

Leaving General College: Interests and Issues Related to Student Departure

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Abstract

Many of the freshmen who begin postsecondary education at the University of Minnesota General College (GC) leave before they complete degrees. The purpose of this study was to describe the patterns of achievement, academic interests, reasons for leaving, and plans after leaving for a cohort of GC leavers. Advising files, the U of M student database, and the General College Student Inventory (GCSI) were used as sources of information. Half of the leavers were found to have academic performance issues. Leavers expressed a wide variety of academic interests on the GCSI, the most common being business and social sciences. There was some evidence to suggest that students with interests in physical science and computer science were more likely to leave, which warrants future investigation. Information in advising files suggested that about 25% of the leavers intended to transfer to another college. Issues that may have been related to leaving that were mentioned most frequently in the files were lack of motivation, physical and mental health concerns, financial problems, and conflicts between family or cultural expectations and the demands of college.

Leaving General College: Interests and Issues Related to Student Departure

The problem of student attrition from colleges and universities has been well studied. In 1975, Tinto published his enduring Student Integration Model of attrition. This model included measures of a student's initial goal for their education and their institutional commitments. More recently, Cabrera, Nora, and Castaneda (1993) combined Tinto's conception of student persistence with work done by others (e.g. Bean, 1985) resulting in a model that included external factors that shape student intentions and preferences. Cabrera et al. found that social integration, financial attitudes, and academic integration have the strongest effects on retention in their model.

Government agencies have also dedicated time and resources to the problem of attrition. A recent United States Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report studied the topic in depth using 1996-1998 NCES data (Bradburn & Carroll, 2002). These data included self-reports on reasons for leaving. Nine reasons were listed in the report, which can be grouped into four categories, listed here in order of frequency cited: finance/work, family/home, academic, and personal.

The problem of student attrition is perhaps most closely felt at the college or university level. Individual colleges and universities have conducted their own studies and written reports in an attempt to understand the problem. Recent examples can be found from across the country, including the University of California-Santa Cruz, West Virginia State College, and the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. These studies have tended to find results similar to the national studies. A study conducted at the University of California-Santa Cruz (Nelson & Davies, n.d.) found the following four types of reasons for leaving to be the most prevalent:

financial, personal, academic, and social. A report from the West Virginia State College (Leaver Attrition Survey: Spring 1996, n.d.) found the following four reasons for leaving to be the most important: conflict between work and/or home and school, problems registering for classes, finances, and health.

Retention has come to the forefront of institutional concerns at the University of Minnesota because of persistent low graduation rates. With a six-year graduation rate of 50%, the University of Minnesota has the lowest rate in the Big Ten. A recent report of the Graduation and Retention Subcommittee of the Council of Undergraduate Deans (*Improving our Graduation Rates*, 2001) examined a broad range of information on leavers and reached several conclusions including:

1. The U of M graduation rate is below its predicted rate based on pre-college academic achievement of its freshman admits.
2. The U of M has lower retention of students in the junior and senior years compared to other similar institutions.
3. Leaving may be influenced by lack of institutional expectations and incentives to graduate.

The report identified three types of leavers: underperformers, disenchanted, and drop-ins. The underperformers left with low GPAs and often were suspended. The disenchanted had problems with course availability, inadequate advising, and an unfriendly environment. About 40% of the dropouts were disenchanted sophomores who tended to transfer to another college. The drop-ins were not dissatisfied with the university, but did not make it the focus of their lives. The drop-ins were more likely to be involved in jobs and pay their own college expenses.

An analysis of all University of Minnesota students enrolled in Spring 2000, (Matross & Huesman, 2001) found that 13.6% did not return during the 2000-2001 school year. Of those, 36% had a registration hold, for either academic or financial reasons, that prevented them from registering. Seniors and freshman had the highest departure rates (21%) and juniors the lowest (8%). American Indian (30%), African American (20%), and Chicano Latino (21%) students had higher departure rates than Asian and White students (13%).

Matross and Huesman (2001) found that the University of Minnesota General College (GC) retention rate for the cohort they identified was 81%. Since GC admits students who are not usually qualified for admission to a research university, and admits significant numbers of students of color, the expected retention rate for the college is lower than that for other freshman admitting colleges. Other unique characteristics of the GC population might also raise the possibility that GC leavers are different from non-GC leavers. Matross and Huesman found that about half of GC leavers from the cohort they studied left for involuntary reasons including academic and financial holds. Research by Schmitz and Andreozzi (1990) suggests that this might be an underestimation of the role of poor academic performance in students' decisions to leave GC. They found that leavers attributed their academic problems to work commitments, personal problems, health, lack of readiness for college, the size of the university, and dissatisfaction with their GC experience.

In a recent survey of students who matriculated in GC and then transferred to a degree granting college, Wambach, Hatfield, and Merabella (2001) asked students to identify barriers to eventual graduation. Though 85% of students surveyed expressed complete confidence in their likely graduation, many students surveyed also identified access to courses and programs as

potential barriers. This study suggested that some students might leave the University of Minnesota because desired majors and professional programs are not available at this institution.

The problems encountered by GC students that might be related to their leaving the University have been documented for small samples of leavers (Schmitz & Andreozzi, 1990; Beach, Lundell & Jung, 2002). However, no recent study of a large cohort of GC leavers has been conducted. The study described in this report explores the following questions about GC leavers:

1. How does academic performance in college impact leaving?
2. Are leavers' academic interests related to patterns of leaving?
3. What do leavers say about their reasons for leaving?
4. Do leavers plan to continue their education at another institution?

Method

The survey is the most common way to collect information about student leavers. However, this method is problematic because it is difficult to reach students after they leave the university due to the loss of easily available up-to-date contact information. The initial strategy for this study was to design a survey for enrolled students that would reach students who did not intend to enroll again. A copy of the survey is in Appendix A. The survey was designed to first identify students who did not intend to return. These students were asked a number of questions about their occupational goals and reasons for leaving. The survey was distributed on-line to 1475 General College students at the end of spring semester 2002. It yielded an overall response rate of 241 (16.3%). The response rate for the group of students who had not yet registered for the next semester was only 5.4%. Since the response rate for the population of interest was so low, we decided to use a different research method to address the research questions.

An archival study based on a content analysis of leaver files was designed. All students in the General College are assigned to an advisor who maintains a file for her or him. From our prior experience with student files, we expected them to contain: an entrance questionnaire including questions about academic plans, academic alerts, mid-semester grade reports, registration planning forms, transfer plans, and advising notes.

The population studied was the segment of all GC students enrolled in the fall of 2000 who did not enroll during the next academic year (fall 2001/spring 2002). Of the 1,909 students enrolled in fall 2000, 448 (23%) met the criteria for inclusion in the study. The U of M student records data base was used to gather information about these students' gender, ethnicity, ACT composite test score at entrance, last term of enrollment, and credits completed and cumulative GPA at the end of Fall 2000.

We attempted to obtain advisor files for 448 students of interest and were able to retrieve 403 (90.0%). All 403 files were coded by one of four raters: two raters coded approximately one third of the files each (n of 138 and 133), and two raters coded the remainder of the files (n of 70 and 62). Each file was read twice by the same rater. During the first reading, notes were made on leavers' occupational goals, academic problems, and/or observations made by advisors. The raters also recorded reasons for leaving and information about transfer to another college. The notes were reviewed and codes developed for academic/vocational interests, reasons for leaving, presence of academic alerts, and plans after leaving. The files were then re-read and coded using these categories.

Coding

The academic/vocational interests identified by leavers were organized into 15 categories listed in Table 1. When coding the files, these categories were not used in a mutually exclusive

manner; multiple academic/vocational interests could be assigned per student. The categories were selected to represent the broad range of leaver interests while allowing identification of leavers with interests in majors that require admission to highly competitive programs. The highly competitive majors include design, business, health sciences, and computer sciences. Interests expressed by students both at the beginning of their academic career and any time after their first term were recorded, resulting in two sets of academic/vocational interests: incoming and post-matriculation.

Table 1 <i>Categories Encoding Incoming and Post Matriculation Academic/Vocational Interests</i>
Education
Architecture
Fine Arts
Design
Communications (journalism, mass comm.)
Business (management, marketing)
Hard Sciences (chemistry, physics)
Social Sciences (psychology, sociology)
Health Sciences (nursing, pharmacy)
Biological Sciences (agriculture, ecology)
Computer Sciences
Humanities (classics, languages)
Undecided
Other
No information available

Reasons for leaving were organized into 13 categories listed in Table 2. When coding the files, these categories were not used in a mutually exclusive manner; multiple reasons for leaving could be assigned per student. The categories were suggested by prior research but also include categories not often seen in retention research such as disability issues and incongruities/resistances. The disability issues category includes perceived lack of accommodation for physical or learning disabilities. The incongruities/resistances category

includes cases where there appeared to be advisor frustration regarding a student’s unwillingness to follow advice, inconsistencies between a student’s expressed plans and his or her enrollment records, or lack of compliance with institutional processes such as required program planning meetings.

Academic feedback consists of academic alerts and mid-semester reports that were sent from faculty to advisors either out of concern for student performance or as part of regular reporting of grades. In aggregate, they were categorized in a mutually exclusive manner as: none on file, on file with problems reported, or on file with no problems reported. On file with problems reported means that at least one instructor indicated that a leaver was excessively absent from class, missing assignments, or not making satisfactory progress.

Table 2 <i>Categories Encoding Reasons For Leaving</i>
performance not high enough physical health or mental health issue family or cultural issues low motivation, poor time management disability issues major/vocational training not available UM not good fit for personal reasons financial or work issues incongruities/resistances multiple difficulties, overwhelmed personal reasons (need time off) other no issues reported

Planned actions after leaving GC were organized into six mutually exclusive categories listed in Table 3. For 66% of leavers this information was not available in the file. When it did exist, it was contained in advising notes and correspondence from students.

Table 3 <i>Categories Encoding Planned Actions After Leaving</i>
plan to work and not attend any school
attend a two-year institution
attend a four-year institution
attend school – type unknown
other
no information available

Reliability Analysis

In order to determine whether the files were coded consistently by the four raters, a reliability analysis was conducted using files from a random sample of 12 leavers. Files were available for all selected students except one. Each of the four raters coded all 11 files. As an index of inter-rater reliability, the agreement between raters regarding the codes assigned to these files was assessed. For the coding schemes that were not mutually exclusive (i.e. academic/vocational interests and reasons for leaving) rater agreement was assessed as follows. First, we identified all instances where an incoming academic/vocational interest category was selected by any one of the four raters. Next, the raters were divided into all possible pairs of two, resulting in six unique pairs of raters. Then, for each of the six pairs of raters, the number of times that the pair agreed in their indication of an incoming academic/vocational interest was counted. This number was then divided by the number of distinct categories selected across both raters in the pair. For example, if rater one selected the interest categories “business” and “computer science” and rater two selected “business” and “social science” then their agreement for the category would be 33% since they agreed on only one interest (business) of the three distinct interests indicated (i.e. business, computer science, and social science). In this manner a percent agreement statistic was calculated for each of the six pairs of raters, resulting in six percent agreement statistics. The average of these six statistics was taken as an index of inter-

rater reliability for incoming academic/vocational interest coding. This procedure was repeated for post-matriculation academic/vocational interests and reasons for leaving in order to obtain indices of inter-rater reliability for these coding schemes as well. In order to assess inter-rater reliability for the mutually exclusive coding schemes (academic feedback and plans after leaving), the proportion of all possible rater pairs where coding agreement occurred was calculated for each coding scheme. The results are summarized in Table 4. The analysis suggests that there was more agreement in the coding of academic/vocational interests than in coding reasons for leaving, which often involved making an inference from information in the file.

Coding scheme	Average % agreement
incoming interests	61.0
outgoing interests	61.1
reasons for leaving	48.6
academic feedback	72.7
plans after leaving	81.8

Results

Description of leavers

Approximately 70% of the students admitted to GC over the past 5 years have been white, whereas 65% of the leavers were white. Likewise, 50% of students admitted to GC have been male, whereas 52% of leavers were male. This suggests that students of color and males are somewhat over-represented among leavers. See Table 5 for descriptive statistics.

	Percent	Mean	N
First-year student	46.40	NA	403
Ethnicity white	64.76	NA	386
Gender male	52.01	NA	398
Composite ACT score	NA	18.95	300
Number of credits fall 2000	NA	20.62	402
GPA end of term fall 2000	NA	1.89	402

How does college academic performance impact leaving?

Among the 403 leavers, the average cumulative GPA in their last semester was 1.89, a C-average. Of these, 206 (51%) had GPAs lower than a 2.0 (see Table 6) making them ineligible for transfer to most degree granting U of M colleges. In addition, 294 leavers (73%) had academic feedback suggesting academic problems (see Table 8). Only 55 leavers (13.6%) had mid-semester reports that did not identify academic problems. Another 54 leavers (13.4%) had no mid-semester reviews or alerts in their files.

Cumulative GPA			Academic Feedback		
category	Frequency	Percent	category	Frequency	Percent
lower than 2.0	206	51.12	none on file	54	13.40
2.0 or higher	196	48.64	on file w/problems	294	72.95
Not available	1	0.25	on file, no problems	55	13.65
Total	403	100.00	Total	403	100.00

Are leavers' academic interests related to patterns of leaving?

When analyzing leavers' academic interests, two groups of students were excluded. Both groups had registered for classes fall of 2000, but never attended. One group (n=21) had completed credits before fall semester 2000, the other had not (n=16). Information about length of enrollment by incoming and post-matriculation academic/vocational interests can be found in

Tables 7 and 8 below. The data suggest that business was the most frequently identified academic/vocational interest both at entry (n=94) and after matriculation (n=41). Social science was the second most frequently identified interest both at entry (n = 88) and after matriculation (n=41). Among leavers with an interest in business, 50% left after one or two terms. Among leavers with an interest in social science, 42% left after one or two terms. The tendency for about half of any group to leave by the end of two terms was apparent in most of the other interest groups, the exceptions being design (35%), biology (36%), computer science (37%), and undecided (37%).

Much less information was available on leavers' interests after their initial enrollment. Table 8 summarizes this information and its relation to length of enrollment. The data suggest that students with interests in design, biology, or humanities are more likely to leave after 5 or more terms. Forty percent of leavers interested in design, 50% of those who were interested in biology, and 44.4% of those who were interested in humanities left the university some time after five terms of enrollment.

Table 7									
<i>Entrance Interests by Length of Stay at the University</i>									
	total	1 Term		2 Terms		3 - 4 Terms		5 + Terms	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Undecided	36	7	17.5	8	20.0	12	30.0	9	22.5
Education	47	8	15.7	18	35.3	10	19.6	11	21.6
Architecture	6	1	16.7	0	0.0	4	66.7	1	16.7
Fine art	32	4	10.0	12	30.0	7	17.5	9	22.5
Design	23	3	11.5	6	23.1	7	26.9	7	26.9
Communications	42	4	8.9	19	42.2	8	17.8	11	24.4
Business	94	22	21.0	31	29.5	18	17.1	23	21.9
Hard science	44	9	19.1	15	31.9	13	27.7	7	14.9
Social science	88	12	12.6	28	29.5	21	22.1	27	28.4
Health science	60	5	7.8	23	35.9	14	21.9	18	28.1
Biology	26	3	10.7	7	25.0	7	25.0	9	32.1
Computer science	29	6	18.8	6	18.8	9	28.1	8	25.0
Humanities	18	1	5.0	10	50.0	1	5.0	6	30.0
Other	30	5	16.7	11	36.7	6	20.0	8	26.7

percents given are row percents
total number of students = 366

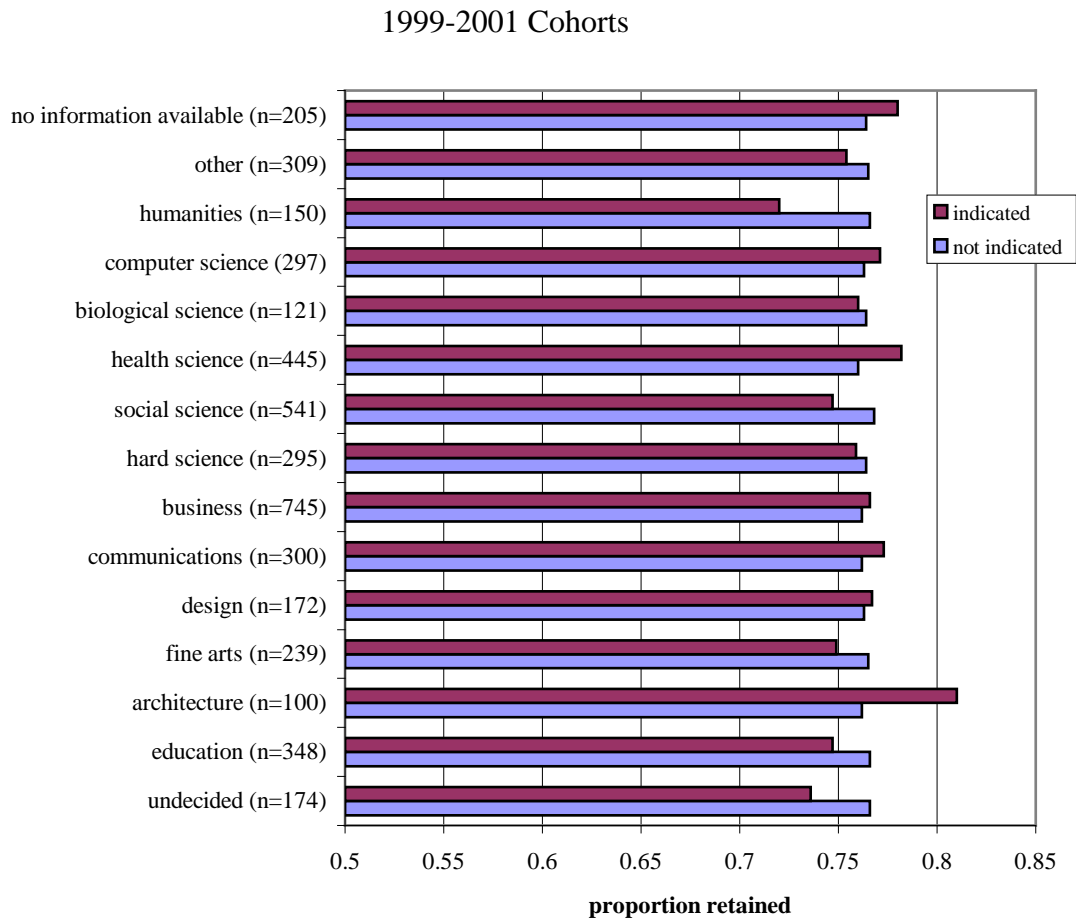
Table 8									
<i>Later Interests by Length of Stay at the University</i>									
	total	1 Term		2 Terms		3 - 4 Terms		5 + Terms	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Undecided	22	2	8.7	9	39.1	6	26.1	5	21.7
Education	23	5	19.2	4	15.4	8	30.8	6	23.1
Architecture	3	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0.0
Fine art	13	1	5.9	7	41.2	1	5.9	4	23.5
Design	13	1	6.7	1	6.7	5	33.3	6	40.0
Communications	21	2	8.3	8	33.3	6	25.0	5	20.8
Business	41	7	15.2	13	28.3	9	19.6	12	26.1
Hard science	23	5	20.0	5	20.0	5	20.0	8	32.0
Social science	40	9	22.0	10	24.4	12	29.3	9	22.0
Health science	33	4	12.1	11	33.3	9	27.3	9	27.0
Biology	10	0	0.0	2	20.0	3	30.0	5	50.0
Computer science	13	2	14.3	4	28.6	2	14.3	5	35.7
Humanities	7	0	0.0	2	22.2	1	11.1	4	44.4
Other	15	2	12.5	5	31.3	3	18.8	5	31.3

percents given are row percents
total number of students = 240

Because the above analyses did not include a comparative group of persisting students, no conclusions could be made regarding the relationship between academic/vocational interests and persistence. Therefore, in order to fully examine the relationship between interests and persistence, analyses were conducted on another set of data, which included incoming academic/vocational interests for all new freshmen entering the General College fall 1999-2001. These data were drawn from students' (N=2714) responses to the General College Student Inventory (GCSI), the same instrument from which the leavers' entry interests were extracted. Interests were coded by one rater in the same manner as previously described.

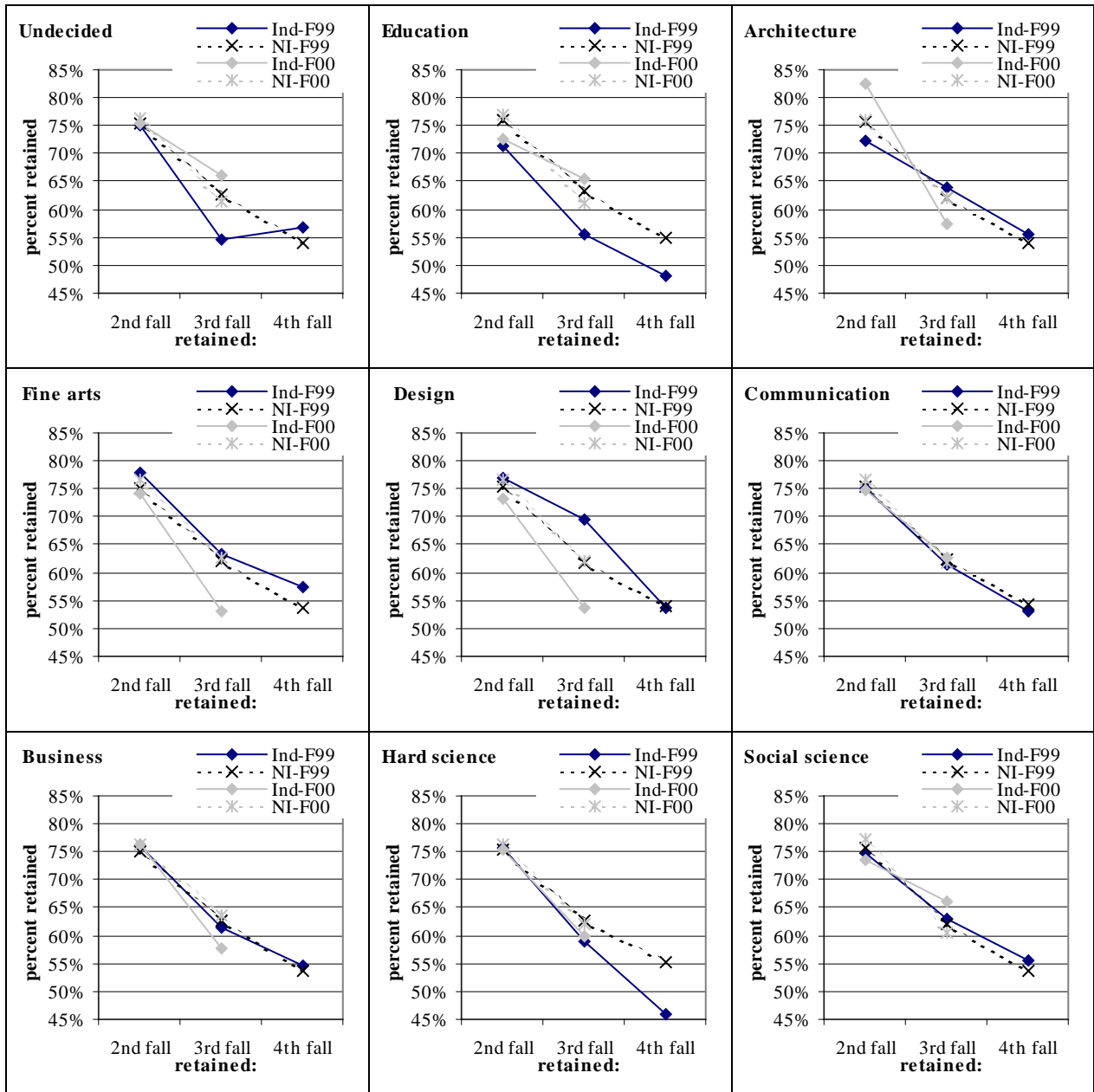
Figure 1 below shows 1-year retention rates for students who did and did not indicate each interest upon entry. No interest appears to be markedly related to one-year retention. The largest effects are seen for students interested in the humanities and architecture. Students who indicated an interest in humanities showed one-year retention rates about five percentage points below those who did not indicate this interest. Students who indicated an interest in architecture showed one-year retention rates about five percentage points above those who did not indicate this interest.

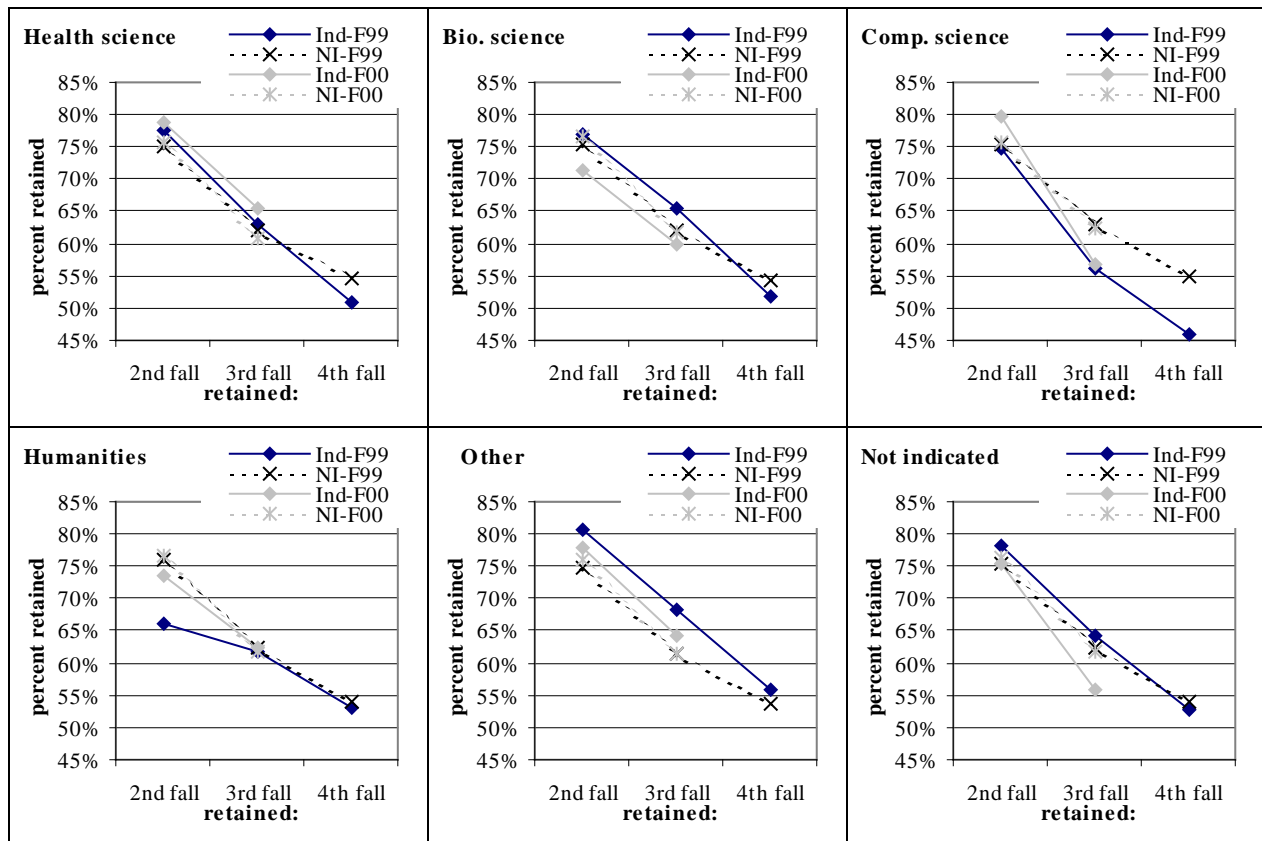
Figure 1. Incoming Academic/Vocational Interests and Rates of Retention to Second Fall Term:



Although the data in Figure 1 address the relationship between incoming interests and short-term persistence, it does not provide information regarding whether students with some incoming interests are more likely to drop/stop out later in their academic career. The charts in Figure 2 below illustrate the relationship between each incoming interest and persistence to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th fall terms for the fall 1999 cohort and persistence to the 2nd and 3rd term for the fall 2000 cohort.

Figure 2. Incoming Academic/Vocational Interests: Rates of Retention for Students from Fall 1999 and 2000 Cohorts Indicating Each Interest.





Ind. = interest was indicated on GCSI; NI = interest was not indicated on GCSI. Fall 1999 cohorts were tracked to their 4th fall term and fall 2000 cohort was tracked to their 3rd fall term (e.g. fall 2002).

These charts illustrate some relationship between entry interest and longer-term retention within a cohort, but they also demonstrate the unpredictability of such relationships. For example, in the 1999 cohort at all retention points students expressing an interest in architecture, fine arts, communications, business, social science, health science, and/or biological science are retained at about the same rate (within four percentage points) as those not expressing the interest. However, this same pattern is not evident for students from the fall 2000 cohort who indicated interests in fine arts or design. The pattern also deviates from that of the fall 1999 cohort for students in the fall 2000 cohort with interests in business, social science, health science, and/or biological sciences. Over both cohorts, only the students with an interest in communications appear to be retained at the same rate as those not expressing the interest. Also

replicated across the two cohorts was the trend for students interested in hard science or computer science to show increasingly lower retention rates over time relative to students without the interest at entry.

What reasons do GC leavers give for leaving college?

The most commonly described factor related to leaving was lack of motivation, which was indicated in 18.7% of the files. Health (16.1%), financial problems (15.7%) and family or cultural conflicts (12.6%) were also indicated in the files. See Table 9.

Table 9 <i>Coded Reasons for Leaving the University</i>		
Reason	Frequency	Percent*
motivation	100	18.73%
health	86	16.10%
financial	84	15.73%
family/culture	67	12.55%
need time off	53	9.93%
incongruencies	50	9.36%
UM not good fit	27	5.06%
overwhelmed	26	4.87%
training n/a	18	3.37%
poor performance	17	3.18%
disability	6	1.12%
total reasons coded	534	100.00%
*of total reasons coded		

Factor Analysis

Rotated Principal Components analysis was used to determine whether reasons for leaving clustered into broader categories, or typologies. Five factors were identified. The reasons for leaving with the highest loading on each factor, along with the factor loading values, are displayed in Table 10. A description of the five factors and the percentage of variance accounted for by each are listed in Table 11. The first factor combined family and cultural conflicts, financial problems, and multiple problems in a way that suggested that the costs of

staying in school were too high for the student. The second factor, which combined performance problems with low motivation and the need for time-off from school, suggested a lack of purpose for and commitment to college. The third factor, which combined health problems with the incongruities and resistances category, suggested stress related physical and mental health problems. The other two factors were related to students' perceptions that the U of M was not meeting their needs either for educational or other reasons.

Table 10					
<i>Results of Principle Components Analysis of Reasons for Leaving</i>					
Reason for Leaving	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
family/culture	0.7259				
finance	0.6653				
overwhelmed	0.4939				0.4250
performance		-0.5858			
motivation		0.6492			
need time off		0.6276			
health			0.7276		
resistances			0.7196		
disability				0.7979	
training n/a				0.6742	
UM not good fit					0.8917
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.					
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					

Table 11			
<i>Five Factor Solution</i>			
Factor	Name	Coded reasons for leaving	Percent of variance
1	High costs	family/culture, finance, overwhelmed	12.04
2	Lack of purpose	performance, motivation, need time off	11.13
3	Physical and mental health	health, resistances	10.89
4	Lack of programs or support	disability, training not available	10.84
5	Unhappy with U	UM not good fit	9.98

Do students who leave plan to continue their education at another institution?

Information about plans after leaving GC was available for 138 (34%) of the leavers. Files for 100 students suggested they planned to attend another school while files for 38 suggested plans to work full time or pursue some other activity. Table 12 presents the numbers and percents of students indicating transfer by their incoming academic/vocational interests. The interests with the highest percentage of leavers indicating transfer were health science (35%), business (34%) and design (30.4%). The interests with the lowest percents of leavers indicating transfer were architecture (0%), humanities (0%), communications (19%), and undecided (19%).

Incoming academic/vocational interest	total	number indicating transfer	percent indicating transfer
Undecided	36	7	19.4
Education	47	10	21.2
Architecture	6	0	0
Fine art	32	7	21.9
Design	23	7	30.4
Communications	42	8	19.0
Business	94	32	34.0
Hard science	44	13	29.5
Social science	88	20	22.7
Health science	60	21	35.0
Biology	26	6	23.0
Computer science	29	7	24.1
Humanities	18	0	0
Other	30	8	26.6

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to better understand students who left the U of M General College before transfer. The four questions related to leaving were:

1. How does college academic performance impact leaving?
2. Are leavers' academic interests related to patterns of leaving?
3. What do leavers say about their reasons for leaving?

4. Do leavers plan to continue their education at another institution?

Using the approach of coding advisor files rather than asking leavers for self-reports has yielded interesting and useful information. One finding was that many files did not contain information about students' interests after entrance or their reasons for leaving. Even when information was available, there was enough disagreement among raters about what the information meant, especially for judgments that were based on inferences, to urge caution in interpreting the results of the analysis.

Given these limitations, this snapshot of GC leavers suggests that many students who left were struggling academically and that poor academic performance is a direct or indirect factor in at least half of the students' decisions to leave. The leavers' poor performance seems to be related to competing demands for their time and money, a lack of clear purpose for being in college, and health problems, such as illnesses and depression, perhaps associated with stress. Few students left only because they were dissatisfied with their GC or U of M experience.

The analysis of leavers' academic interests found that the most frequently mentioned interest was business followed by social sciences, which includes economics, a business related field. Students with these interests did not appear to be more likely to leave than students without these interests. Data from the GCSI suggested that students who entered GC with interests in computer science, hard science, or education were retained at lower rates over a three year time period than students with other interests. Students with an interest in humanities were retained at a lower rate after their first year, but after that their retention rate was no different from other students. Students with similar interests who entered GC at different times did not always show the same patterns of leaving, suggesting that these patterns may be unstable.

The results of this study suggest that high costs, lack of motivation, poor health, and competing priorities may be important contributors to leaving. While other studies of retention have treated financial problems as a stand-alone variable, our study suggests that it may also be accompanied by family/cultural issues and competing priorities, which are other risk factors for stopping/dropping out. Other studies of leavers (see Table 15) have tended to focus on voluntary leavers who are in good academic standing. By excluding students who leave because of suspension or financial holds, these studies likely underestimate the role of low motivation, lack of academic purpose, and poor health in leaving. Also, data based on surveys of leavers may be less likely to capture motivational issues because self-report is susceptible to impression management. Students might be more likely to reveal information about depression, low motivation, and competing priorities in discussions with advisors than they would on surveys.

Table 15				
<i>Comparison of Top Four Reasons for Leaving Among Four Institution-level Reports</i>				
Reason	Institution			
	UCSC	WVSC	UMNTC	UMNTC-GC
1	Financial	School Conflict	Academic	Motivational
2	Personal	Administrative	Financial	Health
3	Academic	Financial	Locational	Financial
4	Social	Health	Campus Environment	Family/Culture

UCSC- University of California, Santa Cruz
WVSC- West Virginia State College
UMNTC- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
UMNTC-GC- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, General College

Implications

Data from advisors' files might provide an excellent source of information about a variety of student development processes including decisions to leave. However, the files used for this study varied greatly in the amount and type of information they contained. Developing reporting mechanisms for advisors to use when recording information about students' interests,

attitudes, and concerns could provide solid data for future research on leaving and career decision-making. GC should go forward with plans to develop a reporting process that advisors could use to record this information.

Information available in students' files suggested that many students changed their minds about majors and careers. Continuing to provide high quality career services for students is critical given the amount of change students demonstrate. It would also be interesting to investigate students' ways of coping with restricted access to popular (**and competitive??**) majors such as design and business. Questions still remain regarding how students with such interests proceed when unable to transfer to competitive programs within the U of M: Specifically, how many transfer to other institutions to pursue their interests, how many find another program at the U of M that offers a degree in their area of interest or even in another area of interest, and how many simply get frustrated and stop/drop out of postsecondary education altogether?

Advisors who work with students interested in computer science, physical science, engineering, and mathematics should be aware that students with these interests are slightly more likely to leave than other students. These students might need extra support to successfully pursue these interests.

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Appendix

SURVEY OF STUDENT'S PLANS FOR FALL 2002

When answering the question below, your choice will connect you to the survey that corresponds to that response. At that time, you will be asked to provide your student ID.

Which option below best characterizes what you anticipate doing in Fall 2002?

- A. I will be enrolled as a General College student.
 - B. I will be enrolled at a different U of MN college (i.e., will have transferred).
 - C. I will leave the U of MN to attend another postsecondary (2 year, 4 year, vocational, technical, etc.) institution.
 - D. I will leave the U of MN and will not be enrolled in a college.
-

RESPONSE A:

You have indicated that you are returning to General College in the Fall. If this is not correct, please use the back button on your browser to go back to the original question and select a different option.

Since you are returning to GC in the fall, there are no further questions. Please provide us with your ID number below and select the submit button. This will allow us to enter your name in the cash drawing.

ID: _____

Have a great summer.

RESPONSE B:

You have indicated that you have transferred to another U of MN program. If this is not correct, please use the back button on your browser to go back to the original question and select a different option.

Congratulations on your transfer. The following survey asks questions about your experiences at the U of MN, your decision about a major, and the transfer process. **Make sure you enter your ID below to ensure you will be entered into the drawing.** It will also allow us to remove you from any follow-up reminders. Upon completion of the survey, make sure you select the submit

button one time. If you have problems completing the survey, please contact Jennifer Franko (frank010@umn.edu).

Please provide your student ID here.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Where did you live during your first year at the University of Minnesota? *If you lived in more than one place, select the choice that describes the place you lived in the longest.*
 - Campus residence hall
 - Fraternity/sorority house
 - With parents or relatives
 - Other off-campus housing
2. During the last year, how many hours per week did you work ON CAMPUS? [short answer]
3. During the last year, how many hours per week did you work OFF CAMPUS? [short answer]
4. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about your primary job during the past year. If you did not have a job during the past year, you may skip this question and proceed to question 5.
[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]
 - a. I enjoyed my work.
 - b. I learned important skills at work.
 - c. My work was more important than school.
 - d. My employer adjusted my hours to accommodate my classes.
 - e. I adjusted my class schedule to accommodate work.
 - f. I studied less than I should have because of work.
 - g. My work connected in a meaningful way to my studies.
5. What is the highest degree that you plan to complete?
 - None
 - Certificate (either from college or alternative voc/tech training, like Microsoft certification programs)
 - 2-year college degree (associate degree)
 - 4-year college degree (bachelor's degree)
 - Master's degree
 - A doctoral (PhD) degree

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

6. Please indicate the degree to which the following factors influenced your decision to attend the University of Minnesota (UM).
[no influence – weak influence – moderate influence – strong influence]
 - a. Information found in UM mailings, brochures, or website
 - b. Advice from high school counselor/teacher
 - c. Friends going to UM

- d. Campus tour
- e. Cost of tuition
- f. Parents want me to
- g. Contact with recruiters
- h. Indecision about what else to do
- i. Quality of academic programs
- j. Types of programs and majors available
- k. Extracurricular activities
- l. Location

EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

7. Based on your experiences at the University of Minnesota to date, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:

[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. The UM has met my expectations about what college would be like.
- b. I have learned a lot from the courses I have taken.
- c. I have had positive experiences with instructors.
- d. I have had positive experiences with teaching assistants.
- e. The UM offers a good variety of courses in my areas of interest.
- f. I am happy with the degree of interaction I have had with my instructors.
- g. I understand what I need to do to graduate from the UM.
- h. I have participated in a lot of campus extracurricular activities.
- i. I am happy with my participation in campus extracurricular activities.
- j. I am satisfied with the quality of career development support available.
- k. I have had access to the advising support I needed to meet my goals.
- l. If I needed help with a problem, I believe I could have found it at the UM.

8. How much do you think attending the University of Minnesota has helped you make gains or progress in the following areas? Use the NA category for areas in which, upon entry to the UM, your level of functioning was such that there was no room for improvement.

[not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much – NA]

- a. Gaining a broad general education about different fields of knowledge.
- b. Developing your ability to think analytically or logically.
- c. Developing your creativity.
- d. Improving your skills in a specific academic area (i.e., writing, mathematics).
- e. Understanding yourself (e.g., your abilities and interests).
- f. Clarifying your educational or vocational goals.
- g. Appreciating diversity.
- h. Meeting new people and making new friends.

MAJOR OR VOCATIONAL INTERESTS

9. What are your current career interests? [short answer response]

10. What college major(s) are you interested in pursuing? [short answer response]

11. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. When I first came to the UM, I knew what I wanted out of college.
- b. I could easily choose a college major right now.
- c. When I first came to the UM, I was confident in my ability to succeed.
- d. Currently I am confident in my ability to succeed in college.
- e. When I first came to the UM, there was a definite major or program that I wanted to pursue.
- f. A college education as a way to get the job I want.
- g. It is important that a college education be related to career goals.
- h. There is a creative activity in which I am passionately involved.
- i. There are specific technical skills that I want to develop.
- j. Work is more important than school.
- k. I am on a definite career path.
- l. There is an academic subject in which I am passionately interested.
- m. I have considered ways in which I might best prepare for a career.
 - n. *I have found at least one occupation that I think I would like.*
- o. I have spent time exploring different vocational options.

TRANSFER TO U OF M DEGREE PROGRAMS

12. What UM college will you be attending Fall 2002?
13. To what extent did your adviser help you make your transfer decision?
[not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much]
14. Have you chosen a major? Yes No
If so, what is your major: [short answer response]
15. How have your major plans changed since you started college?
 - Remained the same.
 - Changed a little.
 - Changed somewhat.
 - Changed a great deal.
 - Changed completely.
16. If your major plans have changed, which of the following reasons played a part in the change (mark all that apply)?
 - I found out more about my interests.
 - I found out more about my abilities.
 - I discovered majors I didn't know about before college.
 - My values have changed.
 - I could not pursue my first-choice major.
 - My career goals have changed.
 - Other _____

17. How confident are you that the major you plan to pursue will be your final choice? If your major is undecided, you may skip to question 18.
[not at all confident – not very confident – somewhat confident – quite confident – very confident]
18. What led you to choose this major (mark all that apply)?
- I can complete it in a reasonable amount of time.
 - I knew I could get accepted into the major.
 - It is related to my career plans.
 - The subject is interesting to me.
 - The values of the discipline are consistent with my values.
 - Another person (i.e., advisor, instructor, parent/relative, friend) encouraged me to choose it.
 - Other _____

THE GENERAL COLLEGE TRANSFER AND CAREER CENTER

19. To what extent did you make use of the General College Transfer and Career Center (127 ApH)?
[not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much]
20. If you used the Transfer and Career Center, what resources did you use (mark all that apply)?
- Strong Interest Inventory
 - Major planning sheets
 - Discover
 - MCIS
 - Books
 - Talking with TCC staff
 - Majors information week
 - Visiting advisors program
 - TCC website
21. Are there services that the TCC does not currently provide that could have helped you with choosing a major and transferring? [short answer response]
22. If you could give one piece of advice to General College freshman about choosing a major and transferring, what would it be? [short answer response]
-

RESPONSE C:

You have indicated that you are leaving the U of MN to attend another postsecondary institution. If this is not correct, please use the back button on your browser to go back to the original question and select a different option.

Good luck at the college you will be attending next Fall. The following survey asks questions about your reasons for choosing and leaving the U of MN. **Make sure you enter your ID below to ensure you will be entered into the drawing.** It will also allow us to remove you from any follow-up reminders. Upon completion of the survey, make sure you select the submit button one time. If you have problems completing the survey, please contact Jennifer Franko (frank010@umn.edu).

Please provide your student ID here.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Where did you live during your first year at the University of Minnesota? *If you lived in more than one place, select the choice that describes the place you lived in the longest.*
 - Campus residence hall
 - Fraternity/sorority house
 - With parents or relatives
 - Other off-campus housing

2. During the last year, how many hours per week did you work ON CAMPUS? [short answer]

3. During the last year, how many hours per week did you work OFF CAMPUS? [short answer]

4. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about your primary job during the past year. If you did not have a job during the past year, you may skip this question and proceed to question 5.
[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]
 - a. I enjoyed my work.
 - b. I learned important skills at work.
 - c. My work was more important than school.
 - d. My employer adjusted my hours to accommodate my classes.
 - e. I adjusted my class schedule to accommodate work.
 - f. I studied less than I should have because of work.
 - g. My work connected in a meaningful way to my studies.

5. What is the highest degree that you plan to complete?
 - None
 - Certificate (either from college or alternative voc/tech training, like Microsoft certification programs)
 - 2-year college degree (associate degree)
 - 4-year college degree (bachelor's degree)
 - Master's degree
 - A doctoral (PhD) degree

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

6. Please indicate the degree to which the following factors influenced your decision to attend the University of Minnesota (UM).
 [no influence – weak influence – moderate influence – strong influence]
- a. Information found in UM mailings, brochures, or website
 - b. Advice from high school counselor/teacher
 - c. Friends going to UM
 - d. Campus tour
 - e. Cost of tuition
 - f. Parents want me to
 - g. Contact with recruiters
 - h. Indecision about what else to do
 - i. Quality of academic programs
 - j. Types of programs and majors available
 - k. Extracurricular activities
 - l. Location

EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

7. ***Based on your experiences at the University of Minnesota to date, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:***

[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. The UM has met my expectations about what college would be like.
 - b. I have learned a lot from the courses I have taken.
 - c. I have had positive experiences with instructors.
 - d. I have had positive experiences with teaching assistants.
 - e. The UM offers a good variety of courses in my areas of interest.
 - f. I am happy with the degree of interaction I have had with my instructors.
 - g. I understand what I need to do to graduate from the UM.
 - h. I have participated in a lot of campus extracurricular activities.
 - i. I am happy with my participation in campus extracurricular activities.
 - j. I am satisfied with the quality of career development support available.
 - k. I have had access to the advising support I needed to meet my goals.
 - l. If I needed help with a problem, I believe I could have found it at the UM.
8. How much do you think attending the University of Minnesota has helped you make gains or progress in the following areas? *Use the NA category for areas in which, upon entry to the UM, your level of functioning was such that there was no room for improvement.*
 [not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much – NA]
- a. Gaining a broad general education about different fields of knowledge.
 - b. Developing your ability to think analytically or logically.
 - c. Developing your creativity.
 - d. Improving your skills in a specific academic area (i.e., writing, mathematics).
 - e. Understanding yourself (e.g., your abilities and interests).
 - f. Clarifying your educational or vocational goals.
 - g. Appreciating diversity.
 - h. Meeting new people and making new friends.

MAJOR OR VOCATIONAL INTERESTS

9. What are your current career interests? [short answer response]
10. What college major(s) are you interested in pursuing? [short answer response]

11. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. When I first came to the UM, I knew what I wanted out of college.
- b. I could easily choose a college major right now.
- c. When I first came to the UM, I was confident in my ability to succeed.
- d. Currently I am confident in my ability to succeed in college.
- e. When I first came to the UM, there was a definite major or program that I wanted to pursue.
- f. A college education is a way to get the job I want.
- g. It is important that a college education be related to career goals.
- h. There is a creative activity in which I am passionately involved.
- i. There are specific technical skills that I want to develop.
- j. Work is more important than school.
- k. I am on a definite career path.
- l. There is an academic subject in which I am passionately interested.
- m. I have considered ways in which I might best prepare for a career.
 - n. *I have found at least one occupation that I think I would like.*
- o. I have spent time exploring different vocational options.

THE GENERAL COLLEGE TRANSFER AND CAREER CENTER

12. To what extent did you make use of the General College Transfer and Career Center (127 ApH)?
[not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much]
13. If you used the Transfer and Career Center, what resources did you use (*mark all that apply*)?
- Strong Interest Inventory
 - Major planning sheets
 - Discover
 - MCIS
 - Books
 - Talking with TCC staff
 - Majors information week
 - Visiting advisors program
 - TCC website

LEAVING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

14. I might have stayed at the U of MN if I had been directly admitted into a degree-granting program.
[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

15. What type of postsecondary institution will you attend after leaving the University of Minnesota?
- Community/Technical College
 - Public 4-year college
 - Private 4-year college
 - Other_____
16. Is this institution in Minnesota? [yes/no]
17. Will you be enrolled full time? [yes/no]
18. How many hours per week do you plan on working during your first semester at this institution? [open-ended response]
19. Have you chosen a major? Yes No
If so, what is your major? _____
20. How have your plans for a major changed since you started college?
- Remained the same
 - Changed a little
 - Changed somewhat
 - Changed a great deal
 - Changed completely
21. If your plans for a major have changed, which of the following reasons played a part in the change (*mark all that apply*)?
- I found out more about my interests.
 - I found out more about my abilities.
 - I discovered majors I didn't know about before college.
 - My values have changed.
 - I could not pursue my first-choice major.
 - My career goals have changed.
 - Other_____
22. How confident are you that the major you plan to pursue will be your final choice? If your major is undecided, you may skip to question 24.
[not at all confident – not very confident – somewhat confident – quite confident – very confident]
23. What led you to choose this major (*mark all that apply*)?
- I can complete it in a reasonable amount of time.
 - I knew I could get accepted into the program.
 - It is related to my career plans.
 - The subject is interesting to me.
 - The values of the discipline are consistent with my values.

- Another person (i.e., advisor, instructor, parent/relative, friend) encouraged me to choose it.
- Other _____

24. Please check items in the list below which were a factor in your decision to leave the University of Minnesota.

	Academic
	Preferred major was not available
	Dissatisfied with my academic performance
	Did not get help seeing how to further my goals here
	The classes seemed irrelevant to what I want to do
	Academic advising was inadequate
	Could not get the classes that I wanted/needed
	Dissatisfied with quality of courses
	Problem(s) with staff and/or instructor
	Opportunity to pursue special interest at another school (e.g., arts, athletics, etc.)
	Personal
	Uncomfortable with campus atmosphere
	Getting around the campus was too difficult
	Not enough diversity
	Too much diversity
	Personal health-related problems
	I came here to participate in a specific activity (e.g., sports) which didn't work out
	Disappointed with the UM experience - it didn't meet my expectations
	Lived in the dorm and did not like it
	I experienced language and/or cultural barriers
	Some of my personal habits are not conducive to being at the UM now
	Family obligations (such as caring for loved ones)
	Visited another school and thought it was a better fit
	Social
	Dissatisfied with social life at UM
	Didn't make friends or get to know people
	Didn't like the political atmosphere of the UM
	Didn't like the amount of drug use and partying of my peers
	Felt homesick or too far from home
	The UM is too big - I feel lost here
	Felt isolated at GC and wanted more of a sense of community
	<i>Financial</i>
	Inadequate or lack of financial aid
	Parents unable to contribute as expected
	Cost of attending UM was higher than expected
	Did not budget money correctly
	Have incurred too much credit debt
	Encountered unexpected expenses

	Need to work to earn more money
	Found another school that is more affordable

25. Did you want to stay at the UM but have been barred from doing so for academic, behavioral, or financial reasons? [yes/no]
26. Do you have any other comments you would like to add regarding why you are not returning to the University of Minnesota? [open-ended response]

If you would like to discuss your reasons for leaving the University of Minnesota with Assistant Dean Avelino Mills-Novoa, please call 612-625-6885 to schedule an appointment with him.

RESPONSE D:

You have indicated that you are leaving the U of MN and do not plan to continue with college. If this is not correct, please use the back button on your browser to go back to the original question and select a different option.

Good luck with your future plans. The following survey asks questions about your reasons for choosing and leaving the U of MN. **Make sure you enter your ID below to ensure you will be entered into the drawing.** It will also allow us to remove you from any follow-up reminders. Upon completion of the survey, make sure you select the submit button one time. If you have problems completing the survey, please contact Jennifer Franko (frank010@umn.edu).

Please provide your student ID here.

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2. During the last year, how many hours per week did you work ON CAMPUS? [short answer]
3. During the last year, how many hours per week did you work OFF CAMPUS? [short answer]
4. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about your primary job during the past year. If you did not have a job during the past year, you may skip this question and proceed to question 5.
[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. I enjoyed my work.
 - b. I learned important skills at work.
 - c. My work was more important than school.
 - d. My employer adjusted my hours to accommodate my classes.
 - e. I adjusted my class schedule to accommodate work.
 - f. I studied less than I should have because of work.
 - g. My work connected in a meaningful way to my studies.
5. What is the highest degree that you plan to complete?
- None
 - Certificate (either from college or alternative voc/tech training, like Microsoft certification programs)
 - 2-year college degree (associate degree)
 - 4-year college degree (bachelor's degree)
 - Master's degree
 - A doctoral (PhD) degree

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

6. Please indicate the degree to which the following factors influenced your decision to attend the University of Minnesota (UM).
- [no influence – weak influence – moderate influence – strong influence]
- a. Information found in UM mailings, brochures, or website
 - b. Advice from high school counselor/teacher
 - c. Friends going to UM
 - d. Campus tour
 - e. Cost of tuition
 - f. Parents want me to
 - g. Contact with recruiters
 - h. Indecision about what else to do
 - i. Quality of academic programs
 - j. Types of programs and majors available
 - k. Extracurricular activities
 - l. Location

EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

7. **Based on your experiences at the University of Minnesota to date, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:**

[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. The UM has met my expectations about what college would be like.
- b. I have learned a lot from the courses I have taken.
- c. I have had positive experiences with instructors.
- d. I have had positive experiences with teaching assistants.
- e. The UM offers a good variety of courses in my areas of interest.
- f. I am happy with the degree of interaction I have had with my instructors.
- g. I understand what I need to do to graduate from the UM.

- h. I have participated in a lot of campus extracurricular activities.
 - i. I am happy with my participation in campus extracurricular activities.
 - j. I am satisfied with the quality of career development support available.
 - k. I have had access to the advising support I needed to meet my goals.
 - l. If I needed help with a problem, I believe I could find it at the UM.
8. How much do you think attending the University of Minnesota has helped you make gains or progress in the following areas? *Use the NA category for areas in which, upon entry to the UM, your level of functioning was such that there was no room for improvement.*
[not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much-NA]
- a. Gaining a broad general education about different fields of knowledge.
 - b. Developing your ability to think analytically or logically.
 - c. Developing your creativity.
 - d. Improving your skills in a specific academic area (i.e., writing, mathematics).
 - e. Understanding yourself (e.g., your abilities and interests).
 - f. Clarifying your educational or vocational goals.
 - g. Appreciating diversity.
 - h. Meeting new people and making new friends.

MAJOR OR VOCATIONAL INTERESTS

9. What are your current career, vocational, major interests? [short answer response]

10. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:

[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]

- a. When I first came to the UM, I knew what I wanted out of college.
- b. I could easily choose a college major right now.
- c. When I first came to the UM, I was confident in my ability to succeed.
- d. Currently I am confident in my ability to succeed in college.
- e. When I first came to the UM, there was a definite major or program that I wanted to pursue.
- f. A college education as a way to get the job I want.
- g. It is important that a college education be related to career goals.
- h. There is a creative activity in which I am passionately involved.
- i. There are specific technical skills that I want to develop.
- j. Work is more important than school.
- k. I am on a definite career path.
- l. There is an academic subject in which I am passionately interested.
- m. I have considered ways in which I might best prepare for a career.
 - n. *I have found at least one occupation that I think I would like.*
- o. I have spent time exploring different vocational options.

THE GENERAL COLLEGE TRANSFER AND CAREER CENTER

11. To what extent did you make use of the General College Transfer and Career Center (127 ApH)?
[not at all – very little – some – quite a bit – very much]

12. If you used the Transfer and Career center, what resources did you use (*mark all that apply*)?
- Strong Interest Inventory
 - Major planning sheets
 - Discover
 - MCIS
 - Books
 - Talking with TCC staff
 - Majors information week
 - Visiting advisors program
 - TCC website

LEAVING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

13. I might have stayed at the University of Minnesota had I been directly admitted into a degree granting program.
[strongly disagree – disagree – neither agree or disagree – agree – strongly agree]
14. What will you do after leaving the University of Minnesota (*If you will be working full time, please specify the occupation*)? [open-ended response]
15. Please check items in the list below which were a factor in your decision to leave the University of Minnesota.

	<u>Academic:</u>
	My preferred major was not available
	Dissatisfied with my academic performance
	Did not get help seeing how to further my goals here
	The classes seemed irrelevant to what I want to do
	Academic advising was inadequate
	Could not get the classes that I wanted/needed
	Dissatisfied with quality of courses
	Problem(s) with staff and/or instructor
	Not sure enough of my goals to continue
	Didn't feel like being in school, needed a break
	Want to stay, but suspended
	Opportunity to pursue special interest (e.g., arts, athletics, etc.)
	<u>Personal</u>
	Uncomfortable with campus atmosphere
	Getting around the campus was too difficult
	Not enough diversity
	Too much diversity
	Personal health-related problems
	I came here to participate in a specific activity (e.g., sports) which didn't work out
	Disappointed with the UM experience - it didn't meet my expectations
	Lived in the dorm and did not like it

I experienced language and/or cultural barriers
Military service obligations
I thought I would like college but I didn't
Some of my personal habits are not conducive to being in school right now
Desire to travel
Family obligations (such as caring for loved ones)
<u>Social</u>
Dissatisfied with social life at UM
Didn't make friends or get to know people
Didn't like the political atmosphere of the UM
Didn't like the amount of drug use and partying of my peers
Felt homesick or too far from home
The U is too big - I felt lost here
Felt isolated at GC and wanted more of a sense of community
<i>Financial</i>
<i>Inadequate or lack of financial aid</i>
Parents unable to contribute as expected
Cost of attending UM was higher than expected
Did not budget money correctly
Have incurred too much credit debt
Encountered unexpected expenses
<i>I want to stay, but I owe the UM too much money</i>
Need to work to earn more money
Choose to accept a full-time job instead of going to school

16. Did you want to stay at the UM but have been barred from doing so for academic, behavioral, or financial reasons? [yes/no]

17. Do you have any other comments you would like to add regarding why are not returning to the University of Minnesota? [open-ended response]

If you would like to discuss your reasons for leaving the Univeristy of Minnesota with Assistant Dean Avelino Mills-Novoa, please call 612-625-6885 to schedule an appointment with him.