

AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATORS
WITHIN A PARTICULAR LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE PERCEIVED A
NEW-STUDENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM'S EFFECT ON STUDENTS' SOCIAL
INTEGRATION AND RETENTION

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ABSTRACT

Because of the difficulties new students may encounter upon starting college, an orientation program's ability to address students' needs could potentially persuade them in their decision to persist or leave. The purpose of this study was to investigate how students, faculty, and administrators within a particular liberal arts college perceived a new-student orientation program's effect on students' social integration and retention.

Findings indicated a majority of interviewed students had a positive experience during the orientation program. The environment provided, the orientation activities, and required participation in the orientation were the topics derived from respondents' comments linking students to social interaction. The orientation program provided this environment by facilitating interaction among new students, establishing a surrogate family for new students, and fostering long-term friendships among students.