

Public Abstract

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According to Bruffee (1999), the current construct of university education does not prepare graduates to interact with other human beings on substantive issues because they are not reacculturated. One approach to institutional policy on college persistence is to look towards modifying the social and intellectual environment of the institution and generating alternative means for the reacculturation of students into the pre-existing social and intellectual culture of the university, such as requiring freshman orientation courses. Determining the key components of the process of reacculturation, as this research has done, can assist institutions in restructuring the current social and intellectual integration process for college freshmen. After researching, developing, and pilot testing an instrument to measure the desired variables, a final causal-comparative study was completed to explore the intent to stay and six factors of reacculturation for incoming freshmen students before and after participation in a freshman orientation course. Results showed that reacculturation, as measured by the Litchy Scale of Reacculturation, did not occur for the participants during the course in question. A correlation matrix showed statistically significant relationships between most subscales, however not all significance had predictive value. Bivariate Linear Regression results suggested Ambivalence was the best predictor of Intent to Stay, with the inverse relationship accounting for over a quarter of the variance. The identification of Ambivalence as a predictor of Intent to Stay warrants further research and has implications for college retention interventions.