of Governors Degree Program has set no limit on the number of credits that may be earned from life experiences. Past graduates of this program have averaged 37.6 semester hours of credit, which is slightly over 25 percent of the total degree requirement.

The global implications of learning can be seen in the sophistication of training that takes place within the corporate structure of business and industry. As the Carnegie Foundation (1985) reports, "Some corporations are joining a nationwide Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction that evaluates specific corporate courses and recommends academic credit at appropriate levels" (p. 54b).

As American post-secondary institutions are struggling with the evaluation and validity of experiential learning, many other countries have already accepted its position within the hierarchy of the academia. Wey (1976) has determined that:

The Philippine government requires that students in private and public universities have practical experience. Universities and colleges in New Zealand are strongly urged to include experiential learning as part of their programs. The Jawahar Lal Nehru University, a new and unique university in India, places great emphasis on learning by practical experience. (p. 35-36)
An example of such program in the United States includes the External Degree Program of Northwood Institute in Midland, Michigan. This particular program is "aimed at highly motivated individuals with specific business-oriented career goals. In this program, students are given credit for work background evaluated as experiential learning and pursue supplementary coursework offered at night or according to other flexible scheduling" (Firenze, 1984, p. 20).

Another example is the College Opportunities in Real Estate Program which represents a collaboration between the American Open University and the National Association of Realtors. This program is designed to promote realtors "to participate in a fully accredited external degree college program while taking advantage of their real estate background" (Dean, 1984, p. 20).

To maintain the proper perspective of experiential and external degrees, it is important that we establish our reference on a global scale. "The external degree is not some new fly-by-night fad. It has a long, if controversial, history. The University of London has been awarding external degrees from baccalaureate to doctorate, as well as a variety of certificates, starting in 1826" (Knowles, 1980, p. 40).

If it is to be the role of post-secondary education to acknowledge learning, no matter where it might have been acquired, many institutions will have to reassess their existing academic guidelines. Lamdin (1983) has identified that:
CLEO—Compact for Lifelong Educational Opportunities, a consortium of thirty-eight colleges and universities in the Delaware Valley region, ... recognizes that to value experiential learning is to acknowledge that we are, in fact, a learning society, that academe has no monopoly on that learning, and that if we are to facilitate human growth, we must begin where the individual is. (p. 45-46)

In comparison to the Open University in Britain and Everyone's University in Israel, nontraditional education in the United States has similar axioms for the future. As Gould (1980) forecasted, "The non-traditional movement is destined to have significant and historic influence on the whole character of higher education during the next three or four decades" (p. 76).

If the thrust of the post-secondary educational institutions in the past has been the transfer of knowledge, the thrust for the future will be to include the assessment of knowledge acquired outside the institutional structure. The growth that has been realized in nontraditional study "represents a move toward a 'total learning society' in which the community, home, and campus become centers of educational activity for a student body which represents the full range of American citizenry" (Heiss, 1973, p. 36).

A concern that is continually raised in higher education emphasizes the responsibility of institutions to maintain the academic integrity of educational programs and degrees. To protect the credibility of post-secondary education, certain strategies have been implemented. Kathryn Patricia Cross (1984) has stated: "The problem of credibility in experiential learning is paramount and supports the value of involvement of
the faculty in the assessment of prior learning" (Presentation to the
Iowa Association of Lifelong Learning, Ames, Iowa).

In the opinion of Bowen (1980), "it is time for institutions of
all kinds to accommodate nontraditional study into their regular programs"
(p. 7). The Commission on Postsecondary Accreditation also believes,
"there should be a single process and set procedures applied in the evalu­
ation of post-secondary education for accreditation purposes. There
should not be separate standards or criteria applied in the evaluation
of traditional or nontraditional institutions" (Andrews, 1979, p. 340).

It is not a question of whether post-secondary institutions should
address the needs of the nontraditional student requesting recognition
for past experiences. It is simply a question of equity. As Gould (1980)
states, "I cannot emphasize too strongly the need for college leaders
to adhere to high standards of quality in their vital work of developing
nontraditional programs to meet the needs of multitudes of new adult
students" (p. 77). Cross and Gould (1972) expand this posture by recom­
mending:

If quality is to be protected, three developments are central;
evaluation and accreditation of programs wherever they are
created and promulgated; and safeguards for the protection
and encouragement of human academic relationships in the midst
of independent and often isolated circumstances of study.
(p. 9)

A central theme in experiential learning is the importance and sig­
nificance of the level of learning that has taken place. Heeger (1983)
has stated that, "Ideally, a prior learning program should link assessment
of prior learning with all existing undergraduate programs in the institution. The effective integration of prior learning credit into formal curricula has always been the point of credentialing prior learning" (p. 19).

The conditioning of educational institutions throughout history has provided a framework of equality and flexibility. This structure has demanded a level of continuity created through time tested standards. As Kimmel (1972) suggests it must be, "axiomatic that the standards of quality required of traditional learning must be upheld for nontraditional learning" (p. 99). He continues to provide a rationale for academic consistency by challenging "any degrees or certificates awarded in recognition of nontraditional learning must be indistinguishable from those awarded for traditional class attendance" (p. 105).

To insure the quality and integrity of its programming, many institutions are asking for external regional and national accreditation. This evaluation by an outside source emphasizes the legitimacy of the degree awarded. Serling (1980) believes that such a request is "evidence of the good practices in place for assuring academic standards and quality in the system" (p. 44).

Educational Change and Innovation

The pressure for change faces post-secondary institutions at a time when other factors must also be addressed. The complexity is magnified as current economic conditions impact the financial security of tomorrow's institutions. "Today's troubled times with such problems as inflation,
a decreasing student pool, and increased competition present more of a challenge to higher education than anything that has gone before" (Gwinn, 1981, p. 13). The projection by Adam Smith (1984), "that the blue collar worker will follow the same employment curve as the farmer" (p. 68), would create large numbers of displaced factory workers demanding a revolution in programming and curriculum of post-secondary institutions.

It is apparent that with such external forces impacting the direction of education, changes will have to be introduced. The study by Apps (1981) states that "Colleges and universities cannot continue with business as usual, given the increasing numbers of these older students returning to work on undergraduate and graduate degrees" (p. 11).

To support the needs of the older student is indicative of the adaptability of higher education. The conservative resistance to change reflects a balance for consistency and equality. Yet, "To American post-secondary education, in general, nontraditional education means the beginning of needed and constructive change" (Andrews, 1979, p. 338).

To be constructive, this change must take place in cooperation with re-evaluation of the purpose of post-secondary education. As institutions recognize the changing demographics of their student body it will be critical that there also be a reassessment of curriculum. As Bear (1982) states, "The direction in which they (universities) are changing is away from traditional education and degrees toward alternative higher education and nontraditional degrees" (p. 23).

The acceptance by business and industry to become a viable delivery of training/education has created serious competition for institutions
of higher learning. For those students/employees involved in company based training programs there is the question of transferability and accessibility to higher education. The significance of these numbers is exemplified by "a pair of studies recently conducted by American Society of Training and Development which suggest that employers train over 50 million people a year" (Calvert, 1985, p. 35).

The awareness of the numbers of people trained by employers could certainly alter the future planning of post-secondary institutions. As it relates to the mission and philosophy of an institution, change becomes a necessary prerequisite for survival. Schlaver (1977) has stated, "Change may come slowly to a university campus, but it also must come constantly. We must understand the challenge (adult student) and demonstrate once again our willingness to further refine and perfect our institutional mission" (p. 45).

Thrash (1978), in her description of North Central Accreditation Commission's approach to innovation, states:

that change occurs all the time in institutions, and that usually change is positive. The Commission's primary responsibility is to determine whether the changes proposed are appropriate to the institution's mission; whether the institution has the resources to initiate, maintain, and monitor these changes, and whether appropriate quality controls are in place. (p. 456)

The North Central Accreditation Commission encourages the involvement of long-range planning to strengthen the process of quality control in a changing environment. The determination of strengths and weaknesses allows an institution to position itself to be most receptive to planned
change. As Groff (1983) comments, those institutions that develop "strategic goals based on the insights provided by the assessment, audit, and assumption-making processes will certainly be better prepared to thrive in a turbulent environment than a less planful and future-oriented college" (p. 48).

The ability of post-secondary institutions to accept the need for change is based on the philosophy and attitude of its staff toward innovation. Certainly, planning may reduce the risk of failure and identify known factors that impact the degree of success. As action is initiated, the success of the project will be monitored and evaluated by different individuals with different sets of value criteria. Heiss (1973) supports this premise by stating that, "Innovation will mean that the change under review is new for a particular institution or particular individuals. Whatever form innovation takes, it is generally seen as an experiment that might succeed or fail" (p. 1).

Although risks will be weighed and measured differently by each institution, innovation will continue to promote a dynamic and futuristic learning environment. "Institutions must be diverse; they must offer alternative learning forms, options for each kind of student" (Thrash, 1978, p. 462).

The more progressive institutions have already designed, evaluated, and implemented alternative delivery systems that are more compatible to the learning styles of the older student body. The projected decline in traditional student numbers has forced all educational institutions to become more creative. MacTaggart and Knapp (1981) offer the
explanation that "In some cases, the need to discover new clientele created an institutional receptivity to innovations that had been ignored so long as enrollment in conventional programs were high" (p. 33).

As post-secondary institutions adopt the position of making higher education more accessible, there becomes a larger number of individuals investigating and evaluating education as something possibly useful to them. "The day of the second chance in higher education is here for the mature adult (Wey, 1976). Those who failed to take advantage of higher educational opportunities while young are now being actively recruited into higher education programs" (p. 115).

The natural instinct for survival has created new institutions within the foundations of old facilities. Their vision is one directed toward tomorrow as they cultivate a futuristic image for a diverse student body. As Gwinn (1981) so aptly observe: "Innovations seldom, if ever, come from defenders of yesterday" (p. 17).

The search for the student body of tomorrow is only valid if there is in place relevant delivery systems. Nontraditional in respect that they vary from the norm, these delivery systems will become the tradition of tomorrow. The unwillingness of the nontraditional student to accept the rigidity of traditional education has "now catapulted nontraditional study to the forefront of public attention" (Cross and Gould, 1972, p. 2).

This becomes a natural transition as post-secondary institutions become more global in the search for the capable students. The data that represent the demographics of our population compliment the
position of Apps (1981) that: "the decline in traditional-student numbers, with more decline predicted in the coming years, motivates colleges and universities to recruit adults openly as a way to their survival" (p. 36).

The strength of tradition provides a balance for the future. As institutions improve their ability to provide alternative services to the nontraditional student, tradition will insures that standards are maintained. Hartnett (1972) suggests that the "Development of new options in learning requires careful examination of the concepts and criticisms of traditional education; as well as an analysis of the meaning, potential, and limitations of nontraditional alternatives" (p. 13).

To be realistic in the services it can provide, post-secondary institutions must be cognizant of the total community needs. Following such an assessment, priorities must then be set with the appropriate institutional commitment. The awareness and acceptance of college level learning taking place outside the direction of higher education has created new curriculum strategies.

The volatile environment of business and industry in the past has demanded that adults change their careers up to three times in a lifetime. Mayhew (1969) projects that, "it is but a step to a future in which learning 5, 6, or 7 different vocational skills will reflect the normal lifestyle of America" (p. 146).

With such a diversity of experiences in more than one career, the adult of today has become more receptive to structured education. To better prepare themselves for the future and obvious career changes,
the adults in our society are asking for an opportunity to network with higher education. Part of this network is a request for institutions to evaluate their past experiences to the accepted college credit standard. As suggested by Lipsett (1981), "there is still the problem of describing learning, as distinguished from experience" (p. 21).

The value of continuity to the question of experiential learning is extremely important if credibility of the institution is to be maintained. From experience in the assessment of experiential learning, some educational agencies have prepared specific guidelines for the purpose of credit determination. As stated by Bear (1982):

Many schools use these volumes (The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs and The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces) to assign credit directly, and others use them as guidelines in doing their own evaluation. (p. 66)

As institutions adopt policies and procedures to create the incentive of credits for life/work experiences, new questions will be raised. The importance for an institution to maintain academic integrity will demand that quality and competence be paramount in the design of experiential learning assessment models. In the opinion of Bowen (1980), "independent study or experience should be fully integrated into the regular programs of all colleges and universities" (p. 15).

Certainly the investigation of credit of experiential learning is a realistic alternative for many adults. Although labeled as innovative, for many institutions it presents a relevant option to a more educated population. Ms. Walshok (1985) recommends when investigating alternatives
institutions should, "Describe and analyze that seemingly large and undifferentiated market of adult learners in order to identify those segments the institution potentially could serve most effectively" (p. 8).

Nontraditional Adult Student Characteristics

The retraining of adult students within post-secondary institutions generates unique problems. This new student body of adults has already developed coping and communication skills from their past experiences. The value of education is exemplified in a statement by Hodgkinson (1985), "We have increased the educational level of the work force rapidly; today one worker in four has a college degree" (p. 5).

The significance of the adult student is compounded when we see the projections for the total population age categories. Bowen (1980) predicted, "The number of 18 year olds will be declining all during the 1980s and will level off around 1991. . . . On the basis of these figures, many observers are predicting average enrollment declines of about 25 percent" (p. 2). Roos (1984) updates the forecasts through a study which "projects that the number of Iowa high school graduates will shrink 34 percent by 1992" (p. 8m, col. 1).

With such forecasts available, post-secondary institutions have been aware of the pending limited supply of traditional students. To prevent the reduction of programs and staffing new sources of students had to be found. "Recognizing that enrollment of students 18-22 age range in declining, colleges are now asking the question; 'How can we establish credit for the experiential learning of mature students prior

The importance of the mature adult student is readily apparent. "The American population is aging. In 1970, the median age was 27; by 1990 it will be over 34, and by the year 2000 it will be over 37" (Ostar, 1981, p. 56). Levitz and Noel (1980) were more specific in their population statistics:

Population projections by age group from 1980 to 1990 indicate that the 25-34 age group will increase by 13 percent; the 35-44 age group will increase by 39 percent; and the 45-54 age group will increase by 12 percent. In contrast, the 18-24 age group will decrease by 15 percent. (p. 1)

The positive reality of the population age statistics offers obvious solutions to the decline of the traditional 18 year old high school graduate. Greater numbers of adults that will experience many career changes will need access to the post-secondary institution that has the flexibility to recognize the value of past learning experiences. A clearer caricature of this adult student is presented by Apps (1981):

they are more often women than men, they are most often between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine, they have a better formal education than those who do not return, and they are likely to be employed and in professional or technical work. (p. 36)

The source of post-secondary students reflect a diversity of students with an increase in adult students and decline in the number of young students. An alternative source of students is found in the foreign immigrants. Hodgkinson (1985) contends, "The new immigration wave of 1980s is just as large as the 1920s) but consists of a mix of Hispanic
groups and various Asian American peoples. . . . These people already are having an impact on higher education, particularly in community colleges" (p. 2).

The impact of our changing society is causing critical self-assessment and self-study by administrators of post-secondary institutions. Their willingness to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses will determine their ability to survive in a changing environment. Adaptability to an aggressive competitive market place and the reevaluation of institutional priorities will provide insurance for the future. Brooker and Noble (1985) confirm that, "Competition in higher education for the declining number of students and reduced resources is growing and will grow even more" (p. 191).

The concern of the potential reduction in the number of college students has stimulated changes in the marketing and educational structure of competitive institutions. These changes followed a careful study of the specific characteristics of potential students. With the confirmed statistics on age demographics colleges began to expand their studies on the adult. It was found by Mohrman (1981) that, "In 1981, over 21 million adults, or almost 13 percent of all Americans aged 18 and over, chose to participate in some form of part-time education or training" (p. 1).

The significance of this information is that many adults are involved in education or training and that it is on a part-time basis. To provide service to the part-time adult student requires certain flexibility in admissions and scheduling. The posture of junior college
presidents, as found in a study by Bushnell (1973) acknowledged the ranking of the goal, "Provide some form of education for any student regardless of academic ability" (p. 50).

Such a position raises the question of a college's ability to be all things to all people and still demonstrate quality services. However, as the student bodies become older and bring with them a greater background of experiences and training, it might allow colleges to create new curriculums to capitalize on the student's skills. As shared by Firenze (1984), "nontraditional learners bring a maturity to the process of degree-seeking. . . . In many cases, the older nontraditional students have made a more purposive commitment to higher education than have the traditional college students" (p. 14).

It is natural for the mature and committed adult student to demonstrate a positive attitude toward higher education. Firenze (1984) continues his remarks by stating the "nontraditional students value their degree more highly than do traditional students" (p. 14). The value that is placed on education by adults is an extension of their value on experiential learning. Eldred and Marienau (1979) explain that, "Adults entering a degree program typically have had some prior academic work and almost always have participated in a range of experiential learning activities for which they want academic recognition" (p. 33).

It must be recognized that most of this learning through life experiences was a function of purpose. Adults have a commonality that is not always evident in the younger student; that is, life must have structure. Dressel (1980) suggests:
Individuals who guide their own learning based upon their own interests and apart from the structure and rigidities of the traditional classroom are quite likely to have achieved insights, tastes, and abilities that differ from and even transcend those of students exposed to traditional education. (p. 205).

The characteristics of the new student body will be different. Dependent upon the posture of the college, the student body may be larger or smaller and older and wiser. To be sure, there is a place for optimism. Mohrman (1981) offers the following encouragement, "The more education a person has, the more likely he or she is to seek further education and training" (p. 5).

Educational Barriers to the Adult Learner

Even though the nontraditional learner may possess competencies and skills that would compliment the academic curriculum, many colleges are not finding adult students enrolling. Stafford and Lundstedt (1984) submit the following information as a reason for low participation, "It suggests the presence of barriers to educational opportunity that prevents participation by citizens who want and should have an opportunity for higher education" (p. 591).

It is often the most obvious that is overlooked when colleges try to market their services to adults. They continue to insulate themselves from many potential students. Heeger (1983) states, (adults) "often are isolated from the networks that lead to colleges and universities" (p. 25). Johnstone and Rivera (1972) parallel this remark in the statement, "People must be aware that opportunities exist and we have a long
way to go in providing new learners with adequate information" (p. 52).

Traditional post-secondary institutions with policies and procedures designed for the traditional student have inadvertently created obstacles for the nontraditional learner. These inhibitors will continue to discourage adults from participating in higher education activities. Some of these barriers as suggested by Eldred and Marienau (1979) include, "requiring students to physically attend a classroom, building degrees around the accumulation of credits, the idea that education should be the student's major activity, advising and counseling services designed for 18-22 year old students, lack of financial aid" (p. 12-13).

Rosenstein and Stack (1980) have determined that "cost and lack of time are the most common obstacles confronted by workers" (p. 14). The encouragement of partnerships between education and business, industry, and labor would greatly improve the communication network. "Working together, colleges and unions can greatly reduce institutional barriers, such as advance payment of tuition; inappropriate admissions criteria; student support services; and a general lack of information about what opportunities exist" (Rosenstein and Stack, 1980, p. 14).

The incentive for a college to maintain and/or increase the number of students on their campus is a question of survival. The attempt to draw the nontraditional adult can only be realized after a thorough description of existing policies and procedures and how they impact the potential adult student. As Johnstone and Rivera (1972) simply state, "barriers to opportunity must be removed and nontraditional programs must be improved" (p. 61).
Although Hartnett (1972) may have been accurate when he singled out a major barrier, "the inflexible nature of the higher education system" (p. 17), conditions are certainly changing. Post-secondary institutions project more liberal and flexible curriculums incorporating a variety of schedules. The ability for colleges to succeed in the future recruiting of adults will be determined by the individual institutional commitment to relevant goals. Fundamental to the efforts of survival is a position presented by Cross and Jones (1972), "Unless education offers what potential students want to learn, the removal of barriers will not result in improved access" (p. 50).

The awareness of post-secondary education by the public is an essential principle to the success in attracting students. This awareness is a condition of the degree of visibility and may be measured as projecting positive or negative images. In support of the value of communication, Cross (1984) remarked that, "the importance of supplying information to the population is a condition of extreme importance to the success of adult programs" (Iowa Association of Lifelong Learning, Ames, Iowa).

Ms. Cross (1983) in a position statement describing information networking suggested, "It will not matter how motivated the learner is, or how great the opportunities, if accurate, up-to-date information is not received by potential learners" (p. 149-150).

Even with all the personal qualities and strengths that the non-traditional student may possess, the institution must be willing to provide support services. As Bowen (1980) contributes, "Many potential adult learners need guidance in the form of unbiased information about
available educational opportunities, informed advice relating to their own educational plans, and encouragement to help them overcome anxieties" (p. 18).

Post-Secondary Planning and Marketing Issues

Before institutions can begin to address the needs of a diverse community, careful planning must be initiated. As the characteristics of the student body change so will the resources that will be necessary to provide the support services. Suggesting institutions will have to adjust in nontraditional ways, Schlaver (1977) recommends greater flexibility in curriculum and scheduling, in degree requirements, in portability of credits, and in evaluation and crediting of prior experience" (p. 34).

With an appreciation for acquired knowledge many post-secondary institutions have introduced standards and policies to recognize prior experiential learning. The insistence of career adults to be evaluated based on their existing competencies has created new questions relating to student needs. Shipton (1981) has consolidated these needs into three major categories:

1. the need for self-assessment, goal clarification, and career planning/development;
2. the need for assessment of the academic skills required for college-level study, as well as an opportunity to develop those skills, if necessary;
3. the need for a transition experience to bridge the gap between an active life in the world of work, family and community to the academic world. (p. 50)
To insure the success of the academic relationship, the nontraditional student must experience the traditional security, recognition, and rewards that are designed into traditional institutions. The value of mainstreaming nontraditional study in institutions of higher education can be measured by "national economic gain, cultural advancement, and institutional survival" (Bowen, 1980, p. v).

The post-secondary institution's delivery of relevant services is an indication of its overall performance. The decisions made that impact the directions of experiential learning will dictate future policies and the ability to be an effective institution. Greenley (1984) defines effectiveness as the "ability of planning to produce the required results" (p. 27).

As institutions strive to improve their position and services in a changing environment, planning becomes a necessary and continuous exercise. As Groff (1983) states, "The major contribution of the planning process to good management is the rationality it imposes on an organization's efforts to anticipate its future" (p. 1). In relation to nontraditional planning, Milton (1973) identified, "that much more data gathering and other forms of research are necessary . . . if sound planning and programming are to result" (p. 77).

The incentive for institutions of higher learning to become socially responsive to adults with prior learning experiences will accelerate in the future. If trends, as projected by Bowen (1980), continue, "by the year 2000 adults may represent nearly 75 percent of the total enrollment in higher education" (p. vi).
Given the information that adults will comprise a larger share of tomorrow's student body, colleges have initiated action plans to meet specific adult learner needs. Marketing plans have been designed to involve the nontraditional clientele. Walshok (1985), from his awareness of increasing numbers of adult students, presents the "assumption that a more 'practical' curriculum, more flexible degree requirements, and more varied formats for curriculum offerings are necessary ingredients for effectively serving the growing adult market" (p. 7).

To compound a complex information network between post-secondary institutions and the public are the procedures that institutions adopt to evaluate academic placement. This is particularly confusing to the adult who is wanting to receive credit for prior learning. Heeger (1983), in his estimation, states:

Prior learning assessment, it has been said, has come of age, for it is increasingly recognized as a legitimate academic process. Yet, awareness both of the process and of its implications for learners remains extremely low--both in the higher education community and by the public at large. (p. 7)

The reason for limited information regarding nontraditional programming in higher education is the lack of an institutional commitment to the marketing of such programs. As Brooker and Noble (1985) have found, "Many higher education administrators identify marketing as merely selling or promotion" (p. 191).

The danger of such a management philosophy to marketing is that it does not contribute nor compliment any institutional goal. The comprehensive planning responsibilities recognizes the need for a strong
component of marketing and an exchange of information between the institution and the public. Brooker and Noble (1985) feel that, "all exchanges between organizations and society involve some product/service, price, promotion, and a place where exchange occurs" (p. 192).

If we recognize the importance of the individual factors of marketing, the value and credibility of institutional planning becomes a future directed exercise. As a part of the planning activity, investigations will take place to determine the ability of the institution to meet the needs of the future. Heeger (1983) warns, "Too often, those responsible for marketing such services as prior learning programs forget that they function in an organizational environment that can have momentous impact on their plans" (p. 8).

Working in concert, planning and marketing will shape the future of an institution. The acceptance of strong marketing strategies and staff support is evident throughout higher education. Walshok (1985) believes, "This is a direct result of the growing awareness among colleges and universities of the profound impacts that new demographic and psychographic trends in American society are having on higher education" (p. 7).

Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning

The challenges of the future will become descriptive as institutions implement their long-range plans. The ability to strengthen an institution will present opportunities for increased resources and potential students. The inclusion of the adult student in greater numbers will
demand the availability of credible assessment procedures. The practice of evaluating an adults prior learning will promote nontraditional programming. A survey conducted by Andrews (1979) indicated that, "94.5 percent of 1500 educators and administrators who responded to his survey agreed that a nontraditional education is sound. Also, 85 percent agreed that a nontraditional degree program was a logical option within the philosophy and structure of their own institutions" (p. 343).

In a 1981-82 survey of post-secondary institutions in Iowa, McLure (1983) "revealed that 96 percent of Iowa's colleges and universities award credit for prior noncollegiate learning" (p. 9). McLure concludes that adults "have been given a boost by colleges and universities which are willing to assess and award academic recognition for prior noncollegiate learning" (p. 7).

The adoption of change in higher education comes about after thorough investigations have been made. This traditional practice, historically, has created a conservative balance in the acceptance of educational alternatives. In support of this process, Hartnett (1972), has observed, "Development of new options in learning requires careful examination of the concepts and criticisms of traditional education, as well as an analysis of the meaning, potential, and limitations of nontraditional alternatives" (p. 13).

To protect the integrity of higher education, standards of excellence must be upheld in all educational programming. The strength of the program is directly proportional to the strength of its process of evaluation. With specific parameters identified, the assessment of prior
experiential learning will produce credit for experiences that equate to legitimate college level learning. Willingham (1977) presents three characteristics that he considers important when evaluating experiential learning:

(a) that the learning imply a conceptual as well as a practical grasp of the knowledge of competence acquired, (b) that the learning be applicable outside the specific context in which it was acquired, and (c) that the learning fall within the domain usually considered degree credit higher education as opposed to secondary or continuing education for noncredit purposes. (p. 12)

The acceptance of nontraditional programming is dependent upon the level of learning demanded and the rigor of the curriculum. Consideration of student performance and placement will reflect future credibility of the program and the institution.

One method that has been developed to assess experiential learning is the portfolio design. As defined by Cannon (1972), "The portfolio is a collection of documents demonstrating the personal and intellectual development and achievement of the student" (p. 96). The portfolio method is a common technique used to assess an adults competencies.

Empire State College, New York, implemented the portfolio method to assist in the determination of advanced standing for adult students. Serling (1980) contends that, "Assessment of prior learning is the process through which Empire State College focuses upon the learning competencies which have already been acquired to determine how much work, of what kind, and at what level remains to be done" (p. 43). To insure that there be credibility to the assessment process Patricia Cross (1984),
"stated the 'extreme importance of faculty involvement in the assessment of prior learning'" (Iowa Association of Lifelong Learning Conference, Ames, Iowa).

One test of credibility for the portfolio assessment process is the regional accreditation evaluations of post-secondary institutions. If regional accreditation is awarded, Serling (1980) submits this as "evidence of the good practices in place for assuring academic standards and quality in the system" (p. 44).

Past practice of evaluating advanced standing has typically been limited to examinations. The examinations were normally content specific and not widely publicized. Information provided by Splavea (1975) stated that, "Students can receive college credits by demonstrating proficiency in a subject (or subjects) by passing certain examinations and thereby accelerate their programs . . ." (p. 16).

Expansion of testing became necessary as education and training became the priority for business and agencies outside post-secondary institutions. As a means to standardize the assessment of experiential learning and provide consistency in the awarding of college credits, a number of accepted testing instruments have surfaced. In reference to a study conducted by Gail McLure (1977), a recommendation was submitted:

The Iowa Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education should study and make recommendations to all post-secondary institutions about credit through standardized examinations (e.g., CLEP, New York Regents Examinations, PEP, and vocational competency tests) and about credit for experiential learning to enhance transferability of credit and to assure quality. (p. 205)
Nyquist (1977) presented two studies, one from the University of Colorado and the other from the University of Iowa that showed students who took the College Level Examination Program averaged better grade point averages than the traditional student; 3.18GPA compared to 2.70GPA at the University of Colorado and 3.07GPA compared to 2.55GPA at the University of Iowa (p. 156).

The American Council on Education (ACE) supports business, industry, and military training by providing services to evaluate and assign credits to structured programs. Many post-secondary institutions recognize the assessment credits as prescribed by ACE. Lindahl (1982) found that "Dallas County Community College District will honor that coursework with the credit recommended by ACE in its National Guide of Credit Recommendations for Non-Collegiate Courses or its Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services" (p. 44).

To summarize the process of assessment and provide the necessary checks and balances, Willingham (1977) feels there are six steps to be considered:

1. Identify college level learning acquired through experience
2. Show how and what parts of that learning are related to the degree objective
3. Verify or provide evidence of learning
4. Determine the extent and character of the learning acquired
5. Decide whether the learning meets an acceptable standard and determine its credit equivalence
6. Record the credit or recognition of learning (p. 6).
The common concern in the implementation of any nontraditional program is the protection of the quality standard within the institution. In the assessment of experiential learning for college credit, it is standard practice that the same minimum requirements be used as would be acceptable in a traditional program. Kimmel (1972) emphasizes that, "individuals with non-traditional learning must be permitted to gain recognition; at the same time, respectable standards for recognition must be upheld" (p. 99).

Nontraditional programs, such as awarding credit for prior experience, cannot enjoy the prestige of traditional programs without the appropriate structuring of graduate requirements and credentialing of staff. The professional presentation and delivery of the program within the college will project a supportive position to the standards of quality. As Heeger (1983) has stated, "The effective integration of prior learning credit into formal curricula has always been the point of credentialing prior learning" (p. 18).

In support of Heeger, Johnstone and Rivera (1972) suggest that, "Any degrees or certificates awarded in recognition of nontraditional learning must be indistinguishable from those awarded for traditional class attendance" (p. 90).

Experiential Learning and the Future

The implications of the adult student and the assessment of their prior experiences upon post-secondary institutions will generate philosophies and practices that support the needs of a changing society. Within
accepted academic standards and regional accreditation guidelines the assessment of experiential learning will provide an educational alternative to a growing segment of the population.

Gould (1980) feels that the impact of nontraditional programming "is going to offer something very profound in its eventual effects upon education as a whole" (p. 75). Bear (1982) also supports the significance of nontraditional degrees as "the wave of the educational future" (p. 23).

The awarding of college credit through the American Council on Education provides continuity in the assessment of prior learning. The growth of this council into the assessment of programs in government, unions, and other agencies has demonstrated their willingness to evaluate and set minimum standards. As Gould (1980) predicts, "we now have a movement that is not only huge and diverse, but one that is growing still faster" (p. 76).

As we continue to step into the future, education must constantly reevaluate the relevance of tradition. Gwinn (1981) has recognized that, "The effective manager must divert attention from yesterday and look to the future" (p. 17). Keeton (1983) has stated, "The post-secondary learning of the future will and should differ markedly from that of today . . . in the balance between experiential learning and informational processing" (p. 5).

Certainly, the post-secondary institutions of tomorrow will change. Yet, tradition will always be a part of a stabilizing force. Today's nontraditional alternatives may become the tradition of tomorrow if they
stand the test of the demands and expectations of the student body and alumni. Martin (1968) presented two assumptions that established an institutional posture for future growth and change:

The first one is that learning in the twenty-first century will be so radically different from the present educational forms that the way we do things now are not likely to have much transfer value. The second assumption is that the content of educational programs in the future will be changed no less radically than the forms; indeed changed to such an extent that what we teach today may be regarded by educators of the future as negative precedents—examples of what not to do. (p. 9)

The review of literature provided the researcher several insights regarding previous research, methodology employed, and relevant findings. This review of literature also enabled the researcher to adopt and further develop instruments for this particular study.

The general organization of the review of literature was structured to provide specific direction and sequencing of references by topic area. This chapter included the content sections of: Historical and Global Impact of Experiential Learning; Educational Change and Innovation; Non-traditional Adult Student Characteristics; Educational Barriers to the Adult Learner; Post-Secondary Planning and Marketing Issues; Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning; and Experiential Learning and the Future.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains a summary of the procedures used to complete the study. To clarify the process, the procedures have been categorized into the following sections:

(1) Population definition and selection of the sample.
(2) Instrumentation.
(3) Data collection and recording.
(4) Data analysis.

The problem addressed in this study was to investigate and compare post-secondary students enrolled in public and private institutions on a number of selected variables. In support of this problem one purpose of this study was to assist the adult student in their search for institutions in the state of Iowa that offer credit for experiential learning. A second purpose was to assist the post-secondary institutions in the state of Iowa to describe the characteristics and profile of the non-traditional student.

Population Definition and Selection of the Sample

The study was designed to investigate and compare nontraditional post-secondary students and public/private post-secondary institutions that request or assess credit for experiential learning in the state of Iowa. The target population for this study, therefore, included all post-secondary institutions in Iowa; as identified by the Task Force on Experiential Learning and those students, as identified by the
institutions, that have requested credit for experiential learning. Due to the design and intent of this study the sample base consisted of:

1. fifty-seven public and private post-secondary institutions
2. one hundred and sixty-three nontraditional students.

The 57 institutions that were surveyed represented three public regents universities, 18 public area community colleges, 30 private colleges and six private specialized institutions. Appendix A provides a list of the institutions that were included in the survey. Table 1 shows the representation of the institutions surveyed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Two-Year N</th>
<th>Four-Year N</th>
<th>Specialized N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student sample of 163 represents all nontraditional students that were identified by the responding institutions. Because of this response it was decided to use all 163 as the student sample size. Table 2 shows the representation of the students surveyed.
Table 2. Post-secondary students surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Two-Year N</th>
<th>Four-Year N</th>
<th>Specialized N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instrumentation

Two instruments were developed to gather the data for this study: an Institutional Profile, which was sent to 57 institutions; and a Student Profile, which was sent to 163 students.

The first instrument, Institutional Profile (Appendix B) was designed and drafted in cooperation with the researcher's major advisor and the Task Force on Experiential Learning (Appendix C). The Institutional Profile was critiqued to determine the appropriate content and length to insure that sufficient data were collected to construct a useful profile.

Section I of the Institutional Profile requested "Background Information" to identify; enrollments, programs offered, credits granted for experiential learning, assessment of experiential credits, policies and procedures for experiential credits, etc. Section II, "Credit for Experiential Learning," asks for information that pertains to nationally developed proficiency tests, recognized equivalency guides, and competency or performance exams. Section III, "Credit by Portfolio," specifically
asks questions dealing with: portfolio design, when offered, how many credits, evaluation of the portfolio, and transcripting of portfolio credits.

The second instrument, Student Profile (Appendix D), was also developed in collaboration with the researcher's major advisor and the Task Force on Experiential Learning and evaluated based on the instrument's capability to acquire the appropriate data. Section I of the Student Profile, "Background Information," requests responses to basic demographic data such as, sex, age, ethnic group, marital status, income, employment, level of education, major area of study, etc. Section II, "Educational Experience and Future Plans," asks questions pertaining to: educational goals, plans to continue their education, preference to full- or part-time instruction, when do they prefer to attend class and where, etc. Section III, "Experiential Learning," relates to issues of support services, means of assessment used for experiential credits, course work complimenting career goals, etc.

The content validity of the questionnaires was established through the involvement and interaction of the Task Force on Experiential Learning, major advisor, and the researcher. Those participating included:

William Wolansky  
John Wilson  
Noreen Coyan  
Jean Beringer  
Elizabeth Stanley  
Robert Dean Talbot  
Jean Goodnow  
Gail McLure  
Iowa State University  
Iowa State University  
North Iowa Area Community College  
Briar Cliff College  
State Board of Regents  
University of Northern Iowa  
Muscatine Community College  
University of Iowa
The suggestions and critiques offered by the professional participants regarding the content and format of the questionnaires were incorporated into the final forms of the instrument.

To determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the questionnaires in collecting the appropriate information, they were field tested in an institution that had 60 nontraditional students requesting credits for experiential learning. The responses were reviewed to determine the overall efficiency and consistency of the instrument.

Data Collection and Recording

As a measure to create a better response to the Institutional Profile, the researcher requested the support and cooperation of the Task Force on Experiential Learning and the Iowa Coordinating Committee on Continuing Education (ICCCE). An official letter (Appendix E), from the chairman of the ICCCE, was sent to each of the selected post-secondary institutions. This letter explained the value of the study and asked for the support of the institutions by cooperating with the study.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Institutional Profile the researcher piloted the survey with one institution. Upon completion of the survey and recommendations by the pilot institution several changes were made in the way in which questions were written or the types of responses offered.

In explanation of the purpose of the study on experiential learning, the researcher enclosed an institutional cover letter (Appendix F) explaining the purpose, coding and the confidentiality of the study. The
letter also described the color coding of the survey depending upon the type of institution: two-year public, blue; two-year private, green; four-year public, gold; four-year private, ivory; and specialized, beige. Within this letter, the researcher requested that, if possible, the institutions send a list of names and addresses of students presently enrolled who have requested credit for experiential learning.

To maintain the credibility of the study, the researcher also enclosed a sample of the Student Profile, the Iowa Guide for Noncollegiate Learning (Appendix G), and a self-addressed stamped envelope for the completed Institutional Profile instrument and list of students.

In order to achieve a high return on the Institutional Profile, the researcher called those institutions not responding after two weeks requesting their participation. A follow-up survey was then mailed to those institutions. A thank you letter (Appendix H) was mailed to each participating institution.

As a means to provide consistency within the Student Profile, 60 students were selected to pilot the survey. Upon completion of the surveys the responses were evaluated based upon the missing values. From the success of the initial pilot it was decided not to change the survey format or content.

Again, as a means to gather support for the Student Profile the researcher enclosed a cover letter (Appendix I) explaining its purpose and confidentiality. The letter also describes the color coding of the survey by type of institution: two-year public, blue; two-year private, green; four-year public, gold, four-year private, ivory; specialized,
A numerical code was affixed to each instrument and return envelope for the purpose of enabling the researcher to follow-up those students that had not returned the survey within two weeks. A second survey was mailed to encourage the participation of those students that had not responded. A thank you letter was mailed to each student responding (Appendix J).

Data Analysis

To simplify the data analysis of this study the researcher has categorized the responses to reflect inferences that relate to the Student Profile and the Institutional Profile. The statistical technique used for the hypotheses of the study was the Chi Square Analysis. Simple frequency and percentage distribution tables satisfied needed data to answer the 11 descriptive questions of the study.

Information on background, educational experience, and future plans and experiential learning gathered from 163 students provided data to complete the following descriptive and research questions:

1. What kinds of delivery systems appeal to the student requesting credit for experiential learning?
2. Are students applying for experiential learning credit enrolled full time or part-time?
3. Have experiential learning students attended a portfolio design course?
4. Do experiential students request transfer of their experiential credits?

5. Do experiential students receive financial aid?

Background information, credit for experiential learning and credit by portfolio were the categories of the Institutional Profile and provided data for the following descriptive and research questions:

1. Are nontraditional students provided academic advisors?

2. Is formal instruction/guidance (portfolio design course) available to experiential learning students?

3. Does the institution accept transfer credits for experiential learning?

4. Does the institution have policies/procedures concerning credit for experiential learning?

5. Does the institution offer financial aid to students enrolled in experiential learning?

6. What institutions in Iowa award credit for experiential learning?

The information gathered from the survey enabled the researcher to construct data profiles for both the student and the institution. These profiles provided the data to test the hypotheses and conduct the Chi-square statistical investigation of the study. In preparation of the Chi-square analysis the researcher calculated all expected frequencies utilizing the formula presented by Leonard Horowitz (1974):

\[ F_{ij} = \frac{(n_{rij})(n_{cj})}{N} \]  

(p. 393).
Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the characteristics of post-secondary experiential learning students in public and private institutions in the State of Iowa.

The Student Profile provided both categorical and continuous variable data for the description of the characteristics of the experiential student. The characteristics selected were sex, age, ethnic group, marital status. To analyze the discrete data, Chi-square analysis was used to test for relationships at a .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the types of post-secondary experiential learning assessment systems employed in public and private institutions in the State of Iowa.

The Institutional Profile provided the data to respond to the statistical question relating to the types assessments used in evaluating experiential learning. To simplify this investigation, assessments were categorized into three components;

1. Proficiency Tests
2. Equivalency Guides
3. Competency Exams

The data were analyzed using Chi-square analysis to test for relationship at a .05 level of significance.
Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the percentage of post-secondary public and private institutions offering credit for experiential learning in the State of Iowa and the national percentage of those listed in the American Council on Education survey.

The Institutional Profile survey provided the data for those post-secondary institutions in Iowa that offer credit for experiential learning. Chi-square analysis at a .05 level of significance was used to compare the survey data with the 1980 American Council on Education results.
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This study involves the investigation of college credits awarded for experiential learning in the post-secondary institutions in Iowa. By design, the data collecting instruments provided information to support a description of (1) the post-secondary institutions in Iowa that request credit for experiential learning.

After all data had been collected, the statistical analysis, as described in Chapter III, were conducted. To simplify the organization of the data, this chapter will be presented in three sections: (1) survey response (Institutional and Student Profiles), (2) descriptive questions, and (3) hypotheses testing.

Survey Response

For this study to meet the data collection and hypotheses objectives, it was necessary to construct and complete two separate survey instruments: (1) the institutional Profile, and (2) the Student Profile. To increase the return rate of the institutional and Student Profiles, the researcher used telephone and/or mailed follow-up surveys.

Institutional profile

To increase the credibility of the Institutional Profile Survey, a support letter from the Chairperson of the Iowa Coordinating Committee on Continuing Education accompanied each mailing. Fifty-seven (57) liaisons of the post-secondary institutions in Iowa were asked to participate in the study on experiential learning. These liaisons represented public,
private, and specialized institutions. The liaisons were to complete the Institutional Profile and, if applicable, enclose a list of students that had requested credit for experiential learning.

Of the 57 institutions surveyed, 40 responded from the first mailing. After a telephone follow-up to the 17 institutions not responding, five additional surveys were returned. This reflects a total of 45 of fifty-seven surveys returned, with twelve (12) not responding. The institutional survey results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Institutional survey responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responded N</th>
<th>No Response N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45 78.9%</td>
<td>12 21.1%</td>
<td>57 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In further study of the returned institutional surveys, it was found that all three classifications (two-year, four-year, and specialized) were within five percent of each other. This balance is further exemplified by comparison of public to private institutional responses which shows public institutions had a 7.9% better return than private institutions. See Table 4.

Student profile

In order to create a demographic profile of those students requesting credit for experiential learning the researcher included all student names that were provided by the participating institutions. The Student
Table 4. Percent response by institutional classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Two-year</th>
<th>Four-year</th>
<th>Specialized</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Profile requested information in three sections: (1) background information; (2) educational experience; and (3) experiential learning.

Those institutions responding with student names included two (two-year) public colleges and five (four-year) private colleges. Due to the confounding of data (lack of student names from four-year public and specialized institutions) further interpretation of student survey findings can only be made between two-year public and four-year private institutions.

Of the 163 students surveyed, 105 represented two-year public institutions and 58 represented four-year private colleges. Student survey results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Student survey response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responded</th>
<th>No Response</th>
<th>No Forwarding Address</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
<td>56 34.4%</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further study of those Student Profiles returned show that public and private institutions were closely balanced. There is less than a four percent difference in comparison of the number responding by categories of public and private institutions. See Table 6 for a summary of Student Profile responses.

Table 6. Student profile response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Responded N</th>
<th>No Response N</th>
<th>No Forwarding Address N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>(67) 63.8%</td>
<td>(34) 32.4%</td>
<td>(4) 3.8%</td>
<td>(105) 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(35) 60.3%</td>
<td>(22) 37.9%</td>
<td>(1) 1.7%</td>
<td>(58) 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the students that responded, 44 percent were male and 56 percent were female.

Descriptive Questions

As the researcher studied and coded the returned Institutional and Student Profiles, it was found that some surveys did not have complete information. To overcome this limitation for some specific response items, the researcher coded the incomplete variables as missing values that were either significant or insignificant in their impact upon the analysis of the study.

To further the contribution of the study on experiential learning, 11 descriptive questions were asked which expanded information about
post-secondary institutions or students requesting credit for experiential learning. Six questions pertained to the Institutional Profile and five used data from the Student Profile.

**Institutional question 1**

Are nontraditional students provided academic advisors?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Institutional Profile question, Section I, variable H.

Are there institutional advisors/counselors available to assist individuals that are requesting credit for experiential learning?

A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Yes N</th>
<th>No N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-year</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(7) 25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(3) 10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(16) 57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(2) 7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(28) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 7, 92.9 percent of the post-secondary institutions that award credit for experiential learning provide advisors for students.
Of the 102 experiential students that responded to the Student Profile survey, 80 percent utilized the services of an academic advisor.

Institutional question 2

Is formal instruction/guidance (portfolio design course) available to experiential learning students?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Institutional Profile question, Section III, variable A.

Does your institution offer a Portfolio Design/Assessment course?

A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 8.

Table 8. Institutions with portfolio design/assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-year</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the data presented in Table 8 only 25.6 percent of the institutions in Iowa offer a structured Portfolio Design/Assessment course.
Institutional question 3

Does the institution accept transfer credits for experiential learning?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Institutional Profile question, Section I, variable N.

Does your institution accept transfer credits for experiential learning?

A summary of the responses to this question is provided in Table 9.

Table 9. Transfer of experiential learning credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Yes N</th>
<th>Yes N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-year</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As data reported in Table 9 shows, 70.4 percent of institutions responding accept transfer of experiential learning credits. One institution did not respond to this variable, therefore, N = 27.

Institutional question 4

Does the institution have policies/procedures concerning credit
for experiential learning?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Institutional Profile question, Section I, variable 0.

Does your institution have written policies and procedures for experiential learning credits?

A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 10.

Table 10. Experiential learning policies and procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Yes N</th>
<th>No N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-year</td>
<td>(6) 21.4%</td>
<td>(1) 3.6%</td>
<td>(7) 25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year</td>
<td>(3) 10.7%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(3) 10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(16) 57.1%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(16) 57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>(2) 7.1%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(2) 7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(28) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results shown in Table 10, 96.4 percent of the institutions that offered credit for experiential learning have written policies or procedures in place.

Institutional question 5

Does the institution offer financial aid to students enrolled in experiential learning?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response
from the Institutional Profile question, Section I, variable I.

Can financial aid be used for experiential learning credits?

A summary of the responses to the question is found in Table 11.

Table 11. Financial aid for experiential learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-year</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial aid accessibility for experiential students is limited as shown in Table 11, to only 20 percent of the responding institutions. This compares to 24 percent of the students responding who stated they received some form of financial aid. However, this variable is recognized as only one of many barriers to the experiential learner.

Institutional question 6

What institutions in Iowa award credit for experiential learning?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Institutional Profile question, Section I, variable D.

Does your institution award credit for experiential learning?
A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 12.

### Table 12. Institutions awarding credit for experiential learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Yes N</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No N</th>
<th>No %</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-year</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four-year</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>(22)</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>(45)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The institutional response from Table 12 reflects 64.4 percent of the post-secondary institutions award credit for experiential learning.

**Student question 1**

What kinds of delivery systems appeal to the student requesting credit for experiential learning?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Student Profile questions, Section II, variable H, I, and K.

Which classes are most convenient to attend?

How frequently should courses meet?

Which class format do you prefer?

A summary of the responses to these questions are found in Tables 13, 14, and 15.
Table 13. Class schedule most convenient to attend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning classes</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon hour classes</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon classes</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening classes</td>
<td>(52)</td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>(80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend classes</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(162)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(162)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Course scheduling - frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once weekly</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice weekly</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or four times weekly</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five or more times weekly</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(99)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(99)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15. Preference of class delivery format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional lecture</td>
<td>(21) 20.6%</td>
<td>(16) 15.7%</td>
<td>(37) 36.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group discussion</td>
<td>(22) 21.6%</td>
<td>(12) 11.8%</td>
<td>(34) 33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent study</td>
<td>(5) 4.9%</td>
<td>(2) 2.0%</td>
<td>(7) 6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab or shop</td>
<td>(7) 6.9%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(7) 6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private tutor</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Preference</td>
<td>(2) 2.0%</td>
<td>(2) 2.0%</td>
<td>(4) 3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(102) 100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Tables 13, 14, and 15, it is possible to determine the delivery systems that appeal to the experiential learning student. Table 13 data shows that the students prefer evening classes 49.3 percent compared to 18.5 percent for morning classes and 16.0 percent for weekend classes. Experiential students in public institutions preferred evening classes almost twice that of the private institution student. Table 14 reflects the students preference to attend classes either once weekly (39.4%) or twice weekly (37.4%). In this case, more students from private institutions chose to attend classes once a week while more students from public institutions selected attending classes twice a week. Table 15 projects a strong preference by both public and private institution
students to attend either lecture or group discussion classes (69.6%).

**Student question 2**

Are students applying for experiential learning credit enrolled full time or part-time?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Student Profile questions, Section I, variable L, and Section II, variable G.

What is your current enrollment status?

Which type of enrollment status do you prefer?

A summary of the responses to these questions is found in Tables 16 and 17.

**Table 16. Current student enrollment status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Private %</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>(69)</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data represented in Tables 16 and 17 show current enrollment status and preferred enrollment status. As seen in Table 16, 71.9 percent of public and private institution students are enrolled part-time. This is in comparison to 69.6 percent of the students that prefer part-time status as seen in Table 17.
Table 17. Preferred enrollment status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>(21) 20.6%</td>
<td>(10) 9.8%</td>
<td>(31) 28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>(46) 45.1%</td>
<td>(25) 24.5%</td>
<td>(71) 69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(102) 100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student question 3

Have experiential learning students attended a portfolio course?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Student Profile question, Section III, variable E.

Did you attend a course to help you in your request for experiential learning credit?

A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 18.

Table 18. Student portfolio session attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(45) 45.0%</td>
<td>(13) 13.0%</td>
<td>(58) 58.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(21) 21.0%</td>
<td>(21) 21.0%</td>
<td>(42) 42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(100) 100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the data shows in Table 18, 58 percent of the students have taken a portfolio course in preparation for their credit assessment.
Student question 4

Do experiential students request transfer of their experiential credits?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Student Profile question, Section III, variable J.

Do you plan to request a transfer of your experiential learning credits to another institution?

A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 19.

Table 19. Student transfer of experiential learning credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(32) 32.7%</td>
<td>(9) 9.2%</td>
<td>(41) 41.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(32) 32.7%</td>
<td>(25) 25.5%</td>
<td>(57) 58.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(98) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those students requesting their credit to transfer are predominantly students from the two-year community colleges (32.7%) compared to only 9.2% of four-year private college students.

Student question 5

Do experiential students receive financial aid?

To answer this descriptive question, the researcher used the response from the Student Profile question, Section I, variable N.
Do you receive any type of federal, state, or college-sponsored student financial aid?

A summary of the responses to this question is found in Table 20.

Table 20. Students receiving financial aid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data from Table 20 shows that 74 percent of the students do not receive financial aid. This is in part due to the larger number of part-time student enrollments (71.9%).

Hypotheses Testing

Within this section there are three hypotheses which were tested. The three hypotheses were designed to determine whether a significant difference existed between: characteristics of public and private college students; assessment systems in public and private institutions; and a comparison between experiential learning in Iowa and the 1980 American Council on Education Survey. Each hypothesis is presented relative to the results yielded through their respective statistical analysis.
Research hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the characteristics of post-secondary experiential learning students in public and private institutions in the State of Iowa.

To create an experiential student profile that provides a descriptive representation for both public and private students, the researcher chose four variables from the Student Profile. These four variables were: sex (Section I-A); age (Section I-B); ethnic group (Section I-C); and marital status (Section I-D). These variables are presented in Tables 21a-21d.

Table 21a. A comparison of public and private institutions' student characteristics - sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>(43) 15.0%</td>
<td>(2) 2.0%</td>
<td>(45) 44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>(24) 23.5%</td>
<td>(33) 32.4%</td>
<td>(57) 55.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(102) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 21a it is seen that students from public post-secondary institutions have a greater male enrollment while there is a greater concentration of females in private institutions.

Since the students responding to this study are requesting credit for experiential learning that equates to college level learning, it can be seen from Table 21b that 64.4 percent of the participants are
between the ages of 31 and 50.

Table 21b. A comparison of public and private institutions' student characteristics - age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>(5) 5.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(5) 5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>(6) 5.9%</td>
<td>(5) 5.0%</td>
<td>(11) 10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>(3) 3.0%</td>
<td>(5) 5.0%</td>
<td>(8) 7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>(16) 15.8%</td>
<td>(9) 8.9%</td>
<td>(25) 24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>(12) 11.9%</td>
<td>(6) 5.9%</td>
<td>(18) 17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>(15) 14.9%</td>
<td>(7) 6.9%</td>
<td>(22) 21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-62</td>
<td>(7) 6.9%</td>
<td>(3) 3.0%</td>
<td>(10) 9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 62</td>
<td>(2) 2.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(2) 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(101) 100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21c. A comparison of public and private institutions' student characteristics - ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afro American/Black</td>
<td>(1) 1.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(1) 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian American</td>
<td>(65) 63.7%</td>
<td>(35) 34.3%</td>
<td>(100) 98.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>(1) 1.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(1) 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(102) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the students responding from two-year public colleges and four-year private colleges 98 percent were Caucasian American.

Table 21d. A comparison of public and private institutions' student characteristics - marital status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Private %</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>(50)</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>(71)</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(102)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In preparation for the testing of hypothesis 1, the researcher examined the response variances of the two institutional groups for each of the four student characteristics. This was accomplished by testing the preceding values using Chi Square Analysis to determine their relationship at a .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1 was constructed to determine if a significant difference in characteristics existed between students in public and private post-secondary institutions in Iowa. The results of the Chi Square Analysis are shown in Table 22.

As can be seen from Table 22, the Chi Square value for Sex of 27.73 is beyond the .05 limit of 3.84 and, therefore, this part of the null hypothesis is rejected. This infers there are significant differences in the relationships of gender between public and private post-secondary
institutions. The remaining variables of age, ethnic group, and marital status do not contain values greater than those necessary to reject the hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis with regard to age, ethnic group, and marital status is, therefore, accepted and inferences can be made of the relationships between students of public and private colleges.

Table 22. Hypothesis 1 - student characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public Chi-Square</th>
<th>Private Chi-Square</th>
<th>Chi-Squared Sum of Chi-Square Values</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>22.10</td>
<td>27.73</td>
<td>3.84*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>14.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Group</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.

Research hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the types of post-secondary experiential learning assessment systems employed in public and private institutions in the State of Iowa.

The data selected and analyzed to provide statistical inferences on assessment systems were available in the Institutional Profile. The three variables chosen by the researcher were: proficiency tests (Section II-A); equivalency guides (Section II-C); and performance exams (Section
II-E). These variables are presented in Tables 23a-23c.

### Table 23a. Assessment systems - proficiency tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>(10) 34.5%</td>
<td>(17) 58.6%</td>
<td>(27) 93.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>(1) 3.4%</td>
<td>(1) 3.4%</td>
<td>(2) 6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(29) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data in Table 23a, it is shown that 93.1 percent of the responding institutions awarding credit for experiential learning used the proficiency tests in their assessment.

### Table 23b. Assessment systems - equivalency guides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>(11) 37.9%</td>
<td>(14) 48.3%</td>
<td>(25) 86.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(4) 13.8%</td>
<td>(4) 13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(29) 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the post-secondary institutions that award credit for experiential learning 86.2 percent assess the credits using equivalency guides.
Table 23c. Assessment systems - performance exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public N</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>Private N</th>
<th>Private %</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data in Tables 23a, 23b, and 23c, the researcher used the Chi Square Analysis to determine the relationship between the variables at a .05 level of significance. This hypothesis was formulated to examine if a significant difference existed between the types of assessment systems used in public and private post-secondary institutions. The results of the Chi Square test are shown in Table 24.

Table 24. Hypothesis 2 - assessment systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Public Chi-square Values</th>
<th>Private Chi-square Values</th>
<th>Chi-Squared Sum of Chi-Square Values</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency Tests</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equivalency Guides</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Exams</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The calculated Chi Square for the proficiency tests, equivalency guides, and performance exams do not fall beyond the extreme value of 3.84 for
the .05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected inferring that public and private post-secondary colleges utilize similar assessment systems.

Research hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the percentage of post-secondary public and private institutions offering credit for experiential learning in the State of Iowa and the national percentage of those listed in the American Council on Education Survey.

To complete the analysis of hypothesis 3, the researcher utilized data from a survey conducted by the American Council on Education in 1980 and data generated from the Institutional Profile survey of this study. The variable of this study requested all colleges to respond to the question, 'Does your institution award credit for experiential learning?' (Institutional Profile, Section I, variable D). These were compared to responses of the national survey. See Table 25.

Table 25. Experiential learning - national and Iowa response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Iowa N</th>
<th>National N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Award Experiential Credits</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>(2118)</td>
<td>(2147)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not award experiential</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>(60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credits</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The information provided in Table 25 was analyzed using a Chi Square Analysis to determine the difference between the relationship of Iowa and National survey responses at a .05 level of significance.

The purpose of this hypothesis was to determine if there was a significant difference between the percentage of post-secondary institutions of Iowa offering credit for experiential learning compared to the national percentage. The computation of the Chi Square yielded a test statistic of 218.69 which far exceeds the 3.84 allowable limit. This figure rejects the null hypothesis inferring that there is a significant difference in the percentage of Iowa institutions that offer experiential learning credit when compared to the national percentage.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, 
RECOMMENDATIONS AND OVERVIEW

Specific objectives of this study have directed the research to completion. These objectives have focused the previous chapters toward stated descriptive and research questions. The first four chapters addressed the; introduction and background, review of literature, methodology, and analysis and results. It is the intent of this chapter to summarize the preceding chapters, present conclusions based on findings, propose recommendations, and submit an overview from the researchers' perspective.

Summary

Central to all chapters of this study was the problem of investigating and comparing post-secondary students and institutions that participate in experiential learning. To promote credibility, it was further projected to prepare evidence in support of two conclusive purposes:

1) To assist adult students in their search for institutions in Iowa that offer credit for experiential learning.

2) To assist post-secondary institutions in Iowa to describe the characteristics and profile of the nontraditional student.

The sample for this study was comprised of two separate and distinct groups. One group consisted of 57 post-secondary institutions in Iowa while the second group represented 163 post-secondary students from the state of Iowa that had requested credit for experiential learning. Of the 57 institutions surveyed, 21 were public and 36 were private; 18
were two-year, 33 were four-year, and 6 were specialized. Forty five or 79 percent of the institutions surveyed and 102 or 63 percent of the students surveyed returned the questionnaires.

Because of the distinct groups the researcher developed two questionnaires; an Institutional Profile and a Student Profile. The Institutional Profile instrument was designed to gather data on; background information, credit for experiential learning, and credit by portfolio. The Student Profile concentrated on; background information, educational experience and future plans, and experiential learning.

The analysis of data, provided from institutional and student responses, was directed toward eleven descriptive questions and three hypotheses. Of the eleven descriptive questions five related to variables found in the Student Profile survey and six were directed toward Institutional Profile data. The data from the Student Profile responded to Hypotheses 1 whereas the Institutional Profile gathered data necessary for investigating Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Conclusions

The results of this study, based on data collected, provides the framework necessary to describe and construct conclusive statements regarding post-secondary students and institutions in Iowa. The institutional and student surveys generated the information required to derive profiles for each category.

The support services and commitment of post-secondary institutions to the experiential learning student is reflected in the following primary
variables examined in this study: advisors, portfolio design, transfer credits, policies/procedures, financial aid, and awarding of credit for experiential learning. These variables are presented separately in Chapter IV. Implications from this study and the review of literature suggests a commonality within post-secondary institutions that award credit for experiential learning. One such commonality is the sensitivity to the needs of the nontraditional learner.

The significance of this study is projected within the descriptive institutional questions. The bases for conclusions is determined by the institutional survey participants. Of those institutions responding 64.4 percent award credit for experiential learning and are closely balanced between public institutions (61%) and private institutions (67%). Ninety-six percent of these institutions control their institutional integrity by having in place written policies and procedures.

In an attempt to meet the needs of this classification of students, 70 percent of the institutions accept the transfer of experiential learning credits. Within this category private institutions accepted transfer credits just as often as public institutions. The extension of the variables relating to student assistance portrays a new dimension of the institutions. Although 93 percent of the responding institutions that award experiential credits provide academic advisors only 26 percent offer a formal portfolio course and only 20 percent have financial aid available. Extrapolating from these differences and the general institutional profile it is contended by the researcher that institutions in Iowa that award credit for experiential learning do not provide
comprehensive institutional support services to the nontraditional learner.

In reviewing the literature on the nontraditional learner and experiential learning it was reported that support services for the experiential learner should be designed to serve specific clientele. The implications of this study reflect that only partial services are in place for the experiential learner and those services are structured for the most part for the traditional student.

The characteristics of the experiential learning student is provided in the data of the Student Profile survey and are derived from the following variables: delivery systems, full-time/part-time, portfolio courses, credit transfer and financial aid. The experiential learning student is typically a part-time student (72%) that has attended a portfolio course (58%), prefers evening and weekend classes (65%) by traditional lecture or group discussion (70%), scheduled once or twice a week (67%).

From the data provided in Chapter IV - Table 19 it is evident that an equal number of students enrolled in a post-secondary two-year institution want to transfer their experiential credits (32) as compared to those that do not plan to request transfer (32).

Research hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the characteristics of post-secondary experiential learning students in public and private institutions in the state of Iowa.

The limitation of the student characteristics, as set by the
researcher, includes the variables of sex, age, ethnic group and marital status. It was found that the distribution of males and females are significantly different between public and private institutions and, therefore, the null hypothesis for this particular variable is rejected at the .05 level. The remaining three variables of age, ethnic group, and marital status were investigated and found to reflect no significant difference. Based upon the above evidence it is concluded that there are acceptable relationships between students of public and private institutions and the null hypothesis is accepted at the .05 level of significance.

**Research Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference between the types of post-secondary experiential learning assessment systems employed in public and private institutions in the State of Iowa.

In comparison of the assessment systems used in those institutions that award credit for experiential learning, the researcher selected proficiency tests, equivalency guides, and performance exams. From the previous evidence in Chapter IV it was concluded that there exists a strong relationship between the assessment types used in public and private institutions and, therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted for all three assessment types at a .05 level of significance.

**Research Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant difference between the percentage of post-secondary public and private institutions offering credit for experiential learning in the State of Iowa and the national percentage
of those listed in the American Council on Education Survey.

To respond to this hypothesis the researcher utilized data from a report by Judith Cangialosi (1981). This report identifies that 98 percent of the responding institutions award credit for extra-institutional learning. Results computed in Chapter IV of this study reflect a high degree of difference between the institutions in Iowa awarding credit for experiential learning when compared to the American Council on Education survey. Based upon such evidence, the null hypothesis is rejected at the .05 level of significance.

Recommendations

Although this study generated institutional and student profiles, clarification is necessary to promote future credibility of the research objective and recommendations for further study. Reviewing the design and the culmination of information suggests a need for the improvement of the educational network in certain dimensions of experiential learning.

Certainly this study has provided institutional and student profiles that reflect accurate demographics and characteristics of the participants. However, it is contended by the writer that the overall effectiveness of the study, within the parameters of experiential learning in post-secondary institutions in Iowa, has been limited by the impact of six factors which created some difficulty during this investigation. These six factors involved the response to the survey instruments, misinterpretation of experiential learning, size of the samples, institutional representatives, strength of the statistical analysis, and the
problem of missing values.

The six critical areas stated previously suggest potential areas in which to improve future research in the area of experiential learning. Future investigators should attempt to alleviate such factors to insure a reliable contribution to theory. Individuals considering further study relating to student or institutional involvement in experiential learning should initiate the following:

1. Investigation of survey design options to promote responses that will allow the use of stronger statistical models.
2. Clarification in the definition of critical terms which will insure accurate responses.
3. Replication of the study with an increase in the number of participating institutions and students to lend strength to the statistical inferences.
4. Identification of institutional representatives that have access to the appropriate information and recognize the value of experiential learning.
5. Replication of the study by using interval and ratio responses to allow the use of more powerful statistical models.
6. Examination and improvement of instrument variables to eliminate the problem of potential missing values.

The challenge of creating an environment for excellence in education while providing support services for the experiential learner will most certainly be the issues to be addressed by institutions of higher education. Informed leaders will search, in depth, for indicators that
provide an insight to the future. It is the contention of the writer that this study has provided a link in the information network and contributed to the expansion of information as it relates to the concept and philosophy of experiential learning.

Researcher's Overview

The following overview reflects the added insights and perspective of the researcher as they relate to the investigative process of this study. Although a personal viewpoint, it projects credibility and value in the commitment necessary to complete relevant descriptive and research analysis.

The strength of this study is evident in the exploration of the current status of experiential learning in Iowa. As a means to establish credibility research must often begin with the assessment of tradition. The dynamics of the past generated momentum for the writer when reevaluating, conceptually, the purpose of the study and stimulated the search for more conclusive results.

In an attempt to answer questions related to current practices of experiential learning it was imperative that limitations be set and constraints be understood. As the boundaries of this study became more definitive the information collected became more manageable and focused. The value gained from the information shared by the students and institutions has answered some questions but raised many more.

The present fragmentation of experiential learning in the state of Iowa will most certainly change as the nontraditional student
population increases. The direction of research in experiential learning can only be enhanced by future social and political priorities that remove barriers and inhibitors to change and allow institutions to accept the nontraditional student of the future. As suggested by Gail McLure (1983):

As higher education becomes more responsive to adult learners, adult learners will become more responsive to higher education. It may be possible to move reluctant adults more gracefully past the critical points of their reentry process and facilitate their upward educational spirals and their lifelong engagement with the learning society. (p. 14)
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Without the understanding of my peers at Hawkeye Institute of Technology it would have been impossible to maintain a realistic goal leading toward academic achievement. My thanks to the secretaries and coordinators of the Adult, Continuing Education and Community Services Division and to the support given by Vice President George Bennett.

For my wife, Carol, a special word of appreciation for her tolerance, love and constant inspiration.
APPENDIX A: IOWA INSTITUTIONS SURVEY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IOWA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS</th>
<th>101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pella, IA 50219</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarke College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubuque, IA 52001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coe College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Rapids, IA 52402</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Vernon, IA 52314</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Word College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epworth, IA 52045</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dordt College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux Center, IA 51250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drake University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, IA 50311</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graceland College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamoni, IA 50140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand View College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, IA 50316</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grinnell College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grinnel, IA 50112</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Wesleyan College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant, IA 52641</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loras College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubuque, IA 52001</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Luther College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorah, IA 52101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharishi International Univ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield, IA 52556</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marycrest College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davenport, IA 52804</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morningside College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux City, IA 51106</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Mercy College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Rapids, IA 52402</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Saint Clare College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton, IA 52732</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange City, Iowa 51041</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ambrose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davenport, IA 52803</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpson College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indianola, IA 50125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Dubuque</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubuque, IA 52001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Iowa University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayette, IA 52142</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE SURVEY
INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

Directions: This questionnaire focuses on the program and assessment procedures associated with credit for experiential learning. Experiential learning is here defined as college level learning that has taken place through life or work experiences outside the supervision of an accredited institution. If any items request information that you do not wish to provide, feel free to omit it. Please use a lead pencil to fill in the oval indicating your response. If you wish to change your response, erase your first mark completely and then mark the correct oval. Select only one response to each item unless otherwise indicated. The information you supply on this questionnaire will be used for research purposes and will be available through the Task Force on Experiential Learning of the Iowa Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education (ICCCE).

Section I - Background Information

Please identify below the institutional contact person to be listed in the Iowa's Guide for Noncollegiate Learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Address |  |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| (street) | (city) | (state) | (zip) |

A. What is your full-time student enrollment?

0 under 500
0 500 - 1,000
0 1,000 - 3,000
0 3,000 - 5,000
0 5,000 - 10,000
0 10,000 - 15,000
0 15,000 - 20,000
0 20,000 - 25,000
0 over 25,000

B. How is the academic year divided?

0 Quarters
0 Semesters
0 Other

C. Which programs are offered at your institution?

0 Vocational technical
0 Associate degree
0 Undergraduate
0 Graduate
0 Weekend
0 Evening
0 Off-campus
0 Programs for part-time students
0 Programs for working adults
0 Other

D. Does your institution award credit for experiential learning?

0 Yes
0 No (If you marked No - proceed to Section III)

E. Can experiential learning credits be applied to more than one program?

0 Yes
0 No

F. How many students are enrolled in programs that award credit for experiential learning?

0 0-50
0 51-100
0 101-150
0 151-200
0 201-250
0 251-300
0 301-350
0 351-400
0 451-500
0 501-550
0 551-600
0 601-650
0 651-700
0 701-750
0 751-800
0 801-850
0 851-900
0 901-950
0 951-1000

G. How many students have graduated from such programs?

0 0-50
0 51-100
0 101-150
0 151-200
0 201-250
0 251-300
0 301-350
0 351-400
0 451-500

H. Are there institutional advisor/contactors available to assist individuals that are requesting credits for experiential learning?

0 Yes
0 No

I. Can financial aid be used for experiential learning credits?

0 Yes
0 No

J. What are the institutional time limitations on evaluating experiential learning for credit?

0 Experiences obtained 5 years prior to application are not acceptable
0 Experiences obtained 10 years prior to application are not acceptable
0 Learning will be evaluated regardless of when the experience occurred
0 Other

K. Who evaluates the experiential learning credit?

0 Administrators
0 Faculty
0 Administrators/Faculty
0 Other

L. Does your institution require grades to be assigned to experiential learning credit?

0 Yes
0 No

M. What is the maximum number of experiential learning credits that can be applied toward graduation?

0 0-10
0 11-20
0 21-30
0 31-40
0 41-50
0 51-60
0 61-70
0 71-80
0 81-90
0 91-100
0 over 100

N. Does your institution accept transfer credits for experiential learning?

0 Yes
0 No

O. Does your institution have written policies and procedures for experiential learning credits?

0 Yes
0 No

-OVER-
A. Which nationally developed proficiency tests are used to evaluate credit for experiential learning?
   0 College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 ACT/Proficiency Examination Program (PEP)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 College Entrance Examination Board, Advanced Placement Program (CEEB/AP)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 DANTES Standardized Subject Tests (DSST)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 Other
   Maximum credits allowed _______________

B. How does your institution record on a student’s transcript credits that have been awarded through recognized guides? (Mark all that apply)
   0 Credits cannot be distinguished from traditional credits
   0 Credits are designated by CLEP, PEP, etc.
   0 Credits designated by subject area
   0 Credits labeled in blocks
   0 Competency statements
   0 Narrative descriptions
   0 Credits meet general education requirements
   0 Credits recognized in subject major, minor or area of concentration
   0 Other
   Maximum credits allowed _______________

C. Which equivalency procedures and credit recommendations are used to evaluate credit for experiential learning? (Mark all that apply)
   0 American Council on Education - National Guide
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services (Military Service Schools)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services (Military Occupational Specialty MOS)
   Maximum credits allowed _______________
   0 Other
   Maximum credits allowed _______________

D. How does your institution record on a student’s transcript credits that have been awarded through competency or performance examinations? (Mark all that apply)
   0 Credits cannot be distinguished from traditional credits
   0 Credits are designated by CLEP, PEP, etc.
   0 Credits designated by subject area
   0 Credits labeled in blocks
   0 Competency statements
   0 Narrative descriptions
   0 Credits meet general education requirements
   0 Credits recognized in subject major, minor or area of concentration
   0 Other
   Maximum credits allowed _______________

Section III - Credit by Portfolio

A. Does your institution offer a Portfolio Design/Assessment course? (A portfolio is an organized document which describes a student’s personal and career goals, verified competencies, projected program of study, etc.)
   0 Yes
   0 No

B. How is the Portfolio course offered?
   0 Individualized instruction
   0 Classroom
   0 Other

C. When is the Portfolio course offered?
   0 Weekdays
   0 Evenings
   0 Weekends

D. How many credits are assigned to the Portfolio course?
   0 Quarter
   0 Semester

E. Who evaluates the student portfolio for credit?
   0 Administration
   0 Faculty
   0 Faculty/Administration
   0 Other

F. What is the maximum number of credits that a student can receive from the portfolio assessment?
   0 Quarter _______________
   0 Semester _______________

G. How does your institution record portfolio credits on a student’s transcript? (Mark all that apply)
   0 Credits cannot be distinguished from traditional credits
   0 Credits are designated by CLEP, PEP, etc.
   0 Credits designated by subject area
   0 Credits labeled in blocks
   0 Competency statements
   0 Narrative descriptions
   0 Credits meet general education requirements
   0 Credits recognized in subject major, minor or area of concentration
   0 Other
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TASK FORCE

STATE OF IOWA

Sister Jean Beringer
Director Continuing Education
Briar Cliff College
3303 Rebecca
Sioux City, IA 51104
712-279-5434

Gail McLure
Interinstitutional Program Coordinator
Iowa Regents Universities
W108 Oakdale Hall
Oakdale, IA 52319
319-353-5288

Dan Brobst, Department Head
Adult Vocational Education
Hawkeye Institute of Technology
Waterloo, IA 50704
319-296-2320

Elizabeth C. Stanley (Ex-officio)
Associate Director for Business and
Finance
State Board of Regents Office
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
515-281-3934

Noreen Coyan
Administrative Assistant
North Iowa Area Community College
500 College Drive
Mason City, IA 50401
515-421-4211

Robert Dean Talbott
Professor of History
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319-273-2268

Rosemary Cronin
Director of Continuing Education
University of Dubuque
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
319-589-3220

John P. Wilson
Extension Specialist in Education
N232 Quadrangle
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011
515-294-2163

Jean Goodnow, Counselor
Kirkwood Community College
6301 Kirkwood Boulevard, S.W.
P. O. Box 2068
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406
319-398-5689
APPENDIX D: STUDENT PROFILE SURVEY
STUDENT PROFILE

Directions: The information you supply on this questionnaire will be kept completely confidential. The data will be used for research purposes only and will not be individually listed on any sheet. If any item requests information that you do not wish to provide, feel free to omit it.

Please use a lead pencil to fill in the oval indicating your response. If you wish to change your response, erase your first mark completely and then blacken the correct oval. Select only one response to each item unless otherwise indicated.

### Section I - Background Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Sex:</th>
<th>0 Male</th>
<th>0 Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Age:</th>
<th>0 Under 20</th>
<th>0 20 - 25</th>
<th>0 26 - 30</th>
<th>0 31 - 35</th>
<th>0 36 - 40</th>
<th>0 41 - 50</th>
<th>0 51 - 62</th>
<th>0 Over 62</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Ethnic Group:</th>
<th>0 Afro American/Black</th>
<th>0 American Indian</th>
<th>0 Asian American</th>
<th>0 Caucasian American/White</th>
<th>0 Mexican American</th>
<th>0 Hispanic</th>
<th>0 Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Marital Status:</th>
<th>0 Unmarried</th>
<th>0 Married</th>
<th>0 Separated/Divorced</th>
<th>0 Prefer Not to Respond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Number of Dependent Children:</th>
<th>0 None</th>
<th>0 One</th>
<th>0 Two</th>
<th>0 Three</th>
<th>0 Four or More</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F. What is Your Current Family Income?</th>
<th>0 Less than $5,000</th>
<th>0 $5,000 - $9,999</th>
<th>0 $10,000 - $14,999</th>
<th>0 $15,000 - $19,999</th>
<th>0 $20,000 - $24,999</th>
<th>0 $25,000 - $29,999</th>
<th>0 $30,000 - $34,999</th>
<th>0 $35,000 - $39,999</th>
<th>0 $40,000 - $44,999</th>
<th>0 Over $45,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G. Which of the following best describes what you are currently doing?</th>
<th>0 Employed full-time</th>
<th>0 Employed part-time</th>
<th>0 Unemployed</th>
<th>0 Serving in the Armed Forces</th>
<th>0 Homemaker</th>
<th>0 Retired</th>
<th>0 Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Section II - Educational Experience and Future Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. What type of institution are you attending?</th>
<th>0 Two-year public college</th>
<th>0 Two-year private college</th>
<th>0 Four-year public college</th>
<th>0 Four-year private college</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. What is your grade level?</th>
<th>0 Freshman</th>
<th>0 Sophomore</th>
<th>0 Junior</th>
<th>0 Senior</th>
<th>0 Higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

-OVER-
**Section III - Experiential Learning**

A. What educational institution are you presently attending?

| 0 Degree | 0 Career change | 0 Self-satisfaction | 0 Career Update |

B. Does the institution you attend use the quarter or semester system?

| 0 Quarter | 0 Semester |

C. Did you receive assistance from a counselor/advisor?

| 0 Yes | 0 No |

D. How did you learn about credit for experience?

| 0 Counselor | 0 College Information | 0 Newspaper | 0 Friend | 0 TV | 0 Radio | 0 Employer | 0 Other |

E. Did you attend a course to help you in your request for experiential learning credit? (Portfolio Design)

| 0 Yes | 0 No |

F. Do you feel that credit for experiential learning is consistent with the quality of education at your institution?

| 0 Yes | 0 No |

G. How many credits did you request for experiential learning?

| 0 0 - 10 | 0 11 - 20 | 0 21 - 30 | 0 31 - 40 | 0 41 - 50 | 0 51 - 60 | 0 61 - 70 |

H. How many credits have you received for experiential learning?

| 0 Credit review in process | 0 0 - 10 | 0 11 - 20 | 0 21 - 30 | 0 31 - 40 | 0 41 - 50 | 0 51 - 60 | 0 61 - 70 | 0 71 - 80 | 0 81 - 90 | 0 Over 90 |

I. Indicate which method of credit assessment you used. Mark all that apply.

| 0 CLEP | 0 AP | 0 SAT | 0 Other |

J. Do you plan to request a transfer of your experiential learning credits to another institution?

| 0 Yes | 0 No |

K. Does your course work complement your career goals?

| 0 Yes | 0 No |
APPENDIX E: IOWA COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION--SUPPORT LETTER
Dear Institutional Liaison:

The Iowa Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education requests your support in the completion of the enclosed Institutional Profile and in the identification of experiential learning students. The Profile, designed by Dan Brobst of Hawkeye Institute of Technology, will provide the necessary information to update the 1980-81 Iowa's Guide to College Credit for Noncollegiate Learning.

The "Guide" identifies regents institutions, area colleges, independent colleges, and private specialized schools that evaluate and award credit for life/work experiences. Copies of the updated "Guide" will be made available to each institution when the survey is completed.

The Iowa Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education also encourages institutions to assist in the student survey by sending Mr. Brobst a list of names with addresses of currently enrolled experiential learning students. Mr. Brobst will mail a Student Profile survey to randomly selected students for the purpose of analyzing the characteristics and needs of the experiential learning student.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John E. Hess, Ed.D.
Chairman, ICCCE

JEH/WP/la
Enclosure
APPENDIX F: INSTITUTIONAL COVER LETTER
May 9, 1986

Mr. Dan Brobst
Hawkeye Institute Technology
P.O. Box 8015
Waterloo, IA 50704

Dear Mr. Brobst:

To assist me in fulfilling my Doctoral requirement for Iowa State University, I would appreciate your taking a few minutes to complete the enclosed Institutional Profile and identify your experiential learning students. Experiential learning, as defined in the Institutional Profile, is college level learning that has taken place through life or work experiences outside the supervision of an accrediting institution.

This profile has been sent to accredited, public and private, post-secondary institutions in Iowa and will provide information for the update of the Iowa's Guide to College Credit for Noncollegiate Learning. (See Attachment) The only information that will identify an institution by name are those responses that pertain to the update of the Iowa Guide.

For research purposes all other responses will be collapsed into categories of Background Information; Credit for Experiential Learning; and Credit by Portfolio. In order to make comparisons relating to experiential learning in Iowa, the Institutional Profile has been classified and color coded by

- Two-year Public Institutions Blue
- Two-year Private Institutions Green
- Four-year Public Institutions Gold
- Four-year Private Institutions Ivory
- Specialized Institutions Beige

Institutional comparisons will be made only within their respective classification and not by identification of the institution.

With your assistance I will also be surveying a random sample of post-secondary students that have requested credit for experiential learning. (See Attachment) This Student Profile will generate a better understanding of the student; their educational experience and future plans; and their past experiences that may qualify for college credit. Student comparisons will be made only within their respective classification of two-year or four-year public or private institutions.
To support this student survey enclose, with your Institutional Profile, a list of names and addresses of students that are presently enrolled in your institution and have requested credit for experiential learning.

Please complete the Institutional Profile and, if applicable, the student names and addresses and return to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelope within two weeks. I thank you for your support and contribution in providing an academic awareness of the current practices of experiential learning in Iowa.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dan Brobst
Department Head Adult Education
Hawkeye Institute of Technology
APPENDIX G: IOWA'S GUIDE TO CREDIT FOR
NONCOLLEGIATE LEARNING
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Credit Determination Method</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Universities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa State University</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area Schools/Community Colleges</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Northeast Iowa Tech Inst</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Lakes CC</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Central CC</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marshalltown CC</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinkley's Institute of Tech</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinton CC</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Muscatine CC</td>
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<td>Scott CC</td>
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<td>Kirkwood CC</td>
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<td>Southeastern CC</td>
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<td><strong>Independent Colleges and Universities</strong></td>
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<td>Spencer School of Bus</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CREDIT DETERMINATION METHODS

Iowa colleges and universities award academic recognition and undergraduate credit for knowledge and skills acquired outside the classroom. Credit determination methods are explained below.

Proficiency Exams: CLEP and other national tests offer general exams which measure achievement in liberal arts: English composition, humanities, mathematics, natural and social sciences. Subject exams measure achievements in specific areas such as accounting, data processing, and nursing.

ACE Recommendations on Military Courses: The American Council on Education (ACE) has examined educational courses of the U.S. armed forces and has selected and recommended courses worthy of college credit. The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services* contains ACE recommendations.

ACE Recommendations on Noncollegiate Courses: The American Council on Education (ACE) examines educational courses sponsored by organizations with primary functions other than education: for example, business and industry, professional and voluntary organizations, labor unions, governmental agencies. The National Guide* contains ACE college credit recommendations for these courses.

Portfolio Assessments: This method involves a carefully organized documentation of relevant noncollegiate learning acquired through experience: on-the-job training, seminars and workshops, independent or self-directed study, community service, volunteer, and home-based work. A portfolio containing documentation and other materials is prepared in accordance with institutional guidelines and is evaluated by faculty who decide whether it is worthy of credit or academic recognition.

Local Exams and Performance Tests: Some institutions have developed proficiency exams and/or performance tests administered by departments within the institution.

* Available at many Iowa colleges and universities. Each participating institution reviews the student’s request for credit in light of the student’s program, the nature of the noncollegiate learning, and the institution’s mission.
APPENDIX H: STUDENT COVER LETTER
May 30, 1986

To assist me in fulfilling my Doctoral requirement at Iowa State University, I would appreciate your taking a few minutes and completing the enclosed Student Profile pertaining to experiential learning. Experiential learning is here defined as college level learning that has taken place through life or work experiences outside the supervision of an accredited college.

Your completion of the Student Profile will be kept in confidence and will not be listed individually. For research purposes your responses will be compiled into categories of: Background Information; Educational Experience and Future Plans; and Experiential Learning. In order to make comparisons among experiential learning students in Iowa the Student Profile has been classified and color coded by:

- Two-year Public Institutions: Blue
- Two-year Private Institutions: Green
- Four-year Public Institutions: Gold
- Four-year Private Institutions: Ivory
- Specialized Institutions: Beige

Student comparisons will be made only within their respective classification and not by identification of the institution or the individual. Student Profile numbers are used only for the purpose of identifying individuals that have not returned their survey. Once a survey has been returned the I.D. number will be disregarded.
Please complete and return the Student Profile to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelope within two weeks. If for some reason you have not responded I will follow-up with a second mailing.

Again I thank you for your support and contribution in providing an academic awareness of the current practices of experiential learning in Iowa. Your responses will hopefully stimulate future educational planning to meet the needs of students requesting credit for life or work experiences.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dan Brobst
Department Head Adult Education
Hawkeye Institute of Technology
APPENDIX I: INSTITUTIONAL THANK YOU LETTER
Dear

I wish to extend my appreciation for your participation in the Institutional Profile Questionnaire. Your support has contributed to the completion of this study and hopefully a greater awareness of experiential learning in Iowa.

Through your involvement it was possible to gather information that will be useful for both the nontraditional student and other post-secondary institutions. The responses from 45 institutions has helped clarify the support services that are available to individuals that have requested credit for experiential learning.

Again, I thank you for your cooperation and acknowledge your commitment to effective higher education.

Sincerely,

Dan Brobst, Department Head
Adult Supplemental Education
HAWKEYE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
APPENDIX J: STUDENT THANK YOU LETTER
Dear

I wish to extend my appreciation for your participation in the Student Profile questionnaire. Your support has contributed to the completion of my study and hopefully a greater awareness of the experiential learning student.

Through your involvement it was possible to gather information that will be useful for post-secondary institutions and colleges. The responses from 102 students has helped clarify the characteristics and preferences of individuals that have requested credit for experiential learning.

Again, I thank you for your cooperation and I wish you success in your personal and educational goals.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dan Brobst, Department Head
Adult Supplemental Education
HAWKEYE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY