

# Marketing for Profit Colleges: A Case Study Of Career Education Corporation

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## I. Introduction

A problem exists in small colleges due to insufficient retention and marketing strategies (American Association of Community Colleges, 2008). Small colleges in the United States provide courses for more than 11.5 million enrolled students with 41% of the students attending college courses full time and 59% of the students attending college courses part time (American Association of Community Colleges, 2008). Of the 4,146 schools in the United States, 71% are small colleges (American Association of Community Colleges, 2008). From 1997 to 2002, 27 of the nation's 1,600 private colleges announced plans to close (Zhao, 2002). The focus of this study will be one such college division that closed in December of 2009, shutting down locations in Cranston, Rhode Island, Dunn Loring, Virginia, Livingston, New Jersey, Boston, Massachusetts, Norwalk, Connecticut, New York City, Norristown, Pennsylvania, Piscataway Township, New Jersey, Melville, New York.

The parent company of Gibbs College plans to close the school's campuses in Livingston, Piscataway, and elsewhere on the East Coast, the corporation's president said today. Career Education Corp. officials said in a written statement that the colleges will *teach out* all programs by Dec. 31, 2009, allowing students time to finish their programs there or transfer elsewhere. (Friedman, 2008, para. 5)

The reasons for the closure of this college division after nearly 100 years in existence will be explored in the proposed study and what other small colleges can do regarding their own marketing and retention strategies so they do not suffer from Gibbs' fate.

Maintaining sufficient student retention levels would require a systemic approach to defining the needs of the student while satisfying the expectations of the small college business plan (Archambault, 2008). Small college retention and marketing strategies might include financial aid, sponsorship programs, workforce education, alternatives to online schools, the building of the personal touch approach, and marketing for success (Archambault). Small colleges borrow money based on an overly optimistic approach to retention predictions and an unclear marketing approach (Archambault). Small colleges are having difficulty providing support to the many different constituencies including graphic art students, business students, international students, students with learning disabilities, and students wanting a small institution that offers individual attention (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2004). Strategies will focus on academic programs, initiatives with internal and external groups, communication and cooperation within the institution, presidential impact, and the strength of institutional missions.

## II. Statement of the Problem

The problem is that small colleges do not have an effective marketing strategy for retaining students within a small college environment (Watson, 2000). According to Ring (2009), the leaders of the American Council on Education indicated that nine degree granting small colleges were closed in 2009; an increase that is dramatic in the past 2 years from four in 2007. Since then, no programs seeking new and affordable ways to retain students through activities, programs, personal care, and networking have had a verifiable success in reducing this occurrence. If small colleges want to remain a focus for students, a program must be put in place. Lau (2003) indicated institutional leaders need an effective program for student retention and that no strategy has been implemented in order to increase the retention of qualified students.

According to the American Enterprise Institute, one in every four students leaves a small college before completing their sophomore year and nearly half of all freshmen will drop out before obtaining their degree (Hess, 2009). The focus of this study is the Gibbs College Division, which closed in 2009, and the examination of their marketing and retention strategies for other small colleges that are in danger of closing. It will examine whether these marketing and retention strategies will be useful in assisting the small college in effectively retaining students interested in a small college environment. It will also be helpful in reducing the increasing number of small colleges that are in danger of closing.

### **III. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the proposed qualitative case study is to identify what retention and marketing strategies are needed for maintaining students within a small college environment (Hess, 2009). The intent of the proposed study is to identify a systemic approach to defining the needs of the student while satisfying the expectations of the small college business plan. Because other small colleges are in danger of closing due to insufficient enrollment and retention, a marketing and retention strategy would identify an effective plan for building small college educational goals, establishing a commitment to profitability, and developing a workforce educational partnership with the community while maintaining a profitable small business college corporation.

The population group of study from the Eastern region of the country will be Gibbs' small college administrators including Chief Executive Officers, Chief Financial Officers, admissions counselors, and directors responsible for maintaining a profitable small college corporation. Data collection results from these sources may provide information regarding marketing and retention strategies and student needs within a small college environment. This will be significant in bringing all departments together and meaning to the community of practice.

By interviewing several administrators, faculty, and students on not only the Gibbs College Division, but on small college strategies, the theme to be established is why do some strategies work for some colleges and not for others. For example, is it the programs, activities, location, or size? By establishing these findings, the conclusion to be drawn is what could have saved a viable school with a successful brand name and perhaps save other colleges having the same difficulty. A qualitative method will be used for the proposed study so events can unfold naturally (Trochim, 2007) and the reasons for small college closures may be explored. Qualitative research will be utilized to examine small college strategies needed for retaining students within a small college environment by interviewing administrators, faculty, and students on topics such as marketing and retention strategies, the perceived needs of students in a small college environment, activities at each school, and the strategic plan of the colleges.

Qualitative research would be helpful in identifying student's needs, when and why they choose a college and perceptions, and feelings and attitudes that underlie and influence behavior when choosing one college over another. Qualitative research would also be useful in this study because it would explore market segments and help develop a marketing strategy for small colleges.

### **IV. Research Questions**

In order to explore strategies needed to maintain sufficient student retention levels, the proposed central question for the study is *what strategies are needed for enrolling and maintaining students interested in a small college environment?* Sub-questions represent the detailed thinking necessary to ensure the proposed study's data collection technique captures the needed study data represented by the central question. The following sub-questions will help guide and capture needed details.

Sub-question 1: What factors influence prospective students choosing a college?

Sub-question 2: What process, such as surveys, feedback, and questionnaires does a college use to analyze student reasons for staying in college?

Sub-question 3: What do students perceive is missing from their college environment?

Sub-question 4: What types of activities do students feel would enhance the likelihood of maintaining retention?

G. McCollough, company president of Career Education Corporation, which owns the Gibbs College Division, the focus of this study, said in a written statement that the company tried without success to find buyers for its Gibbs division before deciding to close the schools. High tuition, new real estate, and new programs were only some of the reasons this institution of nearly 100 years decided to close its doors (Friedman, 2008). Anthony Cipolla, former Vice President of Finance of Gibbs College, Livingston, NJ, stated,

Gibbs closed for a multitude of reasons, and one probably begat the other. Not only was it financial pressures, but it was because the school was a 'jack of all trades' with various academic programs in business, design, criminal justice, health, and computers. The administration arrogantly believed that the school could grow quickly, but did not have a strategy put in place to uphold it. New real estate and high turnover with no real foresight was also a major cause of the campuses closing. (A.J. Cipolla, personal communication, March 4, 2010)

### **V. Definition of Key Terms**

The following unique and critical terms for the proposed study facilitate communication and provide a common understanding for the reader of the proposed study.

**Enrollment and maintenance strategy.** An enrollment and maintenance strategy includes a process of the tracking and interacting with students from the point of their initial contact with the institution until their graduation or departure from the institution (Jones, 2003). As an activity, enrollment management is designed to attract and retain students (Jones, 2003). The strategy is an organizational concept and a systematic set of activities designed to enable educational institutions to exert more influence on their enrollments (Hossler, 2005).

**Educational partnership.** An educational partnership is a partnership that is used among various schools to enhance the capacity of scholars to teach and understand more intelligently between each other (Princeton University, 2009). Often these partnerships will take credits from one school or another to enhance the student's ability to learn (U.S. Department of State, 2003).

## **VI. Brief Review of the Literature**

An initial review of literature suggested many small colleges closing due to low enrollment and financial mishaps (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2004). Literature encompasses research and informed commentary of marketing and service quality in higher education. Literature also encompasses research on how faculty versus administrators handle the marketing and the recruiting of students in higher education (Kennedy, 2008). With this background in mind, the topical areas for a more complete literature review include (a) services quality and marketing theory, (b) student recruitment and marketing measurement, (c) application of brand identity, (d) quality in higher education, and (e) research and statistical methods. The literature research may also provide insight as to why students choose the institutions they did based on individual factors such as size, diversity, programs, location, and how administrators and faculty attitude play a key role in supporting or not supporting their institutions programs to market and recruit students. Ring (2008) indicated that colleges would have difficulty staying open without diverse activities on campus such as athletic and new programs. Moltz (2010) indicated that small colleges are actively recruiting students with lower GPAs from community colleges in order to stay open and "hoping to bolster and diversify their enrollments and capitalize on the belt-tightening of regional public universities" (Moltz, 2010, para 9). Since small colleges in the United States provide courses for more than 11.5 million enrolled students, small colleges need to gain a new perspective on what larger universities are offering in terms of activities, online opportunities, diversity of student body, better majors, in order to yield dramatic recruitment results (Johnson, 2009). Small college administrators and faculty participate in a role in the marketing and recruiting of their schools' student population. Administrator attitudes towards educational goals, profitability, workforce, and community will present data that could provide information on an enrollment strategy and may help maintain a profitable small business college corporation (Atkinson, 2008).

Watson (2000) indicated higher education institutions must change their marketing methods to align with student needs. Low enrollment may indicate students want to attend 4-year schools and that the cost of tuition of a small business school is just as high or sometimes higher, but only awards certificate programs or Associate Degrees. Since higher education institutions are confronted with declining enrollments, mounting financial pressures, diminishing public confidence, and an increasing number of nontraditional students and studies, enrollment management strategies should be used to initiate recruitment (Watson, 2000). As early as the 1980s, American institutions have experienced a major problem retaining students, particularly under-represented minorities (Lau, 2003).

Lack of finances is also an issue. Regarding lack of finances, the economic crisis of today has caused a reduction in financial aid and most students cannot afford a college education without adequate financing; thereby, increasing low retention figures and dropout rates within the second year and more than 1.5 million students are expected to drop out of college due to money issues (Hess, 2009). Hess indicated that students are dropping out of college before their sophomore year because they are not being taught the fundamentals of personal finance, but they are being sent into "a money-driven society" (p. 17). As tuition and costs continue to increase, student retention will be more difficult for smaller colleges as students are attracted to larger, less costly universities (Hess, 2009). Hess stated scholarships and grants are not always available to students, so the finance issue becomes increasingly difficult for students and parents to afford college tuitions. To combat the issue of finance, more financial aid needs to be given to worthy students as well as increasing endowments at the school. According to an article in USA Today, a *no loans* policy, like the one trying to be implemented by Williams College in Massachusetts would also be helpful, where neediest students would not be required to take out loans. Details for this plan are currently in the works (Gorski, 2010).

Increasing activities and athletics would also be a huge asset to smaller colleges. Students do not want to be bored on campus. Community service, externships, clubs and social groups are vitally important to student life.

60% of 2,500 high school seniors were considering a less prestigious 4-year college for affordability reasons and 14% of the seniors changed their focus to a two-year college due to lack of money, whereas 16%

placed their college searches on hold altogether (Kadahroo, 2008). Lack of finances may not be the only issue for low retention and high drop rates, but it is an important one.

Another issue that may be causing students to drop out of college is the concern about a commitment to the diversity of students and how well the college meets the customer service needs of students. Lau (2003) indicated many more students leave because the institution has failed to create an environment, inside or outside the classroom, that is conducive to their learning and educational needs. Activities on campus are essential to students' needs.

Recently, college students expressed a preference for larger institutions with more majors, more activities, and campuses located in urban areas. Low retention is threatening the continued existence of many small colleges (Lapovsky, 2005). In addition, as smaller colleges close down, larger institutions will reap the benefits. Students might transfer to larger schools, boosting their retentions and dropout rates are an issue with smaller institutions because students dropping out affect their profitability, moral commitment, and supportive environment (Atkinson, 2008). Dropping out of college is also important to the individual student because dropping out affects the student's future opportunities. Lastly, dropout rates are an issue nationally because these rates will affect the future workforce and citizenry (Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2004). Atkinson showed that campus climate, safety and security, and student centeredness all have significant relationships with student dropout rates. Johnson (2008) found that adult students in Mississippi claimed student activities as an important factor regarding college life, which contributed to higher retention, graduation, and GPA rates overall. Artale (2007) focused on *peer mentors*, where freshman students were assigned mentors for issue or problem discussions during their first year of college. This implementation showed an improvement in dropout rates, as indicated by Artale, by 93 to 98% the first to second semester with an 88% freshman to sophomore increase. Four-year retention data suggested a 65% retention rate in students, which is higher than the 2-year college retention rate.

Cunningham (2009) indicated in order to make the college more appealing to potential students, marketing strategies and corporate sponsorship programs might also be used. Companies that stress the importance of employees and students will want to sponsor team sports, entertainment religious, community, charity, and business related activities. Cunningham (2009) also indicated other opportunities regarding marketing and recruitment strategies for college students would be to establish facilitation to four-year colleges, especially for students at community or smaller colleges. With this facilitation, outreach programs could be made available as well as a recruitment advisory board.

## **VII. Research Method**

A research design of a qualitative nature would best fit the approach to the problem statement. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine retention and marketing strategies for a small college, such as the Gibbs College Division, to understand what is needed by students in order to stay in a small college. By conducting this research and developing an effective marketing and retention strategy, small colleges will be better aligned with students' needs and not suffer the same fate as the Gibbs College Division.

Qualitative inquirers use theory in their study in several ways, raising questions of gender, class, and race (or some combination) that needs to be addressed (Creswell, 2003). A qualitative study methodology would guide the proposed research on issues that are important to examine (such as education) and people needing to be studied (adult students, women, and minority groups). Qualitative research can also benefit from the perspective of historical (such as Gibbs' historians) and cultural aspects, such as personal experiences regarding education and the advantages of speaking with various students and also assisting them over the years. The research envisioned could witness different accounts about the strategies needed to enroll and maintain students interested in a small college environment.

The qualitative case study method using content analysis is appropriate for the proposed study as the method applies to the exploration of historical document text data and the interviews conducted (Steinbeck, as cited in Cooper & Schindler, 2003) as to why small colleges are closing. The study will analyze literature published in the United States between 2000 and 2010 identifying emerging core competencies needed by administration leading a 21st century workforce in higher education. The previous is important because the researcher wants to explore historical data on how the colleges, particularly the Gibbs College Division changed over the years and the cause of its downfall. Because of the changes over the years, Gibbs failed to market their programs appropriately and retention suffered. Administrators, such as Chief Executive and Financial Officers integrate the strategic and operational levels within the organization (Balogun & Johnson, 2004) because the visions and goals of the strategic levels of directors and deans in a college environment often encounter daily problems operationally in the business front lines, such as admissions, career services and financial aid.

Data collection would include interviewing historians on the Gibbs College Division and how it changed over the years, as well as interviewing students, faculty and administrators as to what made the college work for close to 100 years and what was some of the causes for the downfall of what once was a very



prestigious secretarial school that eventually changed into a business college. Once this information is collected, it will be analyze for highlighting useful information about the Gibbs College Division to suggest conclusions and support decision making on small colleges do not succumb to the same fate as Gibbs.

Reliability and validity, in the use of qualitative research, are used to perceive truth, thoroughness, and quality in the qualitative model (Trochim, 2007). In order to increase the researcher's truthfulness in a social phenomenon, qualitative analysis is used to decrease bias and increase triangulation (Trochim, 2007). Triangulation in qualitative research is intended to "involve several investigators or peer researchers' interpretation of the data at different time or location" (Golashani, 2003, p. 604). In the proposed study, triangulation will be used to interpret retention data or marketing strategies used at a different time and location to prevent small colleges from closing. As indicated by Johnson (1997), a qualitative researcher can consider ideas and explanations studying research participants by using investigator triangulation.

For the research on why small colleges are closing, articles published in the United States from 2000 through 2010 are the best secondary data available. The proposed study will use these works as observations of administration in retaining students through small college marketing strategies competencies.

By interviewing several administrators, faculty, historians and students on not only the Gibbs College Division, but on small college strategies, the theme to be established is why some strategies work for some colleges and not for others. By establishing these findings, the conclusions drawn would be on what could have saved a viable school with a successful brand name and perhaps save other colleges having the same difficulty.

Ethical issues may be a concern collecting the data because sometimes the subjects being interviewed do not admit the truth or may be bias in their attitudes regarding the subject matter.

Manipulation of variables does not occur in non-experimental research; rather, variables occur naturally (Creswell, 2003). Because the proposed study is not experimental and research variables will not be controlled, qualitative research is the proper choice for observing the natural occurrences and determining the hidden themes from the research. The qualitative research process will create meaning from the data while building abstractions, themes, and concepts (Creswell, 2003).

Job responsibilities and skills vary according to the manager's level within the organization (Yukl, 2006). Yukl indicated that higher-level managers, such as Chief Executive and Financial Officers are concerned with long-range plans, formulating policy, and innovative techniques, whereas middle managers, such as director and deans are concerned with interpreting policy and planning implementations. Lower level managers, such as support staff and faculty are concerned with structuring and organizing work functions. The study will address data context differences. The data environment will indicate the social conditions, relationships, and situational considerations of middle management (Creswell, 2003).

The proposed study will provide an in-depth analysis of how the Gibbs Division marketed and recruited new students, and the role that faculty attitudes and administrators play in this process. Data for the proposed study focus group interviewing, case studies and phenomenology. Data of the study may provide information for future college students who are looking to attend a smaller college that offers them personalized care.

A qualitative study uses a specific method of collecting data and explores in depth a transaction, a process, and an activity over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2003). The format used by the proposed qualitative case study is best to research the reasons why small colleges are closing because of low enrollment and financial difficulties in Higher Education. The proposed qualitative study will use surveys to question faculty, as indicated in the research questions, and administrator attitudes, behaviors and traits for the research, and will measure and collect data about faculty and administrator attitudes toward the marketing and recruiting of students complementing a higher education in the Eastern region of the country. The participants in the research will be chosen at small colleges in danger of closing as well as former Gibbs students and employees in the Eastern region of the country.

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- Database Dissertations & Theses: Full Text.
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## **Appendix**

### **Annotated Bibliography**

#### **Section 1, Services Quality and Improvement**

- [29]. American Association of Community Colleges CC Stats. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www2.aacc.nche.edu/research/home.htm>This informational website focused on a comprehensive overview of research regarding community colleges in the United States. This website focused on a thorough description of enrollment figures, demographics, employment status and financial aid, career training, and international programs. Community Colleges often prepare students to transfer onto four-year colleges while at the same time offering them the full college experience in cultural activities and enrichment programs.
- [30]. Archambault, L. (2008). Measuring student satisfaction and its impact on student retention: Developing a combined model for use in private, post-secondary institutions. D.B.A. dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, United States -- Florida. Retrieved from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text.This dissertation focused on today's student being viewed as a customer and how levels of student satisfaction are important. Retention and marketing strategies are crucial for the student to remain at the college of choice. The dissertation also discussed a new type of student: the millennial, as needing more in-depth research and consideration.

- [31]. Artale, M., (2007). An examination of the impact of a peer mentoring program on the recruitment and retention of minority students using SUNY Oneonta's AALANA Mentor Program. M.A. dissertation, State University of New York Empire State College, United States -- New York. Retrieved from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text. This study focused on the use of peer mentors in freshman year of college and through graduation. Retention rates were shown to be higher when a student was given a peer mentor to work with regarding studies, problems, and general anxiety about college life. This would be beneficial when using data for retention and improving overall quality and services to the student population.
- [32]. Fisher, C. (2000, February 16). Mood and emotions while working: missing pieces of job satisfaction? *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21(2), 185-202. Retrieved from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal> Fisher attempted in this article to improve understanding of organizational behavior and what made some people satisfied with their job while others were not. This article would be beneficial to learner research for students who are coming back to school due to low job satisfaction. This study would also be useful in understanding organizational behavior and the correlation between job satisfaction and changing careers.
- [33]. Gronfeldt, S., & Strother, J. (2006). *Service leadership: The quest for competitive advantage*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Gronfeldt and Strother focused on issues of quality in continuing education, mainly in professional development seminars. The literature review included current research in marketing, the quality imperative, dimensions of quality theories, and quality in continuing education. The researchers examine customer perceptions of measurement of quality in a university continuing education setting and the perceptions of continuing educators regarding their customers' perceived importance of the criteria for quality. Based on the data gathered from survey research, which included five dimensions of service quality, the perceptions of each group were reported and the similarities and differences were examined. This dissertation is a useful reference for services quality and improvement.
- [34].
- [35]. Moore, H. E. M. (1994) *Customer perceptions of quality in continuing education*. Ed.D. dissertation, The University of Alabama, United States -- Alabama. Retrieved from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text database. This study focused on issues of quality in continuing education, specifically in professional development seminars. It is a useful dissertation since it can provide feedback for administrators and faculty and how more professional development may be beneficial in providing students with quality education. This study will also be useful since students will more likely stay in schools where teachers are well versed in providing a quality education by attending professional development seminars.
- [36]. Pariseau, S. E., & McDaniel, J. R. (1997). Assessing service quality in schools of business. *The International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 14(3), 204-218. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global database. Pariseau and McDaniel focused on consumers' expectations and perceptions of service quality. Pariseau and McDaniel highlighted how earlier research demonstrated that consumers are less likely to complain about poor professional service, but consumers are more value conscious. Pariseau and McDaniel also focused on customers of higher education including, students, parents, alumni, employers and legislators, and the mounting pressure of expectations of business school performance of service quality compared to the service quality received. Pariseau and McDaniel focused on gaining that information through a sample of faculty and students at two universities in the northeast region. This article is a useful reference for services quality and improvement.

## **Section 2, Marketing Measurement and Recruiting**

- [37]. Atkinson, L., (2008). *Factors impacting student retention on the regional campuses and centers of Ohio University*. Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio University, United States -- Ohio. Retrieved from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text. This dissertation focused on what was most important to students when choosing a college. Through combined model use, students placed the most emphasis on campus climate, safety, security, activities, programs diversity, student centeredness and community feel. This would assist in the study showing what students feel is most important when choosing a college campus.
- [38]. Blumenstyk, G. (2008, May). In turbulent times, 2 small colleges brace for the worst. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 54(35), A1, A12-A16. Retrieved from Research Library database. Blumenstyk focused on two schools in Ohio making the best of turbulent times and their financial struggles by expanding academic programs to appeal to more kinds of students and concentrated on admissions, recruiting, and marketing their schools, rather than their monetary struggles. The conclusion of the study revealed students were confused by having too many choices. For example, those who wanted to go into Sports Management could also go into Marketing and vice versa because it was similar in curriculum. This article is a useful reference for marketing and recruiting.
- [39]. California's universities in trouble: Before the fall. (2009, August 6). *The Economist*, 51(36). Retrieved from [http://www.economist.com/displayStory.cfm?story\\_id=14183037](http://www.economist.com/displayStory.cfm?story_id=14183037) This article discussed how one of the world's finest universities, the University of California may be on the verge of closing due to the economic downturn and loss of state funding. It is beneficial to learner research since it discussed the economic crisis and how schools are closing due to low enrollment, financial crisis and loss of state funding. Due to these losses, the result will be smaller classrooms, fewer majors and letting go caring professors.
- [40]. Cunningham, S. (2009, January). Expressing identity and shaping image: The relationship between corporate mission and corporate sponsorship. *Journal of Sport Management*, 23(1), 65. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global database. This article described marketing sponsorship programs and specifically, a corporate identity sponsorship policy link that offered empirical support for it via a mixed method research design. Results showed that corporate identity, as reflected in mission statements, matters to sponsorship policy. Consumers have a more positive view when selecting a company or an institution that has brand identity and corporate sponsorship. This

- article would be beneficial to learner research on how to incorporate marketing recruitment strategies for retention in schools.
- [41]. Gorski, E., Private colleges aim to rein in loan-free financial aid. (2010, February 11). USA Today. Retrieved from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-02-11-private-colleges-aid\\_N.htm?obref=obinsite](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-02-11-private-colleges-aid_N.htm?obref=obinsite)This article focused on how more private colleges are becoming less generous when it comes to dispensing financial aid to needy students. The article focused on getting more endowments from the state and implementing a no loans policy for students in need.
- [42]. Kadahroo, S.T. (2008, October 23). Students eye cheaper colleges as crisis deepens.
- [43]. The Christian Science Monitor, 86(6), 585. This article focused on students choosing less expensive colleges due to financial struggles or choosing 2 year colleges over 4 year colleges to get a degree. The article concentrated on the economic crisis deepening as students look for less expensive ways to get a degree, while making money for families and themselves.
- [44]. Kennedy, M. (2008, January). The top ten issues impacting college administrators. *American School & University*, 73(5), 24-28. Retrieved from Research Library database. This article focused on issues that college administrators concentrate on continually to ensure they are providing students with a solid education. The areas concentrated on construction, repair, housing marketing, recruiting, and technology. This article is a useful reference for marketing and recruiting.
- [45]. Lapovsky, L. (2005). The economic challenges of liberal arts colleges. *American Council of Learned Societies, ACLS paper*, 50, 17-33. Retrieved from a Research Library database. This article focused on issues that more liberal arts colleges are attracting students of a lesser quality than expected. The financial impact of attracting these students means more financial aid funding, lower level courses and more experienced teachers willing to teach lower level students. The article also focused on how a liberal arts college is a “product” and not necessarily a deciding factor when choosing a college overall. Most students go to college in hopes of gaining a job once they graduate.
- [46]. Lau, L.K. (2003). Institutional factors affecting student retention. *Education*, 124(1), 126-136. Retrieved from a NCU Research Library database. This study focused on institutional factors that affect student retention. Appropriate funding, academic support services, and the availability of physical facilities, in addition to the effective management of multiculturalism and diversity on campus are some of these factors. Ultimately, as the study shows, the success of college retention depends on the students themselves.
- [47]. Marketing Institutions and Recruiting New Students: What Works Best? (2004, April). *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 50(34), B12-B14. Retrieved from Research Library database. The researchers for this study used data to examine how higher education institutions use websites to build relationships and recruit prospective students. The study involved homepages of 163 institutions that U.S. News and World Report added to their 2004 list of the best comprehensive colleges and universities in the country. This study showed that while colleges recruiting in the West published more religious references and had fewer pictures of women, colleges in the Midwest made more references to their international programs overall. Few institutions mentioned diversity on their campuses except through photographs. The article is a useful reference regarding implementation of marketing measurement and student recruiting.
- [48]. McGinn, D. (2000, September 25). Failing grades: A small college hits the skids. *Newsweek*, 51, 9, 23. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/id/86208> This article discussed the closing of a small Catholic college due to financial struggles. Many students are enrolling in big universities because they have much more to offer in terms of activities, fitness rooms, and wireless internet access with students being offered their own laptops upon admission. The article is beneficial because it discussed how universities may be diversifying too much and losing their customer base. It also provided an understanding of how important it is to market programs effectively in order for students to gain interest in them. The article is a useful reference regarding implementation of marketing measurement and student recruiting.
- [49]. Moltz, D., More private colleges court community college transfers. (2010, February 18). USA Today. Retrieved from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-02-18-IHE-transfer-students-18\\_ST\\_N.htm?obref=obinsite](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-02-18-IHE-transfer-students-18_ST_N.htm?obref=obinsite) This article focused on how private colleges are starting to enroll more community colleges students in order to stay open and become more diversified by race, economic status and religion. Endowments from the state also will help accept students into private colleges.
- [50]. Ring, W., Small colleges may be at increased risk during recession. (2009, May 14). USA Today. Retrieved from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-05-14-small-colleges\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-05-14-small-colleges_N.htm) This article focused on Sterling College, a school in Vermont seeking finances for a new dorm and hoping it will attract the 115 students it needs to stay open as an educational institution. It also stated that the campus will be tough to maintain with higher tuition costs, no real activities or sports teams available and only 57 employees.
- [51]. Watson, B.L. (2000). A descriptive study of enrollment marketing strategies for four-year public colleges and universities. Ed.D. dissertation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, United States -- Nevada. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global. This dissertation discussed enrollment and marketing strategies for four-year public colleges and universities. The study was done mainly in the Western area of the United States and regarding strategic marketing efforts, items of the study included: the differences in marketing efforts and the development of strategies, funding between institutions, differences in undergraduate enrollment of the institution, and the size of the institutions surrounding community.

### **Section 3, Quality in Higher Education**



- [52]. Braxton, J. M., Hirschy, A. S., & McClendon, S. A. (2004). Understanding and reducing college student departure. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, 30, 1-76. This study focused on trying to understand why students depart from college after their freshman year. Results showed adult students needed to focus more on family responsibilities or financial mishaps, while the traditional aged students wanted better programs and more activities. This is beneficial in finding out why students leave college before graduation and what could be done to retain them.
- [53]. Education; Researchers at Purdue University have published new data on education. (2009, February). Education Letter, 50, 17-33. Retrieved from Career and Technical Education database. This paper provided an 11-year mixed-methods, cross-sectional longitudinal study beginning with a group of 121 children, identified as gifted, and followed them until high-school graduation. Parents provided negative life events experienced by child and family annually, and, at graduation, students completed an open-ended retrospective questionnaire, focusing on events, affect of events, supports, and hindrances during the school years. The students all achieved high grades despite their negative life experiences. This would be beneficial for learner research to understand why some students consistently stay in school and achieve high grades and others do not.
- [54]. Hess, F.M. (2009). Diplomas and dropouts: which colleges actually graduate their students and which don't. American Enterprise Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.aei.org/docLib/Diplomas%20and%20Dropouts%20final.pdf> This research focused on the impact of retention and graduation of colleges in the United States. The number of college drop out rates is increasing and the study focused which colleges are having the most difficulty retaining students. The study would be beneficial when researching when and why students decide to drop out of colleges before graduating.
- [55]. Johnson, S. The influence of career-technical student organizations on non-traditional and traditional community college students. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Southern Mississippi, United States -- Mississippi. Retrieved from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text. This dissertation focused on adult and traditional students joining student activities on campus which caused students to stay longer, thereby graduating from that school and also improvement of retention and higher GPAs from students who enjoyed campus life. This is beneficial data when determining why students stay in school and not leave after their freshman year.
- [56]. Leonhardt, D. (2008, May 21). A diploma's worth? Ask her. New York Times, 36(7), 101-102. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/21/business/21leonhardt.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/21/business/21leonhardt.html?_r=1) This article discussed how more women are returning to get their college degrees in recent years and establishing careers that were mostly dominated by men, such as doctors and lawyers. The article concluded that women enrolling or returning to school has a distinct advantage over men because in certain fields, there is now more competition. This article is useful in establishing how education is important for a minority group.
- [57]. Hodge, F. V. (1991) Cultural differences in the classroom. Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Woman's University, United States -- Texas. Retrieved from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text database. This dissertation provided the impact of African-American culture made on Western-European classrooms during Language Arts instruction. The study described the behavior, interactions, and lifestyles of both cultures. The study discussed African-American and Western-European cultures as they related to classroom behavior, and the impact that the family crucible and the environment had on the students' behavior and participation during classroom instruction skills. This dissertation would be beneficial to learner research to provide differences on cultural backgrounds of students and why they choose the big universities or small colleges.
- [58]. Not ready for college. (2008, September 22). USA TODAY, A12. Retrieved from ProQuest Newsstand database. This report focused on four out of five remedial students who had a high school grade point average of a B or better: 50% of students say they are good high school students who completed their assignments and, 6 out of 10 say they should have been more challenged in high school. The report determined that high school education is not preparing most remedial students for college where they will ultimately be lost in much more challenging and diverse classes. This report is useful for referencing quality in higher education.
- [59]. Zuckerbrod, N., & Tompson, T. (2008, June 29). Poor marks for U.S. schools: Half of adults surveyed said kids aren't being properly prepared for life. Times Union, B8. Retrieved from Business Dateline database. This article focused on general concerns from business and college administrators who say they have to spend finances on remedial education for people who have completed high school, but cannot succeed at work or in a higher education setting. Studies show U.S. students landed in the middle to bottom of test scores when compared with other nation's children. This report is useful for referencing quality in higher education.

#### **Section 4, Application of Brand Identity**

- [60]. Allred, C. (2006 May 9). E-shopping lovers and fearful conservatives: a market segmentation analysis. International Journal of Retail Distribution and Management, 34(4/5), 308-333. Retrieved from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/Insight/viewContentItem.do;jsessionid=C63D4C3> This paper provided analysis on whether consumers who shopped online were looking for good brands or just bargains. It divided market segmentation globally as well as nationally and regionally. The paper concluded that consumers shop online for bargain prices for brands. This would be beneficial to research regarding education to find out if students are shopping for schools with a brand identity or just shopping for a bargain school where tuition would be an important factor when choosing a college.
- [61]. Cobb, C. M. S. G. T. (2001). The concept of brand identity in relation to students' intent-to-persist. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Oklahoma, United States -- Oklahoma. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global database. This research examined students' perception of the six brand identity attributes and the relationship of

- these brand identity attributes to factors affecting their intent-to-persist. In this study, brand identity was defined as "what a college wants to be known for," (Cobb, 2001, p. 38). Colleges could be perceived as providing a "product: academic, social, and credentials to their students/customers," (Cobb, 2001, p. 40). The assumption made in this study was that students' positive perception of their colleges' brand identity through their freshmen year might increase their satisfaction, enhance their loyalty to their college, and thereby increase their persistence. This article is useful for referencing brand identity.
- [62]. Lowrie, A. (2007). Branding higher education: Equivalence and difference in developing identity. *Journal of Business Research*, 60(9), 990. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global database. This article examined the development of university brand identity within higher education and the marketing activities of universities. The study of three and half years showed how marketing activities appeals to diverse audiences in higher education and also explained how brand identity arises during certain times of the year. Fall is the most active time when college applications are received or information is requested. This article is useful for referencing brand identity.
- [63]. Marich, D. (1989, October 8). Using tachistoscope, semantic differential and preference tests in package design assessment. *Handbook of Package Design Research*, 8. Retrieved from <http://www.quirks.com/articles/a1989/19891002.aspx?searchID=23467709&sort=9>This article discussed a model for testing consumer packages or label designs. It is a reliable, proven methodology for evaluating consumer response to different packages using three separate criteria: (a) impact (T-scope technique), (b) imagery (semantic differential) and, (c) preference (forced choice). This article could be beneficial for application of brand identity when researching why students choose one college over another. The researchers determined these measures provide a maximum amount of information on which to base important packaging decisions for consumer brands and therefore, could be used in learner research for education.
- [64]. Zhao, Y. (2002, May 7). More small colleges dropping out. *New York Times*, 32(5), 97-101. Retrieved from <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C07E2D71730F934A35756C0A9649C8B63&sec=&spn=&pagewanted=all>Zhao discussed the closing of two small colleges: Bradford and Notre Dame and provided research on how over 27 of 1,600 small private colleges are announcing their closure due to low enrollment and financial difficulty since 1997. This is a 35% increase from the previous 5-year period. Zhao stated the reasons for this are due to the appeal of bigger universities, lack of brand identity, little or no endowments at small private colleges, tuition increases, the need for gyms, computers, private apartments instead of dorms, and curriculum changes. The article is a useful reference regarding application of brand identity through marketing activities.

## **Section 5, Research & Statistical Methods**

- [65]. Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. This book provided information on research methods and techniques. It also includes writing tips and considerations, latest developments in the field of research, and data collection and analysis approach. It encompasses qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches and is a recognized form of research in the field from an established author.
- [66]. Fowler, F. J., Jr. (1995). *Improving survey questions: Design and evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. This book provided an introduction to the issues that arise in writing questions, with a focus on interviewer-administered surveys. It examined the logic of measurement in standardized survey interviews, the decisions that must be made in writing questions about events and behaviors and those that must be made in writing questions about attitudes and evaluations. The focus is on showing how the findings from research can be applied to solving problems that routinely arise in writing survey questions. It is a recognized form of research by an established author.
- [67]. Friedman, A. (2008, February 15). Gibbs college to close northeast campus. *NJ.com*. Retrieved from [http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2008/02/gibbs\\_college\\_to\\_close\\_northea.html](http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2008/02/gibbs_college_to_close_northea.html)This article focused on the entire Gibbs Division being closed down after almost 100 years of service. The reasons stated in the article were the inability to locate a buyer for the Gibbs brand identity, but also focused on what would happen to the students.
- [68]. Golafshani, N. (December 2003) *Understanding reliability and validity in*
- [69]. *qualitative research*. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), 597-607. This article discussed the use of reliability and validity in the qualitative research paradigm and draws upon the use of triangulation in the two paradigms (quantitative and qualitative) to show how the changes have influenced the understanding of reliability, validity and triangulation in qualitative studies. It is a recognized form of research by an established author.
- [70]. Hart, C. (1998). *Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. This book provided information on researching, preparing and writing literature review. It also offered advice on searching existing knowledge, analyzing arguments and ideas, and constructing a case for investigating a topic. It is a recognized book by an established author.
- [71]. Hino, A., and Imai, R. (2008, August 28). Ranking vs. rating: Re-examining the Inglehart scale through an experimental survey. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the APSA 2008 Annual Meeting, Hynes Convention Center, Boston, Massachusetts Online. Retrieved from [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p279969\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p279969_index.html)This paper aimed to put the classic debate on ranking and rating methods in survey research into retest by re-examining the Inglehart scale. Hino and Imai applied an experimental design of split-sampling for both ranking and rating items. The 'ranking vs. rating' debate revisits, on one hand, the danger with ranking measurement that factor analysis becomes biased due to the fact respondents choose what is most desirable, and, on the other hand, the danger of 'response set' bias in rating measurement.
- [72]. Johnson, B. R. (1997). *Examining the validity structure of qualitative research*.

- [73]. Education, 118(3), 282-292. This paper provided a seven step process undertaken to develop the interview guide based on preliminary data generation. The process included literature review, focus groups, development and analyzing of data. It encompasses only the initial stages of the qualitative research process.
- [74]. Ottawa, M. (1992). Data collection and research objectives. *How to Use Research and Development Effectively*. Montreal, QB: Trickster, Concordia. This book provided information on data collection and research objectives. It encompasses how to develop your research effectively and gives the researcher steps on how to analyze and use your research ethically and credibility. It is a recognized form of research in the field.
- [75]. Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluative methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. This book emphasized strategies for generating useful and credible qualitative research information for decision making. The book focused on techniques for future applications, focus group interviews, and qualitative synthesis. It is a recognized form of research in the field by an established author.
- [76]. Shank, G. D. (2006). *Qualitative research: A personal skills approach* (2nd ed.).
- [77]. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall. This book provided assumptions and principles used in qualitative research such as basic skills like observation, conversation and participation. It also provided advanced skills such as narrating and identifying. It is a recognized form of research in the field.
- [78]. Trochim, W., & Donnelly, J. (2007). *The research methods knowledge base*. Mason, OH: Thomson Learning. This book provided emphasis on foundations of research, sampling, methods of design and measurement, observation, structure and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative research. It is a recognized form of research in the field by an established author.
- [79]. Yin, R.K. (1994). *Case study research: designs and methods*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA. This book provided information on designs and methods of case study research specifically for qualitative research. It covered all aspects of case study methods from problem definition to reporting and analyzing of data. It is a recognized form of research and the author also uses a wide range of disciplines, particularly in the field of education.
- [80]. Zikmund, W. (2003). *Business research methods*. Mason, OH: Thomson/South-Western. This book provided information on business research methods and techniques. It focused on information technology that has improved over the years, mainly Internet research. It is a recognized form of research in the field from an established author.