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Untangling the Factors that Affect Student Retention: A Quantitative Study of the
Relationships among First-Year Seminar Program Characteristics
and Instructor Type (Full-Time and Part-Time)

by

Christina Marie Shafer

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education
in
Education Leadership: Postsecondary Education

Dissertation Committee:
Candyce Reynolds, Chair
Andy Job
Karen Haley
Yves Labissiere

Portland State University
2020

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Abstract

Each fall first-year college students have met and overcome many challenges and transitions. However, one-third of first-year students who enter college in the U.S. do not return for their second-year. Making the first-year a critical juncture for students, administrators, and institutions. First-Year Seminars were created to help assist students with their transition to college and have been identified as an effective initiative to aid in first-year retention.

What role do institutions play in addressing the issue of retention? Some say that those who teach the Seminars matter. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship among Seminar characteristics and instructor type. Ultimately, the goal is to further administrators' understanding of how Seminar characteristics and who is teaching them are associated.

This study used the theoretical frameworks: Student Departure, Marginality and Mattering, Student Involvement, and Engagement. In addition the Input-Environment-Output model was included. Using the secondary data from the 2009 Survey on First-Year Seminars which reported Seminar program characteristics by administrators, the researcher conducted Chi-Pearson analysis to explore the relationships among Seminar characteristics and instructor type.

There were statistically significant results that indicated that there were relationships among some of the Seminar program characteristics and who taught the Seminar. These results further indicated that administrators looking to enhance their

first-year retention rates need to explore specific Seminar characteristics along with instructor type to better address challenges of first-year retention.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It is one thing to start a college education and it is quite another to graduate. Each fall first-year college students have met and overcome many challenges: coping with financial hurdles, navigating orientation, taking placement tests, and even figuring out where to find their first classroom. On that first day of class, the rooms are filled with first-year students sitting in their desks. Excitement, expectations, and trepidation fill the room. Yet, one-third of these first-year students do not return for their second year (Noel Levitz, 2012). After all the work and anticipation, why do these first-year students leave? Whose problem is this? Students have done everything they think they need to succeed. There are other forces that contribute to this attrition, not retention. Some people say that institutional practices and policies play a role (Kuh, 2001a, 2008; Quaye & Harper, 2014; Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Kinzie, 2009). More specifically, what are institutions doing to address this high-level attrition of their first-year students, and how effective are these practices and policies?

Retention is a significant challenge for institutions of higher education. Retention is defined for this study as “the measurement of proportion of students who remain enrolled at the same institution from year to year” (Hagedorn, 2012, p. 92). Noel-Levitz (2012) reported that roughly 33% of students leave before their second-year of college, making the first year a critical juncture for first year college students. A successful transition to an institution of higher education is critical to the retention of first-year students (Astin, 1984; Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, & Leonard, 2007; Tinto, 1993). Transition

is broadly defined as “an event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions and roles” (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995, p. 27). For first-year students, the more changes they encounter, such as the differences between high school and college, different living arrangements, and new cultural environments, the more difficult the transition can be (Schlossberg et al., 1995). For first-year students transition has been identified as a key barrier that students face in their success in higher education. A negative transition has been associated with first-year students not staying in college for another year that is, not being retained. The decisions that administrators in higher education make seem to impact student retention.

Background of the Problem

In this section I discuss the problem of practice, elaborate the context in which the problem exists, and draw upon multiple sources to substantiate the existence of the problem.

Problem of Practice

In response to the challenge of retaining first year students, institutions of higher education continue to seek out interventions to enhance their retention rates, such as, focusing on developing programs and services that support first-year students and their transition hurdles (Barefoot, Gardner, Cutright, Morris, Schroeder, Schwartz, Siegel, & Swing, 2005; Renn & Reason, 2013; Tinto, 2003). Researchers suggest that interventions such as, the First-Year Experience, can positively impact first-year retention (e.g., Barefoot, 1993; Filder & Moore, 1996; Porter & Swing, 2006).

The First-Year Experience movement arose from the desire to support first-year students and increase retention into the second year. The movement started in 1970 at the University of South Carolina as a student initiative and resulted in a seminar to assist first-year students with their transition into college (Renn & Reason, 2013). The movement developed into a research center known as the National Resource Center of First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

The First-Year Experience movement initially focused only on the newly matriculated first-year students. It has since grown to include pre-matriculation (senior year of high school) through the entire first year up to and including the senior year experience (Renn & Reason, 2013). One of the most studied of the First-Year Experience initiatives is First-Year Seminars. Currently as many as 94% of four-year institutions across the nation have some form of a First-Year Seminar program for first-year students (Porter & Swing, 2006). First-Year Seminars were a decision that institutions and administrators made seeking to increase retention rates of first-year students. First-Year Seminar programs look different across campuses. First-Year Seminars can be tailored to best use institutional resources and meet unique needs of the institutions' students. Some Seminars are focused on helping students with academic skill development. Some are focused on orienting students to the campus. While other Seminars are academic courses that build-in a minor role of orientation and skill development.

One decision that institutions and administrators make is who teaches the First-Year Seminars. Instructors' interactions with first-year students, play a critical role in

helping these students successfully transition to college and be retained, thus instructors are an important part of the effectiveness of the First-Year Seminars. (Clark, 2005; Inkelas, Brower, Crawford, Hummel, Pope, & Zeller, 2004; Tinto, 1993). Research has shown that, in general, student success is associated with “instructor type” (Eagan & Jaeger, 2009; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Schibik & Harrington, 2004). In research, the term instructor type refers to the instructors’ employment status. A variety of instructor types taught these Seminars, including full-time tenure-related instructor, full-time non-tenure related instructor, part-time adjunct instructor, graduate students, undergraduate peers and student affairs professionals. In addition, some Seminars were team-taught.

In general, the research shows that full-time instructors were associated with positive student outcomes, such as retention, higher grade point averages, and greater likelihood of graduation (Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Umbach, 2007). Some studies found a reliance on part-time instructors (including adjunct, post-doctorate, undergraduate students, and student affair professionals) is associated with negative student outcomes, such as attrition, leaving college, rather than retention, staying in college (Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Schibik & Harrington, 2004). In addition, the interaction and connection that instructors have with students, especially outside of class, was associated with retention (Inkelas et al., 2004; G. M. Johnson, 1994; Mallette & Cabrera, 1991). Instructor and student interaction were more likely to happen with full-time tenure-

related or full-time non-tenure related instructors. Full-time instructors had more availability for students, had access to more information related to the institution's policies and processes, and experience with the institutional resources like the library (Benjamin, 2002; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Umbach 2007).

Given the advantages associated with full-time instructors' teaching status, one potential concern is the increase in the number of part-time instructors in higher education. In challenging times, institutions of higher education have sought to cut expenses by hiring more part-time instructors (American Federation of Teachers, 2009; Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Ochoa, 2011). There is concern that as the percentage of courses taught by part-time instructors increases that the (negative) impact on student outcomes will also increase (Ehrenberg & Zhang 2005; Schibik & Harrington, 2004). Knowing that the numbers of instructor types (full-time and part-time) are changing, one could wonder if the use of part-time instructors in First-Year Seminars could also have a negative effect on student outcomes such as retention and thus impact the effectiveness of the First-Year Seminar.

The National Survey on First-Year Seminars has been conducted for many years by the National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, also known as the National Resource Center. They have survey responses from an array of institutional types like community colleges, small liberal arts colleges, and universities. One survey variable collected is instructor type. For this study, instructor type (full-time and part-time) is defined as a broad and inclusive category of employment classifications and appointments. Instructor type includes tenure-related instructors, non-

tenure-related instructors, part-time or adjunct instructors, student instructors, and other staff instructors. Given that instructor type (full-time compared to part-time) seems to be associated with student success and retention, exploring the relationships among First-Year Seminar characteristics and instructor type (employment position: full or part-time) could be important for administrators' decision-making related to bolstering student success. Since the National Resource Center's survey results on First-Year Seminars describe Seminar programs' characteristics on a variety of campuses it provides administrators a possible template of decision making points. Using the data from the National Resource Center survey, this study examines the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar and the instructors' employment position: full-time and part-time.

Context of the Problem

The National Center for Education Statistics reported that more than 16.7 million undergraduate students were enrolled at institutions of higher education in fall of 2017 (Snyder, de Brey, & Dillow, 2019). In fall 2012, 2,994,187 first-year students entered degree-granting institutions for the first time (Snyder et al., 2019, Table 305.10). Of that number, 62% of these entering first-year students had just graduated from high school within the previous 12 months (Snyder et al., 2019, Table 302.50, 2018).

Because of the high numbers of students entering college, institutions in American higher education today realize that they need to promote initiatives to support student retention and completion of students' first year in a college or universities. Examples of such initiatives are:

- Strong orientation/onboarding programs
- Support services for students with diverse backgrounds
- Learning communities
- First-Year Experience Programs, including First-Year Seminars

These initiatives aim to increase retention of first-year students to their second year, while at the same time assisting the transition to college for first-year students. First-Year Seminars have been the most frequent and prominent intervention that institutions have used (Porter & Swing, 2006).

First-Year Experience: An example, First-Year Seminars. Interventions such as those termed the First-Year Experience can positively impact first-year retention (Astin, 1993; Chickering & Gamson, 1991; Cuseo, 2003; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991; Tinto & Goodsell, 1994). First-Year Experience initiatives include (but not limited to); summer programs and/or orientations, small class size, family tailored programs, and specialized (required) advising. One of the most studied of First-Year Experience programs are First-Year Seminars.

Characteristics. Hunter and Linder (2005) established that First-Year Seminars are offered:

. . . to assist students in their academic and social development and in their transition to college. A seminar, by definition, is a small discussion-based course in which students and their instructors exchange ideas and information. In most cases, there is a strong emphasis on creating community in the classroom. (p. 275)

First-Year Seminars are also one of the most used formats of the first-year initiatives because they are adaptable in nature and able to meet each institution's needs. A few examples of the different kinds of decisions that institutions and administrators make when they create First-Year Seminars are:

- How long will we offer the Seminar (full year, semester, quarters, and other)?
- How many years has the Seminar been offered (two years or less, three to ten years, and more than ten years)?
- Are Seminars required for first-year students?
- What are the three most important course objectives for the Seminar (such as develop academic skills)?
- What are the three most important topics that compose the content of the Seminar (such as critical thinking)?
- What type best describes the Seminar that exist at the college (such as uniform academic content)?
- How many section of the Seminar are offered?
- How many students in each class?
- How long will the Seminar be offered (such full semester or term)?
- How should the Seminar be graded, will it receive a letter-grade?
- Should the Seminar offer academic credits? If so, how many?
- Where is the Seminar program housed (such as Academic Affairs or an academic department)?
- Should there be a dean, director, or coordinator to oversee the program?
- Should assessment be done? If so what will be measured and how?
- Should training be required for instructors?

Thus, there are a whole host of decisions that administrators make when deciding to offer a First-Year Seminar.

Benefits of First-Year Seminars. First-Year Seminars are associated positively with graduation and completion (Shanley, 1987; Starke, Harth, & Sirinanni, 2001) and higher grade point average (Barefoot, 1993; Hyers & Joslin, 1998; Sidle & McReynolds 2009; Starke et al., 2001; Strayhorn, 2009; Wilkie & Kuckuck 1989) as well as retention (Barefoot, 1993; Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Fidler, 1991; Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Fidler & Moore, 1996; Porter & Swing, 2006; Schnell & Doetkott, 2003; Starke et al., 2001; Tinto & Goodsell, 1994). Additionally, Barefoot's (1993) study on retention showed that students who participated in First-Year Seminars had higher second-year retention across all student demographics, including compensatory effects for first-year students that enter the institution at-risk (low high school grade point average, lower test scores, etc.).

Research indicates that these students do better even with their experiences that they come in with when they are a part of a First-Year Seminar program (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Scherer, 1981). Porter and Swing (2006) determined that First-Year Seminars are associated with retention from the first to second year while increasing student satisfaction with both instructors and the overall environment of the institution.

While institutions of higher education vary in how they deliver the seminars, they share a set of common purposes in supporting students as they transition to college, orienting students to common higher education practices like the use of a syllabus, developing a sense of community among students, and thereby, increasing retention of first-year students.

Purpose of First-Year Seminar. Generally, one purpose of First-Year Seminar is supporting first-year students through their transitions to college (Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Renn & Reason, 2013). Because of this, these Seminars are most often offered during the fall semester (or term). These Seminars often provide first-year students with the knowledge and skills that will be needed to succeed at their institution. For example, one unique and extremely helpful aspect, is when instructors introduce students to collegial expectations such as learning to read a syllabus.

In addition to orienting students to crucial aspects of academic life (syllabus), Seminars help students adjust to college life. Seminar topics may include a set of skills such as developing better interpersonal communication skills (interacting with peers, instructor, and staff; Keup & Barefoot, 2005), encouraging critical thinking (Kuh, 2008), participating in the larger campus community (Schmidt & Graziano, 2016), and

knowledge of student support services available (Fidler, 1991). In addition, the First-Year Seminar may cover topics such as time management, organization of materials, and resources for career exploration (Starke et al., 2001).

First-Year Seminars seek to create a positive community among students and can help first-year students build their sense of identity within the larger campus community. Many Seminars strive to keep instructor to student ratios low to allow for more interaction and to help create a comfortable environment that will encourage first-year students to participate in discussions. The focus on developing a community like atmosphere within the Seminar also allows for the building of relationships with instructors and staff. A positive relationship with instructors and staff is an essential element to first-year students' success at college (G. M. Johnson, 1994; Keup & Barefoot, 2005; Mallette & Cabrera, 1991). Thus, the importance of First-Year Seminars impact in supporting the interaction with instructors and staff.

The ability to adapt First-Year Seminar across institutional type and needs has helped create a variety of programs throughout the United States. Due to the variety that exist with First-Year Seminar programs it is important to understand, what were the specific characteristics of these programs that seem to ensure their continuation and success? To do so, researchers with the National Resource Center (Keup, 2013; Young & Hopp, 2014) and others (Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Maisto & Tammi, 1991) have sought to explore the impact of different institutional characteristics and administrative decisions in creating and managing First-Year Seminars related to student outcomes, such as retention.

First-Year Seminars: Impact of instructor type. Instructor type (full-time and part-time) is one of the important characteristics in First-Year Seminars and seems to be an especially important factor in first-year student success. Such specific instruction-related characteristics that seem to influence first-year student retention are student-to-instructor interactions—inside and outside the classroom—and student perceptions about the concern instructors hold for their development (Inkelas et al., 2004; G. M. Johnson, 1994; Mallette & Cabrera, 1991).

Besides the above classroom-based specific instructor-related characteristics, research has also focused on a more global element, instructor type (full or part-time employment) to untangle the institutional practices that are associated with student retention after the first year. Researchers have begun to investigate the relationship between instructor type (full-time and part-time) and positive student outcomes like retention and academic performance (Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Schibik & Harrington, 2004; Ronco & Cahill, 2006). Benjamin (2002) found that tenure-related instructors are not only “better qualified, but also devote proportionally more time to their students than do non-tenure-track faculty” (p. 10). Others (e.g., Bettinger & Long, 2010; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Umbach, 2007) have found that there is little or no difference between full-time non-tenure related instructors and full-time tenure-related instructors on the impact of student outcomes. Umbach (2007) argued that there may be more differences between full-time (tenure-related and full-time non-tenure related) instructors and part-time instructors that we have not explored.

Benjamin (2002) and Umbach (2007) stated that the differences between full-time and part-time instructors were associated with student outcomes like retention because instructors differ on critical variables: (a) the time they have to spend with the curriculum, the institutions, and students and (b) their knowledge and experience in general and as it relates to institutional processes and resources. Specifically, Umbach found that part-time instructors spend less time with students, less time preparing for classes, and use less active and collaborative teaching methods than their full-time instructors. Similarly, Benjamin (2003) noted that full-time instructors report more informal interactions (advising and office hours) with students outside the classroom. These interactions are likely due to the fact that, compared to their part-time colleagues, full-time instructors are better supported (they have offices and access to printers, etc.), provide more development opportunities for students, and are able to be more collegially involved as well as know the ins and outs of common institutional practices and policies (Benjamin, 2002; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011). Ran and Xu (2019) study found that, in general, at community colleges non-tenure track instructors had a negative association with student enrollment in the subsequent courses as well as their future performance.

Having found that reliance on part-time instructors may contribute to a negative impact on student retention, studies support the use of full-time instructors in first-year programs (Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2006). Jaeger and Eagan (2011) found that all types of part-time instructors (part-time adjuncts, postdoctoral students, and graduate students) had a negative impact on the retention of first-year students.

Of potential concern, then, is an increase in the use of part-time instructors in U.S. colleges and universities. The total percentage of full-time instructors has decreased and part-time instructors hired by academic institutions has increased. In 2017, part-time instructors made up 47% of all (722,401 of 1,543,569) instructors at four-year public and private institutions in the United States (Snyder et al., 2019, Table 315.10, 2018). In addition, Ochoa (2011) stated, “. . . the decline in tenured and tenure-track faculty is matched and surpassed by the increase in both full-time and part-time non-tenure related professors” (p. 138). Ochoa argued that institutions do not make any long-term commitment to these part-time instructors; thus, a lack of commitment that institutions give to these instructors, possible creating instability for them.

First-Year Seminars: National Resource Center Survey. Going back to 1998, the National Resource Center on First-Year Experience and Student Transition has conducted a survey on First-Year Seminar and since 2000 every three years, including 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015. The 2009 survey data set was and is still the most recent data set available for research for those outside the National Resource Center. The National Resources Center has had as few as 629 institutions of higher education voluntarily complete the survey in 2003 and as many as 890 institutions of higher education in 2009 (University of South Carolina, n.d.).

The National Resources Center’s survey gathers data on the demographics on First-Year Seminar programs, specifically four key characteristics of First-Year Seminar programs that they define as: institutional, objective, structural, and instructional. These four key survey characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) have

been identified as important program characteristics (Keup, 2013). Specifically, in the 2009 survey (University of South Carolina, 2009), there were 83 questions in the survey that cover these four characteristics (see Table 1).

Table 1

First-Year Seminar Characteristics and Sample Questions

Characteristics	Number of Questions in 2009 Survey	Example of Question in This Section of the Characteristics
Institutional	5	#7 Mark the appropriate category for your institution?
Objective	10 * 4 were open-ended	#20 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which <i>special sections</i> of the First-Year Seminar are offered?
Structural	37 * 5 were open-ended	#16 Please indicate the approximate number of sections of the seminar type that will be offered in the 2009-2010 academic year?
Instructional	25 *4 were open-ended and 18 were embedded with the independent variable	#43 Is instructor training <i>offered</i> for First-Year Seminar instructors?

Thus, given the research on the critical role that the instructor type (full-time and part-time) plays on student's retention, it is important to understand the relationship among four First-Year Seminar program characteristics and the instructor types (full-time and part-time).

Statement of Research Problem

Higher education institutions lose approximately one-third of their students at the end of the first year. Yet, disentangling the factors that contribute to this problem is not

easy. Researchers have suggested that two variables controlled by institutions may contribute to increasing student retention: (a) the decisions that institutions and their administrators make related to the kind of programs and resources that institutions have in place for students (Kuh, 2001a, 2008; Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004; Quaye & Harper, 2014; Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009) and (b) the type of instructor that interacts with first-year students (Eagan & Jaeger 2008; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Jaeger & Hinz 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Schibik & Harrington, 2004). First-Year Seminars seem to be an effective intervention.

Researchers have concluded that instructors play an important role in student success (Astin, 1993; Inkelas et al., 2004; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008; Stage & Hossler, 2000; Tinto, 1993). At the same time, institutions use both full- and part-time instructors in their First-Year Seminars. Instructors who engage with students in First-Year Seminars need to share the common goal of supporting students through a successful transition into higher education, as well as connecting with students themselves (Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Strayhorn, 2009; Upcraft, Gardner, Barefoot & Associates, 2005). Given the increased use of part-time instructors as well as the fact that this decision is within institutional control, it is important to examine the relationships among First-Year Seminar program characteristics and instructor type (full-time and part-time).

Significance of the Problem

Given that higher education institutions are not retaining one-third of their first-year students, and given that First-Year Seminars and full-time instructors are associated

with positive impact on student retention, it is important to examine the relationships among First-Year Seminars and instructor type (full or part-time). Why is this research significant?

This research is significant for institutions because institutions invest a lot of resources in recruitment (people, advertising, time) of new, including diverse students. While institutions are stretched with budget concerns as well, retaining first-year students would help institutions to keep the students they have already recruited and enrolled. If institutions and administrators had more information related to the relationship of Seminar program characteristics and instructor type (full-time and part-time), this information could help administrators make informed decisions around these programs. Plus, if administrators increase their students' retention rate, the institution could allocate those resources elsewhere.

This research is also significant for the instructors themselves. Institutions invest time and resources to reach instructors professional goals as well as prepare for each class. Beyond the feel good reason why an instructor would want their students to success, for non-tenure and part-time instructors their course objectives and student outcomes could be leveraged for tenure or more secure longer contracts.

This research is also significant for the students themselves. When students do not succeed in their first year of college, more than likely there will be financial, psychological, social, and emotional consequences. On one hand, their financial investment may linger as a burden for a long time. Yet, on the other hand, completing

their first year and staying in college to graduate will have a positive effect on their financial picture the rest of their lives.

Finally, the National Resource Center data set used in this study has not been used as much as it could be. In 2009 with data from nearly 900 institutions (548 institutions agreed to make their data available for outside researchers), an adept researcher can tap the interactions among different variables to examine the real, statistical impact of institutional decisions on student retention.

Presentation of Methods and Research Question

The data used in this study is considered “secondary data” which means that it was initially collected by one entity (in this case, the National Resources Center at the University of South Carolina) and then used by another (in this case, for this dissertation). Using secondary data sets is a benefit because they are very large data sets that have been conducted using sound and rigorous research methods that would be beyond the means of an individual scholar. This study’s data set came from a respected national clearinghouse, The National Resource Center at the University of South Carolina, which focuses on first-year students, student transitions, and First-Year Seminars. The researcher for this study approached the National Resource Center and applied to use the data set and was given permission to do so, for the data request materials see Appendices B–E.

While the National Survey on First-Year Seminars inquired about the instructor type (full-time and part-time) used in First-Year Seminar programs, the National Resource Center itself had not yet explored the role of instructor type (full-time and part-

time) in First-Year Seminar programs. Instructors are important, thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor type (full-time and part-time).

The main research question for this study was to understand how instructor types (full-time and part-time) were related to First-Year Seminar characteristics measured in the National Resources Center survey. The following question was used to help address the purpose of the study:

What was the strength of the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full or part-time)?

To answer this question, subset questions were developed to better understand the data.

Subset questions:

1. What were the relationships among the institutional characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
2. What were the relationships among the objectives characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
3. What were the relationships among the structural characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
4. What were the relationships among the instructional characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

Definition of Terms

Definitions provide clear, detailed meanings of ideas and terms and are offered to reduce discrepancy (Neuman, 2003). Neuman stated that definitions provide concepts using ideas, theory, and structural meanings to delineate usage. Ambiguous thoughts and terms may impact the outcome of the research study (Neuman, 2003). Therefore, it is

very important to clearly define the terms used throughout the study. The following are terms used throughout this study, some appear in further chapters, and are presented here for clarity of usage.

Involvement. This is a description of a human activity related to the amount of attention devoted to the activity. It is made of physical time and effort and the level of psychological investment and commitment. This definition is being used in this study since it includes both curricular and co-curricular activities. Astin (1985) defined student engagement as “. . . the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experiences” (p. 134).

Engagement. This is a description of how the institutions and administrators allocated resources and organizes learning opportunities and services to induce students to participate in such activities. Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, and Hayek (2007) defined as “. . . the intersection of student behaviors and institutional conditions . . .” (p. 11).

First-year students. This is an example of a classification of students in higher education, which denotes students in their first-year at higher educational institutions. While the demographic profile of first-year students changes (Crissman & Ishler, 2005). A widely used synonym is freshmen. Other classifications are sophomore, junior, and senior.

First-year student success. This is a set of terms that, when taken together, describes a set of outcomes for first-year students. While broadly defined as the achievement of desired learning outcomes and personal objectives (Kuh, 2005), Upcraft

et al. (2005) provided a detailed eight-part definition that includes, “developing intellectual and academic competence, establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, exploring identity development, deciding on a career, maintaining health and wellness, considering faith and the spiritual dimension of life, developing multicultural awareness, and developing civic responsibility” (p. 8).

Performance-based funding. This is an example of funding strategies used in educational environments (institutions). In this study, it refers to how institutions of higher education receive funds from state and federal governments. Performance-based funding is defined as an arrangement where state funding is tied directly to achievements of institutions with specific indicators (Serban & Burke, 1998).

Transition. This is an example of life event. Transition is broadly defined as, “an event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions and roles” (Schlossberg et al., 1995, p. 27). Transition, in the context of this study, refers to the changes that first-year students’ face that impact their retention.

Retention. This term is one kind of label of student behavior in relation to their transition from year to year in an institution of higher education. Embedded in the definition is the idea that the university plays a major role in facilitating or hindering that transition. Berger, Ramirez, and Lyons (2012) stated that retention is, “a campus-based phenomenon [that] by definition . . . focuses on the ability of a particular college or university to successfully graduate the students who initially enroll at the institutions” (p. 8). However, “retention comes in multiple varieties; institutional, system, in the major (discipline), and in a particular course” (Hagedorn, 2012, p. 91). For this study,

retention is referred to in the institutional sense as, “the measurement of proportion of students who remain enrolled at the same institution from year to year” (Hagedorn, 2012, p. 92). An example of widely used synonym for retention is persistence. However, persistence is more student rather than institutionally focused.

First-Year Experience. This is an example of an intervention in higher education, which aims to support first-year students. Characteristics of the first-year experience are: learning communities, pre-orientations, co-curricular and curricular, etc. The First-Year Experience movement occurred during the 1970s on many campuses focused on the first year of new students. Initiatives were designed to support first-year students which has become known as the First-Year Experience (Barefoot et al., 2005). The initial initiative was a seminar that assisted first-year students with their transitions to college. These seminars are now known internationally as First-Year Seminars. First-Year Experience interventions are focused on first-year student retention while increasing student engagement and satisfaction with their campus.

First-Year Seminars. This is an example of a set of curricula designed to address the needs of first-year students. First-Year Seminars are one of the largest of First-Year Experience programs. First-year seminars are courses that

assist students in their academic and social development, and in their transition to college. A seminar, by definition, is a small discussion-based course in which students and their instructors exchange ideas and information. In most cases, there is a strong emphasis on creating community in the classroom. (Hunter & Linder, 2005, p. 275)

Synonyms of First-Year Seminars include College 101, the Freshman Experience, and the First-Year Experience.

Co-curricular. This is an example of a type of curriculum and a part of the university learning experience for students. While the term co-curricular is found throughout higher education, there does not seem to be a common definition. Terms such as extra-curricular/extra-collegiate, active and collaborative learning, and sometimes just “learning” are used to communicate the program and activities outside the classroom in which students participate. These out-of-class activities are where students spend a significant amount of time (Braxton, Hirschy, Yorke, & Longden, 2004; Chickering, 1974; Heaney & Fisher, 2011; Inkelas, Vogt, Longerbeam, Owen, & Johnson, 2006; Pascarella, Cruce, Wolniak, & Blaich, 2004). For the proposed study, the co-curricular definition was adopted from an article from Inside Higher Ed, Rutter and Mintz (2016) stated that co-curricular are “. . . activities, structured learning activities that complement the formal curriculum . . .” (para. 2) and “. . . intentionally aligns with and augments and enhances standard curricular goals” (para. 5).

Instructor type. For this study, instructor type is defined as a broad and inclusive category of employment classifications and appointments that is encompassing full-time and part-time instructors. Instructor type includes tenure-related instructors, non-tenure-related instructors, part-time or adjunct instructors, student instructors, and other staff instructors. Umbach (2007) further explored instructor type based on tenure-instructors and non-tenure full-time instructors and found there were few, if any, differences related to student outcomes (retention, grade point average, graduation) by these two instructor types. Thus why this researcher is using instructor type looking at (full-time and part-time).

Tenure-related instructor. This is a term of classification used in higher education for instructors based on their type of employment.

Faculty tenure in higher education is, in its essence, a presumption of competence and continuing service that can be overcome only if specified conditions are met. Tenure is similar to civil service protection and to judicial tenure. It is not a lifetime guarantee of a position. (Euben, 2002, para. 6).

The tenure process is outlined in institutional handbooks that often describe a process of three to seven years of service prior to the assignment of tenure. Tenured instructors have been promoted to the role after the tenure process has been accomplished. Tenure related instructors are those instructors who are currently in the tenure process.

Full-time instructor. This is an example of a classification of instructors in higher education based on their employment. A full-time instructor has full-time teaching status at institutions of higher education. This classification includes tenure-related instructors and non-tenure related instructors but both are full-time instructors; is the definition used for this study. Research has shown little to no difference between tenure-related instructors and full-time non-tenure related instructors related to (positive) student outcomes (Bettinger & Long, 2010; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Umbach, 2007). This study used the term full-time instructors to include all instructors with a full-time contract tenure related or not. This study looked at full-time instructors teaching in First-Year Seminar programs compared to those that are part-time instructor.

Part-time instructor. This is an example of a classification of instructors who have part-time teaching status at institutions of higher education. Bettinger and Long (2010) described this group as instructors who are often temporary labor. Ronco and Cahill (2006) identified part-time instructors as adjuncts, with long- or short-term

contacts. Often this term of instructor is included in the non-tenure related full-time instructor group. This study used the term part-time instructors to include all non-full-time instructors. This study looked at part-time instructor teaching in First-Year Seminar programs compared to those that are full-time instructor.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor type (full-time and part-time). The discussions in Chapter 1 included the background of the problem, the statement of the problem to be explored, significance of the results, the research question, and the nature of the study. Terminology specific to the study was defined. The following, Chapter 2, contains a review of the research literature pertinent to the study and discussion of the theoretical framework for the study.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents the theoretical frameworks, review of literature related to retention, strategies for increasing retention, characteristics of First-Year Seminars, and the impact that instructor type (full-time and part-time) has on student outcomes. Presenting the literature and background for each area is critical in examining the intersection of the characteristics of First-Year Seminar programs and the impact of instructor type (full-time and part-time).

Colleges and universities in the U.S. lose more students in the first year than any other year. This problem is not only a concern for the growth of the U.S.'s economy and security (Bergeron & Martin, 2015); it is also a problem for the colleges and universities who spend monies recruiting these students. With roughly 33% of first-year students leaving college before their sophomore year, institutions have devoted time and resources to understanding the reasons students leave (Noel-Levitz, 2012). Institutions have developed resources and programs, such as First-Year Seminars, to help support first-year students with their transition to college and help them keep on track to graduate (Barefoot et al., 2005; Renn & Reason, 2013; Tinto, 2003).

Lack of continuation and completion of college is also a missed opportunity for the students themselves. Kane and Rouse (1999) found that those with an associate's degree (2-year community college degree) earned 15-24% (over lifetime) more than those with a high school diploma. Further, those with a bachelor's degree earn nearly 80% (annually) more than a high school diploma (Boesel & Fredland, 1999). One critical

reason identified for first-year student attrition has been transitions that first-year students face at college (Astin, 1984; Inkelas et al., 2007; Tinto, 1993).

For the last 35 years the National Resource Center for First Year Experience and Transition (initially called First Year Experience) has been dedicated to fostering the success of first-year students by offering workshops, consultations, and research data to institutions to inform the decisions they make to improve student retention. This study used the National Resource Center survey data set (University of South Carolina, 2009) to further examine the relationship among First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor type (full-time and part-time). Traditionally, full-time instructors have been associated with better student outcomes, especially retention. For the purposes of this study, full-time instructors are defined as full-time non-tenure track instructors and those that are tenure-track. Part-time instructors are defined as adjunct instructors, graduate students, Student Affairs professionals, undergraduate students, and other campus professionals. Given that we know that First-Year Seminars programs have been widely used, that the instructor demographics are shifting to more part-time instructors, and that administrators make decisions about both aspects, it is important to examine the relationship among these two variables. Since administrators (and their institutions) play a significant role in fostering student retention and they make critical decisions, it is important to acknowledge how “best practices” overlap and create decision-making patterns. This research could assist administrators in identifying patterns associated with First-Year Seminar program characteristics and who was teaching and, thereby, inform their decision-making. The

purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor type (full-time and part-time). The main research question was, what is the strength of the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full or part-time)?

Current Challenges

Background of the Issues Around Retention

Recruiting students is expensive for institutions. Institutions invest in the recruitment of each student with the goal of retaining them to degree completion (Conner & Rabovsky, 2011). While recruitment is vital, retention is crucial as institutions continue to find themselves under pressure from a variety of elements, examples include but does not exclude: financial, local/federal government, increase diverse students' needs, and the public view of the benefit of higher education. Part of the budget woes has been due to reduced funding from both the public and private sector. State governments are funding public institutions with smaller percentages of state revenues than ever before (Conner & Rabovsky, 2011). Specifically, these budget restraints have forced institutions to explore new ways to recruit and more importantly for this study, to retain students. Funding from private donors is not sufficient to make up the difference. This has forced institutions to rely more on tuition dollars to balance costs (Conner & Rabovsky, 2011). Thus, institutions are becoming more focused on retaining the students they already have.

The most important challenges coalesce around these topics discussed below: performance based-funding, diversity, attrition and missed opportunities for students and society, and retention statistics.

Performance-based funding. In addition, state governments have begun to link institution's funding to a performance-based model. Performance-based funding, as it relates to institutions of higher education, is an approach that relies on particular outcomes of the institution set by the government (state or federal) that determines the level of financial support (Jongbloed & Vossensteyn, 2001). Serban and Burke (1998) referred to performance-based funding as an arrangement where state financial support was tied directly to the achievement of institutions, based on specific indicators. Along with graduation rates, one of the main performance measures that has been identified is retention rates, specifically that of first-year students (Jongbloed & Vossensteyn, 2001). Because of this, institutions of higher education are compelled to be attentive to many factors, including retention and degree completion rates. As institutions face a new reality when it comes to support from the state, it has become clear that failing to meet certain performance indicators will mean less funding for that institution (Serban & Burke, 1998).

Diversity. The large increase in enrollment has primarily come from diverse students, specifically identity based (Renn & Reason, 2013). Renn and Reason attributed this increase in diverse student enrollment to two factors. First, the U.S. population demographics have shifted to fewer whites (or Caucasians) than in previous years. This has been largely driven by the increase in the Hispanic population which has increased by

16. 3% since the year 2000 (Renn & Reason, 2013). Growth in the Hispanic population is correlated with an increase in Hispanic student enrollment in institutions of higher education. The second factor is associated with the increase in enrollment in the college-attending rates of other racial and ethnic populations. Historically institutions in the U.S. had been designed by and for people who were white, wealth, and male-identified. With the increased enrollment of not only female-identified students but additionally racial, ethnic, and economic diverse students has created a challenge for institutions trying to address all of the student needs and concerns surrounding first-year transition and retention. As the student population continues to diversify, the institutions must learn how to meet these increased variations of needs continues.

Attrition and missed opportunities for students and society. Boesel and Fredland (1999) found that individuals with a bachelor's degree earn nearly 80% more annually than those with only a high school degree do. McMahon (2004) argued that the economic system, and the public as a whole, benefited when individuals are educated and concluded that, increasing the number of those in higher education, was a major benefit to society. McMahon also reported that levels of education are associated with a commitment to democratization and human rights. Education increases civic responsibilities, crime reduction, and poverty reduction due to the nature of higher education and its development of critical thinking, increased interactions with a diverse group of individuals, and opportunities to explore concepts on a global level (McMahon, 2004).

Retention: The statistics. Higher education continues to face challenges concerning student retention that ultimately lead to a concern about degree completion. In fall 2017, nearly 16.8 million students enrolled in higher education, between 2000 to 2017 undergraduate enrollment increased by 27%. Only, 66% of first-year students were retained for their second year (ACT, 2011). The definition of retention is based on the enrollment in the fall of first-year students and the enrollment in the following fall or second year (Hagedorn, 2012). The first year of college has been identified as critical time period, one of which institutions of higher education need to focus on (Astin, 1984; Barefoot, 2004; Barefoot et al., 2005; Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2011; Chickering & Gamson 1991; Cuseo, 2003; Dwyer, 1989; Hagedorn, 2012; Inkelas et al., 2007; Kuh, 2005; Kuh et al., 2008; Kuh et al., 2007; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Kuh et al., 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Porter & Swing, 2006; Renn & Reason, 2013; Tinto, 1993, 2003). Levitz and Noel (1989) found that, “attrition decreased by almost fifty percent with each passing year of a student’s education” (p. 67), thus identifying the first year of college as the most critical point to implement interventions for retention and, ultimately, degree completion.

Researchers have tried to analyze retention to explain first-year student attrition. Many researchers believe that student attrition has been predominately tied to students’ transition when entering college (Braxton, 2000; Tinto, 1993) together with pre-college and environmental conditions. First-year students have been identified as a population of interest by researchers and institutions due to the concerns over the institutions’ ability to

retain these students beyond their first year. Transitioning to college has emerged as a main concern in the retention of first-year students from the first to the second year.

Theoretical Framework

Given the importance of higher education, research on the retention of college students, specifically first-year students, is plentiful. Institutions of higher education have sought to provide many strategies for first-year students to improve their retention to the second year. From these attempts, seminal theoretical foundations have emerged around the retention of college students including Student Departure, Marginality and Mattering, Student Involvement, Engagement, and one I-E-O model.

The first year in higher education is a critical time for students. First-year students face a number of transitions as they adapt to their campus and the expectations of higher education. Retention of first-year students is an ongoing concern. First-year students' difficulty with transition from high school to higher education has been negatively associated with their retention. Since first-year transition and retention are linked, researchers have conducted studies to explore these two concerns. From the research, elements have been identified that can aid in both first-year students' transition and retention. Two of these elements are the involvement of students and the engagement that institution contributes to the student being successful. Laird, Chen, and Kuh (2008) identified two key components of engagement as "the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other activities [and] how the institution and administrators allocate resources and organize learning opportunities and services to induce students to participate in such activities" (p. 87). An example of a learning

opportunity associated with engagement would include contact and relationships with instructors that First-Year Seminar can provide (Astin, 1993; Inkelas et al., 2004; Tinto, 1993).

The following four theoretical perspectives (Student Departure, Marginality and Mattering, Involvement, and Engagement) and one model (I-E-O) provide a theoretical framework for first-year students' transitions and their retention. Each provides a lens through which understanding the importance of instructors in assisting first-year students' transition and their retention is made easier. These theoretical perspectives provide support for the proposed study.

Student Departure Theory

Vincent Tinto's work focused on explaining the college student withdrawal process (Tinto, 1975, 1986, 1993). Tinto based his theory on the work of Emile Durkheim whose 1897 theory attempted to explain suicide. Tinto's longitudinal study explored the process of voluntary student departure (Braxton, Vesper, & Hossler, 2005) which is focused on how students integrate their academic and social life at college. Tinto theorized that student pre-college characteristics (e.g., family, academic preparedness, ethnicity) and their commitment to attend the institution and graduate affected the degree to which they became integrated academically and socially into the institution (Braxton et al., 1995).

Tinto (1975) used the term departure, (currently better known as student dropout), withdrawal, or attrition, which of course, is the opposite of retention. Tinto (1993)

argued that only a small percentage of student attrition had to do with academic preparation. The rest was the result of non-academic variables (social and emotional). Tinto maintained that students who are more involved in social and educational activities are more likely to persist than those who are not. Similarly, Astin (1996) found that retention includes aspects beyond academic preparedness and the abilities of the students entering college. One of these aspects was interaction with instructors. Tinto also insisted that involvement matters most during the first year of college, where attrition was the highest.

Tinto theorized that students in their first year move through three main transition stages. These stages are separation, transition, and incorporation or integration (Tinto, 1975, 1993). During the separation stage, students are required to distance themselves from their former lives, friends, parental figures, and community, thus individuating their values and norms. Tinto believed that most students saw this first stage as one of tolerating the new environment (Tinto, 1993). The transition stage is where students are weaving their old values and norms together with new ones that they have developed since arriving at the institution. Tensions may come up during this stage as students are finding a way to blend old and new values. These values can conflict or start to be questioned (Tinto, 1975, 1993). Incorporation or integration, occurs when students believe they fully belong to and find relevance in their academic environment (Tinto, 1975, 1993), such as feeling recognized by their instructors. This element is critical in highlighting the importance of the role instructors' play in supporting student outcomes

like retention. This link (the role instructors' play in student retention) in Tinto's theory was one that has not been fully explored in retention initiatives like First-Year Seminars and supports the inquiry in this study. Figure 1 illustrates this process.

Figure 1. Tinto's Departure Theory.

Critics of Tinto's Departure Theory, such as Tierney (1992), argued that Tinto's research was limited in that it only represented traditional students at residential, predominately white institutions (Attinasi, 1994; Tierney, 1992). A specific concern was that students need to fully separate and leave their old values and norms behind to adopt the new values and norms of the institution if they are to succeed (Tierney, 1992). Tierney disagreed with Tinto's idea of, "out with the old and in with the new." Tierney assumed that Tinto's concept meant that students would have to shed their previous selves and leave behind their culture and identity. One criticism of Departure Theory hinged on the ability of this theory to be generalized to all students, specifically students

of color. Another criticism rested on the theory's analogy to suicide (Attinasi, 1994; Tierney, 1992). In response, Tinto stated that he never argued that the Departure Theory applied to all populations and even stated the limits of his research. Tinto has consistently addressed these concerns since 1975 while enhancing his initial theory, most recently in 2006 (Tinto, 2006).

As part of Tinto's work on Departure Theory in 1986, he identified four theoretical viewpoints of student departure. These include economic, organizational, psychological, and sociological perspectives. These viewpoints provide instructors, administrators, and practitioners with four different ways to view student departure. Students (first-year or not) enter college with varying frameworks such as academic characteristics, skills, family, peer associations, perceptions, and personal elements. These frameworks also include their motivations and intentions for entering college that repeatedly adjust while the student is pursuing new goals. Tinto described integration as the extent to which a student shares the attitudes and values of peers in the institution. With increased positive integration, the student's intention increases, which is how bonding with peers, instructors, and the institution occurs. Negative interactions with students' academic system (grades) and social system (such as interactions with instructors) have a harmful effect on the student's motivation toward their goals (personal and academic), leading to an increased chance of attrition. Negative interactions can include not being able to navigate the campus, negative or a lack of interaction with an instructor member and/or an administrator, homesickness, and among other factors. Here lies the complexity of the instructor's role in student retention. Research states that full-

time instructors have more positive outcomes than part-time instructors do. The same research identifies some thoughts on why this may be true, such as lack of investment in the instructor (short-term contracts, lack of benefits, resources are not well allocated, etc.), yet at most colleges part-time instructor numbers are rising while full-time instructor numbers are decreasing.

No matter the criticisms, Tinto's Departure Theory, "is one of the more prominent of the theoretical frameworks" (Braxton et al., 1995, p. 595). Even with its broad, sweeping assumptions, Departure Theory continues to find its way into present research (e.g., Braxton, Brier, & Hossler, 1988; Braxton et al., 1995; Terenzini, Pascarella, Theophilides, & Lorang, 1985) because it emphasizes student variables beyond academics. Departure Theory focuses on the factors that influence motivation, social and academic involvement, and interaction with instructors as predictors of retention and ultimately, student persistence. While this theory has been updated for nearly four decades, student departure and retention is still just as complicated and puzzling a problem as it was in 1975, which speaks to the importance of Tinto's work.

This theory is important because it recognizes student variables beyond academic preparedness and study skills, emphasizing that these are not the only compounding variables in why students leave college. The theory also identifies and embraces variables that are tied to human needs like belonging and fit that motivate students; i.e., the importance of the instructor in helping create an environment that is supportive of students and their retention. Tinto's Departure Theory opened the door for institutions and administrators to consider their own involvement in the retention of their students.

Marginality and Mattering Theory

Schlossberg (1989) has completed research in the areas of adult development, adult transitions, adults as learners, career development, and intergenerational relationships. This theory was built around previous theories (e.g., some of the variables highlighted in the Student Departure theory: Tinto, 1975, 1986, 1993) to provide an understanding of how colleges could better transition students to the college experience and develop a sense of community (Schlossberg, 1989). Schlossberg's work summarized that, throughout life, humans will continue to find themselves encountering different experiences, expectations or transitions. Schlossberg (1989) argued that people going through, "transition, often feel marginal and that they do not matter" (p. 6). An example would be a first-year student entering college who may be concerned about their new environment because of not knowing anyone. This situation of singularity could easily induce an inner feeling that the student does not belong and does not matter to the college and surrounding others. Schlossberg believed that the polar themes of marginality and mattering connect each of us. In her view,

Involvement creates connections between students, faculty and staff that allow individuals to believe in their own personal worth. This involvement also creates an awareness of our mutual relatedness and the fact that the condition of community is not only desirable but also essential to human survival. Therefore, the concern over involving students, although expediently related to satisfaction and retention, is the very process that creates community. (p. 5)

Marginality refers to an individual believing that they do not matter or are not noticed by others, including their instructor. Recurring issues with individuals in transition include concerns about intimacy, belonging, and mattering (Schlossberg et al., 1995). When people face a transition, they can feel marginalized. The larger the

transition, the more severe the feelings of marginality become. The more unknown and difficult the transition was, the more likely it will increase the sense of marginality. Schlossberg's idea of marginality has overlapping themes with Tinto's (1975, 1993) Departure Theory in that a person experiencing feelings of marginality could also be moving through a transition. A student in their first semester/term of college was essentially living in two worlds. They have not yet completely adjusted or adapted to life in college and still hold onto the norms from home (Tinto, 1975, 1993). This sense of being in two worlds may be at the root of students' homesickness. They long for what they knew in their previous life where they felt they belonged or mattered (Schlossberg, 1989).

Mattering can be envisioned as the opposite of marginality and an important motivation for individuals, including first-year students, especially in relation to goal-achievement or retention. The concept of mattering can be defined as, "our belief that, no matter right or wrong, we matter to someone else" (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 9). Mattering refers to an individual believing that they are appreciated, noticed, or acknowledged by others. This concept is an important concern for people in all different life stages, but much more so for those in transition, such as first-year students. The simple act of an instructor interacting with students in and outside of the class, could aid in the student feeling mattered. The ability for an instructor to devote time to interact with their students is critical, particular for a first-year student who is still transitioning to the college experience. The instructors' role was important beyond their knowledge and

ability to teach, their role was important in helping students feel like they matter and belong at the college.

Schlossberg's (1989) research augmented previous work conducted by sociologist Morris Rosenberg (1985). Rosenberg's research demonstrated that "adolescents who feel like they matter, would be less likely to commit delinquent acts" (Schlossberg, 1989, p. 8). In earlier work, Rosenberg identified four aspects of mattering that include attention, importance, ego-extension, and dependence. Appreciation, a fifth component of mattering, was added from Schlossberg's own research. Attention refers to the feeling that one was noticed. A good example would be a student receiving a comment, praise or encouragement from their instructor. Importance holds the belief that others do care for what one wants, thinks, and does. An instructor can help develop importance by helping the students understand that their perspective was valued. Ego-extension was the feeling that others are proud of us. Dependence was both the feeling of when others depend on us, and when we depend on others. Appreciation occurs when people communicate, and often based on perception, that others appreciate their efforts (Schlossberg, 1989). Instructors can play a role in each of the five aspects of mattering, it was this time and care that instructors can provide that can influence a students' feeling that they matter.

Schlossberg (1989) recognized rituals as a way to help students through their transitions and their feelings of marginality. "Rituals help people make sense out of the contradiction and paradox of many transitions" (p. 12). Schlossberg described three stages of rituals. These occur when the individual is segregated, is in between new and old roles and then when the individual steps through the transition and can function with

both their past norms and new ones (Schlossberg, 1989). In her conclusion, Schlossberg mentioned that “the creation of environments that clearly indicate to all students that they matter will urge them to greater involvement” (p. 14). These are factors that connect her work with the understanding of how instructors and others (administrators and practitioners) can better enhance first-year student retention (p. 14).

Schlossberg’s (1989) study highlighted first-year seminars as a known intervention for First-Year Students that can provide a sense of community, opportunities to be involved in curricular and co-curricular events, and connections with instructor. Schlossberg stressed the importance of fostering a sense of community and involvement in assisting student satisfaction and retention. Instructors play a large role in creating a sense of mattering and fostering a sense of community for first-year students. Schlossberg argued that marginality and mattering are concepts that offer instructors and administrators’ ways to address the difficulties of developing a sense of community for students which, in turn, fosters retention.

Schlossberg’s (1989) research was important in understanding students as they go through transitions. Her research supports interaction and connection with instructors in the academic environment and in supporting a student through their transition. Schlossberg’s research links first-year transitions with retention and, more importantly, with the importance that instructors play in retention of students.

Involvement Theory

Astin (1984, 1985, 1993), a psychologist by training, professor emeritus of higher education and the founding director of the Higher Education Research Institute at the

University of California, Los Angeles talked about the importance of involvement. This theory contains the premise that college affects students beyond merely attending classes. Astin (1985) simply summarized the theory by stating, “*Students learn by becoming involved*” (p. 133). Student Involvement Theory describes the type and amount of time that students spend on collegiate experiences such as studying, class sessions, discussion of class material outside of class, interactions with instructors, and other events (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Astin’s Student Involvement Theory gave researchers, practitioners, and administrators’ a perspective with which “to view issues relevant to a student’s transition to college” (Inkelas et al., 2007, p. 406). Astin’s work helps set the stage for future research and exploration on student’s transition and the practices that help retain these students.

Astin (1984) found that the more time (and energy) spent on collegiate experiences, the more likely students were to be retained. Astin (1985) stated that the theory and “. . . the term involvement [was chosen because it] implies a behavioral component.” (p. 135). Astin connected his student persistence findings to student transition and Inkelas et al. (2007), in a review of Astin’s work, stated that, “successful transition was enhanced by various types of college involvements, including on-campus living, participating in social fraternities and sororities, working part-time on campus, and generally making connections with one’s new environment” (p. 406). In his view, “studying is positively related to nearly all academic outcomes: retention, graduating with honors, and enrollment in graduate school” (Astin, 1993, p. 17). The consensus among researchers in this area was that learning in college was related to how students spend

their time, thus supporting the Involvement Theory (Kuh, 2001a, 2009; Kuh et al., 1991; Pace, 1984; Pace & Kuh, 1998; Pascarella, 1985; Rocconi, 2011; Tinto, 1975, 1993).

First-year students, who are both academically and socially involved, are more successful, and are more likely to be retained fall-to-fall (Astin, 1993; Smith & Zhang, 2009; Tinto, 1998). Astin (1993) was the initial researcher to link student involvement with students' grade point average and retention in his multi-institutional study. Astin (1985) identified five postulates for Involvement Theory based on the research. First, involvement is “the investment of physical and psychological energy in various ‘objects’” (Astin, 1985, p. 135). Astin (1985) stated that “objects” could either be generalized like the student experience or something specific like preparing for a test. Second, “. . . involvement occurs along a continuum” (p. 135) of which Astin explained further stating that different students “manifest different degree of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times” (p. 136). Third, “involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features” (Astin, 1985, p. 136). Depending on the object or tasks involvement could be a letter grade or points (quantitative) or involvement could be a student’s understanding of a subject or leadership skills (qualitative; Astin, 1985, p. 136). Fourth, “the amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program” (Astin, 1985, p. 136). Fifth, “the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement” (Astin, 1985, p. 136). Again this is significant because

it highlights the institution and its administrator's roles in student involvement. Other researchers (Braxton et al., 2004; Kuh, 2001a; Kuh et al., 2007; Tinto, 1975) also found a link in student involvement and student outcomes (grade point average and retention). Braxton et al. (2004) found that there are two highly relatable relationships. Specifically, that the greater the student integration (involvement) the greater the student's institutional commitment. In addition, the greater the student's institutional commitment the greater the likelihood of the student to persist at that institution. Tinto (1975) found that the greater the student's commitment to the institution the more the student is likely to persist. In addition, Astin's (1993) study showed that peer and instructor interaction (measured in both quantity and quality) in social and academic activities were key factors in the positive outcome of student involvement. Understanding the importance of instructor-student interaction afforded by Astin's (1993) research led to the development of First-Year Seminars, recognizing the opportunity to capitalize on increased instructor-student interact as a way to stimulate student involvement and aid in the retention of first-year students.

Inputs-Environment-Outputs (I-E-O)

I-E-O is Astin's conceptual model that was created to serve as a guide for studying college students' development. Astin has completed a number of refinements (Astin, 1962, 1970a, 1970b, 1977, 1991) to his I-E-O model, but the basic three elements have remained the same. The letter I stand for inputs. Inputs refer to all the characteristics that a student has when they entered college. This first element was all about what the student was bringing to the college environment. The second letter E

stands for environment. Environment, in an institutional setting, “refers to the various programs, policies, faculty, peers, and educational experiences to which the student is exposed” (Astin, 1993, p. 7). The last letter, O, stands for outputs. Outputs are the students’ characteristics after they had been exposed to college. Change and development in the student can be measured by comparing the student's outputs with the initial inputs. The I-E-O model allows researchers, administrators, and practitioners to assess the college environment by seeing if students change or develop (Astin, 1993).

Figure 2 illustrates the process.

Figure 2. Astin’s Input-Environment-Outputs (I-E-O) Model.

Astin’s model of inputs, environment, and outputs provides a conceptual framework that allows researchers, administrators, and practitioners to be able to understand all existing elements of how college, including interaction with instructor, can affect students’ outcomes. This model was intended to identify what students were bringing to the college with them, what the environmental elements were (e.g., interventions, services, instructor interaction, etc.), and provides a conceptual framework for assessment of the end result as students left the institution. Again, positive interaction with instructor has been identified as affecting first-year student retention (Astin, 1993;

Inkelas et al., 2004; Tinto, 1993). Instructor-student interaction was one example of the “E” in Astin’s I–E–O model.

Engagement

Student Engagement Theory was development through the work of Kuh, Astin, Pace, Chickering, and Gamson. Engagement Theory was built upon Astin’s (1985) Involvement theory, Pace’s (1984) quality of effort measured, and Chickering and Gamson’s (1987) indicators of “good practice” (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). Engagement Theory has two components—a student’s time and effort spent and the institution’s effort at using effective educational practices (Kuh, 2001a; Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). The first element is the student’s time and effort spent on their academics and other activities that support student success. This first component was strongly influenced by previous work including Astin’s (1985) Involvement Theory and Pace’s (1984) College Student Experience Questionnaire. The purpose of Kuh’s 1999 study was to measure the quality of the undergraduate experiences using data sets from Pace’s College Student Experience Questionnaire.

Kuh’s Engagement Theory recognized the time and effort that students expend; however, the second component of this theory focuses on the institution and their actions. It looks specifically, at the “effort institutions devote to using effective educational practices” (Kuh et al., 2008, p. 542). Quaye and Harper (2014) identified that Engagement Theory goes one-step beyond Involvement theory and broadens its focus beyond just action derived from students. It emphasized the purpose of the institution’s role or the organizational interventions and/or actions. This component looked at how

the institution created infrastructures and allocated its resources by providing students with the services and programs that support student engagement (Kuh, 2001a; Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). Braxton et al. (2004) found that the institution's commitment influenced the student's perception of themselves belonging at the institution and thus this perception was correlated with the student's level of social integration or involvement and thus academic success. Kuh (2001a) defined student engagement by the measurement of institutional quality, or effort to create student engagement. This critical element distinguishes engagement from involvement, a commonly held confusion.

The National Survey of Student Engagement, is an instrument designed to explore if and how colleges and universities effectively foster student engagement (Quaye & Harper, 2014). There are five different benchmarks built into the design of the survey. These include the level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-instructor interaction, enriching educational experiences, and supportive campus environments (Quaye & Harper, 2014). Institutions that dedicated resources to the five benchmarks in the National Survey of Student Engagement, have a good sense of their students' needs, experiences, and expectations and have developed purposeful opportunities for student engagement (Quaye & Harper, 2014). The activities and opportunities that engaged students in each of the five benchmark items in the National Survey of Student Engagement are related to deep learning (Quaye & Harper, 2014). Laid, Shoup, Kuh, and Schwartz (2008) described deep learning as “. . . student engagement in approaches to learning that emphasize integration, synthesis, and reflection” (p. 469).

Student engagement has been identified as an important measurement of institutional effectiveness. Retention has been a primary outcome used to assess the effectiveness of an institution. As mentioned earlier, this has become more evident with state government's exploring performance-based funding. Student engagement has been linked, both directly and indirectly to several positive outcomes, (such as grades, persistence, critical thinking, interaction with instructors, and increase experience with diversity) for students including retention (Kuh et al., 2008; McCormick, Gonyea, & Kinzie, 2013). Thus Kuh's Engagement Theory is an important consideration when discussing First-Year Seminars, which are the most studied and most effective retention practice. As this theory goes beyond theories before it by not leaving the blame on students and emphasizing the institution's role. Kuh's theory examined the institution's effort as they pertain to decisions made, instituting effective practices, and helped determined if the institutions have created the structure and resources necessary for their effective practices to retain first-year students.

Review of Research Literature

This study looked at the overlap of first-year retention, First-Year Seminars, and instruction. The researcher selected literature that was foundational, encompasses all facets of the study, and adds to the context for each topic and highlighting when two or more overlap.

Strategies for Increasing First-year Retention

Retaining first-year students is of key importance for institutions of higher education. Institutions have invested in strategies that support first-year students to improve retention from their first year through to graduation.

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) described two interventions that assist students in their first year. First, an academic intervention assists with deficiencies in academic preparedness. Academic interventions refer to “strategies that are used to teach a new skill, build fluency in a skill or encourage a child [student] to apply an existing skill to new situations or settings” (Wright, 2011, p. 2). Interventions in higher education range from individual programs (learning centers) and services (tutoring) to a more comprehensive approach, such as the First-Year Experience. The second intervention was concerned with the social transition to college. While interventions focused on the social transition were varied and numerous, a main focus of first-year social transition was on involvement (Astin, 1985, 1993; Tinto, 1975, 1993). Many of these interventions are housed within the student services and academic departments. Interventions and programs that are commonly found on campuses are first-year housing, student leadership & government, intramurals, and learning communities.

First-Year Seminars are interventions that blend both the academic preparedness and social transitions that Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) described. It is here where First-Year Seminars are able to incorporate a blend of both intervention types, academic preparedness, and social transitions, that First-Year Seminars are effective retention strategy for first-year students. While most institutions in the United States offered some

sort of specialized intervention aimed at helping first-year students' transition. However, not all institutional decision-making practices are effective and some are more effective than others. It is just as important for institutions to assess and continually improve their interventions, as it is to have them.

Research has begun to develop instruments to examine institutional practices. In 2000, the National Survey of First-Year Practices (which included two separate instruments for curricular and co-curricular) indicated that issues related to first-year classrooms were, “faculty development, faculty interaction with first-year students—especially out-of-class interaction—and the relationship of first-year teaching or advising to the institutions’ primary reward structure” (Barefoot, 2005, p. 54). In the same survey, it was reported that First-Year Seminars were used more than any other type of program (Learning Communities, First-Year Classes in Residence Halls, Service Learning, Supplemental Instruction, Early Alert Systems, Distance Education and Online First-Year Courses). First-Year Seminars were used by 94% of all four-year institutions (Porter & Swing, 2006) and 62% of all two-year institutions (Barefoot, 2005). Barefoot (2005) calls for institutions to, better understand and deliver the essential first-year experience for students and stresses that, it is important to do so.

Research on First-Year Seminars

It is well known that First-Year Seminars are widely used across the United States and have been associated with positive student outcomes, including retention, academic performance, and persistence to graduation (Barefoot, 2005; Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Barefoot et al., 2005; Hunter & Linder 2005; Porter & Swing, 2006; Renn & Reason,

2013; Strayhorn, 2009; University of South Carolina, 2009; Upcraft et al., 2005). First-Year Seminars have been recognized as one of the most studied and used of all first-year interventions (Barefoot, 2002, 2005; Keup & Petschauer, 2011; Renn & Reason, 2013). Thus, it is not surprising that a wealth of research exists on First-Year Seminars. Most of these studies focused on retention and academic intervention topics such as student outcomes, student satisfaction, and transition concerns.

The research over the last few decades covered topics that include the impact on student outcomes, retention, academic performance, connection with instructors, and other compensatory results. Specifically, the research has focused on the seminar's ability to retain first-year students. Research on First-Year Seminars and their impact on retention began as early as 1972 (Fidler & Hunter, 1989). In 1986, Fidler and Hunter (1989) found that students during the fall seminar returned to their second year (Fall 1986) at 80.6% as compared to 79.7% of those students who did not take a seminar. The studies were consistent in that the results show that participation in First-Year Seminars has a positive impact on retention (Fidler, 1991; Fidler & Hunter, 1989; Porter & Swing, 2006; Schnell & Doetkott, 2003; Sidle & McReynolds, 2009; Tinto & Goodsell, 1994), academic performances (i.e., grade point average and critical thinking; Barefoot, 1993; Fidler, 1991; Maisto & Tammi, 1991; Shanley, 1987; Sidle & McReynolds, 2009; Strayhorn, 2009; Swing, 2002; Tinto & Goodsell, 1994; Wilkie & Kuckuck, 1989), and persistence to graduation (Porter & Swing, 2006; Shanley, 1987).

Research on retention of first-year students to their second year is abundant. Fidler's (1991) multi-year research at one institution showed that, while First-Year

Seminar participants had lower grade point averages than those that did not take the Seminar, participants had the higher retention rate. In Porter and Swing's 2006 retention study of more than 45 institutions, Seminars increased students' intent to return as compared to non-participant students. This study was a first-year student self-report effort, which made the final outcome of retention impossible to gather. However, intention of returning has been shown to be associated with retention. Schnell and Doetkott's multi-year 2003 study of one institution showed that, not only was retention higher for Seminar participants as compared to non-participants, retention increased for those who participated in a course. Sidle and McReynolds' 2009 study at one Midwest institution observed that, over three years (fall 1993 thru spring 1996), Seminar participants had a 63% higher rate of retention to the next fall as compared to the non-participants retention rate of 56%. Another study at the University of Washington by Tinto and Goodsell (1994) showed that students who participated in the Freshman Interest Group (a Seminar by another name) courses were retained at higher rates than those that did not.

The research on academic performance focuses on two main topics: grade point average and the impact of Seminars on graduation. Wilkie and Kuckuck (1989) studied students who participated in a Seminar at Indiana University in Pennsylvania. These students experienced an increased mean grade point average after three years. A study conducted by Maisto and Tammi (1991) at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte showed that students who participated in a Seminar earned significantly higher grade point averages than non-participants did. Barefoot's 1993 study on 34 different (two-

year and four-year) institutions showed that the majority of institutions (for those that assessed grade point average as a characteristic) reported that participants had higher grade point averages than non-participants did. Only three institutions that assessed for grade point averages found that participants did not have higher grade point averages than non-participants did. While, one institution reported no significant difference even though participants' grade point averages were lower and another seminar had a significant number of at-risk students enrolled.

While Fidler's 1991 research showed that participants in First-Year Seminars at one institution had lower earned grade point averages than non-participants, Strayhorn's research found that there was no grade point average difference between participants and non-participants (Strayhorn, 2009). Further, Strayhorn did acknowledge that the studied Seminars were mostly of the orientation type and further recommended that differences in Seminar type may or may not impact the outcomes. Sidle and McReynolds (2009) studied one institution over three years to find that students who participated in the institution's Freshman Year Experience course did have higher grade point averages than non-participants which mirrored the results of other researchers like Tinto and Goodsell's earlier 1993 study at the University of Washington.

The second focus on academic performance is the impact of Seminars on graduation. Shanley (1987) found that the first-year class of 1979, who took a First-Year Seminar termed University 101 at the University of South Carolina, had an increase in graduation rates. Participants of the University 101 seminar graduated at 56.2% as compared to 50.7% for non-participants (Shanley, 1987). This was true even though

these first-year students, in the University 101 courses, were predicted to have significantly lower grade point averages when they enrolled.

In general, research has shown that the student-to-instructor connection positively impacts first-year students' retention to their second year. Research on Seminars has specifically examined the instructor connection of students in their courses. Woodward (1982), when studying experienced more contact with instructor because of the Seminar. The major limitation of this study was that Woodward only looked at the one period of time, that current semester. Whether or not this trend continued is unknown. In Maisto and Tammi's (1991) research on student's participation in a Seminar, at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, participants reported having more contact with instructors than those students that did not take a Seminar. Swing's (2002) study showed that contact with instructors also increased. Furthermore, Swing stated that, "learning outcomes and student satisfaction with first-year seminars are highly correlated with the way teachers conduct first-year seminars" (p. 1). Keup and Barefoot's (2005) found that Seminars are associated with enhanced communication with instructor, 69.7% compared to non-participants at 65.3%. These researchers also found that students found communicating with instructor as challenging, thus making Seminar outcomes important (Keup & Barefoot, 2005).

Some studies identified the indirect effects of First-Year Seminars. Even though students who participated were retained at similar rates to non-participants, there were particular elements of the participant group that would have suggested that they would have been retained at lower rates or were high-risk students (Fidler & Hunter, 1989). In

Potter and McNairy (as cited in Fidler & Hunter, 1989) study at Clarion University of Pennsylvania reviewed the retention rates of first-year students in fall 1982. The participants were retained at similar rates to the non-participant group. This was true even though the non-participant groups had a significantly higher mean SAT score (Potter & McNairy as cited in Fidler & Hunter, 1989).

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), in their literature review of First-Year Seminars, stated that “with rare exceptions, they produce uniformly consistent evidence of positive and statistically significant advantages to students who take the courses” (pp. 400–401). The majority of First-Year Seminar research focuses on their impact on retention and academic performance.

First-Year Seminars: As high impact practices. In 2008, the American Association of College and Universities released a report entitled *High Impact Educational Practices*, written by George D. Kuh. In this report, Kuh (2008) stated that “student development is a cumulative process shaped by many events and experiences (and) when done well, there are programs and activities that engage participants at levels that elevate their performance across multiple engagements and desired-outcomes measured, such as persistence” (pp. 13–14).

This study listed six factors that defined high impact practices: (a) the time and effort spent on task, (b) the required interaction with instructor and peers on significant issues, (c) experiencing diversity to help challenge students’ way of thinking, (d) providing opportunities for regular feedback, (e) integrating, synthesizing and applying knowledge, and (f) providing the possibility of life changing events. Ten different

examples of practices were identified. One of these were First-Year Seminars. The other nine programs are: “common intellectual experiences, learning community, service learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, and other experiences that include diversity, internships, and capstone courses and projects” (Kuh, 2008, p. 14).

Since retention has been a critical issues for institutions and because First-Year Seminars has been identified as a high impact practice with positive effects on multiple outcomes including retention, further exploration on First-Year Seminars programs is needed. As First-Year Seminars have been shown to be a successful strategy for retention and student success, one might ask what makes for a good First-Year Seminars program. Given the assortment of institutions, it would makes sense that there is also a variety of components that make up these Seminars. The National Resource Center through the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars (University of South Carolina, 2009) has sought to identify how institutions construct the Seminars on their campuses (see Appendix A).

First-Year Seminar: Characteristics. While First-Year Seminars exist at most institutions of higher education in the United States, they vary in their form in numerous ways. The National Resources Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (or The National Resource Center for short) has been studying First-Year Seminars across the country to better understand them. For the last 18 years, the National Resource Center has conducted the National Survey on First-Year Seminars. The National Resource Center has conducted a national survey of First-Year Seminars going back to 1988. The survey was created and continues to be administered in an attempt to

gather national data about First-Year Seminar courses. This survey attempts to learn what institutions are doing and how their Seminars operate. Since 2000, the survey is administrated every three years and data about the characteristics of the nation's First-Year Seminars were collected.

The survey attempts to understand the many characteristics of the seminars. The National Resource Center's survey gathers data on the characteristics on First-Year Seminar programs, specifically identifying four key characteristics of First-Year Seminar programs; institutional, objective, instructional, and structural. These four key characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) have been identified as important critical elements of the programs. The National Survey on First-Year Seminars was develop to collect data on these four key characteristics (Keup, 2013).

Institutional characteristics. The institutional category identify and describe the characteristics of institutions using First-Year Seminars in higher education. Characteristics in this category include how institutions are primarily funded (public or private), degrees offered (2-year vs 4-year), institutional selectivity (how difficult admittance was, often based on SAT and ACT scores), and enrollment of students (number of first year students at the institution). Nationally, private institutions have higher retention and graduation rates than public institutions (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). As well, 4-year institutions have higher retention rates than 2-year institutions (Snyder & Dillow, 2013). Research in general has associated institutional characteristics (private/public, 4-year/2-year, selectivity and enrollment size) as important elements in supporting students, which impact (negatively or positively) student outcomes, like

retention (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1993).

Table 2 describes the categories that were used in this study looked at institutional characteristic and subcategories.

Table 2

Examples of the Institutional Characteristics

Institutional Characteristics	
Institutional Type	2 year
	4 year
	Public
	Private
	2 Year College
	Special Focus Institution
	Inclusive
	Selectivity
	More Selectivity
Enrollment	> 500
	501–1000
	1001–2000
	2001–3000
	3001–4000
	4001+
First-Year Seminar History	2 years or less
	3 to 10 years
	More than 10 years

Objective characteristics. Institutions offer First-Year Seminars for different reasons. Most institutions offer First-Year Seminars to meet more than one objective. The primary objective for offering a First-Year Seminars was the retention of their first-

year students in addition to aiding first-year student transition (Barefoot & Fidler, 1996). First-Year Seminar programs have the ability “to assist student in their academic and social and in their transition to college” (Hunter & Linder, 2005, p. 275), which were positively associated with retention. Transition in the first year include both academic and developmental concerns and students may require additional support in these areas to be successful (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Additional areas to explore Objective characteristics were:

- Population of students that the First-Year Seminar is required
- Any specific sections offered
- Course objectives such as develop academic skills
- Course topics such as critical thinking

Structural characteristic. The third category of characteristics focuses on how the courses were constructed and organized. The structural characteristics had three subcategories; types of First-Year Seminar, administrative, and assessment. The first subcategory, types of First-Year Seminars which had seven types that are recognized by the National Resource Center. These format types included, “extended orientation models, academic seminars with consistent content, academic seminars with varying content, pre-professional, professional or disciple-linked seminars, and basic study skills seminars, hybrid, and other” (University of South Carolina, 2009, p. 70). One of the strengths of First-Year Seminars are that they are adaptable to both individual institutions and student needs.

The second subcategory was the First-Year Seminars included class size, number of hours, length of seminar, credit applied where. While these conditions may seem

minor in comparison to others, they do help describe the variety of characteristics of First-Year Seminars.

The last subcategory was if assessment, on the Seminar program, was done in the last three years, type of assessment, survey instrument, and what outcomes were measured.

Table 3 describes the subcategories that were created in at structural characteristics of First-Year Seminar and the subcategories with example of questions.

Table 3

Examples of the Structural Characteristics

Structural Characteristics	
Type of First-Year Seminar	Extended Orientation, Basic Study Skills, Academic with general uniform academic content across content, Academic on Various Topics, Pre-professional or discipline-linked, or Hybrid
Administration	Department that the First-Year Seminars report to: Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Academic Department, College or School, First-Year Office, or Other
	Course size > 10 11–15 16–19 20–24 25–29 30+
	Grading options: Pass/Fail, Letter Graded, No Grade, or Other
	If Credit was given: No or Yes (if yes, how many credits and where it is applied)
Assessment	No and Yes (if Yes, on what items)

Instructional characteristic. This fourth characteristic was instructional. This characteristic explored what the instructional elements were. In relation to instructors, the dependent variable was here, who taught, full-time and part-time instructors.

Additional areas to explore instructional characteristics were:

- Instructor type (tenure-track, full-time non-tenure-track, part-time, professional staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students)
- Instruction assignment (if instruction was part or not part of assigned responsibilities)
- Training (if training is required and how long it is)
- Compensation (if compensation is given, what type: stipend, course waiver, professional development funds, etc.)

While characteristics of First-Year Seminars are numerous and vary across the nation, one major element that impacts first-year retention is student connection and interaction with instructors. Instructors play an important role in supporting first-year retention and create better results in First-Year Seminars. The details around the instructors in the characteristic of the First-Year Seminars are important in exploring both the First-Year Seminars and the instructor's role in Seminars.

While First-Year Seminars vary in many ways from one institution to the next, they are very effective in supporting first-year students' transitioning to higher education and, by extension, create a positive association on retention. These four key characteristics (Institutional, Objective, Structural, and Instructional) of First-Year Seminars provide a good bases for exploring the main research question for this study which was to understand how instructor types (full-time and part-time) were related to First-Year Seminar characteristics measured in the National Resources Center survey. Instructors are critical piece to this study and it was important to have a background on

instructors, the research pertaining to them and student outcomes, specifically First-Year Seminars.

Research on Instructor Type

Research supports the positive association of First-Year Seminars and full-time instructors as they correspond to first-year student retention. Instructor interaction, both in and out of class, has been linked to first-year student retention. Inkelas et al. (2004) identify three main elements in support of first-year students' retention. These include academic, peer, and instructor support. In addition, Astin (1993), Tinto (1993), Stage and Hossler (2000), and Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) recognized that instructor interaction is important for students to be involved and retained on campus.

Within higher education, several types of instructors exist. Typically, institutions of higher education employ full-time instructors (tenure-track and full-time non-tenure-track) and part-time instructors (often called adjunct). Tenured instructors were those who have gone through the tenure process which is a probationary period no longer than seven years, although the exact number of years differs between institutions (Euben, 2002). Tenured instructors have completed the tenure process and have been given a long-term commitment and contract. Non-tenure-track instructors may teach full or part-time, but are not in the tenure process. Non-tenure-track instructors hold a contract with the institution. Similarly with part-time instructors their contract which is often on a short term basis, no benefits, and orientation to the institution.

Over the last 10 or so years, the number of full-time instructors has decreased while the number of part-time instructors has increased (Snyder et al., 2019). Four

factors involved in the increase of part-time instructors for teaching college courses include: (a) change in enrollment patterns of higher education, (b) changes in instructors demographics, (c) the financial cost of hiring tenure and full-time instructors, and (d) the ability for institutions to be flexible (Ochoa, 2011).

The first factor influencing the increased use of part-time instructors is rising enrollments. Larger enrollments demand more sections of academic courses, thereby require more instructors to teach them (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The second factor is coupled with an increase in the number of people obtaining doctoral degrees and the suspension of the administrative practice of mandatory retirement (Ochoa, 2011). The increased cost of hiring and keeping full-time instructors was the third factor in the rise and use of part-time instructors. The increased cost of salaries and benefits is what Baldwin and Chronister (2001) cited as the primary reason that tenure-track instructors hires are declining. The fourth factor influencing the increase in part-time instructors is that, by hiring part-time instructors, institutions have been able to be more flexible in addressing course/enrollment needs. This flexibility comes into play when institutions may need to quickly adjust the number of courses being offered. Unpredictable enrollments require institutions to be more flexible with the number of instructors they have. Part-time instructors helped address the rapid increase or decrease of students. While the shift in higher education to hire more part-time instructors may serve institutions, there may be larger consequences that should be considered.

Institutions are faced with challenges in making decisions about their hiring practices. Administrators face reduced budgets, worry about the rising cost of tenure-

related and other full-time instructors as well as fluctuating enrollment. Yet they still need to have instructors on hand and ready to teach the courses. Institutions rely the part-time instructors, because overall these positions cost less and allow for short term contracts, which allows institutions to be flexible in addressing the current trends in higher education. However, the challenge is balancing the needs of budget and enrollment trends with student outcomes associated with these instructor types (full-time and part-time).

Impact of full-time instructors on student outcomes. Instructor demographics at institutions of higher education in the United States have shifted in that last few decades. Trends lean towards less full-time positions being offered as well as an increase in part-time positions. While community colleges first saw this shift to part-time instructors, even large public comprehensive institutions have seen the shift (American Federation of Teachers, 2009). Of all instructors in fall 2016, only 53% had full-time appointments and only 47% were in part-time positions (Snyder et al., 2019). Full-time instructors are still the majority, however during 1999 to 2016 full-time instructors increased by 38% whereas part-time instructors increased 74%. If this ratio discrepancy continues it is only a matter of time when part-time instructors are the national majority at postsecondary institutions. It is due to this trend of decreasing tenure-track positions and full-time non-tenure track positions, coupled with the fact that instructors play an important role in student outcomes like retention, that researchers have been exploring the impact of part-time instructors. Three focal points have emerged when looking at the

impact part-time instructors have on student outcomes. These are retention, graduation, and student involvement.

Jaeger and Eagan (2011) studied six institutions as part of a four-year public higher education system and looked at the impact part-time instructors had on first-year student retention. This study is significant in that, in 2010, it was the first study that examined the relationship of non-tenure-track instructors to first-year retention at multiple four-year public institutions. Jaeger and Eagan and (2011) found that at three of the four institutions, first-year students had 50% or more of their courses with non-tenure-track instructors. The researchers found that, across each institution type (doctoral-extensive, masters and baccalaureate), non-tenure-track instructors (again across all types; full-time, part-time, and graduate students) had 30% more students who were less likely to be retained for their second year.

Schibik and Harrington's 2004 study at a comprehensive public Midwestern university also looked at first-year student retention associated with taking courses with part-time instructors. Findings revealed that first-year students who took a majority of their fall semester with part-time instructors were less likely to be retained to the spring semester. These researchers concluded that, when first-year students encounter a higher portion of part-time instructors, "institutions should give more thoughtful consideration to where part-time faculty are utilized on their respective campuses" (p. 5) and how other institutional decisions have a negative effects on student success.

Ehrenberg and Zhang (2005) studied the impact of part-time instructors on student graduation (over six years) at 2- and 4-year American institutions. This was the

first study of its kind. Findings reveal that increases of part-time instructors caused a decrease in graduation rates. A 10% increase in part-time instructors resulted in a 4% decrease in graduation rates.

In 2007, Umbach studied part-time instructors at 148 two and four-year institutions. This study examined the relationship between instructors' types and their effectiveness in undergraduate education. Umbach (2007) found that, compared to full-time instructors, part-time instructors spent less time with students, preparing for class, using active and collaborative techniques and had lower academic expectations. This study demonstrated that, while there may be good economic reasons for using part-time instructors, overall, this practice produced more negativity than positive results for undergraduate education. Umbach separated non-tenure-track instructors into two categories, part-time instructors and full-time tenure-ineligible instructors. It should be noted that this study found that the results for full-time tenure-ineligible instructors were higher than part-time instructors, but still lower than tenure-track instructors.

Among the research and practices at institutions, there is not agreeance among terminology and the labels used for instructors. Also, there is difference in hiring and staffing practices of instructors at institutions. This incongruence adds difficulty for researchers when exploring these positions, specially related to researchers exploring the impact of instructor types on students' outcomes. While research exploring instructor type and student outcomes are relatively new, it does show that, generally, there may be a negative relationship between non-tenure-track instructors, especially part-time instructors and student retention, graduation rates and effectiveness of undergraduate

education (Bettinger & Long, 2004; Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2006; Schibik & Harrington, 2004; Umbach, 2007). With the information related to part-time instructors, numbers increasing and negative impacts on student outcomes (such as retention), administrators who are charged with enhancing first-year students' retention will need to be aware of this information when making decisions about who is teaching the Seminars.

Conclusion

There is an abundant amount of research that focuses on understanding student retention (e.g., Braxton et al., 2011; Dwyer, 1989; Kerr, Johnson, Gans, Krumrine, 2004; Mallette & Cabrera, 1991; Tinto, 1993). These studies also explored initiatives that had positive outcomes for students (Barefoot 2005; Barefoot et al., 2005; Inkelas et al., 2004, 2007; Knight, 2003; Padgett & Keup, 2011; Porter & Swing, 2006; Strayhorn, 2009). Best practices among undergraduate education initiatives have arisen. The more academically and socially involved students are (interaction with other students and instructors), the more likely they are to be retained (e.g., Astin, 1984, 1993; Mallette & Cabrera, 1991; Schlossberg, 1989; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1977; Tinto, 1993, 1998, 2012). First-Year Seminars, the most researched of first-year interventions, adopt the theoretical framework provided above (Barefoot, 2002, 2005; Keup & Petschauer, 2011; Renn & Reason, 2013). One common element that links the use of First-Year Seminars, the importance of theories and models of Tinto's Student Departure, Schlossberger's Marginality and Mattering, Astin's Involvement Theory, Astin's Model of I-E-O, and

Kuh's theory of Engagement together is the importance of positive interactions and relationships with instructors.

Since research and theories support the importance of positive interaction and relationships with instructors, it is also important to underscore the fact that research concludes that full-time instructors have better student outcomes, specifically in the area of retention. Based on the national trend the First-Year Seminars should not been immune to the instructor demographic trends. The First-Year Seminars survey initially collected data around instructor types that only included faculty, student affairs professionals, other campus professionals, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Starting in 2009 the First-Year Seminars survey included a breakdown of instructor types, Tenure-track instructors, full-time non-tenure track instructors, and adjunct instructors. In light of this fact, this study further explores and describes how instructor types (full-time compared to part-time) are related to the characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) of First-Year Seminar programs. With 33% of first-year students leaving before their second year, first-year retention continues to be a major concern (ACT, 2011). Research demonstrates that first-year seminars have a positive impact on many first-year student outcomes, including retention. This study explores how institutions utilize the variety of instructors teaching First-Year Seminars with a particular focus on the use of full-time instructors (full-time tenure related and non-tenure related full-time) and part-time instructors.

This chapter has presented the background of higher education's current challenges. The literature review covered the research on four theories, and a model that

provides the theoretical framework for this study. Then a further look at the research literature and theories on first-year student retention, high impact practices, and the instructors.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, covers the research methods.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

This chapter provides an overview of the purpose of the study, the research questions, research procedures, background on the data set, and the analysis process.

Purpose of the Study

Increasing first-year student retention has been an identified initiative for institutions. First-Year Seminars have been acknowledged as an effective initiative for first-year retention. The National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (National Resource Center) has developed the only national data set on First-Year Seminar programs from the National Survey of First-Year Seminars. The survey, with some variations each year, has been conducted nine times since 1991. Keup (2013) identified four key characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) explored in the First-Year Seminar survey. In addition, the research states instructors play an important role in students' first year and specifically in the successful outcomes of these students and their retention (Astin, 1993; Inkelas et al., 2004; Kuh, 2008; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Stage & Hossler, 2000; Tinto 1975, 1993). Specifically, the research suggests that full-time instructors' impact student positively (Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Schibik & Harrington, 2004; Umbach 2007). While researchers have explored the effectiveness of First-Year Seminar program (Barefoot, 2005; Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Barefoot et al., 2005; Hunter & Linder 2005; Porter & Swing, 2006; Renn & Reason, 2013; Strayhorn, 2009; Upcraft et al., 2005), researchers had not explored the relationship of First-Year

Seminar programs characteristics and instructor types (full-time and part-time). We know that First-Year Seminar programs and instructor types (full-time and part-time) are important. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship among the First-Year Seminar programs characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor types (full-time and part-time).

Research Questions

The main research question for this study was to understand how instructor types (full-time and part-time) were related to First-Year Seminar characteristics measured in the National Resources Center survey. The following question was used to help address the purpose of the study:

What was the strength of the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full or part-time)?

To answer this question, subset questions were developed to better understand the data.

Subset questions:

1. What were the relationships among the institutional characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
2. What were the relationships among the objectives characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
3. What were the relationships among the structural characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
4. What were the relationships among the instructional characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

Research Method

To address the above questions and to gather information across many institutions, the researcher decided to use a very large data set collected by others from many colleges on the topic of characteristics of First-Year Seminars. The data used in this study, therefore, are considered secondary data which means that it was initially collected by one entity (in this case, the National Resources Center at the University of South Carolina) and then used by another (in this case, for this dissertation). Using secondary data sets is a benefit because they are very large data sets that have been conducted using sound and rigorous research methods that would be beyond the means of an individual scholar. This study's data set came from a respected national clearinghouse, The National Resource Center at the University of South Carolina, which focuses on first-year students, student transitions, and First-Year Seminars. This is the only national data set for First-Year Seminars that exists in the United States and the 2009 Survey data set was and still is the only data set available to be used by a researcher outside of the National Resource Center, hence why it was selected.

Participants

The 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars sought out chief academic officers, chief executive officers, and/or chief student affairs officers at regionally accredited, not-for-profit, undergraduate institutions of higher education (Padgett & Keup, 2011). This population was taken from the electronic *2007 Higher Education Directory* (Padgett & Keup, 2011; Tobolowsky & Associates, 2008). In the email sent to the administrators, there was a request that, if there was another professional better able

to complete the survey, it should be forwarded to that person. This provided an avenue for the most knowledgeable person about the First-Year Seminars to complete the survey at each institution (Padgett & Keup, 2011).

The 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars instrument was sent out November 4, 2009 via email. StudentVoice, an online assessment program, handled the administration, general management of data and hosted the survey link. After the initial November 4th email, four additional reminders were sent out before the survey administration ended on December 11, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. The 2009 survey included 83 questions that “asked institutions to provide institutional information and programmatic characteristics of these First-Year Seminar courses” (Padgett & Keup, 2011, p. 10). The survey link was disabled on December 15, 2009. The survey had 1,019 completed surveys, of which 890 stated they offered a First-Year Seminar. Of the 890 institutions, 548 agreed to allow their responses to be shared upon request, the study focused on the 548 institutions that did agree to have their responses shared.

Research Procedures

After the approval of this study by the dissertation committee, an application to conduct the study was submitted to the Portland State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This board monitors research relevant to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2009) regulation 45 CFR § 46.10, a law that institutions must observe to determine if the study would cause minimal risk to participants. The law requires that a determination be made prior to commencing data collection to ensure that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort should not be greater than that

encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. The proposed study was an assessment of secondary data and did not involve human subjects. Thus, approval was granted expedited status.

The researcher made contact with the National Research Center (National Resource Center) and its Director of Research and Assessment to inquire into the process of requesting the data set prior to the IRB submittal. After the IRB approval, the researcher sent in a research proposal and was granted access to the 2006 and the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars data set from the National Resource Center on First-Year Seminars and Students in Transitions. The researcher attempted to combine the data sets from the 2006 and 2009 survey by the four subcategory (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional). However, it became clear that due to changes made in the survey from 2006 to 2009 that the data sets could not be combined. Thus, the more recent 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars data set was used for this analysis.

To address the research questions, the researcher organized the data from the survey. Survey question number 22 identified the independent variable of full-time and part-time instructors. For the purposes of this study, full-time instructors were defined as full-time non-tenure track instructors and those that are tenure-track. Part-time instructors were defined as adjunct instructors, graduate students, Student Affairs professionals, undergraduate students, and other campus professionals. The dependent variables for this study were the four identified characteristics categories described in Chapter 2: institutional, objectives, structural, and instructional (and reflected in the

subset questions for this study) were derived from the literature on the Survey on First-Year Seminar (Keup, 2012). The dependent variables were derived from relevant survey questions. Each relevant survey question became a specific dependent variable in this study. There were 131 specific dependent variables in this study.

Due to the large number of analyses needed to answer the research questions and to better understand the results of the analyses done in this study, the specific dependent variables in each characteristic (derived from the survey questions) are grouped into subcategories. There are 10 subcategories within the four characteristics which are used to report the findings in Chapter 4. The institutional characteristic's subcategories were institution type, enrollment, and First-Year Seminar history. The objective characteristic's subcategories were population, purpose, and content. The structural characteristic's subcategories were types of First-Year Seminar, administrative, and assessment. The instructional characteristic's subcategory was training. Table 4 shows the four characteristics and their subcategories.

Table 4

First-Year Seminar Program Characteristics and Their Subcategories

Institutional	Objective	Structural	Instructional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution Type • Enrollment • History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Purpose • Content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of First-Year Seminar • Administrative • Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training

Maintenance and security of all study data was followed according to the expectations provided by the National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition due to the arranged agreement to use their survey data. Appendix B was the “Application for Obtaining Data” form. Appendix C was the “Agreement for the Use of Data.” Appendix D contains a copy of the “Research Proposal Outline Data Access.” Appendix E was the “Security Pledge signed by Principal Investigator and all Associate Investigators.” Due to the nature of the researcher academic program, the data were to be kept until successful completion of the doctoral program, or no longer than 18 months, as stated in the National Resource Center’s agreement on length of access to their data. During the time, the researcher was working with the data the initial 18 months passed. The researcher contact the National Resource Center and was given another year (12 months) to work with the data.

The data and documents reviewed were kept in two locations to serve both as a security and as a back-up option. Initially a request was made for a graduate student research server with Portland State University’s Office of Academic and Research Computing intended to serve as a secure place to store the study’s data. However, after further discussion with staff at the Academic & Research Computing it was determined that researcher’s data needs were too small and that a research server would not be a good match. Instead, the researcher has kept the data on a 4G thumb drive that the researcher kept secured. In addition and as a backup, as originally stated, the researcher has created a password protected file on a personal secure portable hard drive. The researcher often updates the portable hard drive to keep the files updated.

Instrument and Measures: Reliability and Validity

The two most important psychometric properties to consider in this study was reliability and validity (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Reliability explores the consistency of the data (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Validity refers to the accuracy of inferences the researcher makes from the responses (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). This study was a secondary review and with that comes specific validity and reliability concerns.

The validity concerns for this study were about the construct and content. Construct validity, is “the extent to which a higher-order construct is accurately in a particular study” (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 261). Content validity, is the “evidence that the content of a test corresponds to the content of the construct it was designed to cover” (Field, 2010, p. 783).

In this study, reliability is concerned with the survey responses from the participants. Two issues of reliability for this study were concerned with whether or not the participants were “best informed” to report on their First-Year Seminars and, by self-reporting, could participants have under or over reported on the survey. Padgett and Keup (2011) responded to how the National Resource Center selected participants, how they answered these questions about their study and how they approached the reliability of their survey. Specifically, Padgett and Keup noted that the National Resource Center sought out chief academic officers, chief executive officers, and/or chief student affairs officers. If an institution did not list both the chief academic officer and the chief student affairs officers from the electronic *2007 Higher Education Directory*, that institution was

not included in the initial invitation. This policy was instituted to insure that the email survey reached the two most likely individuals who could best respond (Padgett & Keup, 2011). In the email sent to the administrators, there was a request that, if there was another professional better able to complete the survey, to please forward it to that person. This provided an avenue for the most knowledgeable of the First-Year Seminar to complete the survey at each institution (Padgett & Keup, 2011). As for the self-reported concern on reliability, the majority of the survey questions were closed-ended questions requiring either a dichotomous choice (yes or no) or multiple choice from a set of predetermined questions (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data were drawn from a survey in its fourth cycle. It was presumed that, after three previous cycles, the National Resource Center would have addressed concerns related to its instrument and procedures for collecting their data.

Data Analysis

Because the survey questions produced categorical data, the Pearson's chi-square test was determined to be the best measure to compare the First-Year Seminar characteristics associated with instructor types (full-time and part-time). The researcher used Pearson's chi-square test to see if there were any significant differences between specific variables within First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional dependent variables) and instructor types (full-time and part-time independent variables) for a total of 131 chi-square analysis. Field's (2010) stated that Pearson's chi-square test ". . . is an extremely elegant statistic based on the simple idea of comparing the frequencies you observe in certain categories to the frequencies

you might expect to get in those categories by chance” (p. 688). Field defined Pearson’s chi-squared test as “. . . test[ing] whether two categorical variables forming a contingency table are associated” (p. 783). “The highly significant results indicates that there is an association between the variables” (p. 697). The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software to analyze the data.

Pearson chi-square analyses were run using the independent variables—full-time/part-time instructors and the 131 specific dependent variables. Of these, 49 resulted in a significant p value of $\geq .05$.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the research and methodology for the study. This included an overview of the purpose of the study, the research questions, research procedures, background on the data sets, and the analysis process. Chapter 4 provides the results and analysis of the data from the study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analysis of the study's data. It discusses the focus of the study, highlights the research question, including the subset questions used for the analysis, review the methodology, share the results using the subset questions, and lastly summarizes the key findings and introduces the next and final chapter.

Every year in the United States, one third of first-year college students leave the institutions before their second year. Given that higher education institutions are not retaining one-third of their first-year students, that First-Year Seminars and full-time instructors are associated with positive impact on student retention, and, given that higher education institutions have control over whom they hire to teach the First-Year Seminars, examination of the relationships among First-Year Seminars program characteristics and instructor type (full and part-time) might offer insight into how institutions can address the retention problem through decision making related to their policies and practices. This research is significant for institutions, instructors, students, and, for researchers across multiple institutions who seek to tap the rich resource on the first year college experiences, the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars.

While the National Survey on First-Year Seminars analyzed and reported on the type of instructors used in First-Year Seminar programs based on their survey of the programs, the National Resource Center itself had not yet explored the role of instructor type (full-time and part-time) in First-Year Seminar programs in relation to other data

they collected on First-Year Seminar program characteristics. Instructors are important to student retention thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor type (full-time and part-time).

Data Analysis

The survey data from 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars included responses from more than 1,000 completed surveys, of those 890 had First-Year Seminar programs and within that set 548 institutions (that offered a First-Year Seminar) allowed their responses to be used for further research. Thus, this study focused on the responses from 548 institutions that completed the survey, had First-Year Seminar programs, and that gave permission for their responses to be shared. In this study, 27% of the responses were from two-year institutions (146 of 548) and 73% were from four-year institutions (402 of 548). Of the 548 institutions, 54% were public (293 of 548), 40% were private (220 of 548), and 6% were for-profit (35 of 548). More than half, 58%, (317 of 548) of institutions had first-year class size of 1,000 or less. Overall institutions reported that 64% (346 of 548) of the institutions used full-time instructors. Thus, a majority of full-time instructors taught a First-Year Seminar in 2009.

The main research question for the study was to understand how instructor types (full-time and part-time) are related to First-Year Seminar program characteristics measured in the 2009 National Resources Center survey. The following question was used to help address the purpose of the study:

What was the strength of the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full or part-time)?

To answer this question, subset questions were developed to better understand the data.

Subset questions:

1. What were the relationships among the institutional characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
2. What were the relationships among the objectives characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
3. What were the relationships among the structural characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?
4. What were the relationships among the instructional characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

In the following sections of this chapter, the researcher examines each research subset question in turn and report the significant findings. The analyses of all significant results are displayed in tables identified by the First-Year Seminar characteristic, the subcategories, the specific variables derived from the survey question that are associated with that subcategory (along with the survey question # for reference), the Pearson chi-square, degrees of freedom (*df*), and the *p* value. For a comprehensive table of all results see Appendix F.

Presentation of Results

The results are represented first by each of the four characteristics, then by their subcategories, and at the end of each characteristic the results are interpreted. As an introduction to the results, Table 5 depicts the significant results first by the four characteristics, then by the subcategories, and then the specific number of significant of results in each.

Table 5

Significant Results

Institutional	Objective	Structural	Instructional
Institution Type 1 significant result	Population 6 significant results	Type of Seminars 6 significant results	Training 1 significant result
Enrollment 1 significant result	Purpose 5 significant results	Administrative 12 significant results	
History 1 significant result	Content 6 significant results	Assessment 10 significant results	

Question 1

What were the relationships among institutional characteristic and instructor type?

The first question examined the relationships among institutional characteristic category by instructor type (full-time and part-time instructors) in the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars. The institutional characteristic described the features of the institutions of higher education that participated in the survey. Three subcategories were identified: institution type (two variables), enrollment (two variables), and First-Year Seminar history (one variable). These five variables from the survey were used to derive the specific findings used in the Pearson chi-square analyses, which resulted in three significant findings; one significant finding in each of the three subcategories. The significant findings are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

Significant Institutional Characteristics

2009 First-Year Seminar Institutional Characteristic by Instructor Type				
Subcategory	Specific Dependent Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> value
Institution Type	Two year or four year (6)	10.053	1	.002
Enrollment	Percentage who take a first-year seminar (10)	22.013	10	.015
History	Years the First-Year Seminar has been offered (11)	9.073	2	.011

First-Year Seminar: Institution Type subcategory of institutional characteristic. Within the first subcategory, institution type, one finding was significant—if the institution is a 2-year or 4-year institution. The analysis resulted in $X^2(2, n = 548) = 10.053, p = .002$. To illustrate the institution type significant difference more clearly.

As shown in Figure 3, full-time instructors were used more at both 2-year and 4-year institutions. However, the reported 2-year institutions' percentage of part-time instructors was higher than compared to that of the reported 4-year institutions' percentage of part-time instructors. Additionally, there was a larger difference between who taught when exploring 2-year institutions (70% full-time and 30% part-time) and that of 4-year institutions (82% full-time and 18% part-time). Thus, 4-year institutions use notably more full-time instructors than 2-year institutions.

Figure 3. Four-Year and Two-Year Institutions.

First-Year Seminar: Enrollment—Subcategory of institutional characteristic.

Within the second subcategory, enrollment of the First-Year Seminar courses, one specific finding was significant—approximate percentage of first-year students on campus who took a First-Year Seminar course. The analysis resulted in $\chi^2 (10, n = 537) = 22.103, p = .015$ (see Figure 4).

When institutions had 90% or more of their first-year students' in a First-Year Seminar course it was taught 86% of the time by full-time instructors and 14% of the time by part-time instructors, as displayed in Figure 4. This finding saw 52% of total institutions who responded had 90% or more of their first-year students enrolled in a First-Year Seminar.

Figure 4. Percentage of First-Year Students' Enrollment.

First-Year Seminar: History subcategory of institutional characteristic. The third subcategory, history, included one specific significant finding. This finding was related to how long the First-Year Seminar had been offered. The Pearson chi-square analyze resulted in $X^2 (2, n = 537) = 9.073, p = .011$ (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Number of Years First-Year Seminar was Offered.

All First-Year Seminar were more likely to be taught by full-time instructors, however, one can see in the Figure 5, that when the course has been offered for three years or more, the differences between full-time and part-time instructor use grew.

Institutional characteristic interpretation of results across institutional type, enrollment, and history subcategories. When the researcher reviewed the significant findings in the institutional characteristic's subcategories (institution type, enrollment, and history), three specific findings that emerged as significant, one from each subcategory.

- First, an examination of institutional type showed First-Year Seminar programs at a four-year institution were more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor than First-Year Seminar programs at a two-year institution (84% compared to 70%).
- Second, the institutions that had 90% or more of their first-year students enrolled in a First-Year Seminar course were more likely to have a full-time instructor. Forty-five percent of all institutions' responses for this finding had full-time instructors teaching First-Year Seminar course when 90% or more of first-year students were enrollment in a First-Year Seminar course.
- Third and the last, finding in the first characteristic was that the longer the course was offered (0 to 2 years; 3 to 10 years; more than 10 years) the more likely a full-time instructor taught the First-Year Seminar course. As an example for institutions that had their First-Year Seminar course for 0 to 2 years, were 68% likely to be taught by a full-time instructor and those courses that were, around for 10 or more years had full-time instructors teaching 82% of the time.

For all of the significant findings related to question 1 of the study, full-time instructors were more likely to be teaching than part-time instructors were, especially if it was a four-year institution, if more students were taking the First-Year Seminar, and if

the First-Year Seminar had been offered more than three years. This characteristic maybe less substantive for administrators in decision making as the variables are institutional aspects that would be entrenched unlikely to be changed, especially over a few years. Examples of such an aspect would include an institution changing from a 2-year to a 4-year institutions, this change would be a major change for an institution.

Question 2

What were the relationships among Objective characteristics and instructor type?

The second question examined the relationships among the objective characteristic category by who taught (full-time and part-time instructor) in the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminar. The objective characteristic questions look at the purpose of the institutions' First-Year Seminar course(s). For this characteristic, there were three subcategories, population (with 34 specific dependent variables), purpose (with 13 specific dependent variables), and content (with 14 specific dependent variables) totaling 61 specific dependent variables for this characteristic. Seventeen significant specific findings resulted from the analyses, six within the population subcategory, five in the purpose subcategory, and six in the content subcategory. The significant findings are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

Significant Objective Characteristics

2009 First-Year Seminar Objective Characteristic by Instructor Type				
Subcategory	Specific Dependent Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	df	p value
Population	Required (19.2)	22.368	1	.000
	Special section—Academically underprepared (20.2)	4.002	1	.045
	Special sections—Honors (20.4)	8.427	1	.004
	Special sections—Learning Community (20.6)	7.105	1	.008
	Special sections—Athletes (20.9)	4.574	1	.032
	Special sections—TRIO (20.14)	4.008	1	.045
Purpose	Connection with the institution (66.2)	8.507	1	.004
	Academic skills (66.3)	20.016	1	.000
	Writing skills (66.6)	12.524	1	.000
	Increase student/faculty interaction (66.8)	12.690	1	.000
	Introduce a discipline (66.9)	4.987	1	.026
Content	Critical Thinking (67.5)	26.699	1	.000
	Diversity Issues (67.6)	4.993	1	.025
	Relationship issues (67.9)	4.082	1	.043
	Specific disciplinary topic (67.10)	17.926	1	.000
	Writing skills (67.13)	19.200	1	.000
	Other (67.14)	13.949	1	.000

First-Year Seminar: Population subcategory of the objective characteristic.

The first subcategory of the objective characteristic, population, described who was

taking the First-Year Seminar course and if the course was designed for a specific group.

This subcategory included six significant findings.

The first significant finding was if institutions required all first-year students to take the First-Year Seminar course $\chi^2 (1, n = 548) 22.368, p < .001$.

As shown in Figure 6, when first-year students were required to take the First-Year Seminar course, it was more likely at 87% to be taught by a full-time instructor compared to 70% when it was not required.

Figure 6. Required Students to Take First-Year Seminar.

The next five significant findings were related to the First-Year Seminar sections for special populations. Forty percent of institutions who responded had First-Year Seminar courses for “special populations.” These special populations’ options resulted in significant findings—underprepared students ($\chi^2 (1, n = 548) 4.002, p = .045$), honors

($X^2 (1, n = 548) 8.427, p = .004$), learning community ($X^2 (1, n = 548) 7.105, p = .008$), student athletes ($X^2 (1, n = 548) 7.105, p = .008$), TRIO students ($X^2 (1, n = 548) 4.008, p < .045$). These special population First-Year Seminar courses were all more likely to be taught by full-time instructors.

First-Year Seminar: Purpose subcategory of the objective characteristic. The second subcategory of the objective characteristic, purpose, described why institutions offer First-Year Seminar. The subcategory was derived from a question that asked “what were the three most important course objectives.” Five of the analyses in this subcategory were significant.

The significant finding—develop a connection with the institution—resulted in $X^2 (1, n = 548) 8.507, p = .004$.

As shown in Figure 7, a larger difference between the percentages of full-time and part-time instructor (85% to 15%) is visible for this finding, in those that reported “develop connection with institution” as their objective. Those who did not name this an objective had less of a difference (74% to 26%). Thus, of the institutions that named develop connection with institution, it was more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

The significant finding develop academic skills resulted in $X^2 (1, n = 548) 20.016, p < .00$.

Figure 7. Develop Connection with Institution.

As shown in Figure 8, when institutions reported having develop academic skills as an objective, there was a larger difference between the percentages of full-time and part-time instructor (86% to 14%). Those who did not name this an objective had less of a difference (74% to 26%). Thus, of the institutions that named develop connection with institution, it was more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

Figure 8. Develop Academic Skills.

The three remaining significant findings in the purpose subcategory were writing skills, increased student/faculty interaction, and introduce a discipline. These significant findings were: writing skills ($X^2 (1, n = 548) 12.524, p < .001$), Increase student/faculty interaction ($X^2 (1, n = 548) 12.690, p < .001$), and Introduce a discipline ($X^2 (1, n = 548) 4.987, p = .026$). In each of these significant analyses, if the institution responded it was an important course objective, it was more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

First-Year Seminar: Content subcategory of the objective characteristic. The third and last, subcategory of the objective characteristic, content, describes the course topics taught and the analyses results in six significant findings. Examples of these important topics range from critical thinking to interpersonal skills, such as relationship issues. There were six significant finding related to course topics:

- critical thinking $X^2 (1, n = 548) 26.699, p < .001$,
- diversity issues $X^2 (1, n = 548) 4.993, p = .025$,
- relationship issues $X^2 (1, n = 548) 4.082, p = .043$,
- specific discipline topic $X^2 (1, n = 548) 17.926, p < .001$,
- writing skills $X^2 (1, n = 548) 19.200, p < .001$,
- other $X^2, (1, n = 548) 13.949, p < .001$.

In each of these significant findings, if the institution responded that it was an important course topic, it was more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

Objective characteristic interpretation of findings across population, purpose, and content subcategories. When the researcher reviewed the significant findings in the objective characteristic's subcategories (population, purpose, and content), of the First-Year Seminar, four results emerged.

- First, when First-Year Seminar courses were required, the use of full-time instructor was the highest.

- Second, overall 60% of institutions reported that they did not have special sections of First-Year Seminar dedicated to unique subpopulations. However, for the institutions that did report offering sections for academically underprepared students, more full-time instructors taught these sections.
- Third, related to questions of purpose, full time instructors were used more in these areas of purpose of the First-Year Seminar: writing skills, increase student/faculty interaction, and introduction to discipline.
- Fourth, for questions related to content areas, in critical thinking, diversity issues, relationship issues, specific disciplinary topic, writing skills, and other, used full-time instructor more than part-time instructors.

The objective characteristic had the second most significant results which only highlights the importance of this characteristic. The objective characteristic describes the objectives of the Seminars. Given the results of the objective (or purpose) characteristic institutions identified specific content, taught higher level thinking skills, and in some incidences sought to address needs of specific student populations. In each of these significant results full-time instructors not part-time instructors taught more often; thus, this is an indication of the strong relationship with administrators decision making and the Seminar program characteristics (and with who was teaching).

Question 3

What were the relationship among the Structural characteristics and instructor type?

The third question explored the relationships among the structural characteristics by who taught (full-time and part-time instructors) in the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars. The structural characteristic describes how the courses were constructed and organized. There were a total of 62 specific dependent variables. Twenty-eight of the analyses resulted in a significant findings. There are three subcategories within the

structural characteristic: types of First-Year Seminar (with six significant findings), administration (with 12 significant findings), and assessment (with 10 significant findings). See Table 8.

Table 8

Significant Structural Characteristics

2009 First-Year Seminar Structural Characteristic by Instructor Type				
Subcategory	Significant Specific Dependent Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	df	p value
Types of First-Year Seminar	Academic Seminar w/generally uniform academic content (12.2)	5.296	1	.021
	Academic seminar on various topics (12.3)	18.146	1	.000
	Basic study skills seminar (12.5)	6.826	1	.009
	Hybrid (12.6)	4.115	1	.043
	Number of seminar type offered (16)	34.787	10	.000
	If < 1 First-Year Seminar type exist, which type has the highest enrollment (15)	47.904	6	.000
Administrative	Class Size (17)	16.653	5	.005
	Typical length (46)	14.457	4	.006
	# of Credits (49)	13.597	5	.018
	Credit toward major requirements (50.3)	4.419	1	.036
	Total classroom contact hours per week (51)	10.704	4	.030
	Any service learning component (52)	22.850	2	.000
	Any sections linked another course (54)	6.556	2	.038
	Percentage of online-only sections (60)	18.393	7	.010
	Campus unit administers (61)	26.037	5	.000
	Graded options (47)	30.692	3	.000
	Academic credit (48)	18.239	1	.000

Table 8 (continued)

Subcategory	Significant Specific Dependent Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	df	p value
	dean/director/coordinator (62)	6.481	2	.039
Assessment	Analysis of institutional data (71)	8.769	2	.012
	Individual interviews with instructors (74)	6.685	2	.035
	Connection with peers (81.2)	5.775	1	.016
	Grade point average (81.3)	4.495	1	.034
	Out-of-class student/instructor interaction (81.4)	5.055	1	.025
	Participation in campus activities (81.5)	3.877	1	.049
	Satisfaction with institution (81.9)	10.114	1	.001
	Use of campus services (81.10)	5.345	1	.021
	Persistence to sophomore year (81.7)	10.945	1	.001
	Satisfaction with instructor (81.8)	22.067	1	.000

First-Year Seminar: Types of seminars subcategory of the structural characteristic. The first subcategory of the structural characteristic, types of First-Year Seminar, included nine specific dependent variables. This subcategory explored the kinds of First-Year Seminar offered. There were six significant findings. Four of the significant findings in this subcategory explored the types of discrete sections that best describes the First-Year Seminar course that existed at the institutions. These four significant findings were:

- academic seminar with generally uniform academic content $X^2(1, n = 548) = 5.296, p = .021$,
- academic seminar on various topics $X^2(1, n = 548) = 18.146, p < .001$,
- basic study skills $X^2(1, n = 548) = 6.826, p = .009$,
- hybrid option $X^2(1, n = 548) = 4.115, p = .043$

In each of these significant findings, if the institution responded that it had one of the above discrete sections, it was more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

The next significant finding explored how many of the different types of First-Year Seminar offered by the institution in the academic year 2009–2010, which resulted in $X^2(10, n = 520) = 34.787, p < .001$. There were seven different recognized First-Year Seminar types: extended orientation, academic w/generally uniform content, academic on various topics, pre-professional or discipline-linked, basic study skills, hybrid, and other. No matter how many different types of First-Year Seminar an institution offered, full-time faculty were more likely to have taught them.

The last significant finding involved if the institution offered more than one type of First-Year Seminar and if they did which type had the highest enrollment, which resulted in $X^2(6, n = 520) = 47.904, p < .001$.

Five-hundred twenty institutions responded that Extended Orientation had the highest enrollment for both part-time and full-time instructors (26% part-time and 74% full-time) followed by academic with general content (8% part-time and 92% full-time), and academic with various topics (2% part-time and 98% full-time), as shown in Figure 9. Note, that the courses that had more academic focus were more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

Figure 9. More Than One First-Year Seminar Type: Which has Highest Enrollment?

First-Year Seminar: Administrative subcategory of the structural characteristic. The second subcategory of the structural characteristic, administrative, included 12 significant findings. These questions on the survey-explored items such as approximate size of the First-Year Seminar course, how the First-Year Seminar was graded, and did the course carry academic credit. These nine significant findings were as follows:

- Approximate class size for each seminar section: $X^2 (5, n = 513) = 16.653$, $p = .005$
- Length of a section of the seminar which resulted in $X^2 (4, n = 506) = 14.457$, $p = .006$

- How many credits were offered for the course, this resulted in $X^2 (5, n = 468) = 13.597, p = .018$
- How the seminar credits were applied, this resulted in a significant finding $X^2 (1, n = 74) = 4.419, p = .036$
- How many contact hours the seminar had per week which resulted in $X^2 (4, n = 506) = 10.704, p = .030$
- If there was any sections with a service learning component, which resulted in $X^2 (2, n = 506) = 22.850, p < .001$
- If any of the sections were linked to one or more of the other courses which resulted in $X^2 (2, n = 506) = 6.556, p = .038$
- Approximate percentage of online-only sections, which resulted in $X^2 (7, n = 61) = 18.393, p = .010$
- Which campus unit (academic affairs, academic departments, college, First-Year program office, student affairs, other) administers the First-Year Seminar resulted in $X^2 (5, n = 505) = 26.037, p < .001$

The final three significant findings of the administrative subcategory related to grading, if academic credit was given, and if there was a lead overseeing the First-Year Seminar. Regarding the significant finding related to grading options for the seminar (significant finding) which resulted in $X^2 (3, n = 506) = 30.692, p < .001$.

As shown in Figure 10, the vast majority (84% of all responses) of courses taught used letter grades. When a First-Year Seminar course received a letter grade it was vastly more likely (87%) to be taught by a full-time instructor.

Additionally, for the administrative subcategory, if the seminar carried academic credit (a significant finding) which resulted in $X^2 (1, n = 506) = 18.239, p < .001$.

Figure 10. How is the First-Year Seminar Graded?

As shown in Figure 11, the vast majority (93% of total responses) of reported First-Year Seminar programs provided academic credits for their classes and of those that did provide academic credit a full-time instructor taught 86% of the courses.

Lastly, for the administrative subcategory, if there was a dean/director/coordinator for the First-Year Seminar (a significant finding), which resulted in $\chi^2 (2, n = 505) = 6.481, p = .039$.

Figure 11. Does the First-Year Seminar Carry Academic Credit?

Seventy-nine percent, as shown in Figure 12, of all responses reported that institutions had a dean, director, or coordinator responsible for the seminar, of which 86% of those who had this position had full-time instructors who taught the First-Year Seminar. Thus, when an institution had a dean, director, or coordinator responsible for the seminars the courses were more likely taught by a full-time instructor.

Figure 12. Dean/Director/Coordinator for the First-Year Seminar.

First-Year Seminar: Assessment subcategory of the structural characteristic.

The third subcategory of the structural characteristic, assessment, included 10 significant findings (out of 32). This subcategory of the structural characteristic explored the assessment aspects of the structural characteristic with First-Year Seminar programs. Examples of some of the focus in this subcategory included if the seminar had been formally assessed since 2006, what types of assessment was conducted, and if a national survey was used and if so which ones.

The first two significant findings in the assessment subcategory were in regards to the type of assessment that was conducted. The first significant finding of First-Year Seminar subcategory related to the use institutional data as part of their assessment, which resulted in $X^2(2, n = 288) = 8.769, p = .012$. In fact, this was the most selected option, with 78% of the total responses. The second significant finding of the assessment subcategory was in regards to the inclusion of individual interviews with instructors as part of their assessment, which resulted in $X^2(2, n = 288) = 6.685, p = .035$. If institutional data and interviews with instructors were used for assessment, the institutions' First-Year Seminar courses were more likely to be taught by full-time instructors.

The next eight significant findings, in the assessment subcategory explored the outcomes the seminar program indicated that they measured. These variables had two response options No or Yes. The first six significant findings were:

- Connection with peers that resulted in $X^2(1, n = 289) = 5.775, p = .016$
- Grade point average that resulted in $X^2(1, n = 289) = 4.495, p = .034$
- Out-of-class student/faculty interaction that resulted in $X^2(1, n = 289) = 5.055, p = .02$
- Participation in campus activities that resulted in $X^2(1, n = 289) = 3.877, p = .049$
- Satisfaction with institution that resulted in $X^2(1, n = 289) = 10.114, p < .001$
- Use of campus services that resulted in $X^2(1, n = 289) = 5.345, p = .021$

For all six of the above, when the institution measured these outcomes, the First-Year Seminar courses were more likely to be taught by full-time instructors than part-time instructors.

The next significant finding was when institutions measured persistence to sophomore year as an assessment measure, $\chi^2 (1, n = 289) = 10.945, p < .001$.

As shown in Figure 13, when institutions reported their assessment measured “persistence to sophomore year,” there was a larger difference between the percentages of full-time and part-time instructor (99% to 1%). Those who did not name this as a measured outcome had less of a difference (88% to 22%). Thus, of the institutions that named persistence to sophomore year, full-time instructors more likely taught it.

Figure 13. Persistence to Sophomore Year Outcome.

The last significant finding in the assessment subcategory was when institutions measured satisfaction with instructors that resulted in $\chi^2 (1, n = 289) = 22.067, p < .001$.

When institutions reported their assessment measured “satisfaction with instructors,” there was a larger difference between the percentages of full-time and part-time instructor (94% to 6%), as shown in Figure 14. Those who did not name this as a

measured outcome had less of a difference (75% to 25%). Thus, of the institutions that named satisfaction with instructors, full-time instructors more likely taught it.

Figure 14. Satisfaction with Instructor Outcome.

Structural characteristic interpretation of findings: Across types of First-Year Seminars, administrative, and assessment subcategories. In general, when the researcher reviewed the significant findings in the structural characteristic category, the significant findings in the structural characteristic were more likely to be taught by a full-time instructor.

- First, across the types of First-Year Seminars, those that had full-time instructors tended to have more academically focused Seminars, (Academic seminars with general uniform content, Academic seminars on various topics, Basic study skills, and Hybrid). While the less academic focus (Extended orientation) Seminars still had more full-time instructors who taught the

difference between full-time and part-time instructors was less than the more academically focused Seminars.

- Second, given the array of administrative decisions that can be made when the results were more academic in nature as it related to the Seminar (letter grade, credit given, full semester or term length, etc.), it was more likely to be taught by full-time instructors.
- Third, given the choices regarding assessment practices in the Seminars, when institutions look at their institutional data, conducted interviews with instructors, and looked at student outcomes predictors (such as; grade point average, out-of-class interaction of student and instructor, participation in campus activities, satisfaction with institution, persistence to sophomore year) full-time instructors were more likely to taught the course then their part-time colleagues.

Additionally, on examining the chi-square distributions more closely for several of the significant findings, the researcher noted a clear difference in the percentage of full-time compared to part-time instructors. The structural characteristic had the most significant relationships of all the four characteristics, aspects in considering increasing retention could be easy to adjust and enhance, thus making it an important characteristic for institutions and administrators to consider when making decisions related to their Seminar program, such as class size, seminar types, what grade options exist, etc.

Question 4

What were the relationships among the Instructional characteristics and instructor type?

The fourth question explored differences in the instructional characteristic category by who taught (full-time and part-time instructors) in the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars. Because this characteristic's survey included questions related to the independent variable, full-time and part-time instructors, (specifically instructional

type and compensation) these variables could not be analyzed. The researcher continued with the analysis of the one subcategory that could be used as a dependent variable—training. The instructional characteristic category includes one significant finding based on the analyses. The significant finding is displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

Significant Instructional Characteristics

2009 First-Year Seminar Instructional Characteristic by Instructor Type				
Subcategory	Significant Specific Dependent Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> value
Training	Instructor training required (44)	16.975	2	.000

First-Year Seminars: Training subcategory of the instructional characteristic. The training subcategory of the instructional characteristic explored if there was training, if it was required and if so, how long was the training. There was one analysis that was significant.

This significant finding in the training subcategory inquired if instructor training was required, which resulted in $\chi^2 (2, n = 507) = 16.975, p < .001$.

As shown in Figure 15, the majority (54%) of institutions reported “Yes” that training was required for First-Year Seminar instructors. For those institutions that required training, full-time instructors more likely taught these seminars.

Figure 15. Is Training Required for First-Year Seminar Instructors?

Instructional characteristic interpretation of findings across training

subcategory. When the researcher reviewed the analyses of the instructional characteristics category of the First-Year Seminar, one significant finding was present. This significant finding was if training was required for seminar instructors of which 54% of institutions responded yes. Of those institutions who required training, 87% of the time full-time instructors taught.

Conclusion

To conclude the analyses of the four characteristic categories (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) of the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars programs, 49 findings that indicated a relationship (significant based on having a $p < .05$) with who taught (full-time and part-time instructors) the course. The researcher noted throughout Chapter 4 the significant findings that were substantive, that is, there were many statistically significant relationships among the specific

characteristics of First-Year Seminars and the fact that those particular seminars were taught by full-time not part-time instructors.

This chapter provided an overview of the study's results and analysis of those results based on the research question(s). In addition, this chapter reviewed the study's purpose, research questions, used a step-by-step statistical analysis, of the survey from the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars of the Pearson chi-square analysis, and offered a brief interpretation of the findings. The next chapter, Chapter 5, discusses the synthesis of results, interpretations of results, situation in larger context, limitations of this study, implications, and possible further research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

While first-year student retention is not a new topic, it is still just as critical today as it was decades ago (McCormick et al., 2013; Tinto, 2006). Over the decades, researchers have tried to understand and improve retention rates among college students, especially during their first year in higher education (Astin, 1984; Barefoot et al., 2005; Inkelas et al., 2007; Renn & Reason, 2013; Schlossberg et al., 1995; Tinto 1993). Researchers and administrators in higher education have learned that retention is a complex and tangled problem.

While a simple solution to retain students after their first year at the institution has not been found, a number of critical elements and recommendations for practice have been identified (Barefoot, 1993, Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Chickering & Gamson, 1991; Eagan & Jaeger; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Kuh et al., 2007; Kuh et al., 2005; Kuh et al., 1991; Porter & Swing, 2006; Sidle & McReynolds, 2009; Tinto, 2003). First, one of the most studied and often recommended interventions is to offer First-Year Seminars (Reason, Cox, Quaye, & Terenzini, 2010). First-Year Seminars are part of programming for first year students at 94% of four-year institutions across the country (Porter & Swing, 2006) and 62% (Barefoot, 2005) at two-year institutions and growing (Keup, 2012). First-Year Seminars have been found to promote positive student outcomes, including retention (Barefoot, 2005; Barefoot & Fidler, 1996; Barefoot et al., 2005; Hunter & Linder 2005; Porter & Swing, 2006; Renn & Reason, 2013; Strayhorn, 2009; Upcraft et al., 2005). Second, another recommendation from research for administrators is to be

alert to the effects of instructor type (full-time and part-time). Literature on the impact of instructor type (full-time and part-time) has shown that part-time instructors seem to have negative outcomes (e.g., lower grade point average, lack of first year-retention) for students (Astin, 1993; Inkelas et al., 2004; Stage & Hossler, 2000; Tinto 1993). Also, full-time instructors have been associated with more positive results (Benjamin, 2002, 2003; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Umbach, 2007). Therefore, who teaches students in the First-Year Seminar seems to be an under-investigated, yet, critical decision that could impact retention. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among First-Year Seminar characteristics (institutional, objective, structural, and instructional) and instructor type (full-time and part-time). The main research question was, what was the strength of the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

This chapter first provides a synthesis of results for this study. Second, it describes the importance of the results in light of the theoretical and research context. Third, this chapter discusses the limitations and strengths of using a large, national secondary data set as well as other potential limitations. Fourth, the chapter shares implications for policy and practices. Fifth, recommendations for future research for institutions, instructors, students, and researchers are explored. Finally, a conclusion is presented.

Synthesis of Results

This was a study of the 548 institutions that responded to the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars, from the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, and agreed to have their research used by external researchers. In relation to their hiring full-time instructors, the most significant result was that they chose to use full-time instructors to teach the First-Year Seminars 64% of the time. Given the data, it seems that higher education institutions' more often than not choose to employ full-time instructors in their First-Year Seminars. What institutions may not understand explicitly is that this decision to hire full-time instructors in combination with other decisions has a powerful and even multiplier effect on student retention. This study helps administrators understand that hiring full-time instructors for the First-Year Seminars has economic, social, psychological, and political advantages that substantially contribute to addressing the issue of student retention (Tinto, 1993).

The data used in this study were derived from the National Resource Center's survey on First-Year Seminars in 2009. Within that survey, the National Resource Center sought responses across Seminar programs' four characteristics: institutional, objective, structural, and instructional. While exploring the strength of the relationships among the characteristics of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full-time and part-time), several significant noteworthy results emerged. Next is a summary of each characteristic in relationship to instructor type (full-time and part-time).

Institutional Characteristic

Within those institutions that offered First-Year Seminars, results seemed to indicate a significant relationship among the characteristic of institutional type and with instructor type (full-time and part-time). When looking at the institutional characteristic, there were three noteworthy results that had implications for practice: institution type, history, and enrollment. For this characteristic, the results in this study are directly related to the subcategories (institution type, history, and enrollment).

Institution type. Overall, four-year institutions used full-time instructors in First-Year Seminar more than two-year institutions. Full-time instructors taught 80% of the time at four-year institutions while full-time instructors at two-year institutions in the 2009 survey taught 70% of the time. Interestingly, four-year institutions, nationally, have higher retention rates (Snyder & Dillow, 2010).

History (length of program). Another result was that, for those institutions that had offered their programs for many years, it was more likely than not that the Seminar program was taught by full-time instructors. Dewey (1933) stated that meaningful reflections arise within a learning process. Therefore, it is likely that administrators may have reflected on their hiring decisions and learned that the Seminars were effective. For retention initiatives, especially First-Year Seminars, it is helpful for administrators making decisions to have time to learn about their programs, be able to reflect, and assess what was working and what was not. Tinto (2006) stated that, related to retention, the first task is to identify the “effective action,” the next task is to identify how to implement and see that action sustained and “enhance[d by] student retention over time” (p. 8). For

those institutions that had several years of programming for First-Year Seminars, the administrators, perhaps, reflected on the use of full-time instructors and saw the value of that decision.

Enrollment. Finally, when institutions have 90% or more of first-year students take a First-Year Seminar course, these students were more likely to have had a full-time instructor. Most institutions had nearly all of their first-year students taking Seminars. Thus, administrators seem to demonstrate the value of the Seminars by deciding to require or strongly encourage first-year student to take these Seminars.

In summary of the institutional characteristics (institutional type, history, and enrollment), there are two main points. First, obviously, administrators cannot change their institution from a 2- to a 4-year institution. Second, when administrators made the decision to offer their Seminar over time (three years or more) and strongly encouraged high levels of student enrollment, more than likely these seminars were taught by full-time instructors.

Objective Characteristic

The objective characteristic of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full-time and part-time) was related to the purpose or intention of the Seminars. When looking across all the subcategories (purpose, population, content) within the objective characteristic. There were two noteworthy results; requirement (required or encouraged) and course objective.

Requirement (required or encouraged). The first result looked at First-Year Seminar programs that required all their first-year students to take the Seminar. When

first-year students were required to take the First-Year Seminar, full-time instructors were used 87% of the time. The decision about required enrollment falls on administrators. Requiring students to take Seminars is consistent with Kuh's (2008) high impact practices research. When describing participation of first-year students in relation to high-impact practices (of which First-Year Seminars is one), Kuh stated that institutions need to make these high impact practices “. . . available to every student every year” (p. 20). Therefore, he underscores the power of First-Year Seminars in sustaining student engagement and retention.

Course objectives. The second result examined the course objectives in the First-Year Seminar. If “developing academic skills” was identified as one of the importance course objectives in the First-Year Seminar, full-time instructors taught 86% of the time. Kuh et al. (2007) stated that communicating the importance of academic achievement and high expectations while providing the support needed to meet these standards are important aspects for student success. When Kuh (2008) stated that the next step was to make “. . . clearer the connections between intended learning outcomes [like developing academic skills] and specifically high-impact practices [like First-Year Seminars] (p. 7). Therefore, because full-time instructors are associated with Seminars that focus on developing academic skills, it seems that students benefit from an academic skills curriculum by having, as Kuh (2008) noted “more ‘purposeful pathways’” (p. 7).

In summary of the objective characteristic, the survey results indicated that there was a relationship among the objective characteristic and instructor type (full-time and part-time) when institutions and administrators make available, strongly encouraged or

even requires first-year students to take the Seminar. More often than not, when institutions require students to take the Seminar, full-time instructors are the teachers. In addition, when looking at the Seminar's objectives, developing academic skills, again, full-time instructors were hired to teach those Seminars.

Structural Characteristic

The structural characteristic of the Seminars and instructor type (full-time and part-time) was related to how the courses were constructed and organized. The results were derived from the characteristics subcategories: types of First-Year Seminar, administrative, and assessment. The structural characteristic had the most significant statistical results. There were six noteworthy results that are presented below are: offering academic related content, keeping class size low, granting academic credit, offering a grade option, having a dean/director/coordinator role, and making data-informed decisions.

Offering academic related content. In general, the study indicated that on average full-time instructors taught 64%, of the courses. However, when the First-Year Seminar type was academically-related (academic uniform content 86%, academic on various topics 92%, and hybrid 86%), the course had a higher percentage of full-time instructors teaching than non-academic related (extended orientation 78%, basic study skills 70%, pre-professional or discipline-linked content 77%, and other 77%). It appears that the more academically oriented the content of the Seminar, the more administrators are more committed to investing in full-time instructors.

Keeping class size small. Class size is related to the use of full-time instructors—when the size was 11 to 29 students, the Seminar was taught by a full-time instructors 86% of the time (10 or less 71% and 30 or more 64%). Research has shown that class size impacts student outcomes (Bettinger & Long, 2017). When instructors have lower class sizes, this aids in the amount of time and attention that instructors are able to give to students. It is student interaction with instructors is critical for students’ success (Brower & Inkelas, 2010; Inkelas et al., 2007; Inkelas & Weisman, 2003; Romsa, Bremer, Lewis, Romsa, 2017). While instructors in larger classes often rely on less engaged instructional methods, such as lecturing (Chatman, 1997), additional research indicates that, in addition, smaller class size also encourages active student participation (McKeachie, 1990). I. Y. Johnson’s (2010) study also called out that a first-year student “. . . might have different approach [or needs] to learning than a senior” (p. 705). I. Y. Johnson’s study found overall “. . . that increasing class size has a significant negative effect on final grades across all disciplinary areas . . .” (p. 721). When administrators commit to smaller class sizes, it seems they are also likely to commit to hiring full-time instructors.

Granting academic credit. Institutions granted academic credit (towards their degree) 93% of the time for their First-Year Seminars with a varying number of credit options that were granted. When institutions granted academic credit, the Seminar as taught by full-time instructors 87% of the time. A recent research study looking at Seminars with one, two, and three credits found that students benefited from participating from any of the three credits options; however, at-risk students benefited more in

Seminars with higher credits (Vaughan, Pergantis, & Moore, 2019). Swing (2002) found three-credit Seminars produced a range of items related to positive outcomes (i.e., academic skills and critical thinking). The more credit hours provided more depth of content and development of social-emotional skills (Cuseo, 2015). The additional credit hours likely also would increase the time spent on topics and time with the instructor; both of these have been shown to be associated with retention (Astin, 1993; Romsa et al., 2017; Tinto, 2006).

Offering a grade option. Another result was that 85% of institutions gave a letter-grade option and when they did, the Seminar was 87% more likely to be taught by full-time instructors. Tobolowsky and Associates (2008) reported that 80% of colleges offer the Seminar for a letter grade. Cuseo (2015) stated that, when Seminar programs offer a letter grade option, “it elevates the seminar’s academic legitimacy and credibility . . .” (p. 1). Cuseo went on to say that offering a letter grade sends a message to college community that the Seminar “counts” and can be taken seriously along other grade-bearing courses.

Having a dean/director/coordinator role. When there was this administrator lead, (79% of institutions in this study), the Seminar was taught by full-time instructor 86% of the time. The financial commitment of hiring a dean, director, or coordinator position seems to be associated with utilizing a full-time instructor indicating the value administrators placed on the Seminar.

Making data-informed decisions. For institutions that did assessment of their First-Year Seminars and when institutions indicated that they analyzed institutional data,

the Seminars were more likely taught by full-time instructors. Data-informed decision-making helps aid programs to be more effective (Kuh et al., 2007).

In summary of the structural characteristic, the relationship of the Structural characteristic and instructor type (full-time and part-time) included aspects of the First-Year Seminar that are rooted in common practices and research supporting student success. Offering academic related content, keeping class size low, granting academic credit, offering a grade option, having a dean/director/coordinator role, and making data-informed decisions, all are associated with high impact practices (Kuh, 2008) as well as increased student retention. These practices are also strongly associated with employing full-time instructors to teach the Seminar.

Instructional Characteristic

When looking at the Instructional characteristic and instructor type (full-time and part-time), there was one result that is discussed. The only noteworthy (as well as the only significant) result was related to training for instructors. Training is a subcategory of this characteristic. Fifty-four percent of the time institutions required training for their First-Year Seminars instructors. When institutions did require training for instructors of their seminars, the seminars were taught 87% of the time by full-time instructors. Thus when administrators valued training then they are also valued using more full-time instructors.

Situated in the Larger Context

Based on prior research, I believed that it was important to focus on the intersection of First-Year Seminars program characteristics and who taught them, full-

time and part-time instructors. Additionally, I believed that this would benefit future research of the First-Year Seminars and provide additional guidance for administrators making decision related to First-Year Seminars and retention. When administrators align their goals and the learning outcomes with high-impact practices like the use of First-Year Seminars and full-time instructors, administrators can build effective initiatives to address student retention (Kuh, 2008).

A significant amount of research in the last five decades has been conducted to explore retention and, specifically, the retention of first-year students. However, this is not an easily solved problem. Some (Braxton et al., 2004; Quaye & Harper, 2014) assert that one answer lies in implementing ideas rooted in the Engagement Theory offered by Kuh (1999). Engagement Theory looks directly at the infrastructure created by the institution, like First-Year Seminars, and, then, the allocation resources related to these retention initiatives, such as the instructor type (full-time and part-time) utilized (Kuh, 2001a; Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). Kuh et al. (2008) further suggested that institutions have more control over aiding first-year students' transition than they realize. One first entry point for institutions is to examine their practices related to student retention and, then, to reflect on their core values. What does the institution really care about in reference to retaining first year students? What are their values? Their decision-making is informed by their values. To understand the issue of retention, therefore, Kuh et al. argued that college communities should be looking at their values that inform their decisions and the actions that demonstrate their commitment to addressing the retention

issue. Quaye and Harper (2014) added onto this argument by asserting that the institutional decisions are the primary factor in student retention.

Given that one of the aspects and benefits of First-Year Seminars are that they are adaptable it would be critical for administrators to be informed and aware of their first-year students and their needs. Administrators should also be aware of research on programs and initiatives like First-Year Seminar that has shown positive association with student outcomes. Additionally, since administrator make critical decisions that impact programs and practices, further awareness will need to include how these decisions match the institutions' mission and values.

The study helps connect multiple aspects related to first-year student retention, First-Year Seminars, and instructors who teach those Seminars within a rich data set. The study's results can help guide administrators in their decision-making regarding First-Year Seminar programs and instructors who will teach them. Administrators play a large role in the effectiveness of First-Year Seminar programs. Their decision-making influences the programs and thus impacts the retention of their students.

Best Practices

Given that one of the aspects and benefits of First-Year Seminars are that they are adaptable it would be critical for administrators to be informed and aware of their first-year students and their needs. These administrators should also be aware of research on first-year students and supporting their needs. With the basic information that is specific to the institutions (possibly region, state, etc.) and then considering national practices, an administrator could use the results of this study to explore the profile of First-Year

Seminar program characteristics when full-time instructors taught them (based on the 2009 survey).

Significant chi-squares were found for the following characteristics and associated with specific dependent variables. It might prove useful for administrators to consider these results in making their decisions related to Seminar program characteristics and who will teach (full-time and part-time instructors).

1. What are the relationships among the institutional characteristic and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

A statistically significant relationship was found between the institutional characteristic and the use of full-time instructors when...

- 90% or more of First-year students took a Seminar
- The seminar was offered for 3 or more years

2. What are the relationships among the objectives characteristic and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

A statistically significant relationship was found between the objective characteristic and the use of full-time instructors when . . .

- More students took the Seminar and it was required
 - The course objectives were connected to learning outcomes
 - Likely to have Develop Academic Skills as an important course objective
 - The learning outcomes are closely linked to the course content
3. What are the relationships among the structural characteristic category and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

A statistically significant relationship was found between the structural characteristic and the use of full-time instructors when...

- The Seminar type had academic related content
- The class size was kept low (16 to 24 students)
- Academic credit was granted
- A grade option was offered
- A dean/director/coordinator role was established

- Decisions were informed by data
 - Identified outcomes were measured (i.e., interaction with instructor, use of campus services, etc.)
4. What are the relationships among the instructional characteristic and instructor type (full-time and part-time)?

A statistically significant relationship was found between the instructional characteristic and the use of full-time instructors when . . .

- Training is required for instructors

With a significant amount of research in the last five decades has been conducted to explore retention and, specifically, the retention of first-year students. However, this is not an easily solved problem. Some (Braxton et al., 2004; Quaye & Harper, 2014) assert that one answer lies in implementing ideas rooted in the Engagement Theory offered by Kuh (1999).

The Engagement Theory highlights two main aspects; the students and the characteristics they bring with them to college and the role that institutions have in aiding student retention. The Engagement Theory identifies that most institutions have little to no control over their students, other than their admission criteria, and continues to state that the institutions should be focusing on their own resources and decision-making to increase first-year student retention. An important aspect is for administrators to examine their decision making and practices related to student retention and then, to reflect how and why they made these decisions.

Limitations

The study has a few of limitations. One limitation was the instrument's design, which was perhaps the most important limitation for the study. Prior to 2009, the National Resource Center surveys did not have the ability to look at instructor types

based on full-time and part-time status. Surveys prior explored the role of who was teaching based on the following options; faculty, student affairs, graduate students, etc. In the 2009 survey the options included details on faculty type (tenure-track, adjunct, and full-time non-tenure track). An additional limitation with the survey related to instructors was that institutions were allowed to choose all that applied when asked who taught making it difficult to truly understand the impact of instructor type (full-time and part-time). There wasn't an additional question (like others in the survey) to learn which of these instructor type (full-time and part-time), if more than one, was primarily used teaching at an institution and, thus, overall nationally during that administration of the survey.

Furthermore, related to the survey, the results were based on the 548 (out of the 890 that completed survey and had a First-Year Seminar) institutions who indicated that their data could be shared for research such as this. While this researcher had access to 62% of the overall 2009 data, 38% were not included in this study because permission was not granted.

In addition, the relationships that were identified were statistical relationships. Statistical relationships are like lighthouses, they can guide us to the right destination; yet, they do not help us readily identify the qualities and reasons behind these relationships. Therefore, future qualitative research could help elaborate and explore the nuances and individual institutional experiences that guide the institutions in the creation of successful Seminar programs to aid in first-year student retention.

Additionally, this study is not saying that part-time instructors are less qualified nor that they shouldn't be teaching first-year students. There are limitations around classifications and labels that are given for instructors. These labels do not represent the instructors' ability to instruct. This researcher, as mentioned before, believes that these differences in outcomes are possibly due to part-time instructors not being supported at their institutions. Like students, instructors also need to be supported and feel mattered.

Finally, in general the overall number of variables and results were a limitation. There were 131 variables and with 49 results that were significant, this added to the complexity of understanding the impact and importance of the overall study's results. The researcher addressed this by reporting out the results using the First-Year Seminars characteristics (categories), then further by the subcategories, and finally by using visuals to illustrate the strength of the relationships.

Implications

The study brought forth some compelling and worthwhile patterns within the Seminar characteristics of those institutions who used full-time rather than those who used part-time instructors. Therefore, there were some results that have implications for administrators who make decisions about the First-Year Seminar programs and, especially, who they choose to teach the Seminar. In general, as administrators align their goals (learning outcomes) with high-impact practices like the use of First-Year Seminars, administrators can build effective initiatives to address student retention (Kuh, 2008).

Kuh (2001b) stated that institutions have the ability to influence student retention and that the answer lies in their core values. One very significant way that institutions can influence student retention is through their policies, programs, and resources allocation. Related to Kuh's statement, institutions exploring how they might increase their student's retention rates should focus on their own decision-making. Related to implications for this study, administrators need to recognize how their institutional values influences their decision-making. Kuh stated that examining and being aware of the institutional values that inform their decision-making in retention is critical part of the retention solution.

Future Research

The study provides a comprehensive exploration of the relationships among the characteristics of First-Year Seminars and instructor type (full-time and part-time). I focused on the intersection of the First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full-time and part-time), looking at a very large and comprehensive database from 548 (those available for to researcher) colleges who responded to a national survey from the National Resource Center. Other researchers have focused on instructor type (full-time and part-time) and students outcomes (Ehrenberg & Zhang 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2011; Schibik & Harrington 2004; Umbach 2007) and found that there was a negative association between part-time instructors and student outcomes. Umbach (2007) further explored instructor type based on tenure-instructors and non-tenure full-time instructors and found there were few, if any, differences related to student outcomes (retention, grade point average, graduation) by these two instructor types. Thus, this is why I

examined First-Year Seminar programs by instructor type (full-time and part-time). Here are some other suggestions:

- Given the fact that institutions overall chose full-time instructors 64% of the time, it would be good to explore the reasons why institutions made those decisions. What factors influenced choosing full-time instructor option rather than part-time?
- Future research could explore the connection of who teaches in the First-Year Seminar programs and more specific student outcomes (e.g., retention to second year, grade point average, etc.). Additionally, research at multiple institutions might be helpful.
- Because institutions may have multiple sessions of a First-Year Seminar concurrently and rely on multiple instructor types (full-time and part-time) at one time, it would be helpful for institution to disaggregate the multiple instructor types (full-time and part-time) teaching First-Year Seminars and look at valued student outcomes, like grades in the second year.
- Exploring how institutional commitment inform First-Year Seminar programs would be important aspect to better understanding First-Year Seminar programs and their outcomes as institutions' commitment, inform their decision-making.

Conclusion

It is important to understand that there are many elements that influence first-year student retention. These elements are complex and include many moving pieces. This study added understanding of the relationships among the characteristics of First-Year Seminar programs and instructor type (full-time and part-time instructors). This study identified that there were important elements of the First-Year Seminar program that were associated with instructor type (full-time and part-time), and highlights institutional value when making program decisions. In addition, the study furthers the understanding of the First-Year Seminars characteristics in the 2009 survey and academic year. It is important to understand the impacts of these program characteristics and the engagement

of the institution on first-year retention. The study's results will help administrators' understand how First-Year Seminar program characteristics are related to instructor type (full-time and part-time). These understandings could help guide administrators' decision-making around institutional policies, programs, and resources, such as First-Year Seminars and, hopefully, lead to better retention and a better college experience for both the students and the instructors.

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Appendix A

2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars

Survey Instrument

2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars

This survey is dedicated to gathering information regarding first-year seminars. The survey should take 30-45 minutes to complete. You may exit the survey at any time and return, and your responses will be saved. If you would like a copy of your responses, you will need to print each page of your survey before exiting. Your responses are important to us, so please respond by December 11, 2009. Thank you.

1 ^A Full name of institution: _____

2 ^A City: _____

3 ^A State: _____

4 ^A Your name: _____

5 ^A Title: _____

6 ^A Mark the appropriate category for your institution:

☐ Two-year institution

☐ Four-year institution

7 ^A Mark the appropriate category for your institution:

☐ Public

☐ Private, not-for-profit

☐ Private, for-profit

8 ^A What is the approximate number of entering first-year students in academic year 2009-2010 at your institution?

☐ Less than 500

☐ 501 - 1,000

☐ 1,001 - 1,500

☐ 1,501 - 2,000

☐ 2,001 - 2,500

☐ 2,501 - 3,000

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☐ 3,001 - 3,500

☐ 3,501 - 4,000

☐ 4,001 - 5,000

☐ More than 5,000

9 ^A First-year seminars are courses designed to enhance the academic skills and/or social development of first-year college students.

Does your institution, including any department or division, offer one or more first-year seminar-type courses?

☐ I don't know (*Go to end*)

☐ No (*Go to end*)

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 10*)

10 ^A What is the approximate percentage of first-year students who take a first-year seminar course on your campus?

☐ Less than 10%

☐ 20% - 29%

☐ 30% - 39%

☐ 40% - 49%

☐ 50% - 59%

☐ 60% - 69%

☐ 70% - 79%

☐ 80% - 89%

☐ 90% - 99%

☐ 100%

11 ^A Approximately how many years has a first-year seminar been offered on your campus?

☐ Two years or less

☐ Three to 10 years

☐ More than 10 years

Types of Seminars Offered

12 ^A Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus: (Check all that apply)

☐ Extended orientation seminar– Sometimes called freshman orientation, college survival, college transition, or student success course. Content often includes introduction to campus resources, time management, academic and career planning, learning strategies, and an introduction to student development issues.

☐ Academic seminar with generally uniform academic content across sections– May be an interdisciplinary or theme-oriented course, sometimes part of a general education requirement. Primary focus is on academic theme/discipline, but will often include academic skills components such as critical thinking and expository writing.

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☐ Academic seminar on various topics– Similar to previously mentioned academic seminar except that specific topics vary from section to section.

☐ Preprofessional or discipline-linked seminar– Designed to prepare students for the demands of the major/discipline and the profession. Generally taught within professional schools or specific disciplines such as engineering, health sciences, business, or education.

☐ Basic study skills seminar– Offered for academically underprepared students. The focus is

on basic academic skills such as grammar, note taking, and reading texts, etc.

☐ Hybrid– Has elements from two or more types of seminar. (*Go to Question 13*)

☐ Other (*Go to Question 14*)

13 ^A Please describe the *Hybrid* first-year seminar: _____

14 ^A Please describe the *Other* first-year seminar: _____

Specific Seminar Information

15 ^A If you offer more than one first-year seminar type, select the type with the *highest* total student enrollment:

- ☐ Extended orientation seminar
- ☐ Academic seminar with generally uniform content
- ☐ Academic seminar on various topics
- ☐ Preprofessional or discipline-linked seminar
- ☐ Basic study skills seminar
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☐ Other

Please answer the remaining questions for only the first-year seminar type with the highest total enrollment on your campus.

16 ^A Please indicate the approximate number of sections of this seminar type that will be offered in the 2009-2010 academic year:

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1 – 10
- ☐ 11 – 20
- ☐ 21 – 30
- ☐ 31 – 40
- ☐ 41 – 50
- ☐ 51 – 60
- ☐ 61 – 70
- 72 ^A 2009 National Survey of First-Year Seminars
- ☐ 71 – 80
- ☐ 81 – 90
- ☐ 91 – 100
- ☐ Over 100

The Students

17 ^A What is the approximate class size for each first-year seminar section?

- ☐ 10 students or fewer

- ☐ 11 – 15
- ☐ 16 – 19
- ☐ 20 – 24
- ☐ 25 – 29
- ☐ 30 or more

18 ^A What is the approximate percentage of first-year students *required* to take the first-year seminar?

- ☐ None are required to take it
- ☐ Less than 10%
- ☐ 10% - 19%
- ☐ 20% - 29%
- ☐ 30% - 39%
- ☐ 40% - 49%
- ☐ 50% - 59%
- ☐ 60% - 69%
- ☐ 70% - 79%
- ☐ 80% - 89%
- ☐ 90% - 99%
- ☐ 100%

19 ^A Which students, by category, are *required* to take the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ None are required to take it
- ☐ All first-year students are required to take it
- ☐ Academically underprepared students
- ☐ First-generation students
- ☐ Honors students
- ☐ International students
- ☐ Learning community participants
- ☐ Preprofessional students (e.g., prelaw, premed)
- ☐ Provisionally admitted students

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- ☐ Student-athletes
- ☐ Students participating in dual-enrollment programs
- ☐ Students residing within a particular residence hall

☐ Students within specific majors (please list) _____

☐ Transfer students

☐ TRIO participants

☐ Undeclared students

☐ Other (please specify) _____

20 ^A Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which *special sections* of the first-year seminar are offered: (Check all that apply)

☐ No special sections are offered

☐ Academically underprepared students

☐ First-generation students

☐ Honors students

☐ International students

☐ Learning community participants

☐ Preprofessional students (e.g., prelaw, premed)

☐ Provisionally admitted students

☐ Student-athletes

☐ Students participating in dual-enrollment programs

☐ Students residing within a particular residence hall

☐ Students within specific majors (please list) _____

☐ Transfer students

☐ TRIO participants

☐ Undeclared students

☐ Other (please specify) _____

The Instructors

21 ^A Who teaches the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

☐ Adjunct faculty (*Go to Question 30, Question 35*)

☐ Full-time non-tenure-track faculty

☐ Graduate students (*Go to Question 28, Question 34*)

☐ Student affairs professionals (*Go to Question 29, Question 32*)

☐ Tenure-track faculty (*Go to Question 27, Question 31*)

☐ Undergraduate students (*Go to Question 22*)

☐ Other campus professionals (please specify) (*Go to Question 33*) _____

22 ^A If undergraduate students assist in the first-year seminar, what is their role? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ They teach independently.
- ☐ They teach as a part of a team.
- ☐ They assist the instructor, but do not teach.
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

23 ^A Indicate the approximate percentage of sections that are team taught:

- ☐ No sections are team taught.
- ☐ Less than 10%
- ☐ 10% - 19%
- ☐ 20% - 29%
- ☐ 30% - 39%
- ☐ 40% - 49%
- ☐ 50% - 59%
- ☐ 60% - 69%
- ☐ 70% - 79%
- ☐ 80% - 89%
- ☐ 90% - 99%
- ☐ 100%

24 ^A Please describe the team configurations (e.g., two faculty, one faculty and one advisor) if they are used in your first-year seminar courses: _____

25 ^A Are any first-year students intentionally placed in first-year seminar sections taught by their academic advisors?

- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (*Go to Question 26*)

26 ^A What is the approximate percentage of students placed in sections with their academic advisors?

- ☐ Less than 10%
- ☐ 10% - 19%
- ☐ 20% - 29%
- ☐ 30% - 39%
- ☐ 40% - 49%
- ☐ 50% - 59%

☐ 60% - 69%

☐ 70% - 79%

☐ 80% - 89%

☐ 90% - 99%

☐ 100%

27 ^A Faculty who teach the first-year seminar teach the course as: (Check all that apply)

☐ An overload course

☐ Part of regular teaching load

☐ Other (please specify) _____

28 ^A Graduate students who teach the first-year seminar teach the course as: (Check all that apply)

☐ An assigned responsibility

☐ An extra responsibility

☐ Other (please specify) _____

29 ^A Student affairs professionals who teach the first-year seminar teach the course as: (Check all that apply)

☐ An assigned responsibility

☐ An extra responsibility

☐ Other (please specify) _____

30 ^A What type of compensation is offered to adjunct faculty for teaching the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

☐ No compensation is offered

☐ Graduate student support (*Go to Question 41*)

☐ Release time (*Go to Question 40*)

☐ Stipend (*Go to Question 35*)

☐ Unrestricted professional development funds (*Go to Question 42*)

☐ Other (please specify) _____

31 ^A What type of compensation is offered to tenure-track faculty for teaching the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

☐ No compensation is offered

☐ Graduate student support

☐ Release time

☐ Stipend (*Go to Question 36*)

☐ Unrestricted professional development funds

☐ Other (please specify) _____

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32 ^A What type of compensation is offered to student affairs professionals for teaching the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ No compensation is offered
- ☐ Graduate student support
- ☐ Release time
- ☐ Stipend (*Go to Question 37*)
- ☐ Unrestricted professional development funds
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

33 ^A What type of compensation is offered to other campus professionals for teaching the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ No compensation is offered
- ☐ Graduate student support
- ☐ Release time
- ☐ Stipend (*Go to Question 38*)
- ☐ Unrestricted professional development funds
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

34 ^A What type of compensation is offered to graduate students for teaching the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ No compensation is offered
- ☐ Stipend (*Go to Question 39*)
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

35 ^A Please indicate the total amount of the stipend per class for adjunct faculty:

- ☐ 500 or less
- ☐ \$501 - \$1,000
- ☐ \$2,001 - \$2,500
- ☐ \$2,501 - \$3,000
- ☐ \$3,001 - \$3,500
- ☐ \$4,001 - \$4,500
- ☐ \$4,501 - \$5,000
- ☐ More than \$5,000

36 ^A Please indicate the total amount of the stipend per class for tenure-track faculty:

- ☐ 500 or less
- ☐ \$501 - \$1,000
- ☐ \$2,001 - \$2,500

☐ \$2,501 - \$3,000

☐ \$3,001 - \$3,500

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☐ \$4,001 - \$4,500

☐ \$4501 - \$5000

☐ More than \$5000

37 ^A Please indicate the total amount of the stipend per class for student affairs professionals:

☐ 500 or less

☐ \$501 - \$1,000

☐ \$2,001 - \$2,500

☐ \$2,501 - \$3,000

☐ \$3,001 - \$3,500

☐ \$4,001 - \$4,500

☐ \$4,501 - \$5,000

☐ More than \$5,000

38 ^A Please indicate the total amount of the stipend per class for other campus professionals:

☐ 500 or less

☐ \$501 - \$1,000

☐ \$2,001 - \$2,500

☐ \$2,501 - \$3,000

☐ \$3,001 - \$3,500

☐ \$4,001 - \$4,500

☐ \$4,501 - \$5,000

☐ More than \$5,000

39 ^A Please indicate the total amount of the stipend per class for graduate students:

☐ 500 or less

☐ \$501 - \$1,000

☐ \$2,001 - \$2,500

☐ \$2,501 - \$3,000

☐ \$3,001 - \$3,500

☐ \$4,001 - \$4,500

☐ \$4,501 - \$5,000

☐ More than \$5,000

40 ^A Please indicate the amount of release time: _____

41 ^A Please indicate the number of hours per week of graduate student support: _____

42 ^A Please describe the unrestricted professional development funds: _____

78 ^A 2009 National Survey of First-Year Seminars

43 ^A Is instructor training *offered* for first-year seminar instructors?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 45*)

44 ^A Is instructor training *required* for first-year seminar instructors?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes

45 ^A How long is new instructor training?

☐ Half a day or less

☐ 1 day

☐ 2 days

☐ 3 days

☐ 4 days

☐ 1 week

☐ Other (please specify) _____

The Course

46 ^A What is the typical length of a section of the first-year seminar?

☐ Half a semester

☐ One quarter

☐ One semester

☐ One year

☐ Other (please specify) _____

47 ^A How is the first-year seminar graded?

☐ Pass/fail

☐ Letter grade

☐ No grade

☐ Other (please specify) _____

48 ^A Does the first-year seminar carry academic credit?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 49, Question 50*)

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49 ^AHow many credits does the first-year seminar carry?

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

☐ More than 5

50 ^AHow is the first-year seminar credit applied? (Check all that apply)

☐ As an elective

☐ Toward general education requirements

☐ Toward major requirements

☐ Other (please specify) _____

51 ^AHow many total classroom contact hours are there per week in the first-year seminar?

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

☐ More than 5

52 ^ADo any sections include a service-learning component (i.e., nonremunerative service as part of a course)?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 53*)

53 ^APlease describe the service-learning component of the seminar: _____

54 ^AAre any sections linked to one or more other courses (i.e., learning community—enrolling a cohort of students into two or more courses)?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 56*)

80 ^A2009 National Survey of First-Year Seminars

55 ^ADo any sections incorporate a first-year/summer reading program component?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes

56 ^A Please describe the learning community: _____

57 ^A Do any sections incorporate online components?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 58, Question 59*)

58 ^A Please describe the online components that are included in the course: _____

59 ^A Are there any online-only sections?

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 60*)

60 ^A Please indicate the approximate percentage of online-only sections:

☐ Less than 10%

☐ 10% - 19%

☐ 20% - 29%

☐ 30% - 39%

☐ 40% - 49%

☐ 50% - 59%

☐ 60% - 69%

☐ 70% - 79%

☐ 80% - 89%

☐ 90% - 99%

☐ 100%

The Administration

61 ^A What campus unit directly administers the first-year seminar?

☐ Academic affairs

☐ Academic department(s) (please list) _____

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☐ College or school (e.g., College of Liberal Arts)

☐ First-year program office

☐ Student affairs

☐ Other (please specify) _____

62 ^A Is there a dean/director/coordinator of the first-year seminar?

- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (*Go to Question 63*)

63 ^A Does the dean/director/coordinator of the first-year seminar work full time or less than full time in this position?

- ☐ Full time (approximately 40 hours per week)
- ☐ Less than full time (*Go to Question 64*)

64 ^A Does the dean/director/coordinator have another position on campus?

- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (*Go to Question 65*)

65 ^A The dean/director/coordinator's other campus role is as a/an: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Academic affairs administrator
- ☐ Faculty member
- ☐ Student affairs administrator
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Assessment and Evaluation

66 ^A Select the *three* most important *course objectives* for the first-year seminar:

- ☐ Create common first-year experience
- ☐ Develop a connection with the institution
- ☐ Develop academic skills
- ☐ Develop financial literacy
- ☐ Develop support network/friendships
- ☐ Develop writing skills
- ☐ Improve sophomore return rates
- ☐ Increase student/faculty interaction
- ☐ Introduce a discipline
- ☐ Provide orientation to campus resources and services
- ☐ Self-exploration/personal development
- ☐ Encourage arts participation
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

82 ^A 2009 National Survey of First-Year Seminars

67 ^A Select the *three* most important *topics* that compose the content of this first-year seminar:

- ☐ Academic planning/advising

- ☐ Career exploration/preparation
- ☐ Campus resources
- ☐ College policies and procedures
- ☐ Critical thinking
- ☐ Diversity issues
- ☐ Financial literacy
- ☐ Health and wellness
- ☐ Relationship issues (e.g., interpersonal skills, conflict resolution)
- ☐ Specific disciplinary topic
- ☐ Study skills
- ☐ Time management
- ☐ Writing skills (Go to *Question 68*)
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

68 ^A Briefly describe up to *three* assignments or activities used to promote the development of writing skills in the seminar: _____

69 ^A Please list up to *three* elements or aspects of your first-year seminar that you consider innovative or especially successful: _____

70 ^A Has your first-year seminar been formally assessed or evaluated since fall 2006?

- ☐ I don't know (*Go to Question 83*)
- ☐ No (*Go to Question 83*)
- ☐ Yes (*Go to Question 71*)

What type of assessment was conducted?

71 ^A Analysis of institutional data (e.g., GPA, retention rates, graduation)

- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

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72 ^A Focus groups with instructors

- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

73 ^A Focus groups with students

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes

74 ^A Individual interviews with instructors

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes

75 ^A Individual interviews with students

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes

76 ^A Student course evaluation

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes

77 ^A Survey instrument

☐ I don't know

☐ No

☐ Yes (*Go to Question 78*)

78 ^A What type of survey instrument did your institution use to assess or evaluate the first-year seminar? (Check all that apply)

☐ I don't know

☐ A locally developed (i.e., home-grown) survey

☐ A national survey (e.g., NSSE, CCSSE, CIRP, EBI) (*Go to Question 79*)

84 ^A 2009 National Survey of First-Year Seminars

79 ^A If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: (Check all that apply)

☐ Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

☐ Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey

☐ Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Your First College Year (YFCY)

☐ First-Year Initiative (FYI)

☐ National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

☐ Other (please specify) _____

80 ^A Please describe any other types of assessment or evaluation that were conducted: _____

81 ^A Select each outcome that was measured: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Connections with peers
- ☐ Grade point average
- ☐ Out-of-class student/faculty interaction
- ☐ Participation in campus activities
- ☐ Persistence to graduation
- ☐ Persistence to sophomore year
- ☐ Satisfaction with faculty
- ☐ Satisfaction with the institution
- ☐ Use of campus services
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

82 ^A Please describe the most significant findings from your assessment and evaluation of firstyear seminar outcomes: _____

83 ^A It is our practice to make available specific and general information gathered from this survey. In general, findings from the survey are reported in aggregate, but we may identify individual

institutions that have agreed to allow their responses to be shared on request. Please select the appropriate response:

- ☐ You may share my survey responses.
- ☐ Please do not share my survey responses.

Appendix B

Application for Obtaining Data

Application for Obtaining Data: National Resource Center for The First-Year
Experience and Students in Transition

Date of Application: _____

Requested dataset: _____

Name of Principal Investigator:

Title of Principal Investigator:

Name of Associate Investigator(s) – if applicable

Institution: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code:

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Requested Delivery Date for Data: _____

As separate documents, please upload 1) current curriculum vitae for the Principal Investigator, and 2) IRB approval for the project.

Only fully completed and documented requests will be considered. Please ensure your application is complete.

Application checklist:

- o Application for Obtaining Data
 - o Principal Investigator's curriculum vitae
 - o IRB approval for research project

- o Agreement for the Use of Data
 - o Research Proposal Outline
 - o Security Pledge signed by Principal Investigator and all Associate Investigators
-

Please send signed Application, Agreement, Research Proposal Outline, and Security Pledge to:

Dallin George Young, Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition University of South Carolina 1728 College Street Columbia, SC 29208

Appendix C

Agreement for the Use of Data

Agreement for the Use of Data: National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

I. Definitions

- A. “Principal Investigator” or “PI” is the person primarily responsible for analysis and other use of data obtained through this agreement.
- B. “Associate Investigator(s)” are persons, excluding the investigator, who will have access to data obtained through this agreement.
- C. “Receiving institution” is the university or research institution at which the investigator will conduct research using data obtained through this agreement.
- D. “Representative of receiving institution” is a person authorized to enter into contractual agreement on behalf of the receiving institution.

II. Requirements of Principal Investigator

PIs must meet one of the following criteria:

- A. Hold a faculty or staff position at the receiving institution, or
- B. Be a graduate student under the direct supervision of a Ph.D. or other terminal degree professional who holds a faculty or staff position at the receiving institution.

III. Requirements of a Receiving Institution Receiving Institutions must meet the following criteria:

- A. Be an institution of higher education, a research organization, or a government agency,
- B. Have a demonstrated record of using data according to commonly-accepted standards of research ethics, and
- C. Have an IRB or institutional research review board.

IV. Obligations of the Principal Investigator, Associate Investigator(s), and Receiving Institution Data provided under this agreement shall be held by the PI, associate investigator(s), and receiving institution in the strictest confidence and can only be disclosed in compliance with the terms of this agreement.

The PI, associate investigator(s), and receiving institution agree:

- A. That the data will be used solely for research purposes, and that no attempt will be made to identify specific individuals or participants nor will any listing of data at the individual or participant level be published or otherwise distributed
- B. That no persons other than those identified in this agreement, or in subsequent amendments to this agreement, as investigator or research staff, be permitted

access to the contents of data files or any files derived from data files provided by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

C. To respond fully and in writing within ten working days after receipt of any written inquiry from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition regarding compliance with this contract or the expected date of completion of work with the data or data derived there from

D. To make available for inspection, at reasonable hours, by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition the data files and any other information, written or electronic, relating to this agreement

E. To supply the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition with:

1. A complete application packet via hardcopies in the mail,
2. Two copies of this entire agreement with original Institutional Signatures page.

F. To include in each written report or other publication based on analysis of data from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, the following statement: The original research using this dataset was conducted by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. The author has been granted special permission to use the dataset for independent research. The analysis and opinions presented in this [report, article, etc.] are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

G. To advise the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition of 1) any plans to share findings with the media, or 2) media inquiries as a result from the proposed research.

H. To destroy all the electronic data files at the agreed upon date.

I. To provide annual reports in electronic format to the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition staff which include:

1. A copy of the annual IRB approval for the research project,
2. A listing of public presentations at professional meetings using results based on these data (if applicable),
3. A listing of papers accepted for publication using these data, with complete citations (if applicable),
4. A listing of graduate students using the data for dissertations or theses, the titles of these papers, and the date of completion (if applicable).

J. A breach of this Agreement by the PI, associate investigator(s), and/or the receiving institution may cause irreparable damage to the National Resource

Center for The First Year Experience and Students in Transition. Therefore, the National Resource Center for The First Year Experience and Students in Transition shall be entitled to injunctive relief to restrain the PI, associate investigator(s), and/or the receiving institution from breaching this Agreement.

Institutional Signatures

Principal Investigator

Representative of Receiving Institution

Signature Date

Signature Date

Name typed or printed

Name typed or printed

Title

Title

Institution

Institution

Building address

Building address

Street address

Street address

City, State, Zip

City, State, Zip

If investigator is a graduate student, please supply the following:

Supervising Faculty or Researcher

Representative of the National Resource
Center for the First-Year Experience and
Students in Transition

Signature Date

Signature Date

Name typed or printed

Name typed or printed

Title

Title

Institution

Building address

Street address

City, State, Zip

Appendix D

Research Proposal Outline for Data Access

Research Proposal Outline for Data Access: National Resource Center for
The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

Abstract (less than 100 words)

The abstract should be a brief summary of the proposal's key points.

Background/Literature Review (less than 500 words)

Brief conceptual and/or theoretical framework, including supporting research.

Research Questions

Introduce the question(s) to be addressed by your research.

Method and Procedures (less than 400 words)

Describe the research methodology.

Dissemination Plan (less than 500 words)

Describe your specific plans for dissemination and/or publication of your findings.

Appendix E

Security Pledge for Data Access

Security Pledge for Data Access: National Resource Center for
The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

I, _____, through my involvement with and work on the _____ dataset will have access to data collected by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. By virtue of my affiliation with this project, I have access to and use of the data. I understand that access to this information carries with it responsibility to guard against unauthorized use and to abide by the Agreement for the Use of Data from the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

I agree to fulfill my responsibilities on this project in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Application for Obtaining Data, Agreement for the Use of Data, and Research Proposal Outline, and the following guidelines:

1. I agree to not permit non-project personnel to access these data, either electronically or in hard copy.
2. I agree not to attempt to identify individuals or survey participants.

Principal Investigator

Signature

Date

Associate Investigator (if applicable)

Signature

Date

Associate Investigator (if applicable)

Signature

Date

Appendix F

2009 Comprehensive Tables of Results

2009 Comprehensive Tables of Results

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#6 Mark the appropriate category for your institution		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
2yr	44	102	146
4yr	71	331	402
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.002		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#7 Mark the appropriate category for your institution		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Public	69	224	293
Private Not-for- private	40	180	220
Private for-profit	06	29	35
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.284		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#8 What is the approximate number of entering first-year students in academic year 2009-2010 at your institution?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
> 500 students	42	137	179
501 – 1000 students	25	113	138
1001 – 1500 students	13	52	65
1501 – 2000 students	04	40	44

2001 – 2500 students	08	17	25
2501 – 3000 students	08	16	24
3001 – 3500 students	04	18	22
3501 – 4000 students	01	09	10
4001 – 5000 students	03	13	16
< 5000 students	07	18	25
totals	115	443	548
P Value	.290		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#9 Does your institution, including any department or division, offer one or more first-year seminar-type courses?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Yes	115	433	548
No	00	00	00
I don't know	00	00	00
totals	115	433	548

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 10 What is the approximate percentage of first-year students who take a first-year seminar course on your campus?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
> 10%	09	27	36
20% - 29%	08	25	33
30% - 39%	10	26	36
40% - 49%	05	08	13
50% - 59%	04	15	19
60% - 69%	06	10	16

70% - 79%	09	20	29
80% - 89%	04	37	41
90% - 99%	21	91	112
100%	19	148	167
totals	104	433	537
P Value	.015		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 11 Approximately how many years has a first-year seminar been offered on your campus?		
	N = 537 M= 11		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
2yrs or less	24	51	75
3yrs to 10yrs	35	177	212
More than 10yrs	45	205	250
totals	104	433	537
P Value	.011		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.1 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Extended Orientation Seminar)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	43	177	220
Yes	72	256	328
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.498		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.2 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Academic Seminar w/Generally uniform academic content across sections)		

	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	95	312	407
Yes	20	121	141
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.021		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.3 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Academic seminar on various topics)		
	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	104	308	412
Yes	11	125	136
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.4 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Pre-professional or discipline linked seminar)		
	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	98	376	474
Yes	17	57	74
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.652		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.5 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Basic study skills seminar)		
	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	80	350	430
Yes	35	83	118
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.009		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.6 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Hybrid)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	98	331	429
Yes	17	102	119
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.043		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 12.7 Select each discrete type of first-year seminar that best describes the seminars that exist on your campus? (Other)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	112	423	535
Yes	03	10	13
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.851		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 15 If you offer more than one first-year seminar type, select the type with the highest total student enrollment.		
	N = 520 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Extended Orientation	54	156	210
Academic w/ generally uniform content	07	81	88
Academic on various topics	02	87	89
Pre-professional or discipline-linked	02	15	17
Basic study skills	09	11	20
Hybrid	08	73	81

Other	05	10	15
totals	87	433	520
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 16 Please indicate the approximate number of this seminar type that will be offered in the 2009-2010 academic year.		
	N = 520 M= 28		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
0	00	00	00
1 – 10	40	83	123
11 - 20	18	118	136
21 - 30	08	82	90
31 – 40	04	40	44
41 - 50	05	26	31
51 – 60	01	24	25
61 – 70	03	14	17
71 – 80	00	11	11
81 – 90	01	08	09
91 -100	01	03	04
Over 100	06	24	30
totals	87	433	520
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 17 What is the approximate class size for each first-year seminar section?		
	N = 513 M= 35		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
10 or fewer	02	05	07
11 – 15	11	72	83
16 – 19	13	108	121
20 – 24	25	151	176
25 – 29	14	70	84
30 or more	15	27	42
totals	80	433	513
P Value	.005		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 18 What is the approximate percentage of first-year students required to take the first-year seminar?		
	N = 513 M = 35		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
None	22	86	108
Less than 10%	05	26	31
10% - 19%	04	16	20
20% - 29%	03	12	15
30% - 39%	03	06	09
40% - 49%	01	05	06
50% - 59%	00	04	04
60% - 69%	04	05	09
70% - 79%	02	10	12
80% - 89%	00	17	17
90% - 99%	13	69	82
100%	23	177	200
totals	80	433	513
P Value	.118		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.1 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (None are required to take it)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	93	352	445
Yes	22	81	103
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.918		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.2 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (All first-year students are required to take it)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	76	179	255
Yes	39	254	293
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.3 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Academic underprepared students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	100	373	473
Yes	15	60	75
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.822		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.4 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (First-generation students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	109	410	519
Yes	06	23	29
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.968		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.5 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Honors students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	109	404	513
Yes	06	29	35
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.564		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.6 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (International students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	414	524
Yes	05	19	24
totals	115	433	548

P Value	.985

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.7 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Learning community participants)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	401	511
Yes	05	32	37
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.248		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.8 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Pre-professional students)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	112	416	528
Yes	03	17	20
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.503		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.9 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Provisionally admitted students)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	106	400	506
Yes	09	33	42
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.941		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.10 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Student athletes)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	107	400	507

Yes	08	33	41
totals	115	433	548
P Value	810		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.11 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Students participating in dual enrollment programs)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	112	426	538
Yes	03	07	10
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.480		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.12 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (None are required to take it)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	420	530
Yes	05	13	18
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.472		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.13 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Students within specific majors)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	111	414	525
Yes	04	19	23
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.665		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.14 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Transfer students)		
	N = 548 M = 0		

	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	410	520
Yes	05	23	28
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.676		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.15 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Trio Participants)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	112	415	527
Yes	03	18	21
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.442		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.16 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Undeclared students)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	411	521
Yes	05	22	27
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.747		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 19.17 Which students, by category, are required to take the first-year seminar? (Other)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	107	377	484
Yes	08	56	64
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.076		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	# 20.1 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (No special sections are offered)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	77	249	326
Yes	38	184	222
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.066		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.2 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Academically underprepared students)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	103	354	457
Yes	12	79	91
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.045		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.3 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (First-generation student)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	113	422	535
Yes	02	11	13
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.616		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.4 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Honors students)		
	N = 548 M = 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	103	335	438
Yes	12	98	110
totals	115	433	548

P Value	.004

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.5 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (International students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	113	414	527
Yes	02	19	21
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.188		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.6 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Learning community participants)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	104	345	449
Yes	11	88	99
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.008		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.7 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Preprofessional students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	404	514
Yes	05	29	34
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.353		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.8 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Provisionally admitted students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		

	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	111	414	525
Yes	04	19	23
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.665		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.9 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Student athletes)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	111	391	502
Yes	04	42	46
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.032		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.10 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Student participating in dual-enrollment programs)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	114	425	539
Yes	01	08	09
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.463		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.11 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Students residing within a particular residence hall)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	113	410	523
Yes	02	23	25
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.103		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.12 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Students within specific majors)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	105	367	472
Yes	10	66	76
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.071		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.13 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Transfer students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	112	404	516
Yes	03	29	32
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.096		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.14 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (TRIO Students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	114	411	525
Yes	01	22	23
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.045		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.15 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Undeclared students)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	397	507
Yes	05	36	41
totals	115	433	548

P Value	.151

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 20.16 Please identify unique subpopulations of students for which special sections of the first-year seminar are offered? (Other)		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	108	387	495
Yes	07	46	53
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.143		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 23 Indicate the approximate percentage of sections that are team taught?		
	N =511 M=37		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
None	40	239	279
Less than 10%	13	107	120
10% - 19%	01	20	21
20% - 29%	02	06	08
30% - 39%	03	05	08
40% - 49%	01	00	01
50% - 59%	00	08	08
60% - 69%	00	01	01
70% - 79%	00	03	03
80% - 89%	00	02	02
90% - 99%	06	05	11
100%	12	37	49
totals	78	433	511
P Value	.001		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#25 Are any first-year students intentionally placed in first-year seminar sections taught by their academic advisors?		
	N = 510 M= 38		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals

I don't know	05	27	32
No	57	248	305
Yes	16	157	173
totals	78	432	510
P Value	.022		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 26 What is the approximate percentage of students placed in sections with their academic advisors?		
	N =173 M= 375		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Less than 10%	03	24	27
10% - 19%	03	20	23
20% - 29%	01	14	15
30% - 39%	02	11	13
40% - 49%	00	08	08
50% - 59%	02	09	11
60% - 69%	01	04	05
70% - 79%	00	03	03
80% - 89%	01	02	03
90% - 99%	01	10	11
100%	02	52	54
totals	16	157	173
P Value	.618		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#43 Is instructor training offered for first-year seminar instructors?		
	N = 507 M= 41		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	03	05	08
No	19	76	95
Yes	56	348	404
totals	78	429	507
P Value	.071		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	#44 Is instructor training required for first-year seminar instructors?		
	N = 507 M= 41		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	06	04	10
No	37	186	223
Yes	35	239	274
totals	78	429	507
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#45 How long is new instructor training?		
	N = 404 M= 144		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Half day or less	23	115	138
1 day	12	80	92
2 day	07	50	57
3 day	03	16	19
4 day	02	04	06
1 week	02	10	12
Other	07	73	80
totals	56	348	404
P Value	.560		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#46 What is the typical length of a section of the first-year seminar?		
	N = 506 M=42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Half semester	18	42	60
One quarter	03	20	23
One semester	44	307	351
One year	02	20	22
Other	11	39	50
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.006		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#47 How is the first-year seminar graded?		
	N = 506 M=42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Pass/fail	17	30	47
Letter grade	55	374	429
No grade	05	04	09
Other	01	20	21
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 48 Does the first-year seminar carry academic credit?		
	N = 506 M= 42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	15	23	38
Yes	63	405	468
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#49 How many credits does the first-year seminar carry?		
	N = 468 M= 80		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
1 credit	37	156	193
2 credits	08	51	59
3 credits	17	138	155
4 credits	01	44	45
5 credits	00	03	03
Other	00	13	13
totals	63	405	468
P Value	.018		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	# 50.1 How is the first-year seminar credit applied? (As an elective)		
	N = 210 M= 338		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	04	22	26
Yes	32	152	184
totals	36	174	210
P Value	.799		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 50.2 How is the first-year seminar credit applied? (Toward general education requirements)		
	N = 270 M= 278		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	03	11	14
Yes	21	235	256
totals	24	246	270
P Value	.090		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 50.3 How is the first-year seminar credit applied? (Toward major requirements)		
	N =74 M= 474		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	06	24	30
Yes	02	22	44
totals	08	66	74
P Value	.036		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	# 50.4 How is the first-year seminar credit applied? (Other)		
	N =77 M= 471		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	05	27	32
Yes	10	35	45
totals	15	62	77
P Value	.471		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#51 How many total classroom contact hours are there per week in the first-year seminar?		
	N = 506 M= 42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
1 hour	28	91	119
2 hours	19	107	126
3 hours	25	187	212
4 hours	02	29	31
More than 5 hours	04	14	18
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.030		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#52 Do any sections include a service learning component?		
	N = 506 M= 42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	03	26	29
No	60	204	264
Yes	15	198	213
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#54 Are any sections linked to one or more other courses?		
	N = 506 M= 42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	00	01	01
No	58	253	311
Yes	20	174	194
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.038		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	#55 Do any sections incorporate a first-years/summer reading program component?		
	N = 506 M= 42		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	01	04	05
No	59	278	337
Yes	18	146	164
totals	78	428	506
P Value	.158		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#57 Do any sections incorporate online components?		
	N = 505 M= 43		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	01	27	28
No	34	157	191
Yes	43	243	286
totals	78	427	505
P Value	.144		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#59 Are there any online-only sections?		
	N = 505 M= 43		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
0	00	02	02
No	68	374	442
Yes	10	51	61
totals	78	427	505
P Value	.815		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#60 Please indicate the approximate percentage of online-only sections?		
	N =61 M= 487		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Less than 10%	04	35	39
10% - 19%	00	06	06

20% - 29%	01	05	06
30% - 39%	01	03	04
40% - 49%	00	01	01
50% - 59%	01	00	01
60% - 69%	00	00	00
70% - 79%	00	00	00
80% - 89%	01	00	01
90% - 99%	00	00	00
100%	02	01	03
totals	10	51	61
P Value	.010		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#61 What campus unit directly administers the first-year seminar?		
	N = 505 M= 43		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Academic Affairs	24	154	178
Academic departments	14	78	92
College or school	04	35	39
First-year program office	06	59	65
Student affairs	23	40	63
Other units	07	61	68
totals	78	427	505
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#62 Is there a dean/director/coordinator of the first-year seminar?		
	N = 505 M= 43		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	01	00	01
No	19	84	103
Yes	58	343	401
totals	78	427	505

P Value	.039
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	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#63 Does the dean/director/coordinator of the first-year seminar work full time or less than full time in this position?		
	N = 401 M= 147		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
Less than full time	32	216	248
Full time	26	127	153
totals	58	343	401
P Value	.258		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#64 Does the dean/director/coordinator have another position on campus?		
	N = 246 M= 302		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	02	05	07
Yes	30	209	239
totals	32	214	246
P Value	.214		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#65.1 Does the dean/director/coordinator's other role on campus is a/an: Academic Affairs?		
	N = 239 M= 309		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	20	156	176
Yes	10	53	63
totals	30	209	239
P Value	.354		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#65.2 Does the dean/director/coordinator's other role on campus is a/an: Faculty Member?		
	N = 239 M= 309		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals

No	20	149	169
Yes	10	60	70
totals	30	209	239
P Value	.603		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#65.3 Does the dean/director/coordinator's other role on campus is a/an: Student affairs administrator?		
	N = 239 M= 309		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	19	157	176
Yes	11	52	63
totals	30	209	239
P Value	.171		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#65.4 Does the dean/director/coordinator's other role on campus is a/an: Other?		
	N = 239 M= 309		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	20	159	179
Yes	10	50	60
totals	30	209	239
P Value	.266		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.1 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Create common first-year experience?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	96	333	429
Yes	19	100	119
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.129		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.2 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Develop a connection with the institution?		

	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	77	224	301
Yes	38	209	247
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.004		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.3 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Develop academic skills?		
	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	75	181	256
Yes	40	252	292
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.4 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Develop financial literacy?		
	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	114	429	543
Yes	01	04	05
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.957		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.5 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Develop support network/friendships?		
	N = 548		M= 0
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	92	356	448
Yes	23	77	100
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.584		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	#66.6 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Develop writing skills?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	111	363	474
Yes	04	70	74
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.7 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Improve sophomore return rates?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	98	368	466
Yes	17	65	82
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.951		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.8 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Increase student/faculty interaction?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	109	351	460
Yes	06	82	88
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.9 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Introduce a discipline?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	113	401	514
Yes	02	32	34
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.026		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.10 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Provide orientation to campus resources and services?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	71	235	306
Yes	44	198	242
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.152		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.11 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Self-exploration/personal development?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	85	310	395
Yes	30	123	153
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.622		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.12 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Encourage arts participation?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	115	429	544
Yes	00	04	04
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.301		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#66.13 Select the three most important course objectives for the first-year seminar: Other?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	107	385	492
Yes	08	48	56
totals	115	433	548

P Value	.194

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.1 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Academic planning/advising?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	82	286	368
Yes	33	147	180
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.286		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.2 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Career exploration/preparation?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	96	381	477
Yes	19	52	71
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.200		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.3 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Campus resources?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	75	254	329
Yes	40	179	219
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.202		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.4 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: College policies and procedures?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	99	378	477

Yes	16	55	71
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.731		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.5 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Critical thinking?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	96	248	344
Yes	19	185	204
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.6 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Diversity issues?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	112	395	507
Yes	03	38	41
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.025		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.7 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Financial literacy?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	115	430	545
Yes	00	03	03
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.371		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.8 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Health and wellness?		
	N = 548 M= 0		

	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	111	419	530
Yes	04	14	18
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.896		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.9 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Relationship issues?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	111	393	504
Yes	04	40	44
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.043		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.10 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Specific disciplinary topic?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	113	359	472
Yes	02	74	76
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.11 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Study skills?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	73	276	349
Yes	42	157	199
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.958		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	#67.12 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Time management?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	77	325	402
Yes	38	108	146
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.081		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.13 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Writing skills?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	110	337	447
Yes	05	96	101
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#67.14 Select the three most important topics that compose the content of this first-year seminar: Other?		
	N = 548 M= 0		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	109	347	456
Yes	06	86	92
totals	115	433	548
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#70 Has your first-year seminar been formally assessed or evaluated since fall 2006?		
	N = 499 M= 49		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	07	34	41
No	30	139	169
Yes	41	248	289
totals	78	421	499

P Value	.578

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#71 What type of assessment was conducted: Analysis of institutional data?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	03	06	09
No	13	41	54
Yes	25	200	225
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.012		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#72 What type of assessment was conducted: Focus groups with instructors?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	02	10	12
No	22	101	123
Yes	17	136	153
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.269		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#73 What type of assessment was conducted: Focus groups with students?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	02	08	10
No	22	128	150
Yes	17	111	128
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.823		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	#74 What type of assessment was conducted: Individual interviews with instructors?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	01	12	13
No	27	109	136
Yes	13	126	139
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.035		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#75 What type of assessment was conducted: Individual interviews with students?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	03	16	19
No	25	151	176
Yes	13	80	93
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.979		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#76 What type of assessment was conducted: Student course evaluation?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
I don't know	00	00	00
No	01	12	13
Yes	40	235	275
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.490		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#77 What type of assessment was conducted: Survey Instrument?		
	N = 288 M= 260		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals

I don't know	02	06	08
No	11	44	55
Yes	28	197	225
totals	41	247	288
P Value	.241		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#78.1 What type of survey instrument did your institution use to assess or evaluate the first-year seminar: I don't know?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	28	196	224
Yes	00	01	01
totals	29	197	225
P Value	.706		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#78.2 What type of survey instrument did your institution use to assess or evaluate the first-year seminar: A locally developed survey?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	01	28	29
Yes	27	169	196
totals	28	197	225
P Value	.116		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#78.3 What type of survey instrument did your institution use to assess or evaluate the first-year seminar: A national survey?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	17	91	108
Yes	11	106	117
totals	28	197	225
P Value	.150		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
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	#79.1 If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)?		
	N = 117 M= 431		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	09	95	104
Yes	02	11	13
totals	11	106	117
P Value	.433		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#79.2 If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	07	68	75
Yes	04	38	42
totals	11	106	117
P Value	.973		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#79.3 If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Your First Year of College (YFCY)?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	10	91	101
Yes	01	15	16
totals	11	106	117
P Value	.642		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#79.4 If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: First-Year Initiative (FYI)?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	10	94	104
Yes	01	12	13
totals	11	106	117

P Value	.823
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	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#79.5 If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	04	26	30
Yes	07	80	87
totals	11	106	117
P Value	.392		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#79.6 If you used a national survey, please identify the survey/s: Other?		
	N = 225 M= 323		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	09	83	92
Yes	02	23	25
totals	11	106	117
P Value	.787		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.1 Select each outcome that was measured: Academic abilities?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	29	157	186
Yes	12	91	103
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.358		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.2 Select each outcome that was measured: Connection with peers?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	31	138	169
Yes	10	110	120
totals	41	248	289

P Value	.016
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	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.3 Select each outcome that was measured: Grade point average?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	27	119	146
Yes	14	129	143
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.034		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.4 Select each outcome that was measured: Out-of-class student/faculty interaction?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	32	148	180
Yes	09	100	109
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.025		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.5 Select each outcome that was measured: Participation in campus activities?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	30	141	171
Yes	11	107	118
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.049		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.6 Select each outcome that was measured: Persistence to graduation?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	34	172	206
Yes	07	76	83
totals	41	248	289

P Value	.075

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.7 Select each outcome that was measured: Persistence to sophomore year?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	27	95	122
Yes	14	153	167
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.001		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.8 Select each outcome that was measured: Satisfaction with faculty?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	32	96	128
Yes	09	152	161
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.000		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.9 Select each outcome that was measured: Satisfaction with institution?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	29	109	138
Yes	12	139	151
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.001		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.10 Select each outcome that was measured: Use of campus services?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	31	140	171
Yes	10	108	118

totals	41	248	289
P Value	.021		

	2009 Full-Time Compared to Part-time Instructors		
	#81.11 Select each outcome that was measured: Other?		
	N = 289 M= 259		
	Part-Time	Full-Time	totals
No	35	208	243
Yes	06	40	46
totals	41	248	289
P Value	.808		