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Wisam Al-Dabbagh
Wilfrid Laurier University

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"JUST WHAT WERE YOU EXPECTING FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE ANYWAY?"

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS AND SUBSEQUENT ADJUSTMENT IN VISIBLE

MINORITY STUDENTS

By

Wisam Al-Dabbagh

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THESIS

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Abstract

Pre-enrollment university expectations can influence subsequent adjustment levels during the first year of postsecondary studies (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992). There is very limited literature studying the expectation levels of visible minority students in the U.S., and no literature at all in a Canadian context. We were interested in examining expectation differences between visible minority students and majority students attending Canadian universities, as well as exploring the influence of residence status and campus-wide diversity on these expectation levels. We further used regression analyses to predict subsequent university adjustment using pre-enrollment expectations as predictor variables, and used structural equation modeling (SEM) to explore the role of students' perceptions of university support as a mediator for the expectations-adjustment relationship. Using an initial sample of 2913 students from six campuses across Canada, we found that: a) visible minority students expected a less academically successful experience when compared to majority students, but there were no differences between minority and majority students in social expectations; b) students planning to live at home (more often visible minority students) were not as prepared for the upcoming experience as the students planning to live on campus during university; c) students attending schools with greater ethnic and cultural diversity in our sample reported lower levels of positive academic and social expectations than students attending predominantly White schools; d) university expectations predicted adjustment levels across four years of university, and e) perceived university support mediated the relationship between pre-enrollment expectations and subsequent adjustment levels across time. These patterns of support and adjustment predictions did not differ by minority/majority status.

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The proportion of high school graduates continuing their education at the university or college level is increasing (NCES, 2008). According to Statistics Canada (2008), university enrollment, both full-time and part-time, surpassed the 1-million mark for the first time in Canadian history during the 2004/2005 academic year. This growing trend is primarily attributed to the increasing enrollment of students aged 18 to 24, a population that has risen 27.5% between 1995/1996 and 2003/2004 (Statistics Canada, 2005). In addition, the number of high school graduates leaving home to live in university residence is increasing, with many attending postsecondary institutions outside of their home province or state.

The transition from high school to university is marked by numerous adjustment difficulties for many students. Although many students do not report experiencing difficulties with the adjustment period following this transition, there are many others who find it difficult to wake themselves up in the morning in order to attend lectures, do their own laundry, plan their own cooking, handle their own living expenses, and individually organize several other daily tasks that were previously co-managed with (or done by) their parents. Without parental management, many first-year university students are free to skip classes, experiment with alcohol and other illegal substances, as well as engage in numerous risky sexual endeavours (Sadava & Park, 1993). Leaving home also often means parting from a well-established social support network of peers and/or a romantic partner. In fact, then, many first-year university students do not adjust appropriately or successfully to university life, with research indicating that 30 to 40 percent of students drop out without attaining a degree (Smith, 1991).

What distinguishes students who are able to adjust to university life from students who are not able to adjust to university life following the postsecondary transition? From early on, research focusing on predictive variables associated with the university transition and subsequent adjustment has addressed the significance of pre-enrollment student expectations. The purpose of the following literature review is to outline the importance of university expectations as they predict university adjustment, and to offer possible explanations about the formation of such expectations, especially in relation to visible minority students. A brief overview of diversity in Canadian society will follow the literature review in order to emphasize the importance of this research within a Canadian context.

University Expectations and Student Adjustment

"Given this dramatic upheaval in their lives, it is not surprising that many students fail to find their footing and develop serious emotional, social, or academic problems" (Pancer, Pratt, Hunsberger, & Alisat, 2004, p. 84). Entering students face a plethora of adjustment difficulties, from depression symptoms (Dyson & Renk, 2006), homesickness and loneliness (Beck, Taylor, & Robbins, 2003; Fisher & Hood, 1987; Fisher & Hood, 1988), increased alcohol consumption due to stress, peer pressure and lack of social support (Sadava & Park, 1993), to dropping out of university without degree attainment (Gerdes & Mallincrodt, 1994). According to the literature, student expectations can predict these adjustment outcomes to some degree, and variations in student expectancies predict differences in university adjustment (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Berdie, 1966; Shaw, 1968; Zirkel & Cantor, 1990).

Some of the earliest work in this literature focused on the disparity between pre-enrollment expectations and actual university experiences. In 1966, G.G. Stern coined the term "freshman myth", referring to the tendency of high school graduates to formulate unrealistically positive expectations of freshman life. Students overestimate their expected adjustment and enjoyment of university prior to entering their first-year of studies, particularly glamorizing the social and academic aspects of postsecondary education (Buckley, 1971; Lauterbach & Vielhaber, 1966). Interestingly, students with such idealistic expectations generally may report lower levels of social and academic adjustment after first-year commencement, delineating a sharp incompatibility between expectations and reality (Baker, Siryk, & McNeil, 1985).

For instance, Smith and Wertlieb (2005) found that students reporting unrealistically high academic expectations had lower first-year GPAs when compared to students reporting average or below average first-year expectations. Additionally, students reporting overly positive social expectations at university reported higher than expected levels of loneliness and isolation (Smith & Wertlieb, 2005). Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (1994) also found significant differences between anticipated and actual adjustment, with students reporting lower than expected levels of social and academic acclimation during the university transition period. These trends are comparable with research conducted in the 1960's, where Pervin (1966) found that first year Princeton students reported inconsistencies between their expectations and their experiences; the freshman population felt as if the institution was somewhat or very different from their academic and social expectations. However, more recent research indicates that there are

variations in university expectations, and contrary to Stern's (1966) notion of a generic "freshman myth", these expectancy variations predict adjustment differently.

Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, and Hunsberger (2000) conducted a cluster analysis to identify four distinct types of expectations about university reported by a large sample of first-year students: *optimistic, prepared, fearful,* and *complacent.* The *optimistic* cluster was marked by high levels of positive social and academic expectancies, and lower levels of negative expectancies [similar to Stern's (1966) "freshman myth" ideology]; the *prepared* cluster reported high levels of positive social and academic expectancies, but were also aware of the inevitable challenges that they would face in university; the *fearful* cluster reported high levels of negative social and academic expectancies, and low levels of positive expectancies, indicating that this sample was apprehensive about the transition period; finally, the *complacent* cluster was marked by relatively moderate scores on all expectancy scales, indicating that no clear expectations about university were formed. Jackson et al. (2000) found that the students in the *prepared* cluster fared better than the other groups with regards to university adjustment over the first year, reporting lower levels of stress and depression comparatively. The *fearful* cluster reported the poorest levels of university adjustment, with the *optimistic* and *complacent* clusters falling somewhere in between (Jackson et al., 2000).

The literature on students' university expectations has been predominantly studied using White student populations in the U.S., with the exception of the Jackson et al. (2000) study which used students from a Canadian university in the province of Ontario. The first goal of the present study is to examine the differences in university expectations between visible minority students and majority (White) students in Canada, measured

prior to entering their first year of university. The following section will discuss the limited literature available on visible minority student expectations, which primarily focuses on educational aspirations of African American and Hispanic student populations in the U.S.

Visible Minority Student Expectations and Adjustment

Mickelson (1990) speaks of a paradox that exists in the attitude-achievement literature studying African American student populations in the U.S., which results from African American students reporting having high value for education but low educational achievement. African American students in the U.S. are reported as having unrealistically high expectations, and simultaneously as being underachievers (Mickelson, 1990; Trusty, 2002). When compared to White students, research has shown that African American students report lower levels of academic success (Ainsworth, 2006; Ogbu, 1978), obtain less education (Kao, Tienda, & Schneider, 1996), and are more likely to drop out of school without attaining a degree (Kao & Thompson, 2003).

According to Khattab (2003), "minority students…are more likely to develop low educational aspirations and expectations as a consequence of their marginal position and lower social status" (p. 284). However, the literature is mixed with regards to the educational aspirations of visible minority students, with a large body of empirical studies indicating that visible minority students, particularly African American and Hispanic students, report high educational aspirations when compared to White students (Cheng & Starks, 2002; Dale, Shaheen, Kalra, & Fieldhouse, 2001; Goyette & Xie, 1999; Kao & Tienda, 1998; Morgan, 1996; Qian & Blair, 1999). Regardless, these high

aspirations are still generally coupled with low educational performance in visible minority populations.

Visible minority students attending U.S. schools also perceive the university climate as unsupportive and unwelcoming when compared to the majority population (Cress & Ikeda, 2003; Hurtado, 1994). African American and Hispanic students attending Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) in the U.S. were more likely to perceive the university climate as alienating, less socially and academically supportive, and at times hostile when compared to the majority population (Davis, 1994; Gonzalez, 2002). According to historical research, visible minority students report perceptions of prejudice, discrimination, and lack of positive social and academic support from their peers, school administrators, and professors at such schools (Davis, 1994; Hurtado, 1994; Sedlacek, 1987). Consequently, such perceptions have a detrimental effect on academic and social achievement (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980), and most visible minority students, who traditionally struggle with educational success, tend to generally develop lower educational aspirations when compared to White students (Mickelson, 1990; Solorzano, 1992).

It should be noted that the limited literature available on the educational aspirations of visible minority student populations has primarily focused on the educational aspirations of African American and Hispanic student populations attending PWIs in the U.S., and does not examine these aspirations in more diverse schools and samples. Additionally, the aforementioned literature lacks perspective on the social aspirations and expectations of visible minority students. Therefore, the second goal of the present research study is to examine the academic and social expectations of a larger

visible minority student population (expanding on the African American and Hispanic populations predominantly examined in the previous literature), and to explore the influence of these expectations on the perception of the university climate in a Canadian context.

The following section will highlight some of the important findings with regards to this literature, subsequently delineating the empirical need to examine the differences in university expectations between visible minority students and majority students in both ethnically diverse schools and PWIs in a Canadian context.

School Ethnic Diversity, Expectations, and Adjustment

There is a growing body of literature emphasizing the importance of school racial composition and diversity as it predicts educational adjustment. According to Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002), school racial diversity fosters socially desirable educational outcomes that are important for educational success. Kao and Joyner (2004) found that students attending ethnically diverse schools reported having more ethnically diverse friends when compared to students attending ethnically-segregated schools. Likewise, students attending ethnically diverse schools reported more positive feelings toward other visible minority groups than students attending ethnically-segregated schools (Schofield & Sagar, 1983). However, other theories have suggested a different impact of school racial composition on academic adjustment, specifically emphasizing the negative influence of school diversity on the educational outcomes of visible minority student populations in the U.S. (Bankston & Caldas, 2002; Ogbu, 1995; Pong, 1998).

Specifically, Fordham and Ogbu (1986) theorized that there may be a development of an oppositional culture composed of visible minority students who

pursue direct opposition against the academic and social beliefs of the majority population (White students). According to this literature, visible minority students refrain from "acting White", a pattern of behaviours that is marked by high educational attainment and the pursuit of academic success (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1995). This pattern has been reported in both racially diverse schools and minority-segregated schools (Massey & Denton, 1993; Ogbu, 1995). However, regardless of these beliefs, there is a dearth of literature that has emphasized the high educational aspiration levels of African American and Hispanic students in minority-segregated schools and in racially diverse schools as well (Cheng & Starks, 2002; Dale, Shaheen, Kalra, & Fieldhouse, 2001; Falk, 1978; White & Knight, 1973).

Using a closed-choice question asking students how much education they realistically expect to attain (high school graduation, BA, PhD, MD, or other professional degree), Frost (2007) found that visible minority students attending ethnically diverse schools reported more positive academic expectations when compared to visible minority students attending PWIs. Specifically, visible minority students attending ethnically diverse schools are more likely to expect to graduate with a bachelor's degree than visible minority students attending PWIs (Frost, 2007). Similarly, Goldsmith (2004) found that African American and Hispanic students were more likely to report higher levels of academic aspirations in ethnically diverse schools than African American and Hispanic students attending PWIs.

The literature regarding the educational adjustment of visible minority students in ethnically diverse schools across the U.S. has been mixed (Bankston & Caldas, 2002; Frost, 2007; Goldsmith, 2004; Ogbu, 1995; Pong, 1998). The third aim of the current

research paper is to examine the differences in university expectations between visible

minority students attending ethnically diverse schools and visible minority students

attending PWIs in a Canadian context.

Visible Minorities in Canada

Canada has one of the largest proportions of foreign-born citizens in the world,

currently only trailing the United States and Australia (Chui, Tran, & Maheux, 2007).

According to Statistics Canada (2005), international immigration accounted for two-

thirds of the country's population growth in 2005, with projections for 2030 indicating

that immigration would be the only population growth factor for Canada.

The majority of today's Canadian immigrants come from Asia, representing over

60% of the new immigrant population between 2001 and 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2008).

Recent figures also indicate that the number of new African immigrants has increased

between early 1960s and early 2000s, with this population accounting for 10.5% of recent

new immigrants when compared to the 3% of the population accounted for in the 1960s

(Statistics Canada, 2008). Projections indicate that by 2017, 20% of the Canadian

population will likely belong to a visible minority group (Statistics Canada, 2003), with

South Asian, West Asian, Korean, African, and Arab populations increasing the most

rapidly (Belanger & Malenfant, 2005). Projections also indicate that by 2017, one person

in two would belong to a visible minority group in the city of Toronto, the largest urban

center in the province of Ontario (the most populated province in Canada) (Statistics

Canada, 2006). Despite these projections, we need to note that the status of "visible

"minority" does not solely refer to numbers in a population, but also the personal

experience of belonging to an ethnic group which is not White by race. Visible minority

populations face issues of prejudice, racism, inequality and discrimination that have historical roots and are potentially unique to their ethnic identities.

As statistical projections indicate, Canada will remain one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world, and coupled with the lack of literature associated with the academic adjustment of visible minority groups in the country, it is clearly relevant and necessary to study the role of university expectations as they predict adjustment in visible minority populations in a Canadian context. Visible minority populations in Canada are culturally different from visible minority populations in the U.S. Canadian provinces are populated by a large number of multicultural sub-populations, whereas the visible minority populations in American states discussed in the research literature is primarily composed of African Americans and Hispanic residents.

There is also an expanding literature on research investigating the differences in university adjustment between university commuters and on-campus residents. The following section will highlight some of the general findings of this literature, and will also delineate the possible influence of the residency factor (commuting vs. on-campus living) as it predicts university expectations between students. Minority students, especially in large urban settings, may be more likely to live at home and commute to university. A search of the literature however indicates that there are currently no documented research studies focusing on this expectancy topic in both majority populations and visible minority populations categorized as either commuters or on-campus residents.

Adjustment Differences Between Commuters and On-Campus Residents

Although many first-year university students decide to live at home during their postsecondary transition, more than half of students live on campus during their first year according to our sample. A great deal of research examining the differences in university adjustment between commuters and on-campus residents has been conducted. The literature has focused on several topics exploring these adjustment differences, from social and personal development, to emotional outcomes, and to educational success, amongst many other factors (Astin, 1973; Astin, 1977; Iffert, 1958; Pascarella, Duby, Miller, & Rasher, 1981; Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Pascarella, 1984; Wilson, Anderson, & Fleming, 1987).

A substantial body of the literature has emphasized the favorable social and academic adjustment associated with students living on campus as opposed to commuting. Typically, commuters report lower levels of social satisfaction (Pascarella, 1984), higher levels of academic difficulties (Astin, 1977), lower self-confidence levels (Wilson et al., 1987), and overall lower levels of satisfaction with the university/college experience when compared to on-campus residents. On-campus residents generally report higher educational aspirations (expecting to attain a degree) and higher levels of faculty interaction and satisfaction when compared to commuters (Astin, 1973; Astin, 1977). Consequently, commuters are generally more likely to drop out of university or college before completing a degree when compared to on-campus residents (Astin, 1973; Iffert, 1958; Newcomb, 1962).

Although there is some minimal evidence that commuters can adjust to the postsecondary transition as well as on-campus residents do, the vast majority of the

literature emphasizes the poor academic and social adjustment associated with university commuting. A general question remains that has not been extensively scrutinized in the literature: what factors might account for the adjustment differences between commuters and on-campus residents? According to Chickering (1974), there are 3 primary pre-enrolment and enrolment factors that predict differences in educational persistence between commuters and on-campus residents:

> First, commuters are on entrance to college significantly less predisposed than residents to engage in various educationally and developmentally influential activities and experiences. Second, as compared to residents, commuters are less likely during college to participate in various nonrequired social, cultural, and intellectual offerings and are generally less likely to interact with an institution's important agents of socialization (e.g., faculty members and other students). Finally, commuters are less likely than residents to be influenced developmentally by their college experience, as assessed by various dimensions of change (e.g., increases in degree aspirations, perceived competence and ability, and commitment to long-range goals) (p. 330)

In accordance with the purpose of the current research study, the notion of predisposition, discussed by Chickering (1974) as it relates to poor educational adjustment in commuter populations, suggests the influence of pre-enrolment university expectations on subsequent adjustment. The final goal of this study, then, is to examine the differences in university expectations prior to entering university between visible minority student commuters and visible minority on-campus residents (as well as expectation patterns for majority residents). It currently seems that there are no

documented research studies focusing on initial expectation differences between these groups.

Purpose

The purpose of the present study is to delineate the differences in university expectations between visible minority students and majority students. Using a predominantly White student population, the literature has discussed the predictive power of university expectations on subsequent social and academic adjustment, primarily in a U.S. context. We want to examine this relationship in a visible minority student population in Canada, and explore whether or not university expectations predict adjustment similarly in both minority and majority groups. The proposed study also seeks to examine the influence of residence plans (commuting vs. on-campus) and university type (ethnically diverse vs. ethnically homogeneous) on expectations as they predict adjustment in visible minority students and majority students in a sample of Canadian universities, and explore the mediating effect of perceived university support (climate) on the prediction of university adjustment from expectations in both groups. We will use gender as an exploratory factor in our study, but will not make any specific predictions regarding its influence on expectations as they predict university adjustment.

Alongside multivariate (MANOVA) analyses of variance and regression analyses, we will use structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the possible role of university climate as a mediator in the pre-enrollment expectations and adjustment relationship. We want to compare the predictions from expectations variables within the two majority/minority groupings as they relate to university adjustment. Gender will be

analyzed as an exploratory variable in our analyses with no hypotheses generated regarding its influence in our study.

Hypotheses

University Expectations

1. There is limited literature indicating that visible minority students report lower educational aspirations and expectations when compared to the majority population (Mickelson, 1990). Therefore, we predict that visible minority students during the transition to university will report lower levels of positive university expectations and higher levels of negative university expectations when compared to the majority population, including higher levels of complacent expectations.

2. Preliminary analyses of our data indicate that visible minority students are more likely than majority students to live at home than to live on campus, and research on the effects of commuting on university social and academic adjustment has demonstrated that commuters report lower levels of social and academic satisfaction than on-campus residents (Astin, 1977; Pascarella, 1984). Therefore, we also expect that commuters will have lower expectations of university social life and academic satisfaction, prior to attending school, than those who plan to live in residence, and this may partly account for minority/majority differences.

3. Visible minority students attending ethnically diverse schools will report higher levels of positive expectations and lower levels of negative expectations than visible minority students attending predominantly White schools. Frost (2007) found that students in ethnically diverse schools had higher expectations of attaining a four-year college degree than students in schools which were not ethnically diverse

University Expectations and Subsequent Adjustment

4. Research has indicated that minority students tend to be less well-adjusted in comparison to majority students overall (e.g., Ainsworth, 2006). We hypothesize that university expectations may account for some of this difference, and will predict adjustment similarly in both visible minority students and majority students. Specifically, students reporting higher positive expectations and lower negative expectations will report higher levels adjustment to university on the SACQ when compared to students reporting lower levels of positive expectations and higher levels of negative expectations.

5. It is also expected that there will be a mediating effect of perceived university support on the prediction of university adjustment from university expectations in both visible minority students and majority students. Minority students are likely to perceive university climate as less positive than majority students overall (Wintre & Dhami, unpublished manuscript, 2010). This difference may partly mediate the adjustment contrasts for minority and majority students. We hypothesize students reporting higher levels of positive expectations and lower levels of negative expectations will perceive the university climate to be more supportive, subsequently reporting higher levels of adjustment on the SACQ. Students reporting lower levels of negative expectations and higher levels of positive expectations will perceive the university climate to be less supportive, subsequently reporting lower levels of adjustment.

Method

Participants

2913 incoming first-year university students from the 2004 and 2005 cohorts were recruited for this longitudinal study, taken from the Transition to University database

(Pratt & Pancer, 2008). The participants were randomly selected from the student population graduating from high school and entering their first-year of university. The participants represent 6 Canadian universities [Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU), University of Guelph (UoG), Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (MUN), University of Toronto—St. George Campus (UoT), York University (YU), University of Toronto—Erindale Campus in Mississauga (UTM)], with the percentage of students designating themselves as visible minorities ranging from 9% to 41% across campuses (mean = 23% overall). Three of the universities were relatively ethnically diverse, large and had many commuters (UoT, YU, UTM) with an average student population of 38,000 across the three campuses, while three were less ethnically diverse (WLU, UoG, MUN), small and had more residential students, with an average student population of 16,000 across the three campuses. The first three universities were also located in a large metropolitan area, whereas the last three were not.

Procedure

Participants completed questionnaires during their postsecondary careers, beginning prior to entering university in August until the end of their fourth year of schooling. During the first year, questionnaires were sent out in August, November and March, and for the following three subsequent years, questionnaires were only sent out in March. University expectations were measured in August prior to first-year enrollment, with perceived university climate, university adjustment and personal adjustment measured across all four years. The package sent out in August of first year contained an introductory letter, a cover sheet requesting contact information, and the 12-page survey. Participants from the 2004 and 2005 cohorts were offered several incentives for their

participation over the fours years of their university careers: a) introductory psychology course credits, b) $10.00 cash payments, c) draws for chances to win 1 of 5 $500 cash prizes, d) a draw for a year's paid tuition, e) draws for several iPod Shuffles, f) and draws for several gift cards.

Materials

Demographic Information. Students were asked to complete a general information section detailing demographic information. The self-reported information we were interested in included gender, visible minority status ("are you a member of a visible minority?"), high school GPA, and family income (below average income, average income, above average income, well above average income). See Appendix A.

Expectations about University Scale (Pancer & Rog, 1998). This 22-item questionnaire measures university expectations prior to entering the first-year of postsecondary education. The scale is composed of 6 subscales that measure positive social expectations (e.g., "I will make new friends in no time when I start university"), negative social expectations (e.g., "There are a lot of social pressures at university that may be hard to deal with"), positive academic expectations (e.g., "University courses are going to be much more interesting than high school courses"), negative academic expectations (e.g., "There may be a lot of things in my courses that I have trouble understanding"), adaptation expectations (e.g., "I have spoken to several people who have gone to university to find out what university is like"), and complacent expectations (e.g., "I haven't really thought too much about what life will be like when I attend university"). Items were rated on 9-point rating scales ranging from -4 (*very strongly disagree*) to +4 (*very strongly agree*). Higher scores on each subscale indicated higher

levels of respective expectancies. Because we did not have hypotheses about adaptation expectancy, we do not include this subscale in the analyses. Cronbach's alphas for the other 5 expectancy subscales were averaged across both cohorts, and are provided as follows: positive social .80 (4 items), negative social .57 (3 items), positive academic .74 (4 items), negative academic .55 (4 items), and complacent .67 (3 items). See Appendix B.

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1989). The SACQ is a 67-item questionnaire that measures college or university adjustment based on 4 domains: academic (e.g. "I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at university"), social (e.g. "I am meeting as many people, and making as many friends as I would like at university"), personal-emotional (e.g. "I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed on me in university"), and attachment (to university) (e.g. "Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to transferring to another university"). Items were rated on a 9-point rating scale ranging from 1 (*Doesn't apply to me at all*) to 9 (*Applies very closely to me*), with higher scores on the scale indicating better university adjustment. Cronbach's alpha ranged from .95 to .97 (mean = .96) across the four years of university for the full scale. See Appendix C.

Students' Perception of University Support and Structure (SPUSS; Wintre, Gates, Pancer, Pratt, Polivy, Birnie-Lefcovitch, & Adams, 2009). The SPUSS is a 21-item questionnaire that measures the students' perceptions of university support and its bureaucratic structure. An example of a *support* item is "If a student needed help for an emotional problem, it would be easy to find a service on campus to help them", whereas an example of a *structure* item is "Professors in classes make it clear what students are

expected to do in order to get a good grade on assignments, papers and tests". Items were rated on a 9-point rating scale ranging from -4 (*very strongly disagree*) to +4 (*very strongly agree*). Higher scores on the scale indicated a higher perception of university support and structure. Cronbach's alphas ranged from .69 to .85 (mean = .81) between both cohorts across the four administrations of the scale (November of first-year, March of first-year, March of second-year, and March of third-year). See Appendix D.

Results

The descriptive statistics for the expectation subscales are reported in Table 1. Overall pre-enrollment levels of expectations across the sample were mixed, with students reporting high levels of positive social expectations, low levels of negative social expectations, high levels of both positive and negative academic expectations, as well as low levels of complacent expectations. Overall means of SACQ adjustment indicate that students report a modestly positive level of perceived social and academic adjustment across the four years of university, and overall means of the SPUSS measure indicate that students generally perceive the campus climate to be supportive across the first three years of university (the SPUSS measure was not administered in the fourth year). The descriptive statistics for the SACQ and SPUSS measures are reported in Table 2.

Due to the large attrition rate in the data set across the four years of university, we ran univariate analyses to check if dropout was systematic with regards to the main variables in our study: gender, high school GPA, visible minority status, family income, positive social expectations, negative social expectations, positive academic expectations, negative academic expectations, and complacent expectations. We compared those who

dropped out versus those who persisted in the study to Year 4 on each of these variables from the August pretests. Using a significance level of $p < .01$, we found that students who dropped out of our study at any point during their university career were more likely to be males, more likely to have lower high school GPAs, and more likely to report low levels of negative social expectations than students who remained in the study. There were no significant differences between the two groups with regards to visible minority status, family income, positive social expectations, positive academic expectations, negative academic expectations, and complacent expectations.

Testing the Hypotheses

In order to investigate the differences in August expectations between visible minority students versus majority students, commuters versus on-campus residents, students attending a racially diverse campus versus students attending a predominantly White campus, and gender, a 2 (visible minority status: yes/no) X 2 (residential status: commuter vs. on-campus resident) X 2 (campus racial composition: ethnically diverse vs. predominantly White) X 2 (gender: males vs. females) omnibus multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted, with the five expectation subscales(positive social, negative social, positive academic, negative academic, complacent) measured as the dependent variables, and high school GPA and family income included as covariates. This analysis addressed the first three hypotheses of the study. All significant effects ($p < .05$) are reported below.

Hypothesis 1: Minority Status and Expectancies

There was a significant main effect of minority status in the omnibus MANCOVA, Pillai's Trace = 4.41, $p = .001$, with visible minority students reporting

lower levels of positive academic expectations, $F(1,1456) = 7.16$, $p = .008$, higher levels of negative academic expectations, $F(1,1456) = 11.32$, $p = .001$, and higher levels of complacent expectations, $F(1,1456) = 5.37$, $p = .021$, than majority students. There were no significant differences in the follow-up ANCOVAs between visible minority students and majority students with regards to social expectations (both positive and negative). These findings indicate that visible minority students were more likely to expect to perform poorly academically and less likely to formulate any expectations about the university experience prior to enrollment, partly consistent with Hypothesis 1. The means for both groups are reported in Table 3. The effects for positive and negative academic expectations were not qualified by any higher order interactions in the omnibus tests. However, the effects for complacent expectations were qualified, as described next.

Overall multivariate analyses indicated that there was no significant interaction between minority status and gender, Pillai's Trace = 2.04, *ns*, but the univariate tests revealed a modest significant effect for complacent expectations only, $F(1,1456) = 4.22$, $p = .04$, with visible minority males reporting higher levels of complacency than the majority males, as well as minority females and majority females.

This two-way interaction was itself qualified by a significant three-way interaction between residence status, minority status and gender in the MANCOVA, Pillai's Trace = 2.48, $p = .03$, with the univariate tests revealing a significant effect on complacent expectations, $F(1,1456) = 6.71$, $p = .01$. In order to understand this three-way interaction, follow-up analyses were conducted separately for males and females using a 2 (residence status: commuters vs. on-campus residents) X 2 (minority status: visible minority vs. majority) ANOVA, with complacent expectations analyzed as the criterion

variable, and high school GPA and family income analyzed as covariates. Results indicated that there was a significant two-way interaction between minority status and residence status for the women, $F(1,862) = 9.92$, $p = .002$, but not for the men, $F(1,606) = .31$, *ns*. Visible minority women living on campus reported higher levels of complacency ($M = 9.49$) than majority women living on campus ($M = 7.85$), and visible minority women living at home reported lower levels of complacency ($M = 9.08$) than majority women living at home ($M = 9.63$). However, regardless of the fact that the ANOVA follow-up analysis for the men was not significant, it is interesting to note that visible minority males living at home reported the highest levels of complacency overall ($M = 11.51$) when compared to the other groups (majority males living at home, $M = 9.89$, visible minority males living on campus, $M = 9.60$, majority males living on campus, $M = 8.84$).

Hypothesis 2: Commuter Status and Expectancies

Examining the expectation differences between commuters and on-campus residents within the context of minority status, a chi-square analysis was performed to measure the proportion of visible minority students and majority students choosing to stay at home or live on-campus during the first year of university. Analyses indicate that visible minority students were more likely to live at home during the first year of university, $\chi^2(1, N = 1636) = 70.67$, $p < .001$, with 65% of minority students living at home and 41% of majority students living at home.

As predicted in H2, there was a main effect of residence status in the omnibus MANOVA, Pillai's Trace $= 24.43$, $p < .001$, with commuters reporting lower levels of positive social expectations, $F(1,1456) = 38.97$, $p < .001$, lower levels of positive

academic expectations, $F(1,1456) = 6.67$, $p = .010$, and higher levels of complacent expectations, $F(1,1456) = 4.45$, $p = .035$, when compared to on-campus residents. However, contrary to predictions, commuters also reported lower levels of negative social expectations, $F(1,1456) = 52.21$, $p < .001$, and lower levels of negative academic expectations, $F(1,1456) = 13.74$, $p < .004$, when compared to on-campus residents. The means for both groups are reported in Table 4. There were no significant qualifying interaction effects on these positive or negative social or academic expectations main effects for residence type. However, there were several effects of higher-order interactions on complacency, which are discussed next.

Overall multivariate analyses indicated that there was no significant interaction between residence status and gender, Pillai's Trace $= 1.58$, *ns*, but the univariate tests revealed a significant effect of Residence Status X Gender for complacent expectations only, $F(1,1456) = 3.95$, $p = .047$, with males living at home reporting higher levels of complacency than females living at home, as well as males and females living on campus. In general, however, males living at home or on campus reported higher levels of complacent expectations than females living at home or on campus.

There was also a significant interaction between campus racial composition and residence status in the omnibus MANOVA, Pillai's Trace $= 2.70$, $p = .020$, with students living on campus in predominantly White schools reporting higher levels of negative social expectations than students living on campus in ethnically diverse schools, as well as students living at home in both types of campuses, $F(1,1456) = 7.94$, $p = .005$. Overall, students living on campus in both predominantly White and ethnically diverse schools reported higher levels of negative social expectations than students deciding to live at

home in both types of schools, but these differences were greater for the ethnically diverse schools.

Multivariate analyses also indicated that there was no significant three-way interaction between residence status, campus racial composition and gender, Pillai's Trace = 2.10, *ns*, but the univariate tests revealed a significant three-way interaction effect on complacent expectations only, $F(1,1456) = 4.95$, $p = .026$. In order to understand this three-way interaction, follow-up analyses were conducted separately for males and females using a 2 (residence status: commuters vs. on-campus residents) X 2 (campus racial composition: ethnically diverse vs. predominantly White) ANOVA, with complacent expectations analyzed as the criterion variable, and high school GPA and family income analyzed as covariates. Results indicate that there was a significant two-way interaction between campus racial composition and residence status for the men, $F(1,611) = 4.11$, $p = .043$, but not for the women, $F(1,879) = .85$, *ns*, indicating that men who live at home while attending a diverse campus reported higher levels of complacency than the other three groups.

Hypothesis 3: Campus Racial Composition and Expectations

Contrary to the literature and Hypothesis 3 of this study, there was no significant interaction between campus racial composition and minority status across the five expectation subscales. Visible minority students attending ethnically diverse schools did not report higher positive expectations or lower negative expectations when compared to visible minority students attending predominantly White institutions.

There was, however, a main effect of campus racial composition in the omnibus MANOVA, Pillai's Trace = 4.09, $p = .001$, with students attending racially diverse

schools reporting lower levels of positive social expectations, $F(1,1456) = 6.62, p = .010$, and higher levels of negative academic expectations, $F(1,1456) = 5.92, p = .015$, when compared to students attending predominantly White institutions. There were no significant differences in negative social expectations, positive academic expectations and complacent expectations between students attending ethnically diverse schools and students attending predominantly White institutions. The means of these differences are highlighted in Table 5. There were no significant qualifying interactions for this pattern of effects, except that, as noted, there was a significant two-way interaction between campus type and residence status for negative social expectations, and a significant three way interaction, as described above, for complacent expectations with gender, residence status and campus type.

Gender

There was a main effect of gender, Pillai's Trace = 5.77, $p < .001$, with men reporting lower levels of negative social expectations, $F(1,1456) = 5.84, p = .016$, and higher levels of complacent expectations, $F(1,1456) = 17.35, p < .001$, when compared to women. There were no significant differences in positive social expectations, positive academic expectations, and negative academic expectations between men and women. Men are less likely to enter university expecting a negative social climate, and are more likely to report formulating no real expectations of the upcoming university experience. The means for the two groups are reported in Table 6. Although overall multivariate analyses indicated that there was a significant four-way interaction between residence status, campus racial composition, minority status and gender, Pillai's Trace = 2.83, $p = .015$, the univariate ANCOVAs revealed no significant effects for any one of the 5

separate types of expectancies included in this analysis, and follow-up analyses were therefore not conducted on this complex interaction.

Hypothesis 4: University Expectations Predicting Adjustment

Univariate analyses on first year adjustment data indicated that visible minority students reported significantly lower levels ($p < .001$) of SACQ social (mean = 101.35) and academic (mean = 119.47) adjustment when compared to majority students (mean = 117.25; mean = 129.78, respectively), similar to the findings of Wintre et al. (unpublished manuscript) using the same data set with a somewhat different definition of minority status. We were therefore interested in examining whether the pattern of expectations predicted adjustment similarly in visible minority students and majority students.

Preliminary overall regression analyses were conducted in order to find whether or not there was a significant interaction between minority status (visible minorities vs. majorities) and expectations in predicting subsequent adjustment. Four interaction terms were created [(a) majority/minority status by positive academic expectations, (b) majority/minority status by negative academic expectations, (c) majority/minority status by positive social expectations, and (c) majority/minority status by negative social expectations] for linear regression analyses predicting SACQ academic and social adjustment respectively, while controlling for visible minority status and the expectation subscales as independent variables, as well as controlling for gender, high school GPA, and family income. All four interactions were not statistically significant across the four years, indicating that there was no difference in the pattern of how expectations predicted adjustment for visible minority students and majority students in any year. Therefore,

follow-up linear regression analyses were conducted using the expectation subscales (measured in August of first year) as the independent variables and the relevant SACQ subscales (measured in March across all four years) as the dependent variables, with gender, family income, and high school GPA entered as control variables in these equations, in order to examine the prediction of adjustment levels for our entire sample.

As predicted, during the first year of university, (a) positive academic expectations measured in August of first year significantly predicted SACQ academic adjustment measured in March of first year in the entire sample, $t(1266) = 9.63$, $p < .001$, (b) negative academic expectations predicted SACQ academic adjustment $t(1265) = -7.91$, $p < .001$, (c) positive social expectations predicted SACQ social adjustment $t(1264) = 14.34$, $p < .001$, and (d) negative social expectations predicted SACQ social adjustment $t(1266) = -5.25$, $p < .001$. Visible minority students and majority students reporting higher levels of positive academic and social expectations in August of their first year reported higher levels of perceived academic and social adjustment in March of their first year. Additionally, higher levels of negative academic and social expectations in August of first year predicted to lower levels of perceived academic and social adjustment in March of first year, with the pattern similar for visible minority students and majority students. Our analyses indicated that these patterns were similar across all 4 years, and we therefore decided to only report the fourth year data in detail, in order to illustrate the extended longitudinal predictions from pre-enrollment expectations to adjustment levels over time.

During the fourth year of university, (a) positive academic expectations measured in August of first year significantly predicted SACQ academic adjustment measured in

March of fourth year in the entire sample, $t(432) = 3.53$, $p < .001$, (b) negative academic expectations predicted SACQ academic adjustment $t(431) = -4.08$, $p < .001$, (c) positive social expectations predicted SACQ social adjustment $t(430) = 7.59$, $p < .001$, and (d) negative social expectations predicted SACQ social adjustment $t(430) = -2.12$, $p < .035$. Thus, visible minority students and majority students reporting higher levels of positive academic and social expectations in August of their first year reported higher levels of perceived academic and social adjustment in March of their fourth year. Additionally, higher levels of negative academic and social expectations in August of first year predicted lower levels of perceived academic and social adjustment in March of fourth year for both visible minority students and majority students. The regression data for all four years of university are reported in Table 7.

Hypothesis 5: University Climate Mediating Expectations-Adjustment Relationship

Univariate analyses on first year data indicated that visible minority students reported significantly lower levels ($p < .001$) of perceived university support (mean = 58.88) when compared to majority students (mean = 62.68), similar to the findings of Wintre et al. (unpublished manuscript) using the same data set. We were therefore interested in examining whether the pattern of perceived university support as a mediator of the relationship between university expectations and subsequent adjustment was similar between visible minority students and majority students.

In order to analyze the role of perceived university support as a mediator for the pre-enrollment university expectations and SACQ adjustment relationship, we constructed mediation models based on structural equation modeling for both visible minority students and majority students. We used the Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation

paradigm, which is comprised of four steps necessary for establishing mediation: 1) the initial predictor variable must be correlated with the criterion variable, 2) the initial predictor variable must be correlated with the mediator variable, 3) the mediator variable must significantly predict the criterion variable while controlling for the predictor variable, and 4) in order to establish full mediation, the initial predictor variable must have a non-significant effect on the criterion variable when controlling for the mediator variable. If the effect of the predictor variable on the criterion variable remains significant after controlling for the mediator variable, then partial mediation is established.

We were interested in the longitudinal effect of first year expectations (predictor variables: positive and negative social expectations, positive and negative academic expectations) measured in August, and perceived university support and structure (mediator variable) measured in March of first year on subsequent second, third, and fourth year adjustment (criterion variables: SACQ social and academic adjustment) measured in March of each respective year. We will present one longitudinal model (first year perceived university support mediating the effects of first year university expectation on second year SACQ adjustment measures) and then highlight any important differences between the two student population groups across the four years of university.

We initially ran Sobel tests of significance for all mediation models using the entire data set (both groups combined) in order to test for significant mediation of effects on second year adjustment, and found that: a) perceived university support significantly mediated the relationship between positive social expectations and SACQ social adjustment, $z = 7.58$, $p < .001$, b) perceived university support significantly mediated the

relationship between negative social expectations and SACQ social adjustment, $z = -3.97$, $p < .001$, c) perceived university support significantly mediated the relationship between positive academic expectations and SACQ academic adjustment, $z = 6.72$, $p < .001$, and that d) perceived university support significantly mediated the relationship between negative academic expectations and SACQ academic adjustment, $z = -4.95$, $p < .001$. Thus, in each case, the Sobel test for mediation effects indicated that expectations predicted each type of outcome on the SACQ through the mediating effects of views of university climate at the end of first year.

Positive Social Expectations

Results indicated that perceived university support in March of first year significantly mediated the relationship between positive social expectations measured in first year and SACQ social adjustment measured in March of second year. Looking at the standardized results of our mediation model, positive social expectations positively correlated with perceived university support for both visible minority students, r = .21, $p < .001$, and majority students, r = .25, $p < .001$, which in turn positively correlated with SACQ social adjustment measured in second year for both groups, r = .39, $p < .001$, and r = .39, $p < .001$, respectively. Partial mediation only was obtained because the initial relationship between positive social expectations in August of first year and SACQ social adjustment in second year remained significant for both visible minority students, r = .28, $p < .001$, and majority students, r = .24, $p < .001$, after removing the effects of perceived university support. Students expecting positive social experiences prior to entering university perceive the university climate as more supportive and subsequently reported

higher levels of social adjustment. The figures for visible minority and majority students are shown in Figure 1.

Negative Social Expectations

Results indicated that perceived university support in March of first year significantly mediated the relationship between negative social expectations measured in August of first year and SACQ social adjustment measured in March of second year for the majority group only. Looking at the standardized results of our mediation model, negative social expectations negatively correlated with perceived university support for majority students, $r = -.09$, $p = .002$, which in turn positively correlated with SACQ social adjustment measured in second year $r = .44$, $p < .001$. Partial mediation was obtained for the majority group because the initial relationship between negative social expectations in August of first year and SACQ social adjustment in second year remained significant after the pathway through the mediator was controlled, $r = -.12$, $p = .001$. There was no significant mediation shown for the visible minority group, however, because the initial relationship between negative social expectations in August of first year and SACQ social adjustment in second year was not significant, thereby failing to meet the first requirement of the Baron and Kenny (1986) paradigm. Majority students expecting low levels of negative social experiences prior to entering university perceive the university climate as more supportive and therefore report higher levels of social adjustment, but this is apparently not true of minority students. The figures for visible minority and majority students are shown in Figure 2.

Positive Academic Expectations

Results indicate that perceived university support in March of first year significantly mediated the relationship between positive academic expectations measured in first year and SACQ academic adjustment measured in March of second year. Looking at the standardized results of our mediation model, positive academic expectations positively correlated with perceived university support for both visible minority students, r = .18, *p* = .002, and majority students, r = .26, *p* < .001, which in turn positively correlated with SACQ academic adjustment measured in second year for both groups, r = .38, *p* < .001, and r = .31, *p* < .001, respectively. Partial mediation was obtained because the initial relationship between positive academic expectations in August of first year and SACQ academic adjustment in second year remained significant for both visible minority students, r = .16, *p* = .027, and majority students, r = .15, *p* < .001 after removing the effects of perceived university support. Students expecting positive academic experiences prior to entering university perceive the university climate as more supportive and subsequently reported higher subsequent levels of academic adjustment. The figures for visible minority and majority students are shown in Figure 3.

Negative Academic Expectations

Results indicate that perceived university support in March of first year significantly mediated the relationship between negative academic expectations measured in first year and SACQ academic adjustment measured in March of second year. Looking at the standardized results of our mediation model, negative academic expectations negatively correlated with perceived university support for both visible minority students, r = -.18, *p* = .002, and majority students, r = -.13, *p* < .001, which in turn positively

correlated with SACQ academic adjustment measured in second year for both groups, r = .37, $p < .001$, and r = .33, $p < .001$, respectively. Partial mediation was obtained because the initial relationship between negative academic expectations in August of first year and SACQ academic adjustment in second year remained significant for both visible minority students, r = -.17, $p = .020$, and majority students, r = -.15, $p < .001$, after the pathway through perceived climate was controlled. Students expecting low levels of negative academic experiences prior to entering university perceive the university climate as more supportive and subsequently reported higher levels of social adjustment. The figures for visible minority and majority students are shown in Figure 4.

Mediation Patterns for Fourth Year

Our analyses showed that the mediation models became weaker with each subsequent year for the outcome measures. In order to illustrate the longitudinal effect of expectations on perceived university support and overall adjustment without covering too much detail, we decided to only report the fourth year data here. Results indicated that perceived university support in March of first year significantly mediated the relationship between a) negative academic expectations measured in first year and SACQ academic adjustment measured in fourth year, and b) between positive social expectations measured in first year and SACQ academic adjustment measured in fourth year. In both of these cases, partial mediation was obtained for both minority and majority students because the initial relationship between the respective predictor variable and criterion variable remained significant, once the mediation pathway was controlled. For both visible minority students and majority students, there was no significant mediating effect of perceived university support in March of first year on the relationship between

negative social expectations in August of first year and SACQ social adjustment in March of fourth year because the initial relationship between negative social expectations and SACQ social adjustment was not significant, thereby failing to meet the first requirement of the Baron and Kenny (1986) paradigm. There was also one difference between the two groups with regards to positive academic expectations: for the majority students, perceived university support in March of first year did not significantly mediate the relationship between positive academic expectations measured in first year and SACQ academic adjustment measured in fourth year because the initial relationship between positive academic expectations and SACQ academic adjustment was not significant, thereby failing to meet the first requirement of the Baron and Kenny (1986) paradigm. Full mediation of this effect was however obtained for the visible minority student population.

Discussion

The major purpose of this study was to delineate the differences in university expectations between visible minority students and majority students. We also wanted to examine the influence of pre-enrollment university expectations on subsequent adjustment levels of visible minority students attending Canadian postsecondary institutions in order to compare them to the majority student population's (Euro-Canadian students) experience of attending the same universities. We examined the roles of campus diversity (ethnically diverse versus predominantly White universities), residence status during university (living at home versus living on campus), and gender as they influenced pre-enrollment expectations and adjustment. Finally, we were interested in the role of perceived university support as a mediator in the expectations and subsequent adjustment

relationship, specifically measuring the similarities of this model between visible minority students and majority students.

Hypothesis 1: Expectation Differences Between Visible Minority and Majority Students

There was a significant main effect of minority status, with visible minority students reporting lower levels of positive academic expectations, higher levels of negative academic expectations, and higher levels of complacent expectations than the majority students, as predicted by Hypothesis 1. However, there were no significant differences in positive social expectations and negative social expectations between the two groups, contrary to our hypothesis. Students identifying themselves as members of visible minority groups are likely to enter university reporting more worries about upcoming courses, exams, and generally expecting to perform more poorly academically when compared to their majority peers attending the same respective postsecondary institutions in Canada. Visible minority students are also more likely to enter university without well-formulated expectations as to what their time at university will be like, since they are higher on our complacency subscale. More specifically, they do not seem to have done as much thinking about the upcoming challenges and experiences of university when compared to the majority student population.

Overall multivariate analyses indicated that there was no significant interaction between visible minority status and gender, but the univariate tests revealed a modest significant interaction effect on complacent expectations. Visible minority male students reported the highest levels of complacent expectations when compared to visible minority female students, as well as majority male and female students, indicating that visible minority male students are more unlikely to have formulated expectations about the

university experience when compared to all other groups. However, this significant interaction was also itself qualified by a significant three-way interaction between minority status, residence status, and gender with regards to complacent expectations. Visible minority males living at home reported the highest levels of complacent expectations when compared to the other groups, indicating that these students are more likely to enter university without thinking about the upcoming experience in as much detail as any other group.

Our Canadian findings may be seen as consistent in some ways with the American literature. Visible minority students attending Canadian universities reported lower levels of positive academic expectations and higher levels of negative academic expectations when compared to majority students attending the same universities, similar to the lower educational aspirations reported by African American and Hispanic students attending American universities (Ainsworth, 2006; Khattab, 2003; Ogbu, 1978). Visible minority students are more likely to enter university expecting to struggle with managing course work, perform poorly on exams, and generally find the academic experience more challenging, consistent with the literature (Kao, Tienda, & Schneider, 1996; Kao & Thompson, 2003; Mickelson, 1990; Trust, 2002). We also found that visible minority students are more likely to enter university without having thought as much about what the upcoming experience will be like in general. We found no existing literature on the topic of such "complacency" differences between majority and minority groups, but considering the differences in academic expectations observed, students expecting to perform more poorly academically in an unfamiliar context (university/college) may have

not thought as much or as realistically about the upcoming experience, possibly because such sustained examination is stressful if one is already anxious.

There is also a limited literature claiming that African American and Hispanic students report high levels of educational aspirations when compared to White students (Cheng & Starks, 2002; Dale, Shaheen, Kalra, & Fieldhouse, 2001; Goyette & Xie, 1999). Our findings for academic expectations for this large Canadian sample are not consistent with this evidence. Data collection in this earlier literature relied heavily on a qualitative approach, using narratives to code for differences in aspiration levels between visible minority students and majority students. Our data collection on expectancies was strictly quantitative in this study, and the contradiction with this literature we found may be the result of the difference in methodological approaches.

We did find that there was no significant difference in social expectations (positive or negative) between visible minority students and majority students, inconsistent with Hypothesis 1 of our study. Social expectations are not as tangible as academic expectations; it may be difficult to formulate an understanding of the social climate prior to entering university due to the potential disparity between familiar high school experience and the upcoming unfamiliarity of university social life. Academic expectations stem from personal prowess and results, with students potentially expecting to perform academically in unfamiliar territory based on personal confidence with course work and exams. We found no previous literature focusing on pre-enrollment university/college social expectations, and specifically nothing on social expectation differences between visible minority students and majority students. Due to the intangible nature of unfamiliar social interactions, it may not be entirely surprising that we found no

differences in pre-enrollment social expectations between visible minority students and majority students.

It may also be the case that minority families are the basis of this difference for academic and social expectations. Minority families may be especially likely to stress academic success as a route to future success in the wider culture (Goyette & Xie, 1998; Kiyama, 2010), and thus may make minority students more concerned about this dimension than majority students, whereas whatever processes incoming students use to think about future social adjustment do not seem to differ between visible minority students and majority students, and may be of less direct concern to parents.

Hypothesis 2: Expectation Differences Between Commuters and On-Campus Residents

Our preliminary chi-square analyses indicated that visible minority students were substantially more likely to stay at home and commute to university rather than live on campus, when compared to the majority student population. We were therefore interested in examining pre-enrollment expectation differences between commuters and on-campus residents to understand the potential role of this factor between groups, and our analyses revealed that there was a significant main effect of residence status. Students living at home reported significantly lower levels of positive social expectations, lower levels of positive academic expectations, and higher levels of complacent expectations than students living on campus, as predicted in Hypothesis 2. However, contrary to our predictions, students living at home also reported lower levels of negative social expectations and negative academic expectations when compared to on-campus students.

Students living at home are less likely to expect to perform well academically, and are less likely to expect to be engaged socially in university when compared to

students living on campus. Commuters also enter university with fewer clear expectations formulated about the experience overall when compared to on-campus residents. Interestingly however, students living at home are also less likely to expect to struggle academically and socially when compared to students living on campus. Although this finding is contrary to our prediction, we believe that the overall pattern makes sense in association with the higher levels of complacency reported by commuters. Chickering (1974) believed that on-campus residents are more *predisposed* to engage in educationally influential activities during university, indicating that they are potentially more prepared for the experience prior to attendance at school. According to Jackson et al. (2000), the *prepared* cluster of students in their study entered university reporting high levels of positive social and academic expectancies, as well as negative expectancies associated with the inevitable challenges that accompany the university experience. Our analyses indicated that students living at home think less about the upcoming university experience (as reflected in higher levels of complacency) than students deciding to live on campus, indicating that the former group is likely less "prepared" than the latter. On-campus residents enter university having thought more about how this experience will be both challenging and rewarding, thereby explaining their higher reported levels of both positive and negative academic and social expectations.

Overall multivariate analyses indicated that there was no significant interaction between residence status and gender, but the univariate tests revealed a significant effect of this interaction for complacent expectations. Males living at home reported higher levels of complacency than females living at home, as well as females and males living on campus. Males deciding to live at home are more likely to enter university with no

real formulated expectations about what the experience will be like when compared to the other groups. Perhaps female minority students are likely to live at home based on more explicit and articulated parental concerns about their living independently, and thus have done more consideration of this potential transition than males in this group, about whom parents may be less likely to be anxious (Dosanjh & Ghuman, 1996).

There was also a significant interaction between residence status and campus racial composition, with students living on campus in predominantly White schools reporting higher levels of negative social expectations than students living on campus attending more ethnically diverse schools, as well as students living at home in both types of campuses. Students deciding to live on campus in predominantly White universities are more likely to expect negative social experiences (social rejection and peer pressure, etc.) than all the other groups. This seems to follow from the greater consideration given to social climate generally among those intending to live on campus, but this may be heightened when the campus is seen as smaller and less diverse, as was true in our sample for the predominantly White schools.

The above interactions are all qualified by a significant three-way interaction between residence status, campus racial composition and gender for complacent expectations. Men who decide to live at home while attending an ethnically diverse university are more likely to report having no real formulated expectations about the upcoming experience when compared to the other groups. Consistent with the argument above, males living at home may have done the least thinking about university issues because they have not been pushed to do so by an upcoming move to a new setting or by

a family's overt concern about the transition to greater maturity and independence signaled by this life transition to university.

Hypothesis 3: Campus Racial Composition and Expectations

According to the more recent literature, visible minority students attending ethnically diverse schools report higher levels of positive academic expectations and are more likely to expect to graduate with a bachelor's degree than visible minority students attending predominantly White institutions (Frost, 2007; Goldsmith, 2004). However, contrary to the literature and Hypothesis 3 of this study, our analyses revealed that there was no significant interaction between campus diversity and student visible minority status for expectations, indicating that visible minority students in our sample attending ethnically diverse universities did not report higher positive expectations or lower negative expectations than visible minority students attending predominantly White universities.

We did find a significant main effect of campus racial composition, with students from all groups attending ethnically diverse schools reporting significantly lower levels of positive social expectations and higher levels of negative academic expectations than students attending predominantly White schools. Students attending ethnically diverse universities are less likely to expect positive social experiences (looking forward to making friends and forming new social networks, participating in socially developmental activities, etc.), and are more likely to expect academic challenges (worries about struggling with course work and performing poorly on exams) than students attending predominantly White universities. These findings are directly contrary to the previous literature suggesting that attendance at more diverse universities should be linked to

higher aspirations for visible minority students. It is important to note here that our ethnically diverse universities were also generally larger, and located in larger urban settings than the more homogeneous schools in this study. Some of these confounded factors, inherent in our design, may account for these differences between the school types. For example, everyone going to these large, diverse, urban-based schools may be more worried about social integration into campus life, regardless of their own visible minority status.

According to Fordham and Ogbu (1986), visible minority students develop an "oppositional culture" and feel pressure to refrain from "acting White", a pattern of behaviours that is marked by high educational attainment and the pursuit of academic success. African American and Hispanic students oppose the academic and social beliefs of the majority population, and therefore do not aspire to attain the same postsecondary experience as the White group (Ogbu, 1995). This pattern of behaviour has been reported in both ethnically diverse campuses and minority-segregated schools, primarily in the U.S. (Massey & Denton, 1993).

Our findings indicate that visible minority students attending ethnically diverse universities in Canada report the same level of expectations as the visible minority students that attend predominantly White universities. Visible minority students in our sample reported lower levels of academic expectations than majority students across both types of campuses, and along with our previous finding, we can thus find some consistencies with the American literature. We did not explore for the existence of an oppositional culture, but the lack of a difference in expectations between visible minorities attending diverse universities and visible minorities attending predominantly

White universities may be explained by this group expecting to struggle more across all campuses when compared to their majority peers. The basis of these differences in academic expectations among minority students (versus majority students) clearly requires more study.

Although we made no direct predictions about the role of gender in our study, we did analyze it as an exploratory variable and found a significant main effect, with men reporting lower levels of negative social expectations and higher levels of complacent expectations than women. Men entering university are less likely to worry about not forming new social bonds, and are more likely to enter university with no real formulated expectations about the upcoming experience when compared to women entering university. These findings for gender differences in social expectations are quite plausible, given the extensive evidence that social concerns may be more salient for women in many settings (Hyde & Shelly, 2008). As discussed above, men's greater complacency may be at least partly a function of the greater family concern for the transition to adulthood and independence for women (Greenberger & Robin, 1993), which leads them to demonstrate more consideration of their upcoming experiences.

Hypothesis 4: University Expectations Predicting Adjustment

As we hypothesized, our analyses indicated that there was an identical pattern of expectations predicting first, second, third, and fourth year adjustment between visible minority students and majority students - the interaction terms between minority status and expectations were non-significant in these regressions in all cases. Thus, both visible minority students and majority students reporting high levels of positive academic expectations and low levels of negative academic expectations in August of first year

reported high levels of academic adjustment (SACQ measure) in March of all subsequent years. Likewise, high levels of positive social expectations and low levels of negative social expectations predicted to high levels of social adjustment (SACQ measure) in March of all four years. Students expecting to perform well academically (managing course work, doing well on exams, etc.) and to develop socially (build new social networks, etc.) before entering university reported a high degree of perceived academic and social adjustment across the four years of their university career.

In our analyses, we controlled for high school GPA and family income, and still found a high degree of positive academic and social expectations across our entire sample. Students seem to enter university with the expectation that the experience may individualize itself from their previous high school experience, and therefore enroll with comparable positive and negative expectations that go above and beyond the influence of high school GPA and family income (though high school GPA does have a strong overall significant effect on university adjustment). More interesting to our study is the fact that expectations themselves seem to function predictively in the same way for both visible minority and majority students, and whatever the processes may be, they seem to be pretty similar across our full sample, given these results.

Hypothesis 5: University Climate Mediating Expectations-Adjustment Relationship

As predicted for our mediation model, our analyses indicated that positive academic expectations, negative academic expectations, and positive social expectations measured in August of first year were significantly mediated by perceived university support in March of first year in predicting SACQ academic and social adjustment in March of second year, respectively. Students reporting a) high levels of positive

academic expectations (manage course work, perform well on exams), b) low levels of negative academic expectations (unable to complete course work, worry about exams), and c) high levels of positive social expectations (making new friends, developing new social networks) in August, prior to entering first year of university, reported higher levels of perceived university support (environment as supportive, not hostile, etc.) in March of first year, which in turn led to higher levels of perceived academic and social adjustment in March of second year on the SACQ, respectively. Perceived university support in March of first year significantly mediated the relationship between negative social expectations measured in August of first year and SACQ social adjustment in March of second year for the majority students only. Majority students expecting low levels of negative social experiences (not making friends, unable to meet new people, etc.) prior to entering university perceive the university climate as more supportive (helpful, not hostile, etc.) and then report higher levels of social adjustment in the following year. However, minority students' level of negative social expectations did not predict significantly to their social adjustment in Year 2.

In order to illustrate the longitudinal effect of expectations on perceived university support and overall adjustment, and considering the weakening effect of our mediation models across subsequent years of students' adjustment, we decided to focus the follow-up analyses on the fourth year results. For fourth year longitudinal mediation, our analyses indicated that the predictive effects of negative academic expectations and positive social expectations measured in August of first year were maintained and significantly mediated by perceived university support in March of first year in predicting SACQ academic and social adjustment in March of fourth year, respectively. Students

reporting a) low levels of negative academic expectations (unable to complete course work, worry about exams), and b) high levels of positive social expectations (making new friends, developing new social networks) in August prior to entering first year of university reported higher levels of perceived university support (environment as supportive, not hostile, etc.) in March of first year, which in turn predicted to higher levels of perceived SACQ academic and social adjustment in March of fourth year, respectively. These patterns of effects were essentially identical for both visible minority students and majority students. There was no significant mediation for pre-enrollment positive academic expectations and negative social expectations for both visible minority students and majority students, so these patterns were the same as well. Again, these processes seem to be largely parallel in forecasting student adjustment outcomes at the end of university for visible minority and majority students in our sample.

Of course, it is not clear in detail how these expectancy-adjustment processes work, but they do seem to be substantially mediated through student perceptions of university climate, as assessed on the SPUSS instrument developed for this larger project (Wintre et al., 2009). This might indicate that more positive expectancies on the part of students overall may provide a greater sense of optimism about the university experience and climate in Year 1, which ultimately translates into more satisfaction and adjustment by Year 4 (e.g., Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992). Students with a higher level of optimism about the university experience reported higher satisfaction with the social support provided by their institution, which in turn predicted to better college adjustment (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992). The results of Jackson et al. (2000) also indicated that more optimism, particularly a prepared optimism, may be beneficial in terms of student

adaptation. The present findings on a large Canadian sample across several university sites, are consistent with these earlier results, and further suggest that this process is likely quite parallel in both majority and visible minority students.

Limitations and Confounding Variables

There were a number of limitations in our study. Although we did have a large sample size in the initial phase of our study (2004/2005 cohort), there was considerable attrition and student dropout due to the longitudinal nature of the data collection. And with the nature of our data collection (observational, using questionnaires), our analyses and results were strictly correlational, not allowing us to make any cause and effect interpretations, which require experimental tests. The relatively low Cronbach's alphas for the negative social, negative academic and complacent subscales of the Expectations about University measure were also a limitation and therefore suggest some caution with regard to interpretations of the findings. It should be noted, however, that these subscales were based on very small numbers of items (3 or 4), which likely explains part of the reason for their lower reliabilities.

There were also some confounded variables in our study. The largest schools in our sample (York University, University of Toronto—St. George Campus) were also the most ethnically diverse. The smaller schools (Wilfrid Laurier University, University of Guelph, Memorial University of Newfoundland) were much more ethnically homogenous (mostly White students), making it difficult to know which characteristics of these schools were the important ones for the campus type effects we studied (the University of Toronto-Erindale was smaller, but urban and ethnically diverse, so there was some variability within that group).

There was also an interpretive issue with the method of indication for minority status: students were asked if they considered themselves as part of a visible minority group, opening the door to personal perception of what the term "minority" constitutes. A female participant may consider the female gender as a minority group, or a homosexual student may consider him or herself as part of a minority group as well (though less likely a "visible" one). As best we could determine, most of the students who designated themselves as visible minorities were representatives of an ethnically diverse group, but it is important to note that this was based on the person's own perception of minority status, not one categorized by others. However, given the complexity of such categorization, it is certainly important to obtain the individual's own perception of minority status as a key approach to these issues.

Despite these limitations and confounds, there were several strengths to this study. It is a very large study involving six campuses across two regions of Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University, University of Guelph, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, University of Toronto—St. George Campus, University of Toronto— Erindale Campus in Mississauga, and York University. We had a large sample size due to the scope of the study, giving us a lot of power in our analyses to test hypotheses. The study was also longitudinal in nature (data collected from 2004 onwards), allowing us to analyze the educational development and adjustment patterns of students across four years of university, which has rarely been done in this research literature. These findings therefore provide a stronger picture of the variability of students' pre-university expectations across a diverse population, and show how they were related to adjustment across several university sites and two sample cohorts.

Future Directions

The Transition to University database is large and quite expansive. A multitude of variables has been explored and studied longitudinally, and there remains room for more complicated analytical tools in order to understand the complexity of educational development across a range of university campuses. This study did benefit from the implementation of structural equation modeling used to examine potential mediation across our variables of interest. However, our analyses could be furthered using analytical methods such as Latent Growth Modeling in order to understand longitudinal change patterns across four years of university, and this could potentially be the next step we take with this project.

There are also opportunities for qualitative research for future directions. The university transition period is a milestone experience, and although we tapped into the quantitative understanding of the expectations and adjustment associated with this transition, supplementing this with a more qualitative approach would allow for a more personalized voice of individuals about this key experience to be presented. As a future step, we are interested in interviewing participants (both who remained in university and those who dropped out) in order to obtain personal perception with regards to pre-enrollment expectations matching the overall university experience. With such transcripts, we could code for narrative themes associated with academic adjustment, social adjustment, attachment to the campus, and reasons for remaining in or dropping out of university, all of which might help us understand the meaning of these experiences for individuals better.

Conclusion

Pre-enrollment university expectations predict subsequent academic and social adjustment levels over four years of the university experience. Visible minority students attending Canadian postsecondary institutions enter university with lower academic expectations, as well as higher complacency levels in their thinking about the future, when compared to majority students attending the same universities. Commuters also appear to enter university with lower levels of positive expectations, lower levels of negative expectations and higher levels of complacency than students deciding to live on campus in Canadian universities. It appears as though visible minority students and commuters (who are disproportionately from minority groups) enter university without giving as much thought as to what the upcoming experience will be like, and subsequently are more predisposed to report lower levels of adjustment across the four years of their studies, particularly on perceived academic outcomes.

It therefore seems likely that both minority students and commuter groups can benefit from pre-enrollment intervention programs designed to introduce students to common social and academic difficulties associated with university transitions, and help them to think about these issues more effectively. Pre-enrollment intervention programs are rare in North American postsecondary institutions, and there is very limited literature on this topic. However, it does appear as though first-year university students receiving even remedial intervention report an improvement in overall progression and achievement with regards to postsecondary adjustment (Lowis & Castley, 2008). Therefore, we believe that students who may be predisposed to lower expectations (such

as commuters and visible minorities in our data) can benefit particularly from such

intervention programs in the future.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Expectation Subscales Measured in August of First-Year

Expectation Subscale	N	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
Positive Social	2714	5.00	36.00	27.89	5.38
Negative Social	2716	3.00	27.00	14.91	5.14
Positive Academic	2721	6.00	36.00	28.74	4.90
Negative Academic	2715	4.00	36.00	23.86	5.26
Complacent	2724	3.00	40.00	9.26	4.55

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for the SACQ and the SPUSS Measured in March of all Four Years of University

	N	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
Year 1					
SACQ Social Adjustment	1384	30.56	175.78	116.74	28.97
SACQ Academic Adjustment	1384	46.26	211.00	131.57	28.62
SPUSS Support	1376	21.00	90.00	61.88	12.36
Year 2					
SACQ Social Adjustment	809	32.63	178.00	118.69	27.09
SACQ Academic Adjustment	810	46.00	208.00	131.86	29.28
SPUSS Support	797	19.00	90.00	62.27	12.00
Year 3					
SACQ Social Adjustment	657	36.67	173.33	117.07	27.63
SACQ Academic Adjustment	657	47.00	202.00	130.17	29.06
SPUSS Support	640	11.00	90.00	63.00	12.10
Year 4					
SACQ Social Adjustment	479	34.44	177.89	123.32	26.11
SACQ Academic Adjustment	480	50.00	203.00	138.04	28.24
SPUSS Support	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: The SPUSS was not administered in Year 4.

Table 3

Marginal Means for Differences in Expectations Between Visible Minority Students and Majority Students

| | Minority Status | | | |
| | Minorities | | Majorities | |
Expectation Subscale	*M*	SE	*M*	SE
Positive Social	27.50	.38	27.78	.19
Negative Social	15.30	.37	14.61	.18
Positive Academic	28.10*	.35	29.16*	.17
Negative Academic	24.49*	.39	23.03*	.19
Complacent	10.09*	.32	9.26*	.16

Note: * significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 4

Marginal Means for Differences in Expectations Between Commuters and On-Campus Residents

	Residential Status			
	Commuters		On-Campus	
Expectation Subscale	M	SE	M	SE
Positive Social	26.31**	.32	28.97**	.28
Negative Social	13.48**	.31	16.43**	.27
Positive Academic	28.12*	.30	29.14*	.26
Negative Academic	22.96**	.32	24.56**	.29
Complacent	10.05*	.27	9.30*	.23

Note: * significant at the $p < .05$ level; ** significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table 5

Means for Differences in Expectations Between Students Attending Ethnically Diverse Schools and Students Attending Predominantly White Institutions

| | Campus Racial Composition | | | |
| | Ethnically Diverse | | Predominantly White | |
Expectation Subscale	*M*	SE	*M*	SE
Positive Social	27.09*	.27	28.19*	.33
Negative Social	15.30	.26	14.60	.32
Positive Academic	28.66	.25	28.59	.31
Negative Academic	24.29*	.27	23.23*	.34
Complacent	9.98	.22	9.37	.28

Note: * significant at the *p* < .05 level

Table 6

Marginal Means for Differences in Expectations Between Males and Females

Expectation Subscale	Males		Females	
	M	SE	M	SE
Positive Social	27.54	.31	27.73	.29
Negative Social	14.46*	.30	15.45*	.28
Positive Academic	28.43	.29	28.83	.27
Negative Academic	23.38	.32	24.14	.29
Complacent	10.41**	.26	8.94**	.24

Note: * significant at the *p* < .05 level; ** significant at the *p* < .001 level.

Table 7

Regression Analyses Across the Four Years for Prediction of SACQ From Pre-enrollment Expectations

Year 1	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Predicting SACQ Academic Adjustment				
Gender	-0.18	-0.09	-3.19	$p < .05$
High School GPA	0.03	0.20	7.61	$p < .001$
Family Income	0.13	0.09	3.25	$p < .001$
Positive Academic Expectations	0.05	0.25	9.63	$p < .001$
Gender	-0.10	-0.05	-1.78	$p < .10$
High School GPA	0.03	0.17	6.16	$p < .001$
Family Income	0.12	0.08	3.12	$p < .05$
Negative Academic Expectations	-0.04	-0.22	-7.91	$p < .001$
Predicting SACQ Social Adjustment				
Gender	-0.11	-0.05	-2.03	$p < .05$
High School GPA	0.01	0.08	3.19	$p < .05$
Family Income	0.13	0.09	3.44	$p < .05$
Positive Social Expectations	0.07	0.37	14.34	$p < .001$
Gender	-0.07	-0.03	-1.18	*ns*
High School GPA	0.01	0.07	2.61	$p < .05$
Family Income	0.16	0.11	3.99	$p < .001$
Negative Social Expectations	-0.03	-0.15	-5.25	$p < .001$
Year 2				
Predicting SACQ Academic Adjustment				
Gender	3.93	0.07	1.83	$p < .10$
High School GPA	0.93	0.19	5.31	$p < .001$
Family Income	0.77	0.02	0.51	*ns*
Positive Academic Expectations	1.38	0.22	6.11	$p < .001$
Gender	6.09	0.10	2.81	$p < .05$
High School GPA	0.73	0.15	4.11	$p < .001$
Family Income	0.41	0.10	0.27	*ns*
Negative Academic Expectations	-1.21	-0.22	-6.00	$p < .001$
Predicting SACQ Social Adjustment				
Gender	0.47	0.01	0.24	*ns*
High School GPA	0.34	0.08	2.18	$p < .05$
Family Income	1.33	0.03	0.97	*ns*
Positive Social Expectations	1.76	0.34	9.61	$p < .001$

Gender	0.89	0.02	0.43	*ns*
High School GPA	0.28	0.06	1.70	$p < .10$
Family Income	2.38	0.06	1.66	*ns*
Negative Social Expectations	-0.67	-0.12	-3.38	$p < .05$

Year 3

Predicting SACQ Academic Adjustment

Gender	1.97	0.03	0.82	*ns*
High School GPA	0.46	0.09	2.34	$p < .05$
Family Income	4.96	0.12	2.99	$p < .05$
Positive Academic Expectations	1.15	0.19	4.76	$p < .001$
Gender	3.13	0.05	1.29	*ns*
High School GPA	0.29	0.06	1.49	*ns*
Family Income	5.16	0.12	3.08	$p < .05$
Negative Academic Expectations	-0.96	-0.18	-4.32	$p < .001$

Predicting SACQ Social Adjustment

Gender	0.85	0.02	0.39	*ns*
High School GPA	0.39	0.08	2.19	$p < .05$
Family Income	3.75	0.09	2.45	$p < .05$
Positive Social Expectations	1.94	0.37	9.72	$p < .001$
Gender	1.02	0.02	0.43	*ns*
High School GPA	0.26	0.06	1.37	*ns*
Family Income	4.72	0.12	2.90	$p < .05$
Negative Social Expectations	-0.74	-0.14	-3.41	$p < .05$

Year 4

Predicting SACQ Academic Adjustment

Gender	2.42	0.04	0.88	*ns*
High School GPA	0.42	0.09	1.84	$p < .10$
Family Income	5.71	0.14	3.02	$p < .05$
Positive Academic Expectations	0.92	0.17	3.53	$p < .001$
Gender	3.50	0.06	1.28	*ns*
High School GPA	0.21	0.04	0.93	*ns*
Family Income	5.61	0.14	2.95	$p < .05$
Negative Academic Expectations	-1.06	-0.19	-4.08	$p < .001$

Predicting SACQ Social Adjustment

Gender	0.30	0.01	0.12	*ns*
High School GPA	0.43	0.10	2.11	$p < .05$
Family Income	4.42	0.12	2.58	$p < .05$
Positive Social Expectations	1.70	0.34	7.59	$p < .001$

Gender	0.30	0.01	0.11	*ns*
High School GPA	0.25	0.05	1.14	*ns*
Family Income	5.85	0.16	3.25	$p < .05$
Negative Social Expectations	-0.52	-0.10	-2.12	$p < .05$

Figure 1

Mediation Model: Perceived University Support in First Year Mediating Relationship Between Positive Social Expectations in First Year and SACQ Social Adjustment in Second Year for (a) Visible Minority Students and (b) Majority Students
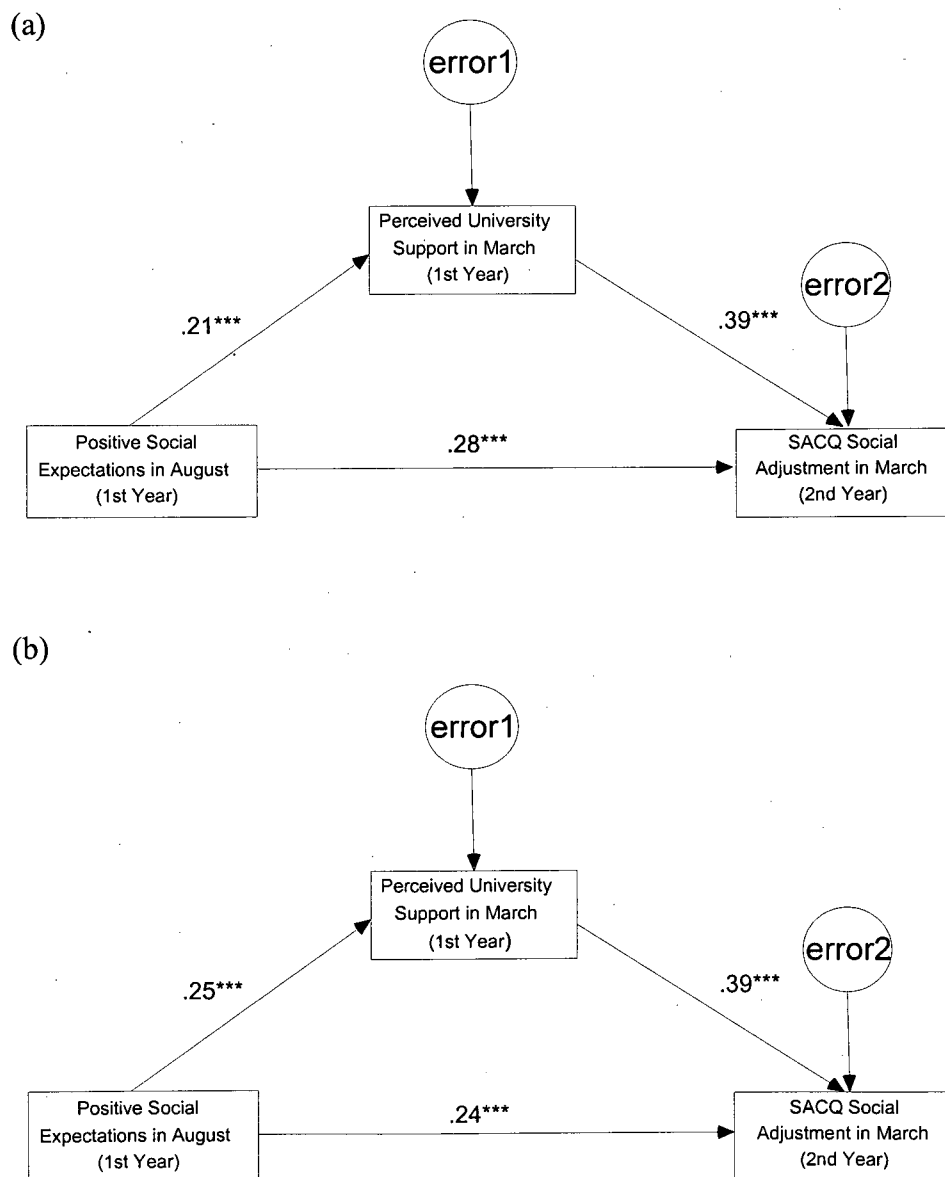
(a)

(b)

Figure 2

Mediation Model: Perceived University Support in First Year Mediating Relationship Between Negative Social Expectations in First Year and SACQ Social Adjustment in Second Year for (a) Visible Minority Students and (b) Majority Students
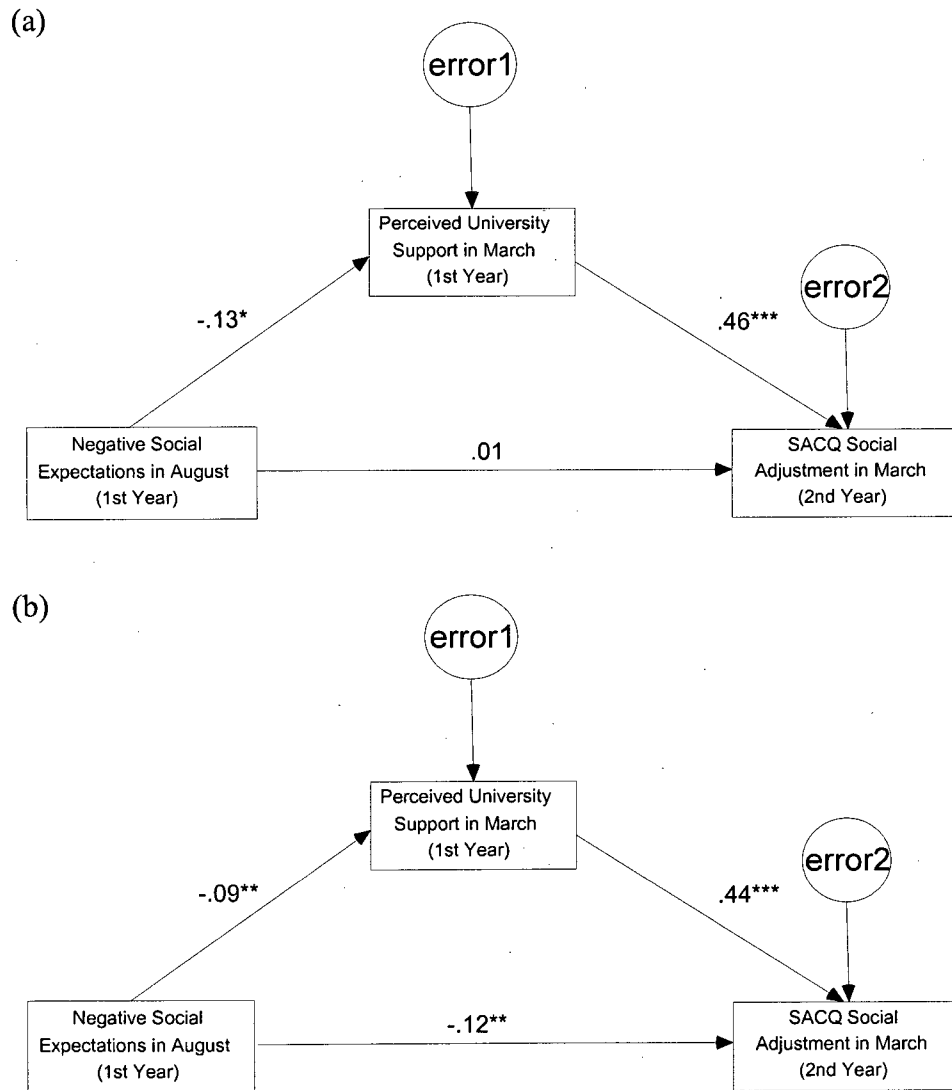
(a)

(b)

63

Figure 3

Mediation Model: Perceived University Support in First Year Mediating Relationship Between Positive Academic Expectations in First Year and SACQ Academic Adjustment in Second Year for (a) Visible Minority Students and (b) Majority Students
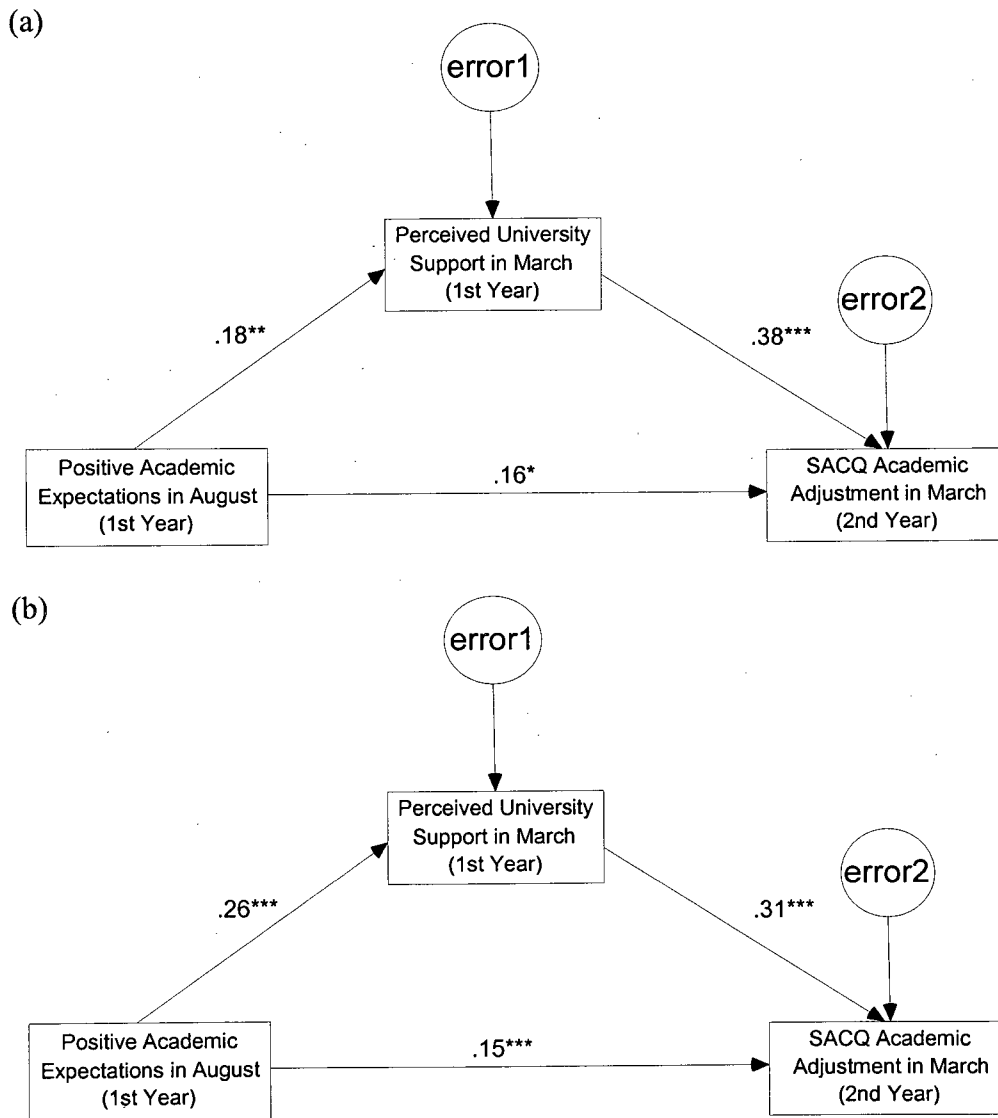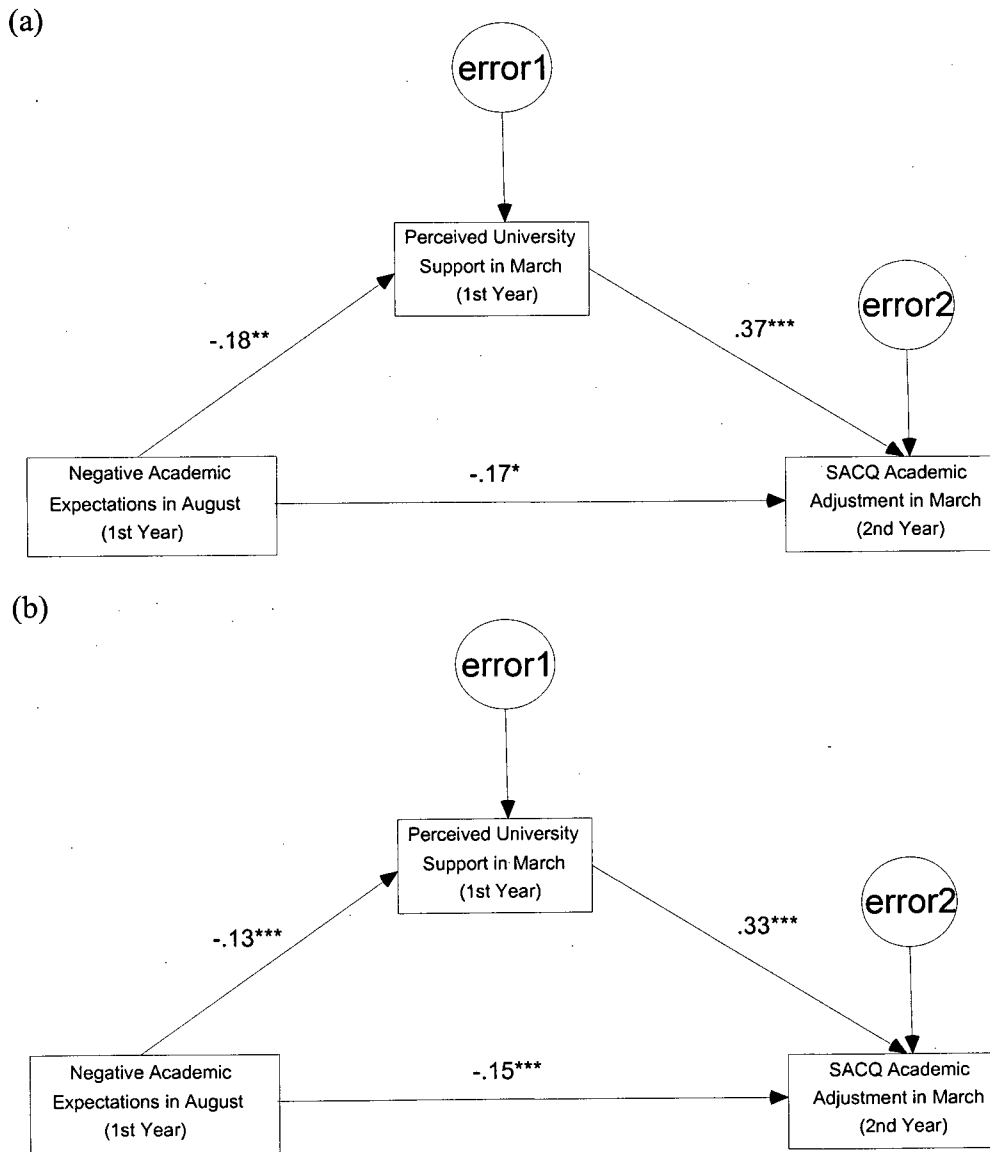
(a)

(b)

Figure 4

Mediation Model: Perceived University Support in First Year Mediating Relationship Between Negative Academic Expectations in First Year and SACQ Academic Adjustment in Second Year for (a) Visible Minority Students and (b) Majority Students

(a)

(b)

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Appendix A

General Information

1. Are you... ☐ male   ☐ female

2. Age: ___

3. Height: ___ feet ___ inches

4. Weight: ___ pounds

5. Graduating high school average: ___%

6. Primary language spoken at home:
___ English ___ Spanish ___ French ___ Greek ___ Italian ___ Portuguese
___ Cantonese ___ Other:_____

7. Were you born in Canada? ☐ yes ☐ no   If NOT, in what country were you born? ___

8. Was your father born in Canada? ☐ yes ☐ no   If NOT, in what country was he born? ___

9. Was your mother born in Canada? ☐ yes ☐ no   If NOT, in what country was she born? ___

10. Family Composition: Are your parents:
☐ living together (go to question #13)   ☐ mother a widow
☐ divorced/separated   ☐ father a widower
☐ adoptive/foster   ☐ both deceased

11. If not living together, what age were you when there was a divorce/separation or death? ___

12. If there is a step-parent or remarriage, how old were you when this occurred? ___

13a. What is your father's age?___   What is your mother's age?___

14. How many siblings do you have? ___

15. Please indicate their age and gender:

Age	Gender

16. Are you a member of a visible minority?
☐ Yes... Which cultural/ethnic group are you a member of? _____
☐ No

17. Financially, do you consider your family to be:
☐ Below average income
☐ Average income
☐ Above average income
☐ Well above average income

18. What is the highest level of education that your parents completed?

Mother	Father	
☐	☐	less than high school
☐	☐	some high school
☐	☐	completed high school
☐	☐	some college or university
☐	☐	completed college program
☐	☐	completed undergraduate university degree
☐	☐	some post graduate training

19. Does your mother work outside of the home? ☐ Not at all ☐ Part Time ☐ Full Time

20. Does your father work outside of the home? ☐ Not at all ☐ Part Time ☐ Full Time

21. What is the approximate size of your home community, i.e., the community where you currently live?
  ☐ hamlet or outport
  ☐ small town
  ☐ moderate city
  ☐ large metropolitan area

22. If you home community has a population less than 20,000 approximately how far is it from a city having a population of 100,000 or more?
  ☐ < 40 km
  ☐ 40-80 km
  ☐ > 80 km

23. With whom will you be living while you attend university?
  ☐ my parent(s) in their home
  ☐ a relative or other family friend
  ☐ on my own in off-campus housing
  ☐ on my own in a university residence
  ☐ a university-assigned roommate(s) in a university residence
  ☐ other students in a shared campus apartment
  ☐ other: _____

24. How many of your close friends will be attending the same university as you? ___

25. Use the following scale to complete the table below:

0	1	2	3	4
never	almost never	sometimes	fairly often	very often

How often have you *discussed* these issues with:

	Parents	Friends
a. University life		
b. Classes		
c. Social life at university		
d. How your living arrangements will work out		
e. Finances		

26. Have you determined your major program of study?
   □ Yes... What is your major? _____
   □ No

27. How important is it to you to graduate with this major? (circle one)

-2	-1	0	+1	+2
very unimportant	unimportant	don't care	important	very important

28. How important is it to you to complete your degree at this university? (circle one)

-2	-1	0	+1	+2
very unimportant	unimportant	don't care	important	very important

29. What were the most important factors in your decision to come to this university?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix B

Expectations about University

-4 very strongly disagree	-3 strongly disagree	-2 moderately disagree	-1 slightly disagree	0 neither agree nor disagree	+1 slightly agree	+2 moderately agree	+3 +4 strongly agree	very strongly agree

1. _____ University is going to be a wonderful experience.
2. _____ I'm very excited about beginning my first classes at university.
3. _____ I'm concerned that the pressure to "party" at university will affect my school work.
4. _____ I've thought about what I can do to meet new people at university.
5. _____ I cannot wait to begin university.
6. _____ It will be fun taking courses in new subjects at university.
7. _____ I don't have any image in my mind about what it will be like at university.
8. _____ I am prepared to deal with the stresses of university life.
9. _____ I haven't talked to anybody very much about what university will be like.
10. _____ There may be a lot of things in my courses that I have trouble understanding.
11. _____ At university, you get to study all the things that interest you the most.
12. _____ There are a lot of social pressures at university that may be hard to deal with.
13. _____ I haven't really thought too much about what life will be like when I attend university.
14. _____ I have some ideas about what kinds of things I would like to be involved with at university.
15. _____ I am a little scared about university exams.
16. _____ I worry about finding a group of friends that I can hang out with.
17. _____ Courses at university are going to be a lot more difficult than they were in high school.
18. _____ I worry about getting along with the people I'm living with when I attend university.
19. _____ I think that my time at university is going to be the best time of my life.
20. _____ I have spoken to several people who have gone to university to find out what university is like.
21. _____ University courses are going to be much more interesting than high school courses.
22. _____ I will make new friends in no time when I start university.

Subscales:
Positive Social: Items 1, 5, 19, 22
Negative Social: Items 12, 16, 18
Positive Academic: Items 2, 6, 11, 21
Negative Academic: Items 3, 10, 15, 17
Adaptation: Items 4, 8, 14, 20
Complacent: Items 7, 9, 13

Appendix C

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire

The 67 items included in this survey are statements that describe university experiences. Read each one and decide how well it applies to you at the present time (within the last few days). For each item, record the appropriate number in the space next to that item.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |

Doesn't apply to me at all   Applies very closely to me

1. _____ I feel that I fit in well as part of the university environment.
2. _____ I have been feeling tense or nervous lately.
3. _____ I have been keeping up to date on my academic work.
4. _____ I am meeting as many people, and making as many friends as I would like at university.
5. _____ I know why I'm in university and what I want out of it.
6. _____ I am finding academic work at university difficult.
7. _____ Lately I have been feeling blue and moody a lot.
8. _____ I am very involved with social activities in university.
9. _____ I am adjusting well to university.
10. _____ I have not been functioning well during examinations.
11. _____ I have felt tired much of the time lately.
12. _____ Being on my own, taking responsibility for myself, has not been easy.
13. _____ I am satisfied with the level at which I am performing academically.
14. _____ I have had informal, personal contacts with university professors.
15. _____ I am pleased now about my decision to go to university.
16. _____ I am pleased now about my decision to attend this university in particular.
17. _____ I'm not working as hard as I should at my course work.
18. _____ I have several close social ties at university.
19. _____ My academic goals and purposes are well defined.
20. _____ I haven't been able to control my emotions very well lately.
21. _____ I'm not really smart enough for the academic work I am expected to be doing now.
22. _____ Lonesomeness for home is a source of difficulty for me now.
23. _____ Getting a university degree is very important to me.
24. _____ My appetite has been good lately.
25. _____ I haven't been very efficient in the use of study time lately.
26. _____ I enjoy living in a university residence. (Or any university housing.)
27. _____ I enjoy writing papers for courses.
28. _____ I have been having a lot of headaches lately.
29. _____ I really haven't had much motivation for studying lately.
30. _____ I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at university.
31. _____ I've given a lot of thought lately to whether I should ask for help from the Psychological/Counselling Services Centre or from a counsellor outside of university.
32. _____ Lately I have been having doubts regarding the value of a university

education.

33. _____ I am getting along very well with my roommate(s) at university.
34. _____ I wish I were at another university.
35. _____ I've put on (or lost) too much weight recently.
36. _____ I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at university.
37. _____ I feel that I have enough social skills to get along well in the university setting.
38. _____ I have been getting angry too easily lately.
39. _____ Recently I have had trouble concentrating when I try to study.
40. _____ I haven't been sleeping very well.
41. _____ I'm not doing well enough academically for the amount of work I put in.
42. _____ I am having difficulty feeling at ease with other people at university.
43. _____ I am satisfied with the quality or calibre of courses available at university.
44. _____ I am attending classes regularly.
45. _____ Sometimes my thinking gets muddled up too easily.
46. _____ I am satisfied with the extent to which I am participating in social activities at university.
47. _____ I expect to stay at this university for a bachelor's degree.
48. _____ I haven't been mixing too well with the opposite sex lately.
49. _____ I worry a lot about my university expenses.
50. _____ I am enjoying my academic work at university.
51. _____ I have been feeling lonely a lot at university lately.
52. _____ I am having a lot of trouble getting started on homework assignments.
53. _____ I feel I have good control over my life situation at university.
54. _____ I am satisfied with my program of courses for this term.
55. _____ I have been feeling in good health lately.
56. _____ I feel I am very different from other students at university in ways that I don't like.
57. _____ On balance, I would rather be home than here.
58. _____ Most of the things I am interested in are not related to any of my course work at university.
59. _____ Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to transferring to another university.
60. _____ Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to dropping out of university altogether and for good.
61. _____ I find myself giving considerable thought to taking time off from university and finishing later.
62. _____ I am very satisfied with the professors I have now in my courses.
63. _____ I have some good friends or acquaintances at university with whom I can talk about any problems I may have.
64. _____ I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed on me in university.
65. _____ I am quite satisfied with my social life at university.
66. _____ I am quite satisfied with my academic situation at university.
67. _____ I feel confident that I will be able to deal in a satisfactory manner with future challenges here at university.

Appendix D

Students' Perception of University Support and Structure

Please use the following scale to indicate your agreement with each statement, as it applies to this university.

-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4
very strongly disagree	strongly disagree	moderately disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	moderately agree	strongly agree	very strongly agree

1. _____ Students are informed during student orientation about help available to them if they are having any emotional or adjustment problems.
2. _____ The degree and program requirements in the university calendar are very clear.
3. _____ It's easy to make friends.
4. _____ Professors in classes make it clear what students are expected to do in order to get a good grade on assignments, papers and tests.
5. _____ If a student needed help for an emotional problem, it would be easy to find a service on campus to help them.
6. _____ Professors aren't really clear about what they expect of students.
7. _____ There are lots of confusing rules that make registration and course selection difficult.
8. _____ The professors don't really care about their students.
9. _____ There aren't many places for students to get together and talk.
10. _____ If students are having difficulty with academic course work, they can easily talk to professors or their teaching assistants.
11. _____ Professors at this school don't really try to make you think.
12. _____ Professors get tests and assignments back to students in good time.
13. _____ It is hard for students to get advice in selecting courses or deciding on a program of study.
14. _____ Professors and teaching assistants in classes are helpful and encouraging.
15. _____ Academic policies on cheating and copying are made clear to students.
16. _____ Professors and teaching assistants don't give very much feedback on tests, exams or papers.
17. _____ There's very little opportunity for students to have direct one-to-one contact with a professor.
18. _____ Professors emphasize reasoned questions and critical appraisal of what they present in class.
19. _____ Faculty and teaching assistants post office hours and are available when they say they will be.
20. _____ School officials and advisors are approachable and open-minded when you have a question or problem.