IMPACT OF MANDATORY ADVISING ON RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE OF
MALE AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINX COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

A DISSERTATION IN
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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

by
SHAWN PIERRE DERRITT

B.G.S., University of Kansas – Lawrence, 1995
M.S., Counseling Psychology, University of Kansas – Lawrence, 2002

Kansas City, Missouri
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IMPACT OF MANDATORY ADVISING ON RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE OF
MALE AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINX COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Shawn Pierre Derritt, Candidate for the Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

This correlational research study examined the effects of mandatory advising on the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx male community college students who attended an urban community college in the Midwest. Additionally, the study also examined the effects of mandatory advising on all males, African American and Latinx students overall and all students. The study used data collected from two separate cohorts, mandatory advising and non-mandatory advising. The retention and persistence of all groups were analyzed using a Chi-square statistical analysis. The results of this study revealed that there was statistical significance of $p = .000$ between mandatory advising of all students and persistence and there was a statistical significance of $p = .000$ between the persistence of men and mandatory advising.
Approval Page

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Education, will examine a dissertation titled “Impact of Mandatory Advising on Retention and Persistence of Male African American and Latinx Community College Students,” presented by Shawn P. Derritt, candidate for the Doctor of Education degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

Loyce Caruthers, Ph.D., Committee Chair
Division of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

Donna Davis, Ph.D.
Division of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

Bonita Butner, Ph.D.
Division of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

Tiffani Riggers-Piehl, Ph.D.
Division of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Academic advising has been a part of college campuses for over one century emerging from the theory of in loco parentis in which college faculty and administrators were seen as sub parents for students away from their parents (Gillispie, 2003; Harborth, 2015; White, 2015a). The function of advising originated as a clerical task that was a part of the student registration process of each preceding semester (Gordon, 2004; White, 2015a). However, because of the growth of student enrollment and the often changes in majors, colleges soon realized the importance of students needing more of a focused one-on-one assistance with understanding electives within the curriculum (Gillispie, 2003; Gordon, 2004; White, 2015a).

The history of academic advising reaches back to the colonial colleges where college presidents and then faculty members assisted students with academic, personal issues and concerns (Gordon, 2004). In 1841, the first recognition of faculty advisors was traced to Kenyon College where students were required to select a faculty member as an advisor creating the first formalization of an academic advising system (Kramer, 1995). This model eventually began to be replicated at other colleges as Johns Hopkins University established a faculty advising system in 1877.

Today, the need and role for academic advisors continues with a clearer understanding of its importance in relation to the retention and persistence of college students (Bahr, 2008; Donaldson, McKinney, Lee & Pino, 2016; Drake, 2011; Forche, 2009; Kot, 2014; Lynch, 2004; Priest & Milne, 1991; Swecker, Fifolt, & Searby, 2013). The importance and use of academic advising is even more significant at community colleges due to their
populations and the number of students that enter higher education through their doors (Juszkiewicz, 2015). Every year community colleges provide access to higher education for more than 12 million students (Juszkiewicz, 2015; National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), 2016). Many of these students are underprepared, are often from low socioeconomic status high schools, and are students of color (Ma & Baum, 2016; NSC, 2016).

The College Board reported that about 44% of all African American and 56% of all Latinx students attended public two-year colleges in 2014 compared to only 29% from these groups in public four-year institutions (Ma & Baum, 2016). With almost half of college-going African American and Latinx students entering higher education through community colleges, these institutions must invest in ways to help them complete their educational goals (Juszkiewicz, 2015; Ma & Baum, 2016; NSC, 2016; Shapiro et al., 2017).

This study compares the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students who were required to see an academic advisor with those that were able to self-advice at a community college. The students were degree seeking and under thirty credit hours at an urban community college located within the Midwest. Community colleges must look at methods that are effective toward improving the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (Snyder, 2014) defines Black/African American as a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin). Latinx is a person who lives in the U.S. and who comes from, or whose family comes from, Latin America; used when you do not want to say that the person is a man or woman (Salinas Jr. & Lozano, 2017). Improving the retention and persistence of community college students will lead to increased college
completion outcomes (Juszkiewicz, 2015; Ma & Baum, 2016; NSC, 2016; Shapiro, Dundar, & Huie, 2017).

**Statement of Problem**

The U.S Census Bureau (2015) predicts that by 2060 the population of people of color, consisting of African American, Latinx, and others, will rise to 56% of the total population with Latinx making up 31%. However, African American and Latinx are among the poorest in our country and have limited resources (Proctor, Semega & Kollar, 2015). The 2015 U.S. Bureau reported that 30% of African Americans and 27.2% of Latinx live below the poverty level compared to 17.8% of white individuals (Proctor et al., 2015). Higher education increases the chances of upward socioeconomic mobility, providing greater resources for individuals (Baum, Ma & Payea, 2013). While African American and Latinx students attend community colleges at a higher rate than four-year colleges, (Ma & Baum, 2016), they have the lowest completion rate (36% and 52.6% respectively), compared to white (59.9%), and Asian (52.6%) students (Shapiro, Dundar, Huie, Wakhungu, Yuan, Nathan, & Hwang, 2017); reducing their opportunities for a better quality of life.

With such low completion rates, it is important that community colleges identify methods and factors that increase completion rates of African American and Latinx students. In a 2012 study, Strayhorn examined African American men’s satisfaction at community colleges and their relation to retention. His findings suggested a statistical connection between social integration and satisfaction with college; 27% of African American males’ satisfaction at community colleges was related to age, units taken, employment impact on school, family responsibilities, grades, social interaction with peers, social interaction with campus life, and social interaction with faculty. Background factors such as age, external
impacts and credits completed explained the greatest amount of variance, 19%. In addition, academic integration accounted for 3% of the variance with social integration explaining 6% more. Strayhorn’s 2012 study highlights the importance of satisfaction with college for the success of African American males at community colleges. Furthermore, his results point to the importance of social integration for African American males at community colleges.

In an earlier study, Strayhorn (2010) examined the influence of social and cultural capital on the academic achievement of African and Latinx males. Social and cultural capital was defined as social economic status (SES), discussions with parents about college, parent’s education, and involvement in student activities (Strayhorn). Findings suggested that social and cultural capital added to the predictive ability of college success based on prior achievement and academic preparation for African American males by 14% and 6% for Latinx males.

While Strayhorn (2010, 2012) found student satisfaction and social and cultural capital to influence retention, student services such as academic advising are effective in retaining students of color. Museus and Ravello (2010) interviewed a purposeful sample of 45 racially and ethnically diverse students across three California community colleges. The researchers identified three themes related to characteristics of academic advising that were effective for improving the retention and persistence of students of color at predominantly white institutions (PWI). The first theme was humanized academic advising, noted as being caring and committed to the success of students of color. The study found that students of color reported that it was important to see advisors as human beings not just college staff. The second theme was holistic academic advising, which seeks to address all issues related to the student’s day-to-day life, which influence their abilities to be successful. Students
reported that this advising started with addressing academic issues but went further into personal areas like social, family and financial issues (Museus & Ravello). The final theme was proactive academic advising, explained as making intentional efforts to aid students in finding resources. Advisors known for this style of advising were defined as individuals who assumed the responsibility to connect students of color to resources. Overall, Museus and Ravello suggested that advisors who are warm and go the extra mile in assisting students of color have a greater impact on the retention and persistence of students of color. Their findings added to the practice of meaningful academic advisors’ method or delivery of services that may contribute to the success and satisfaction of students of color at PWIs.

Success for African American and Latinx students in higher education also decreases generational poverty. It is important that community colleges examine the resources and services they provide to increase the success of African American and Latinx students so they might have a greater chance of upward mobility. De Vuijst, Van Ham and Kleinhans (2017) tracked low-income students from 1999-2012 to determine if they would remain in low-income neighborhoods once, they became adults. De Vuijst et al. found that children who lived in poor neighborhoods growing up were more likely to live in poor neighborhoods when they become adults (37.8% of 12 years after leaving the parental home), compared to children who grew up in rich neighborhoods (14.2% of 12 years). However, De Vuijst et al. also found that higher education weakens the cycle of poverty because students that earned a college degree were less likely to return to low-income neighborhoods as adults. College completion was found to also address generational poverty.

Cuthrell, Stapleton and Ledfor (2009) described three types of poverty: situational, absolute poverty, and generational. Situational poverty occurs through certain life changes
like illness or loss of employment but usually does not last for long periods. Absolute poverty centers on sustenance, essentials, and living without the ability to enjoy social and cultural expenditures. Lastly, generational poverty has to do with a continuous cycle of poverty involving two or more generations of family (Cuthrell et al., 2009). Generation poverty may be interrupted with education. Torche (2011) completed a national analysis of class mobility across levels of schooling by examining data collected from several surveys. Findings indicated that a bachelor’s degree weakens the intergenerational association of household income. Thus, individuals born into low-income families are more likely to break from that social status of poverty upon earning a bachelor’s degree (Torche).

Since higher education can break the social status of poverty, the success of students of color in higher education benefits local communities and our nation. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (2014) reported that the 2012 student population of our country’s community colleges would generate a present value of $1.1 trillion in added income to the country over their working lives. This added income to our country would be supported by a stronger employment rate enjoyed by college graduates (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2013; Economic Modeling Specialists Intl (E.M.S). 2014). Individuals with higher levels of education are also likely to enjoy a higher level of income and physical health (Baum et al., 2013; E.M.S., 2014). Education provides many benefits that exceed a good job and low employment rates, our society benefits as communities are saved from generations of poverty, and our economy and tax payers are saved from the burden of providing government assistance to undereducated communities (Baum et al., 2013; E.M.S., 2014). More importantly, an educated citizen participates in a democratic society and helps to improve the quality of life for others. Fortunato and Panizza (2015) believe that a
democratic institution or society’s performance is dependent on the number of educated people. Moreover, Fortunato and Panizza suggested that education improves the political engagement and participation of citizens, increasing their ability to select good candidates and evaluate elected officials.

The participation in a democratic society is important to ensure the issues and topics relevant to communities are addressed. Kilgo, Pasquesi, Sheets and Pascarella (2014) discovered that college students who participated in service learning, were more likely to participate in political and social engagement after college. Richard, Keen, Hatcher and Pease (2017) identified similar findings in their study of 1,066 alumni from 30 campuses, who completed the Civic Minded Professional scale (CMP) (Hatcher, 2008), designed to assess civic mindedness. Being civic minded, as measured by the CMP scale, was associated with involvement in civic activities and volunteering post-graduation. They used Checkoway’s (2014) definition of civic mindedness, “a way of thinking about and paying attention to, the public good and the well-being of society” (p. 77). Civic mindedness includes the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behavioral intentions to participate in political and voluntary actions (Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011). Civic actions focus on a range of behaviors like volunteering to vote, leading boycott campaigns, and civic organizational involvement (Richard et al., 2017). These behaviors and activities are considered byproducts of higher education. Since higher education is likely to affect the overall quality of life for individuals and their roles in a democratic society, it is important that community colleges are successful in educating African American and Latinx students.

In general, there are multiple causes related to low retention and persistence for students of color. Hausmann, Ye, Schofield and Woods (2009) found that sense of belonging
was a significant predictor of persistence for both African American and white first-year students when combined with other variables. Hausmann et al. used three surveys to assess 365 white and Black students’ senses of belonging and its relationship to persistence. The surveys measured students’ levels of financial difficulties, encouragement from family and friends, social and academic integration, sense of belonging, institutional commitment, goal commitment, and intentions to persist on a 5-point ordinal Likert-scale. The largest total effect on intentions to persist for African Americans students was from encouragement of family and friends, followed by institutional commitment, goal commitment, and sense of belonging, (ranked 4th among the variables) which combined accounted for 80% of the variance observed. For white students, the largest total effect on intentions to persist was from encouragement from family and friends, followed by institutional commitment, goal commitment, academic development, sense of belonging (ranked 5th among the variables), faculty interactions, financial difficulty, and ESB (enhanced sense of belonging) treatment, which combined accounted for 74.7% of the variance observed. The largest total effect on actual persistence for African American students was GPA, followed by intentions to persist, encouragement from family and friends, institutional commitment, goal commitment and sense of belonging (ranked 6th among the variables), which combined accounted for 47.3% of the variance observed. For white students, encouragement from family and friends, institutional commitment, GPA, goal commitment, academic development, sense of belonging (ranked 7th among the variables), and ESB (enhanced sense of belonging) treatment were the largest total effect for intention to persist which combined was 57% of the variance observed.
Hausmann et al.’s (2009) study revealed that sense of belonging had a direct effect on both African American and white students’ commitment to the institution but an indirect effect on Black and white students’ intentions to persist. There was an indirect effect, as sense of belonging strengthened students’ levels of commitment to the college, which, in turn, was found to directly affect persistence more than sense of belonging, but the methods of developing a sense of belonging differed between the two groups. Hausmann et al. found that colleges would need to consider the unique issues African American students face at PWIs, in order to help African American students develop a sense of belonging. Hausmann et al. discovered that the enhanced sense of belonging treatment, which consist of letters and college material sent to applicants prior to attending the college, did not enhanced African American’s sense of belonging. Hausmann et al.’s study points to Tinto’s (1975) seminal social integration theory that stressed the importance of students connecting to the college.

Another area linked to low retention and persistence for African American students is the lack of financial assistance. The availability of student loans showed a positive impact for the persistence of African American students (Jackson & Reynolds, 2013). Jackson and Reynolds used a data set from the 1995-1996 Beginning Postsecondary Study (BPS) and its three and six academic year follow-up data to assess overtime the educational progress and student loan accumulation of 6,780 white and Black beginning college students between the ages of 16-25. Their analysis used three variables from the BPS, one pertained to student loans and the other two pertained to college achievement. The results revealed that though 10% of Black and 31% of white students completed a degree with no federal loans, yet the college completion rates were higher for students that borrowed money. Surprisingly, Black students that used student loans stayed in school longer and were more likely to complete a
bachelor’s degree. Financial aid counseling and advising could provide great assistance to African American students reducing the number of students failing to persist.

Being prepared for college also has a direct link to retention and persistence. Students who have higher levels of academic preparation during their PreK-12 education increase their probability of completing a degree at a community college (Craig & Ward, 2008; Johnson, Wasserman, Yildirim & Yonai, 2014; Porchea, Allen, Robbins, & Phelps, 2010). Porchea et al. used the Student Readiness Inventory (SRI) results of 4,481 students from 21 different community colleges and found that student who had high levels of academic preparation were more likely to complete an associate degree and transfer to a 4-year institution. Another study found that students who were academically prepared and attended a community college immediately after graduating high school were more likely to complete a bachelor’s degree than those who postponed college entry (Craig & Ward, 2008).

Purpose

This study’s purpose was to determine whether African American and Latinx students who were required to see an advisor at community colleges would have a higher retention and persistence rates than African American and Latinx students who self-advised. The major data source came from four-years of longitudinal student retention and persistence data collected from an urban-serving community college in the Midwest.

Prior to the implementation of the new advising policy, the college experienced a decrease in enrollment due to the changes in our country’s economy. Juszkiewicz (2015) reported that during the height of the recession in 2008 and 2009, enrollment at public community colleges exceeded the enrollment increase across all institutions of higher education. Between the fall of 2012 and the fall of 2014, Juszkiewicz then reported that the
decline in enrollments at community colleges exceeded the enrollment decline of all postsecondary institutions. It is common for the enrollment of community colleges to fluctuate with the rise and fall of the economy (Juszkiewicz, 2015). The decrease in enrollment is usually due to the improvement with the economy as students return to the work force after having survived the recession (Juszkiewicz, 2015). This was reflected in the unemployment rate of the city where the community college is located. In 2009 the unemployment rate of the Midwest city, the site of the study, was 11% which was reflected in the enrollment rate of the community college that experienced an all-time high enrollment of 11,751 in 2009. In 2013, the unemployment rate of the city was 8.2% and continued to drop to 5.6% in 2015. The enrollment of the college also dropped to 9,544. The consistent drop in the unemployment rate was also reflected in the decline in the enrollment of the community college, consistent with Juszkiewicz’s assessment of how the economy affects the enrollment of community colleges.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guide this proposed study.

1- Are there statistically significant differences between retention rates of community college students who receive mandatory advising and community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

2- Are there statistically significant differences between persistence rates of community college students who receive mandatory advising and community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

3- Are there statistically significant differences between retention rates of African American and Latinx community college students who receive mandatory advising
and African American and Latinx community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

4- Are there statistically significant differences between persistence rates of African American and Latinx community college students who receive mandatory advising and African American and Latinx community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

Questions 1 through 4 will be assessed using a Chi-square analysis.

**Definition of Terms**

**Academic Advising**

There have been many definitions used to describe academic advising. For this proposed study, Kuhn’s (2008) definition provides the most fitting description of the function of academic advising. Kuhn believes that academic advising takes place in "situations in which an institutional representative gives insight or direction to a college student about an academic, social, or personal matter. The nature of this direction might be to inform, suggest, counsel, discipline, coach, mentor, or even teach." (p. 3)

**Retention**

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which is the primary source of retention information for the nation, defines retention as a measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, retention is the percentage of first-time bachelor (or equivalent) degree seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions retention is the percentage of first-time degree or certificate
seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008).

**Persistence**

Persistence is defined as the enrollment headcount of any cohort compared to its headcount on its initial official census date. The goal is to measure the number of students who persist term to term and to completion (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008). For this study, persistence will be defined as the completion of up to six or more semesters.

**Community College/Two-Year Institution**

Community college and two-year institution are used interchangeably within higher education. Snyder through The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (Snyder, 2014) defines community colleges or two-year colleges as a postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 2 but less than 4 years duration. This includes occupational and vocational schools with programs of at least 1800 hours and academic institutions with programs of less than 4 years. This does not include bachelor's degree-granting institutions where the baccalaureate program can be completed in 3 years.

**Black/African American**

Black and African American are used interchangeably within higher education research. As such, this study will use them interchangeably. NCES (Snyder, 2014) defines Black/African American as a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).
Latinx

A person who lives in the US and who comes from, or whose family comes from, Latin America; used when you do not want to say that the person is a man or woman (Salinas & Lozano, 2017).

White

A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East (except those of Hispanic origin) (Snyder, 2014).

Overview of Methodology

Data Analysis

Study site. The site for this study was a community college located in an urban community in the Midwest. The college has three locations: a main campus that offers degrees and certificates, a technical educational center that offers technical certificates that can be completed in less than one year, and a satellite campus located about 40 minutes away from the main campus that offers degrees and technical certificates.

Measurement. Data was collected through the college’s office of institutional effectiveness. One data set was used with two separate markers identified as mandatory advising and non-mandatory advising. Mandatory advising semesters consist of Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2015 and Fall 2016 degree seeking and or certificate seeking students with less than 30 credit hours who were required to meet with an academic advisor prior to enrolling each semester. Non-mandatory advising semesters consist of Fall 2009, Fall 2010, Fall 2011, and Fall 2012 degree seeking and or certificate seeking students who have earned less than 30 credit hours who were not required to meet with an academic advisor prior to enrolling each semester.
**Participants.** The study consists of all students attending an urban community college in the Midwest. The students were seeking either a degree or certificate and had earned under 30 credit hours at the college.

**Statistical analysis.** Chi-square statistics were used to determine the differences between retention, persistence rates of students who received mandatory advising and students who did not receive mandatory advising. Significance was set at $p < .05$ for all tests.

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study consist of three theories that are considered foundational theories for student persistence and retention: integration, involvement, and student engagement. Tinto’s integration theory (1975) points to the importance of integration into college culture and community, explaining that the absence of such could lead to exiting the college. However, Astin (1984) points to the importance of not only integrating into the college, but also the importance of the quality and quantity of involvement that takes place during the process of the aforementioned integration. Kuh adds what I believe to be variables that exist outside of the role of the student, which are policy and procedures of colleges to encourage and provide opportunities for students to engage with the campus community (1991, 2003, 2008, 2009). A short introduction to all three theories follows.

**Integration Theory**

Tinto’s integration theory (1975) is considered one of the leading theories on retention and persistence, grounded in Durkheim’s (1951) classic theory of social factors centered on suicide. Durkheim’s theory was first applied to student retention by Spady in 1970. Tinto later refined his integration theory in 1975 by connecting it to a student retention and persistence model. His study was the first attempt to explain rather than describe the
process that leads to a student dropping out of college. Tinto situated his integration model within an understanding that individuals come into a social organization, which in the current setting would be a community college. The interactions that students have at a college community involve an academic system of faculty and staff, and a social system of peers; both systems create varying degrees of academic integration and social integration (Tinto, 1975, 1993). In turn, integration causes changes in students’ commitment to the college community leading to persistence or attrition from the college (Tinto, 1975, 1993). Tinto borrowed from Durkheim’s (1951) belief that certain factors lead to persistence in life. In essence, the strength of the connection the individual experiences with people connected to the college, whether it be college faculty, staff, of other students, would determine a student’s persistence at the college (Tinto, 1975).

**Involvement Theory**

Astin’s (1984) developmental theory provides another perspective for the theoretical framework of this study. Astin presented a theory that focused on student involvement and its connection to student retention and persistence. Student involvement is defined as the amount of physical and psychological energy devoted to the academic experience. Therefore, according to Astin’s theory, a very active student is one that spends a large amount of time and energy studying and participating in campus activities and student organization. However, the opposite of such a student would be one who is uninvolved, fails to complete assignments, spends a short amount of time on campus and abstains from extracurricular activities.
Astin’s (1984) theory has five basic hypotheses:

- The investments of physical and psychological energy in various objects represents the level of involvement.

- Involvement happens along a continuum that varies per student with different manifested degrees of involvement in various objects.

- Involvement consists of quantitative and qualitative features represented by the amount or effort of involvement.

- Student learning and personal development are relative to the quantity and quality of student involvement in educational programs.

- The effectiveness of educational policy or practice relates to the ability of the policy or practice to increase students’ involvement.

Astin’s (1984) student involvement theory suggested that the curriculum presented in educational settings must elicit sufficient student effort and desire to invest energy that will bring about learning and development. Involvement theory focuses more on the resource of student-time over institutional resources, believing that the level or completion of developmental goals is a direct result of the time and effort given to activities designed to produce gains.

**Student Engagement Theory**

The third theory of persistence and retention used as a part of the theoretical frame for this study is Kuh, Schuh, and Whitt’s (1991) understanding of student engagement theory. Kuh et al. used the term “involving college” which helped to set their theory apart from Astin’s (1984) involvement theory, which focused on the quality and quantity of student involvement demonstrated through five hypotheses. Kuh (2003, 2008, and 2009) believed
that student engagement is a collaboration of time and energy students give to educational activities inside and outside of the classrooms and the policies and practices that institutions use to encourage students to participate in activities. The policies and practices explored in Kuh’s et al. 1991 analysis of “involving colleges” provides an additional variable to Astin’s (1984) involvement theory in that Kuh (2003, 2008, 2009) believes that colleges need to encourage students to participate and provide methods that create a culture of willingness through policies and practices.

Kuh’s (2003, 2008, 2009) definition of engagement theory rest on three factors believed to have a great impact on influencing and encouraging students to participate in campus activities. These are as follows:

- A clear, coherent philosophy that sets expectations for student behavior and guides the development of campus policies and practices
- A campus culture that encourages student participation and loyalty
- People committed to student learning who appreciated the importance of out-of-class experiences to the aims of the institutions. (Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt, 1991, p. 50)

Tinto’s (1975) integration theory, Astin’s (1984) involvement theory, and Kuh’s (1991) engagement theory build upon each other and provide a theoretical framework for this study. Academic advising provides the opportunity for students to connect with a representative of the college who can create and suggest opportunities for students to be involved. The relationship created with an advisor can also create an information network established to assist the student in navigating the college campus resources. Kuh’s (2003, 2008, 2009) belief of the importance of colleges creating policy and practices that encourage
engagement supports the value of required advising that provides an opportunity for students to engage outside of the classroom with a representative of the college (Kuh et al., 1991). In chapter two, I will provide a deeper review of all three theories and present current empirical studies relevant to each theory as well as opposing theories.

**Significance**

This study may provide useful data to influence how community colleges work to improve the retention and persistence of students of color, particularly African American and Latinx students. Museus and Ravello’s (2010) study found that proactive academic advising, which is advising that places the responsibility of developing the relationship between an academic advisor and the student on the academic advisor, has a strong impact on the success of students of color. This proposed study uses a proactive advising approach, so the results of this study could provide useful data that would add to Museus and Ravello’s findings of methods that lead to the success of students of color.

Orozco, Alzarez and Gutkin (2010) found that the quality of the relationships between advisors and students as important to students’ perception of advisors’ genuine concerns for their success. Students that met with general advisors that were not really vested in developing a relationship with them did not have a strong impact on the retention of students. This proposed study is intended to add to the existing literature regarding the importance of required advising needed for the retention and persistence of students at community colleges. Kot (2014) compared first-time full-time freshmen who used advising with those who did not and found that students that used advising had an increase in the first and second-term GPA and their first-year cumulative GPA. Kot also found students that
received advising had a decrease in first-year attrition compared to those who did not use advising.

Chapter One provided a summary of this study, including the overview of the methodology. Chapter Two includes an expansion of the theoretical framework with an indepth review of theories pertaining to the persistence and retention of students in higher education, followed by Chapter Three; the literature review. The methodology is the focus of Chapter Four which outlines the research design and data analysis with attention given to limitations of this study and ethical considerations.
CHAPTER 2
THEORIES OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Various theories support factors associated with persistence and retention. Theoretical frameworks provide the why of these factors. This chapter will explore three theories related to retention and persistence: integration theory, involvement theory, and student engagement theory. Gaining an understanding of why particular factors can increase student persistence and retention gives colleges tactics to build effective strategies for the successful completion of the students who are the units of analyses of this study, African American and Latinx students.

Integration Theory

Tinto’s (1975) integration theory was grounded in Durkheim’s (1951) classic theory of social factors around suicide. Durkheim’s theory was first applied to student retention by Spady (1970) that presented a sociological model of the dropout process by focusing on social integration, influenced by the satisfaction of one’s college experience and the commitment to the college. Spady believed that satisfaction with one’s college experience stemmed from the available social and academic rewards; thus, commitment to the college is established by a sense of integration into the college and large amounts of positive rewards. Tinto further refined Durkheim’s theory connecting it to a student retention and persistence model. His study was the first attempt to explain rather than describe the process that leads to a student dropping out of college.

Tinto (1975, 1997) situated his integration model within an understanding that individuals come into a social organization, which for this proposed study will be a community college. The interactions that students have in a college community involve an
academic system of faculty and staff, and a social system of peers; both systems create varying degrees of academic integrations and social integration (Tinto, 1975, 1997; Barnett, 2011). In turn, integration or the lack thereof causes change in students’ commitments to the community college leading to persistence or attrition (Tinto, 1975, 1997; Barnett, 2011). Tinto borrowed from Durkheim’s (1951) belief that certain factors lead to persistence in life. In essence, the strength of the connection an individual experiences with people connected to the college, whether it be college faculty, staff, or other students determines a student’s persistence in college.

Current theorists have critiqued Tinto’s theory of integration by expanding it and reviewing uncharted components. Stuart, Rios-Aguilar and Deli-Amen (2014) challenged Tinto’s original theory (1975) and understanding of persistence at community colleges by presenting a model that reviewed the economic factors affecting persistence. They suggested that community colleges develop programs to acknowledge and align students’ experiences with their understanding of selected careers and the availability of jobs. Stuart et al. not only believed that students need the socio-academic experience with faculty, staff and peers in order to determine whether they should persist but they also need to be aware of the labor market in relation to their chosen career. Stuart et al. presented a human capital model that stressed students should examine the benefits of their education in regards to the cost and the increase in income as a direct result in their investment in future education. Further, they pointed out that community colleges would benefit by developing career exploration programs that will allow students to investigate their capital payout in relation to their educational choices.
Evidence of a human capital model pertaining to retention and persistence is seen in the enrollment trends of community colleges. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) reported in a 2015 progress report that community colleges’ enrollment trends follow the trends our economy (Juszkiewiez, 2015). As our economy improves, enrollment in community colleges began to spiral downward; as it is believed that students began to find jobs that in accordance to Stuart et al (2014) is the result of students examining the investment rates of the payout from the completion of their degree or certificate. However, Tinto (1975) did not believe that the job market affects a student’s decision to attend college or persist. Tinto’s belief was that human capital theories only sought to explain dropout from individual institutions of higher education rather than provide an explanation of why students drop out from systems of higher educational institutions. Nevertheless, Stuart et al believed that a human capital model is a missing link to Tinto’s integration theory and influences the persistence rate of students at community colleges. Considering the increasing cost of higher education, even among community colleges, Stuart et al. offer an explanation of economic factors affecting persistence.

Tinto reviewed other theories related to the persistence of college students. However, his analysis of the various theories led Tinto to believe that these theories only presented parts of the problem related to persistence and failed to provide independent effects of various factors. Contemporary theories view Tinto’s integration theory as the foundation of retention studies; however, it is believed that there are various factors that need to be critiqued in light of current trends and issues within higher education. Variations like types of schools, racial /ethnic groups, and gender, causes researchers today to see missing elements
within his theory that he may have dismissed when developing his original theory because these groups were not researched as well in 1975.

With nearly half of undergraduate students attending community colleges in the United States (Juszkiewicz, 2015), it is important that higher education administrators and advisors take a closer look at Tinto’s integration framework in relation to community colleges. Tinto (1975, 1997, and 1998) believed that students are more likely to stay enrolled at an institution if they are connected to the social and academic life of the college, in other words if they are integrated into the college. Students that fail to be integrated may find the institution to not be a good fit for them and will choose to withdraw from the school. Tinto further explained that students must be integrated both socially and academically. As such, he believed that academic integration happens when students connect to the intellectual values and beliefs of the campus through interactions with students and faculty members inside and outside of their course work. Social integration occurs when students develop relationships with their peers outside of the classroom (Tinto, 1975, 1997 and 1998).

In 1997, Tinto questioned whether social integration would be important at community colleges, as his original theory of 1975 did not examine the relevance of social integration at community colleges but rather suggested that it would still be important at community colleges in some variation. Deil-Amen (2011) and Karp, Hughes and O’Gara (2010) presented studies that examined the use of social integration at community colleges and found that information networks and college specific “agent” or “agents” were effective in helping students feel connected and integrated to the campus. Deil-Amen collected data through surveys, interviews and observations of 238 students, staff, and faculty at seven public and seven private community colleges. Of the student population 37% were Latinx,
35% were African American, 19% were white, and 9% were of Asian, Indian or Middle-
Easter descent. Karp et al. also conducted a similar study where they interviewed 46-second semester community college students and re-interviewed the same students six months later. The participants for their study came from two urban community colleges. Though Deil-
Amen’s findings were associated with, students in career-related programs both studies reported that making connections with students and college faculty or staff members that assisted them in navigating their college gave them a sense of belonging. Deil-Amen’s study reported that 92% of the students specified that a college “agent” or “agents” (p. 61) were related to their sense of belonging and succeeding at their college. Karp et al. found that 61% of the participants of their study reported that engaging in information networks was related to their sense of belonging and academic success and 26% of the students reported that they felt integrated into the college due to being a part of a network. These networks or “agents” were established through interactions within the classroom and outside the classroom with more of an academic function but with some social elements. Karp et al. discovered that students that had information networks felt as though they could handle any challenge presented to them by the college and that these networks helped make the college smaller and more manageable. The study presented by Deil-Amen described these networks as institutional actors or agents that were instrumental in helping students navigate the college. The interesting thing about both studies is that they did not necessarily refute the importance of social integration but rather redefined its existence on community college campuses.

Karp, Hughes, and O’Gara (2010) found that information networks had a relationship component that allowed students to feel socially connected to the campus through the sharing of information related to academic experiences. The development of social relationships
through academic experiences was uncharted by Tinto’s original theory of 1975 though his later work on classrooms as communities (1997) did discuss the importance of student connecting with their peers and faculty members in their classroom. Karp et al did not report any sub-group patterns but Deil-Amen (2011) found that African American students desired a cultural connection with an individual or group. Tinto’s original work conducted in 1975 suggested that social integration happened outside the classroom. Karp et al. found that social integration happened through information networks that were developed through academic sources like the classroom. Karp et al. found that students that developed networks that were created through extracurricular activities did not report feeling connected or integrated to the campus. Students in this study reported that they developed their information network within a College 101 or Student Success course. These courses created, as Tinto’s 1997 work suggested, the opportunity for students to connect with their peers and instructors through class discussions and sharing of information, which is necessary to develop a social network. Barnett (2011) conducted a study of 333 community college students who completed surveys that assessed how likely they were to return the following semester. Results showed that academic integration was directly related to intent to persist and faculty validation had an indirect effect on persistence for students at community colleges as faculty validation provided a sense of academic integration. In fact, faculty validation explained 47% of the variance.

While many of the aforementioned studies focus on traditional students who were full time students, non-traditional working students often find ways for social integration into college life. Gilardi, and Guglielmetti (2011) conducted a study that examined the behavioral social interaction of 228 non-traditional students, students who worked at least part-time, in
the Italian university system. Gilardi and Guglielmetti found that non-traditional students made informal contacts outside of the class a priority. Furthermore, Gilardi and Guglielmetti found that students who had high levels of interaction with staff, faculty and students had a strong association with renewal of enrollment. In fact, 96.2% enrolled while only 3.8% dropped out. Forbus, Newbold and Mehta (2011) conducted a study that examined how 97 non-traditional and 374 traditional students, attending a southwestern 4-year university, manage their time, stress factors and coping strategies. Forbus et al. found that non-traditional students places less interest and importance on social activities outside of class. The results of study came from self-administered questionnaire. The results showed that the mean importance level of having fun at school was 5.1 for traditional and 4.1 for non-traditional. Furthermore, non-traditional students in this study had a mean of 3.1 compared to 4.1 of traditional students when measuring the level of participation in social events.

Karp, Hughes, and O’Gara (2010) and Deil-Amen (2011) presented evidence that social and academic integration happens at community colleges but occurs as a unit with academic integration, through the development of information networks, or agents as the foundation. Therefore, Tinto’s original 1975 theory holds some truth regarding social integration on community college campuses; yet, Karp et al. helped to identify the construct in which it occurred by redefining the existence or development of social integration for community colleges. Though Gilardi, and Guglielmetti’s 2011 study was conducted with university students, its results supported Tinto’s belief that integration is related to persistence and retention.

Tinto’s integration theory is one of several retention and persistence theories that examines the interaction of college students within the culture and community of college
campuses. Astin is also a well cited theorist that has presented a developmental theory within higher education to explain student persistence and retention. His theory is discussed further below.

**Involvement Theory**

Astin’s (1984) developmental theory is another theoretical framework for this study. Astin focused on student involvement and its connection to student retention and persistence. Involvement is defined as the amount of physical and psychological energy devoted to the academic experience. Astin’s theory has five basic hypotheses:

- The investments of physical and psychological energy in various objects represents the level of involvement.
- Involvement happens along a continuum that varies per student with different manifested degrees of involvement in various objects.
- Involvement consist of quantitative and qualitative features represented by the amount or effort of involvement.
- Student learning and personal development is relative to the quantity and quality of student involvement in educational programs.
- The effectiveness of educational policy or practice relates to the ability of the policy or practice to increase students’ involvement. (p. 519)

Outcalt and Skewes-Cox’s (2002) study of involvement, interaction and satisfaction at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) explored Astin’s (1984) involvement theory by looking at the impact of student involvement at HBCUs. Outcalt and Skewes-Cox compared 443 African American students attending Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) with 443 students attending HBCUs and found that African American
students that attended HBCUs showed a greater level of academic involvement than students attending PWIs. This amount of academic involvement translated to a higher level of satisfaction among African American students attending HBCUs with 80% reporting satisfaction in comparison to 74% of African American students attending PWIs. Outcalt and Skewes-Cow’s study provided support to Astin’s involvement theory but also supported their own theory of reciprocal engagement with the belief that environmental and cultural conditions of the campus influenced student involvement. However, it could be argued that if African American students at PWIs participated more in activities they would experience a greater connection to the college. Nevertheless, Outcalt and Skewes-Cow’s study brings to light the importance of a campus environment that encourages student involvement.

Strapp and Farr’s (2009) surveyed 71 seniors about their participation in psychology related activities. Results showed that involvement was related to satisfaction, \( r = .363 \) and GPA \( r = .279 \) but satisfaction was not correlated to GPA, \( r = .028 \). However, Sidelinger and Booth-Butterfield (2010) found that student involvement is influenced by the connectedness between students and class size with 16% of variance being explained by this model. Moreover, the more connected students felt to their peers the more likely they were to be involved and participated in class. For this study, Sidelinger and Booth-Butterfield surveyed 434 undergraduate students and measured the following areas: teacher confirmation, classroom connectedness, in-class involvement, and out-of-class involvement. Similar results were found in Strayhorn’s (2008a) study where African American and white male students reported a sense of belong when interacting with diverse peers. In this study, Strayhorn compared the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) results of 231 African American male students and 300 white male students attending a PWI. Both African
American males and white males reported a greater sense of belonging when interacting with diverse peers, however the regression was higher for white males than African American males, .25 and .24 respectively. In another study, Strayhorn (2008b) examined the influence of academic and social experiences on Latinx students’ sense of belonging also using the CSEQ. In this study, Strayhorn compared the results of 289 Latinx and 300 white students’ responses to the CSEQ. The results of this study also showed that sense of belonging was influence by interacting with diverse peers combined with earned grades and time spent studying. However, the variance was higher for Latinx students than white students, 11% and 7% respectively. In contrast, Webber, Krylow and Zhang (2013), using results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), found the exact opposite by examining 1,269 students’, attending PWIs. Involvement with diverse peers was negatively related to GPA, while students with multiple interactions with faulty in and outside of the class, involvement in academic activities, social activities, and earned higher grades had higher levels of satisfaction with college, R2 .268 for first year students and R2 .316 for seniors (Webber et al., 2013). This study strongly supports Astin’s (1984) notion on time-on-tasks and his belief that quality and intent of time spent on tasks lead to greater levels of involvement, which leads to greater academic success.

Astin’s involvement theory is supported by various studies and provides a theoretical framework for this study, along with Tinto’s (1975) integration theory and Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt (1991) engagement theory, to be discussed next.
Student Engagement Theory

Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt’s (1991) definition of engagement theory rests on three factors believed to have a great impact on influencing and encouraging students to participate in campus activities:

- A clear, coherent philosophy that sets expectations for student behavior and guides the development of campus policies and practices.
- A campus culture that encourages student participation and loyalty.
- People committed to student learning who appreciated the importance of out-of-class experiences to the aims of the institutions.

(Kuh et al., 1991 p. 50)

Kuh’s (2003) review of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) found that full-time students who lived on campus were engaged more in comparison to students who were not full-time and did not live on campus. The study also showed that 42% of seniors reported to have completed community work or service-learning projects as a part of a class assignment and 90% of students reported collaborating on class task and projects (Kuh). The implications of this analysis point to the need and importance of student housing and collaborative learning experiences that engage students throughout the campus community. In another study, Gayles and Hu (2009) examined the influence of engagement on athletes and found that engagement had an impact on student athletes and that the absence of it could cause them to miss out on the learning that takes place when interacting with peers and engaging in educational activities outside of class. Gayles and Hu surveyed 410 freshmen, gathered from 21 Division I colleges and universities, using the Progress in College (PIC) and the Social and Group Experiences (SAGE) surveys. Four areas were
examined: (a) interaction with faculty, (b) interaction with non-teammate students (c) participation in student organizations and activities, and (d) participation in academic activities. Results showed that interaction with other students, interaction with faculty, and the participation in academic related activities related positively to the learning and communication skills of student athletes and accounted for 20% of the explained variance. This study, though directed towards student athletes, provides empirical evidence that points to the need for student engagement and the impact that it can have on student’s self-concept and learning outcomes needed to persist.

Saenz et al. (2011) provided a study that examine the impact of engagement at community colleges. Saenz et al. used survey data from the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) to examine similarities and difference that exist across student levels of engagement at community colleges. They used a sample from 663 community colleges with 320,000 students participating. The study sought to reveal and address the diverse needs of community college students. Saenz et al. found that students were either consistently detached from their school environment or highly involved. Furthermore, students who were prepared for assignments ranked highest on engagement. Saenz et al. also found that female students were more engaged than their male counterparts were. The results of this study support Kuh’s et al. engagement theory (1991) in that engagement leads to academic success. In addition, Saenz et al. found that when comparing the cluster of low-engaged students to high-engaged students there was a direct correlation to the number of student services used and the increasing amount of student engagement. As such, 60% of the most engaged used three – five services often compared to 37% of least engaged having used no services and 48% of least engaged having used only two services.
The amount of services used could possibly be a formula of building a relationship that encourages more engagement thus creating academic networks with the student services professionals.

Hu’s 2011 study contradicted the Saenz et al. (2011) study in that academic was not a predictor of persistence. Hu used data from two rounds of student surveys from 832 participants in the Washington State Achievers (WSA) program. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between student engagements in activities with the probability of persisting in college. Hu found that students with high levels of academic engagement persisted at a lower rate than students engaged at a middle level, 80.7% and 83.7% respectively. However, students with high levels of engagement in social activities had a persistence rate of 95.6%. Hu’s study was conducted with students attending four-year colleges so there are some questions regarding the importance of social engagement at four-year colleges compared to community colleges. It is possible that social engagement is more important and necessary at four-year colleges and through social engagement, academic engagement is developed. Kuh (1991, 2009) believed that students needed engagement to feel connected to the college and persist. Though not addressed in Hu’s study, Kuh’s et al. (1991), focused on the college’s role in providing the opportunities for students to be engaged. Thus, the quality and accessibility of services might also have an impact on the student’s ability to be engage academically.

In another study Lester, Leonard and Mathias (2013) examined the importance of social and academic engagement for transfer students. Lester et al. interviewed 31 community college students who transferred to George Mason University. The study focused on how transfer students engage academically and socially at a four-year college and whether
their pattern of engagement influenced their sense of belonging. The results showed that academic engagement was central to the success of community college students who transferred to the George Mason University whereas social engagement was not. Social engagement was related more to the social connections from home with family and their hometown community instead of college life.

Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie and Gonyea’s 2008 study provided earlier evidence that academic based activities are positively related to academic outcomes. Kuh et al. examined the relationship between key student behaviors and the institutional services that are connected to student success. Kuh et al. evaluated the student records from 18 different types of colleges and universities to see if there were links between student engagement and two key outcomes of college: academic persistence and academic achievement. These colleges and universities were selected based upon having administered the National survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). They sought to determine whether engagement during the first year of college had an impact on first-year grades and retention and if engagement had a different outcome for different student populations like students of color. The results of the study found that student engagement in educational activities was positively related to academic outcomes which was reflected by first-year grades and persistence between the first and second year term. Student’s demographic characteristics, pre-college experiences, and prior academic achievements accounted for 29% of the variance in first-year grades. However, student engagement accounted for an additional 13% of the variance for first-year GPA. Additionally, Kuh et al. found that engagement also influenced second-year persistence particularly for lower ability students and students of color. The results showed that for 72% of this student population there was 25% increase in persistence.
This chapter provided a summary of three theoretical frame works of retention and persistence supported by current empirical studies. As such, Tinto’s (1975) belief that academic and social integration helps students feel connected to the campus, which could lead to higher retention and persistence, was reviewed and supported by current studies. In addition, Astin’s (1984) belief that involvement is important for the retention and persistence of college students was explored. He believed that students that are actively involved on their college campus are more likely to persist. Kuh et al., 1991 added that engagement was another factor that would assist in the persistence of students. His theory focused on colleges being responsible for creating opportunities for students to be engaged. Furthermore, he believed that engagement causes the student to feel connected to the college creating a feeling and sense of belonging. All three theories provide a strong base for the importance of helping students feel connected to a college. It is believed that academic advising can provide an opportunity for these three theories to be put into action by the interaction of an academic advisor with a student. While some elements of these theories may play out differently at a community college, academic advising might be a great solution to the retention and persistence problem of students at community colleges; particularly African American and Latinx students.

Chapter Three, will provide a summary of the history of community colleges. It will also provide a review of the success of African American and Latinx students at community colleges. In addition, the history of academic advising will be reviewed and discussed in relation to its’ effectiveness in retaining students. Lastly, a summary of the predictors of persistence and retention will be reviewed.
CHAPTER 3
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

African Americans and Latinx attend community colleges at disproportionate rates, yet have the lowest retention rates of all students (Juszkiewiez, 2015). As such, community colleges have become the gateway to higher education for African Americans and Latinx, yet many are underprepared and face obstacles achieving success (Juszkiewicz, 2015). The success of African American and Latinx students at community colleges is important, considering the rapid growth and changes to our country’s racial and ethnic demographics, the current level of poverty experience by these two populations, and the social ramifications of an uneducated population.

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of academic advising on the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students at community colleges. Whereas the social and academic integration of students has been shown to be effective in improving the persistence and retention of students (Karp, Hugus, & O’Gara, 2010), campus resources such as academic advising can provide elements of social and academic integration thus helping African American and Latinx students integrate.

This chapter provides a review of the literature that serves as the foundation for this study, guided by the research questions. Rowley and Slack define a literature review as “a summary of a subject field that supports the identification of specific research questions” (p.31). To establish the foundation of this literature review, empirical studies and national reports were gathered from databases such as the Education Resources Information Center (ERICO), ProQuest, Google Scholar, and related books. The following terms and words were used in various combinations to find the studies and books related: community college,
junior college, two-year college, students of color, African American students, African American males, Latino(a), Latinx, Hispanic, Latinx males, academic advising, retention, persistence, history of advising, history of community colleges, students of color at community colleges, academic predictors, poverty and higher education, civic mindedness, norm schools. To assure that all studies and reports were current, searches were limited, with some exceptions, to publications between 2007 and 2017. Some exceptions were made when reviewing historical areas that needed an historical perspective and when areas had a limited amount of publications needed to support the research questions and hypotheses.

A summary of the history, purpose, and demographics of community colleges is provided and serves to situate the problem that confronts African American and Latinx students regarding retention within a broader context. The literature review will also discuss the experiences, enrollment patterns, and success rates of African American and Latinx students at community colleges. In addition, a review of the history of academic advising will be presented along with a discussion of the effectiveness of advising as a retention strategy. The chapter will conclude with a review of literature that examines strategies related to the predictors of persistence and retention of students.

Community Colleges

Community colleges have evolved out of the political, social and economic struggles of various periods. The social issues and struggles facing community colleges today chart a new direction for community colleges. Their survival has been due to their ability to adjust and meet the needs of their communities. However, with the large number of students of color attending community colleges and the low success rates of such students, the history
and origins of community colleges becomes important in understanding the role community colleges play in educating students of color.

**History of Community Colleges**

The origins of community colleges started with normal schools that predated high schools as institutions of secondary education (Beach, 2012; Jurgens, 2010; Ogren, 1995; Wright, 1930). In fact, normal schools were created during the early 1800s to educate teachers for public primary schools, though few students went on to pursue a career in teaching (Beach, 2012; Jurgens, 2010; Ogren, 1995; Wright, 1930). Many students saw normal schools as institutions of higher education and a vehicle for social mobility (Beach, 2012; Jurgens, 2010; Ogren, 1995; Wright, 1930). From this focus, normal schools became known as the “people’s college” (Beach, 2012 p.4) because they offered paths into higher education for many Americans who would not have been able to attend college (Jurgens, 2010; Ogren, 1995; Wright, 1930). Therefore, it was through the educational reform of normal schools that junior colleges were created (Beach, 2012; Jurgens, 2010; Ogren, 1995; Wright, 1930).

As early as the mid-1880s, Henry Tappan, president of the University of Michigan; William Mitchell, a University of Georgia trustee; and William Folwell, president of the University of Minnesota, developed the original proposals for community colleges (Beach, 2010; Jurgens, 2010; Russo, 2009). All believed that lower-division preparation in universities was an unnecessary burden for universities, and kept universities from reaching their full potential (Beach, 2012; Cohen & Brawer, 2013; Jurgens, 2010; Russo, 2009). Likewise, William Rainey Harper at the University of Chicago, David Starr Jordan of Stanford, and Edmond James of the University of Illinois presented a modification to the
American educational system to reflect a European model, making universities responsible for higher level scholarship and junior colleges responsible for providing vocational and technical training (Kintzer & Bryant, 1998; Witt, Wattenbarger, Gollattscheck & Suppiger, 1994).

In the early 1900s, the University of California, Berkely (UCB), established a program that encouraged high schools to offer college-level classes (Jurgens, 2010). Students were able to earn up to 45 units while in high school and earn junior certificates, the precursor to the associate’s degree, counting as the first two years at Berkely (Jurgens, 2010; Beach, 2012). With the growth of high school graduates in the early 1900’s, junior colleges eventually became the answer for many high school graduates seeking a postsecondary education (Beach, 2012; Cohen & Brawer, 2013; Jurgens, 2010; Russo, 2009). As such, the concept of a junior college evolved further from a university branch system that offered lower-division work at either a high school, university or separate facility (Beach, 2012; Cohen & Brawer, 2013). The first public junior college was Joliet Junior College in Illinois; created in 1901 as a part of the Joliet public high school with a fifth and sixth year of courses added to the high school curriculum (Beach, 2012; Jurgens, 2010; Wattenbarger & Witt 1995). William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago and J. Stanley Brown, principal of Joliet High School are credited for the creation of Joliet Junior College; however, Harper is responsible for creating the term junior college (Beach, 2012).

The earliest junior colleges focused primarily on a liberal arts education with the ideal of students transferring to 4-year universities (Beach, 2012; Jurgens, 2010). Junior colleges were regarded as an extension of high schools; yet, were part collegiate, part vocational, and part terminal (Jurgens, 2010). In 1947, the Truman Commission Report suggested the title
Community College because it held that junior colleges should have a broader comprehensive mission that addressed the needs of the surrounding community (Jurgens, 2010; Russo, 2009). The Truman Commission Report purported that junior colleges have the responsibility to address the crisis of unemployed youth by evaluating the employment needs and opportunities within the local communities and then offer semiprofessional programs (Beach, 2012). During the 1950s and 1960s, the term junior college applied to lower-division private universities and the title two-year college was related to colleges that were supported by churches or independent origins (Cohen & Brawer, 2013). By the 1970s, the term community college began to apply to both sectors (Cohen & Brawer, 2013).

Community colleges experienced major growth from 1970 to 1980 and throughout the 1990s; there were nearly 5.5 million students by the end of the 1990s (NCES Digest, 2001, 2006). Between 1965 and 1996, community colleges experienced a 369% growth (Cohen & Brawer, 2013). Much of the growth was a result of social and cultural movements like World War II baby boomers, equal access to colleges for individuals of color during the 1960s, and the availability of financial aid and the G.I Bill (Cohen & Brawer, 2013). Furthermore, the growth of enrollment at community colleges has also been influenced by the participation of older students, an increase in part-time attendance, the reclassification of institutions, the redefinition of students and courses, and the influx of underprepared students, women, and individuals of color (Cohen & Brawer, 2013).

**Demographics of Community Colleges**

The demographics of community colleges tend to reflect the communities that surrounds them. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) reported in their 2016 fast facts that there are 982 public community colleges, 90 independent and 36
Tribal community colleges. The demographics of students by credit hours is as follows: 49% of the students were white, 22% were Latinx, 14% were African American, 6% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% were Native American, 3% were two or more races, 4% other/unknown, and 1% Nonresident Alien (AACC, 2016). Fifty-seven percent of today’s community colleges students are women with 43% men and the average age is 28 (AACC, 2016). Moreover, 36% of today’s community college students are first-generation, 17% are single parents, 7% Non-U.S. citizens, 4% are Veterans and 12% of are students with disabilities (AACC, 2016). Community colleges are an important part of our country’s educational system considering that 45% of all 2014 fall U.S. undergraduates attended a community college and 41% were first-time freshman (AACC, 2016).

**Students of Color at Community Colleges**

Community colleges have the largest population of students of color compared to four year colleges and universities (Ma & Baum, 2016; Shapiro et al., 2017; AACC, 2016). Therefore, it is important to understand the experiences of students of color at community colleges. The retention and persistence rates of students of color at community colleges are among the lowest of all students (AACC, 2016). However, there is evidence that retention services such as tutoring, advising, and orientation can have a great impact on men of color (Museus & Ravello, 2010). Thus, more research is needed to examine strategies that will assist all students of color in completing their educational goals (AACC, 2016; Mangan, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2017).

**African American students.** In 2014, 44% of African American students were enrolled in public community colleges (Ma & Baum, 2016). In addition, African American students were reported to be more engaged, yet have the lowest retention and persistence rate
of all students at community colleges (Greene, Marti, & McClenny, 2008; Shapir et al., 2017). Furthermore, Sandoval-Lucero, Maes and Klingsmith (2014) found that African American students reported that relationships with faculty, family support and campus engagement and support was important to their success.

**Latinx students.** Studies have shown that several factors are important for the enrollment of Latinx students at community colleges. Because of the importance of family and the responsibility of helping to support family, factors such as accessibility, affordability, and a support system are important and make community colleges ideal for Latinx students (Chacon, 2013; Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2014; Saenz, Bukoski, Lu & Rodrigues, 2013). Latinx students at community colleges tend to come from lower-income families with 80% applying for aid, 63% receiving some form of aid or loans and 39% receiving Pell Grants (Chacon, 2013; Saenz et al. 2013). Saenz et al. (2013) also found that Latinx students selected community college because of the vocational programs that allows them to enter the work force at a faster rate and the ability to take classes part-time, which allows them to work while in school.

Studies have shown that various factors at community colleges are effective in assisting Latinx students adjust to college. Hagedorn, Chi, Cepeda, and Mclain (2007) found that the representation of Latinx faculty on community college campuses has an impact on the success of Latinx students. However, other studies showed that Latinx students’ sense of belonging was influenced by academic and social experiences with individuals with diverse perspectives (Lucero et al., 2014; Strahorn, 2008b). The importance of ethnic representation among faculty and staff may have more of a mentoring role; however, both studies
demonstrate the need for more empirical research regarding the success of Latinx students in higher education.

Mangan (2014) found that though African American and Latinx male students enter community colleges with greater determination than their white peers, white males are six times more likely to graduate in three years with either a degree or certificate. Furthermore, a report, ‘Aspirations to Achievement: Men of Color and Community College’ showed that among the low success rates of males of color, African American males participated in more student success services than Latinx, yet had the lowest success rate (Mangan, 2014). Moreover, Mangan found that though minority males enter community college with the highest level of aspiration, a greater amount entered with weak academic skills. However, the report did not indicate that male students of color lacked the ability to do college-level work. What was stressed in the report is that many male students of color lacked the educational experiences needed to maximize their capabilities. However, it was noted that many males of color fail due to the fear of fulfilling negative stereotypes.

**African American men.** There is a need for more research on African American students at community colleges. However, there is a growing body of research focused on African American males which have the lowest retention and persistence rate of all students in higher education and the lowest male to female completion ratio of all groups (AACC, 2016; Mangan, 2014; Cuyjet, 2006; Shapiro et al., 2017). African American men at community colleges tend to be older, married with dependents, enrolled part-time, and have lower degree expectation (Wood, Palmer & Harris, 2015). In addition, African American men have earned 5% fewer baccalaureate degrees since 1990, yet are more engaged than all other groups (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2014).
The high level of engagement of African American men could possibly be fueled by their preoccupation with a desire to achieve, as they tend to see education as a way to advance socially (Perrakis, 2008). There is a great need to understand this mismatch of high engagement of African American men at community colleges with such low performance. However, the low performance of African American men at community colleges could also be attributed to the level of preparation, as African American men tend to be underprepared academically (Wood, Palmer & Harris, 2015). Furthermore, some studies looked at the challenges African American men may face measuring up to the dominant culture’s ideal of masculinity, thereby facing feelings of failure and worthlessness, which could lead to withdrawing and rejecting higher education (Ellis, 2002).

African American males face many challenges at community colleges (Bush & Bush, 2010; Perrakis, 2008; Strayhorn, 2008a; Wood & Williams, 2013). As such, they have shown to have the lowest level of academic and social integration, which might be a contributing factor in their low retention and persistence rates (Bush & Bush, 2013; Wood & Williams, 2013). African American male students at community colleges tend to enroll part-time and part-time enrollment prevents the full incorporation into academic and social aspects of college, part-time students also tend to have external obligations competing for their time (Wood & Williams, 2013). However, social integration was found to be a negative predictor of African American males’ satisfaction at community colleges (Bush & Bush, 2010; Strayhorn, 2012; Sutherland, 2011). African American men at community colleges reported that interaction with their African American peers was more of distraction than a tool of support unless their peers were supportive of their pursuit of higher education and were themselves dedicated to a goal of higher education (Bush & Bush 2010). Other studies
suggested that African American men who interacted with a diverse peer group reported a higher level of a sense of belonging (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2014; Strayhorn, 2012; Wood, Palmer, & Harris, 2015). Though social integration was found to be a negative predictor of satisfaction for African American male students (Bush & Bush, 2010; Strayhorn, 2012; Sutherland, 2011), participation in non-varsity and intramural sports was a positive predictor of first-year persistence for African American males at community colleges (Wood & Palmer, 2013; Wood & Williams, 2013). Other studies have shown that satisfaction was a significant positive predictor of persistence among African American men at community colleges (Mason, 1998; Strayhorn, 2012; Wood & Vasquez Urias, 2012). Faculty-student interactions was found to benefit African American men at community colleges though they are less likely to have contact with faculty (Bush & Bush, 2010; Perrakis, 2008; Wood & Williams, 2013). However, Wood, (2010) reported that African American men at community colleges felt that faculty avoided them. In addition, African American men are shown to have lower levels of perceived institutional support and are unaware of the services on campus (Bush & Bush, 2010; Wood & Hilton, 2012).

**Latinx men.** Overall, Latinx men have the second lowest retention and persistence rate of all students (AACC, 2016; Mangan, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2017). However, research regarding the success of Latinx men at community colleges is limited. The few studies that exist have found that Latinx men at community colleges struggle with the masculine identity of their culture, which has an impact on their retention and persistence at community colleges (Harper & Harris, 2010; Saenz et al., 2013). Saenz et al. (2013) demonstrated that the gender role of Latinx men, referred to as machismo, causes Latinx men to be emotionally rigid and exhibit fear and pride that prevents them from seeking help. Such behavior tends to cause
Latinx men to withdraw from school. Furthermore, Saenz’s et al. findings are supported by additional studies that found that men in general are less likely to ask for help when needed and are influenced by the social construct of masculinity (Ellis, 2002; Perrakis, 2008; Torres, Solberg, & Carlstrom, 2002).

Latinx men tend to avoid failure thus developing a fear of failure, which can lead to dropping out of college to run from their fears (Saenz et al., 2013). Studies regarding the impact of the culturally assigned role of Latinx male on college completion is limited and in need of more research given the growing amount of Latinx students enrolling at community colleges (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2014). Saenz et al. suggest that for many Latinx males the concept of the machismo male is linked to the lack of success for Latinx men at community colleges. Latinx men are largely enrolled part-time at community colleges (Wood, Palmer & Harris, 2015). Vasquez’s (2012) study found that Latinx men who enrolled part-time enjoyed a higher graduation rate. However, other studies have shown that the highest graduation rate for Latinx men were at colleges with higher levels of full-time enrollment (Wood, Palmer & Harris, 2015).

Among students of color, African American and Latinx males have the lowest enrollment, retention and persistence rates of all students at community colleges (AACC, 2016; Mangan, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2017). African American and Latinx males face an extreme amount of barriers to make it to and through college. Many African American and Latinx males face economic hardships, cultural norms and values that challenge their desire to complete a college degree (Perrakis, 2008; Saenz et al., 2013; Strayhorn, 2008b). Additional research is needed to address the challenges that African American and Latinx males face at community colleges.
Academic Advising

History of Advising

Academic advising has been a part of college campuses for over one century emerging from the belief that college faculty and administrators were seen as sub parents (Gillispie, 2003; Harborth, 2015; White, 2015a). The function of advising originated as a clerical function that was a part of the student registration process of each preceding semester (White, 2015a). However, because of the growth of student enrollment and the often changes in majors, colleges soon realized the importance of students needing more of a focused one-on-one assistance with understanding electives within the curriculum (White, 2015a).

Academic advising has existed within Higher Education since 1841. Kramer (1995) traced the role of faculty advisors to Kenyon College where students were required to select a faculty member as an advisor creating the first formalization of an academic advising system. The history of academic advising is reference to the colonial colleges where college presidents and then faculty members assisted students with academic and personal issues and concerns (Gordon, 2004). Gordon (2004) identified the first recognition of advising with Johns Hopkins University in 1877 with the establishment of faculty advisors. In 1889, a board of freshmen advisors was established at Harvard to assist students with the selection of elective curriculum and guidance (Rudolph, 1962). A closer examination of the history of academic advising on a college campus is shared through Gordon’s review of the evolution of academic advising at Ohio State University. Ohio State University’s history of academic advising mirrors the same historical development of academic advising on college campuses during the same time period but gives a more descriptive analysis and understanding of the
why and how advising was created and evolved to what is common on most college campuses today.

At Ohio State University, it was recorded that in 1873 the first college president met with the freshmen class every Friday after chapel to help orient students to the college (Gordon, 2004). Today, our current advising system, on most college campuses, started with the need for a representative of the college to meet with and assist students in adapting to not only the educational components of the college, but also the social components. Simple tasks such as changing a major were assigned to a college representative with the hope to retain students and provide a seamless process. In 1928, Ohio State took actions to assist freshmen students by establishing a Junior Dean system, assigning a junior dean to each undergraduate college (Gordon). This was due to the realization that the first two years of college were such a developmental period in a college student’s life, so more supervision was needed during the Freshmen and Sophomore years. The junior dean was to be students’ chief advisors in all university matters (Gordon). As such, students were required to inform the dean of their major if they wanted to change their major. Other populations were also given special attention and services. In the 1920s Ohio State began to address the needs of older adult students with the first reference of advising needs for adult learners. Students that were undecided about their majors were not acknowledged or provided assistance until 1940 at Ohio State.

In the early 1960s, the growth in the college student population caused some schools to create the University College to develop and promote excellence during the freshmen and sophomore years (Murphy, 1966). The development of the University College was the result of further growth and development of the Junior Dean system created in 1928. The
University College at Ohio State was responsible for academic advising and orientation of new students (Gordon, 2004). In the 1940s, the evolution of professional advisors began to take place on the campus of Ohio State with the hiring of counselors (Gordon, 2004). In 1960, the College of Electrical Engineering was the first department to hire a full-time academic advisor assign specifically to that department. In the 1970s, academic counselor, academic advisor and coordinator of academic advising became the standard titles across the campus of Ohio State.

**Advising Theories**

The first mentioning of academic advising was prescriptive in theory where faculty members would translate college catalogues to assist students in the selection of courses leading to graduation (Gordon, 2004; Harrison 2009). Faculty members focused not only on the development of intellectual enlightenment through classical curriculum, but also on the moral and ethical development of the whole student (Gillispie, 2003). This method of academic advising continued until the 1960 when the first publication of student theories started with the creation of developmental theory as the foundation for the earliest concepts of academic advising (Gordon, 2004; Harrison, 2009; Raushi 1993). Development advising is one of the most popular advising model created from developmental theories. This model is rooted in educational objectives that center on the complete wholeness and wellbeing of students that also incorporates student diversity (Harrison, 2009; Raushi, 1993). Developmental theory was based on the understanding of the developmental evolution that students must master in becoming educated adults (Harrison, 2009). Student development theories focused on the belief that students should become sufficient in balancing their emotions, establishing their identity, identifying purpose and developing integrity all within
the process of earning their college degree (Harrison). Developmental advising has been the foundation for the practical implementation of academic advising and has been the theory upon which the foundation of an abundance of research regarding academic advising (Grites & Gordon, 2000; King, 2005; Kohle & Fitzpatrick, 2015; Ugur, 2015). Though prescriptive advising existed at the inception of academic advising, developmental advising became the new face of advising as the need for professional advisors grew due to high enrollment at colleges and universities. White (2015a) found in his research that it was suggested that academic advising should come from a developmental approach upon which a new era of academic advising was created with developmental advising becoming the backdrop of the field of advising.

As the field of advising continued to change, the establishment of developmental advising was replaced with a modern belief and theory that students are responsible for their own success and survival in college (Earl, 1987). Yet, this belief does not bring about the same desired outcome of retention and persistence of college freshmen. In 2003, the freshmen to sophomore dropout rate was 32.7% with cross-sections of the entire freshmen class represented demonstrating that the dropout rate was not totally related to students being underprepared. Various advising theories address this problem of retention using different strategies (Earl). Students are not well oriented to adult responsibilities so other advising theories were needed to help provide guidance. One of the newer theories since developmental theory is the intrusive advising model. Intrusive advising is a method centered on an action-orientation that has the advisor involved with the student at a deeper level where the advisor works to motivate the student to seek help when having difficulties (Earl, 1987). Though some colleges are reluctant to use the term intrusive, this model requires advisors to
do more probing into the lives of students with the intent to find the problems before they become a problem and then provide directions to find resources on campus to help. Many colleges now refer to intrusive advising as proactive advising still with the same focus (Barron & Powell, 2014). Museus and Ravello’s 2010 study identified proactive advising as an effective strategy to increase the retention and persistence of African American students.

Though advising originated more as a prescriptive model, today it has been revised placing the advisor as the expert on the topic of student success, being able to assess the needs of students and provide direction regarding the structure of academic programs (Donaldson, McKinney, Lee & Pino, 2016; Earl, 1987; Schneider, Sasso, Puchner, 2017). Today prescriptive advising is more about advisors being knowledgeable regarding college programs and student services and for students to be able to trust that advisors are the ultimate source of knowledge as Junior Deans where at Ohio State (Gordon 2004). In reality, a successful advising system might consist of Intrusive advising, prescriptive and development advising which provides the awareness of student development in relationship to a student’s total needs (Sander & Killian, 2017).

The theoretical framework of intrusive advising is founded on three hypotheses from research on advising. First, professional advisors should be trained to recognize freshmen students that are in need of assistance. Second, studies have shown that students do respond to direct contact when challenges regarding their academic life are identified with resources offered to help. Third, students with deficiencies can be taught how to be successful through freshmen year and throughout their senior year (Earl, 1987; Garing, 1993; Schneider et al., 2017). There are distinct advantages of incorporating an intrusive advising model. Intrusive advising establishes direct contact with students providing opportunities for
advisors to address academic challenges while the student is present and motivated to receive assistance (Donaldson et al., 2016; Earl, 1987). This is the direct result of the relationship built between the student and advisor. Intrusive advising also puts students in a place where they are required to do academic planning while being self-motivated. The structured process of intrusive advising is a benefit of intrusive advising as the concept of contrast models puts the student at the center of the advising process, making the student an active participant (Earl, 1987; Donaldson et al., 2016; Garing, 1993; Schneider et al., 2017).

Other advising models have shown to be effective with different populations and between genders. Appreciative advising has been reported to be more effective for men as it is designed to convey a genuine desire to help, which tends to be needed for men in higher education (Forche, 2009). Appreciative advising requires advisors to go against social norms and not see life as a series of challenges but to see life as a series of opportunities (Bloom, Hutson & He, 2008). Appreciative advising is constructed of six steps: Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver and Don’t Settle (Bloom et al., 2008). Disarming requires advisors to establish a bond with students that conveys a genuine sense of care for the student (Bloom et al., 2008). This is established through the engagement of short talks, and by the advisor presenting oneself as a coach or mentor. The Discover phase requires advisors to ask a series of open-ended questions to learn more about the student’s past academic successes (Bloom et al., 2008). The Dream phase requires the advisor to ask questions regarding the students’ dreams and aspirations ((Bloom et al., 2008). The Design phase is when the student works collaboratively with the advisor to create a plan of solid goals and how they will be measured. The final step of Don’t Settle, focuses on continuous improvement as the advisor reminds the student that they should seek to continue to improve.
The Engagement model for advising clarifies the individual’s roles and responsibilities for the student and the advisor, creating a well-established mentor/mentee relationship with clear expectations for both (Yarbrough, 2002). Yarbrough provided this perspective of engagement theory in relation to the quality of an academic advising program. The engagement advising model sees the advisor as the primary academic advisor in assisting the student. This focus is the same as what was expected of junior deans at Ohio State during the first creation of the advising structure at Ohio State University. In this process the advisor functions from five primary beliefs regarding students:

- The student was admitted to the college and meet the required academic standards.
- The student was introduced to the college catalog.
- The student has a personal sense of his/her academic strengths and weakness.
- The student has explored degree options.
- The student has identified personal priorities regarding academic and nonacademic success. (Yarbrough, 2002 p.64)

These assumptions may not be appropriated for students attending community colleges due to their open-door policy and general admissions structure. However, engagement theory believes that students should be able to address these areas with the advisor and that the advisor should be aware of these areas regarding students. The belief is that the relationship between the advisor and student will be instrumental in the successful completion of academic progress. This is done through the four primary steps taken to engage the student in a supportive learning process. The four steps are:

- Identify the assumptions that students might bring to the learning process.
• Assist the student in clarifying assumptions that are unclear.
• Clarify personal, professional, and educational goals of the student.
• Guide the student as they navigate through their educational curriculum.

(Yarbrough, 2002).

These areas have to be addressed before the advisor and student can further the mentoring relationship. The engagement theory sees the advisor as an experienced tutor/mentor that works to provide specific insight and expertise for the university and professional community (Yarbrough).

**Impact of Advising**

The importance of academic advising and the use of academic advisors was made evident from the beginning when college presidents and deans where assigned to assist students due to the complexity of college curriculum back in 1906 (White, 2015b; Gordon, 2004). The impact of academic advising is seen in the success of students. The ability of academic advisors to reach all students enrolled at a college is unique and identifies academic advising as the one endeavor in higher education that is developed in such a way and is known to have a great impact on retention and persistence (Drake, 2011; Harrison, 2009; Kim & Feldman, 2011; White, 2015b). The relationship between the academic advisor and student is developed so that the student is empowered to work alongside the advisor to create and develop their own education path to their chosen career (Harrison, 2009; White, 2015b). Wood (2012) found that students who experienced informal or social interaction with faculty members had 283% greater odds of persisting and completing their educational goals. Therefore, colleges that use faculty-advising models could expect to have higher persistence rates.
Research regarding the impact of academic advising is growing in various pockets of higher education. Wood (2012) found that students who experienced informal or social interaction with faculty members had 283% greater odds of persisting and completing their educational goals. Furthermore, Wood and Williams (2013) found that interaction and conversation about academic matters with faculty members outside of class had a positive effect on first-year persistence for African American males. Wood and Williams’ study used data from the Education Longitudinal Study (ELS: 2002/2006) a nationally representative survey of 16,200 students tracking them from high school, college, and then work (2013). The study used a two-stage research design that focused on the dependent variable, student persistence. The independent variables were background, social, academic and environmental. The results of the study showed that as interaction with faculty increased from never, sometimes, or often, the odds of persistence grew by 89% for African American males. Meeting with an academic advisor raised persistence by 39.5%.

There is a growing amount of empirical studies that address factors that influence the retention and persistence of African American males (Bush & Bush, 2010; Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2014; Sandoval-Lucero, Maes, Klingsmith, 2014; Perrakis, 2008; Wood, 2012; Wood and Williams, 2013). Studies such as Wood and Williams (2013) and Wood, Palmer and Harris (2015) have shown that African American males benefit greatly from the interaction with faculty and academic advisors. Hausmann, Ye, Schofield and Woods’ 2009 study identified sense of belonging as a significant predictor of persistence for both African American and white first-year students. These studies are important considering that African American males have the lowest retention and persistence rates of all students (AACC, 2016; Mangan, 2014; Cuyjet, 2006; Shapiro et al., 2017). Latinx
males have the second lowest retention and persistence rates of all students (AACC, 2016; Mangan, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2017). Chacon (2013) and Saenz et al. (2013) point to the importance of faculty and academic advisors in their role of retaining Latinx males. However, there is a need for more research regarding Latinx men in higher education.

In the early years Clark presented studies (1960, 1980) that sought to prove that academic advisors served the role of persuading student of color and underprepared students to select less challenging studies known as the ‘cooling out’ of such students. However, Bahr (2008) found that academic advising had the exact opposite role for underprepared students. Underprepared students benefited more from academic advisors than college-ready students did (Bahr, 2008). Kot (2014) found that advising done by professional advisors through a centralized advising center was effective in producing higher GPAs. Furthermore, Kot found that students that met with an academic advisor were more likely to return in the second year. Swecker, Fifolt and Searby (2013) found that the number of advising sessions had a direct impact on student retention with a possible 13% increase in retention per-session for first-generation students.

Academic advisors can function to help students transition into the culture of the campus and the college experience. Academic advising that is intentional and reaches out to students has been shown to be related to a 60% retention result (Schwebel, Walburn, Klyce & Jerrolds, 2012). Schwebel et al. conducted a randomized 4-year longitudinal study of 501 first-year students at the University of Alabama to determine the effect of advising outreach on student retention. Students in the study were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: outreach or no outreach. Students assigned to outreach received extra reminders regarding advising for the fall and spring semester and were aggressively pursued to come in and enroll
for the next semester. Students assigned to no outreach just received the general information regarding the availability of advisors, but no aggressive outreach was included. Advising outreach was positively related to retention and number of advising appointments, but the number of appointments was not related to retention. The implication of this study is that intrusive advising, demonstrated through actively pursuing students by reaching out to them, is an effective retention strategy. However, how often an advisor reached out is not as important as the establishment of the relationship coming from the advisor. Community colleges that desire to create a more effective advising model might want to consider an intrusive advising model. However, Swecker, Fifolt and Searby (2013) using a multiple logistic regression technique to determine the relationship between the number of advising sessions and retention of 363 first-generation students found that there was a direct relation between the number of advisor sessions and retention of students. The results of the study revealed that for every meeting with an advisor, a student’s chance of being retained increased by 13% (Swecker et al., 2013).

**Persistence and Retention**

Numerous studies have looked at the academic skills students bring to the classroom, parents level of education and psychosocial factors as predictors of student success. (Wolff, Kustanowitz & Ashkenazi, 2014; Porchea, Allen, Robbins, & Phelps, 2010; Arbona & Nora, 2007). For example, Wolff et al. evaluated 105 community college students enrolled in a 16-week environmental biology course and found that math proficiency was directly linked to successful course completion. In addition, other factors such as employment and mode of delivery were proven to be effective predictors of course completion (Wolff et al., 2014). Furthermore, this study found that students that were employed under 12 hours a week had a
75% completion rate and that student who attempted the course online where less likely to successfully complete. However, Porshea et al. found that students who planned to work less were more likely to transfer from a community college without obtaining a degree. Nevertheless, full-time enrollment, higher degree aspirations along with working fewer work hours were predictive of students obtaining a degree (Porshea et al., 2010). Other studies, such as Arbona and Nora’s 2007 research examined the level of education of parents, student’s educational expectations, gender, and plans to attend college immediately following high school, as factors that affect college degree completion. Arbona and Nora found that these were strong predictors of degree attainment for Latinx students.

Nonacademic factors have shown to be effective in predicting the success rate of community college students (Karp, 2016). Moreover, Farrington et al. (2012) and Michalski (2014) asserted that both cognitive and non-cognitive skills influence college success. However, Michalski found that the top four reasons students fail to persist were nonacademic reasons related to time-schedule, personal, other job-work, and family. Farrington et al. conducted a summary of hundreds of studies and developed a non-cognitive framework. The summary of their review found five general categories related to academic success:

- Academic behavior
- Academic perseverance
- Social skills
- Learning strategies
- Academic mindset.

Academic behavior is identified as being a good student such as class attendance, completion of assignments and class participation (Farrington et al., 2012). This area, while fairly new in
the literature, was found to be a reoccurring theme. Academic perseverance is being able to remain focus and engaged even with opposition (Farrington et al.). Lee, Flores, Navano and Munoz (2015) conducted a study that tested academic persistence among White and Latinx engineering students and found that students with high persistence intentions were more likely to persist, however, no difference was found between Latinx and White students. Academic perseverance can be referred to as persistence on a task or working towards an extensive goal, also known as “grit” (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). There are other related concepts to academic perseverance such as tenacity, self-control, and delayed gratification, all defined in different ways (Farrington et al., 2012). Dweck, Walton, Cohen (2011) defined academic tenacity to include the academic mindsets, which encourage or prevents efforts towards persistence, academic skills, which support student persistence in addition to hard work and the ability to follow through with work, learning strategies that makes students’ efforts even more effective, and distinctive personality traits that shape and develop behaviors.

Notably, the results of Strayhorn’s (2014) study provides evidence of the importance of grit in predicting academic success. Strayhorn conducted a study to determine the impact of grit in predicting grades for Black males attending a predominantly White institution. The results showed that grit was positively related to college grades for Black males and when combined with background traits, such as academic factors like high school GPA and ACT scores, grit explained 24% of the variance in Black males’ college grades. Overall, grit alone provided predictive validity above traditional measures of academic success such as high school GPA and ACT (Strayhorn, 2014). Similarly, Hagedorn, Chi, Cepeda, and McLain
(2007) found that student aspiration and academic attitude were strong predictors of academic success for Latinx students at community colleges.

Social skills are identified as the ability to interact with peers in meaningful ways (Farrington et al., 2012). In a review of data, Barbatis (2010) concluded four themes were important to social skills:

- Precollege characteristics
- External college support/community influences
- Academic integration
- Social involvements.

Moreover, the data revealed that participants felt that being socially involved and engaged on campus and working with peers and faculty on class projects were beneficial (Barbatis 2010).

Learning strategies is another category related to student success. Learning strategies are methods or tactics used to assist in the process of learning (Farrington et al., 2012). Some studies have demonstrated a strong link between learning strategies and academic performance (Cho & Karp, 2013). Notably, Cho and Karp (2013) found that students who enrolled in student success courses, designed to teach college success strategies, were more likely to earn credits and persist to the second year. Such strategies provide students with tools to leverage academic behaviors allowing them to engage in learning (Farrington et al., 2012). For example, Samuel and Scott (2014) conducted a survey of students attending a Latinx-serving metropolitan community college in Texas and found that students identified mandatory orientation as an institutional practice that helps them stay in school. Orientation provides similar learning strategies as student success classes.
The fifth category that Farrington et al., 2012 identified was academic mindset, which consisted of four sub-sets that contribute to academic success:

- I belong at this institution.
- My abilities grow out of my efforts.
- I can succeed (self-efficacy).
- This work has value.

Farrington et al. noted that academic perseverance and academic behavior can be improved by developing students’ academic mindsets and learning strategies. As such, Kurland and Siegel (2016) measured attachment, self-efficacy, and procrastination of 161 college students enrolled in an Introductory Psychology class and found that self-efficacy moderated the connection between attachment and class grade and overall GPA. Additionally, the results determined that procrastination also moderated between the relationship of attachment anxiety and GPA and attachment avoidance and GPA (Kurland & Siegel, 2016). In a similar manner, Liao, Edlin and Ferdenzi (2014) examined how self-efficacy and motivation influenced student persistence at an urban community college. In their study, self-efficacy was examined regarding self-regulated learning and self-efficacy for academic achievement. As a result, they found that self-regulated learning efficacy and extrinsic motivation exerted influence on persistence/re-enrollment (Liao et al., 2014). However, they found that self-efficacy for academic achievement did not directly predict persistence. Yet, it was determined that academic achievement efficacy did affect persistence indirectly through the mediating effect of extrinsic motivation. These results demonstrated that students today are more motivated by the future earnings and rewards related to a potential college degree (Liao et al., 2014).
The development of students’ academic mindset and learning strategies require a holistic concept, according to Mechur (2016). Thus, Mechur adds to Farrington et al. (2012) framework by reviewing the results of empirical studies that examined persistence among “academically vulnerable” students. Academically vulnerable is defined as students who are, academically underprepared, from underrepresented ethnic groups, low socioeconomic status, and or having parents with low levels of education (Mechur, 2016). Mechur’s review of 128 books, journal articles, and reports lead to four key non-cognitive mechanism responsible for encouraging positive student outcomes:

• Creating social relationships
• Clarifying aspirations
• Enhancing commitment
• Developing college know-how
• Making college life feasible

This review, as with the research of Farrington et al. (2012) found that creating social relationships has a strong impact on student success as it develops a sense of belonging (Mechur, 2016). Beyond these analyses, Karp, Hughes and O’Gara (2010) found that community college students viewed social relationship in conjunction with academics, depending more on the social relationship as a resource to assist in navigating the college experience. The results of this study were substantiated further by Deil-Amen (2011) who found that the combining of both social and academic moments was effective in integrating commuter students into the college. Therefore, students with strong social relationships integrate into their college, which leads to greater persist towards degree completion (Karp et al., 2010).
Clarifying aspirations and enhancing commitment were other nonacademic mechanisms effective in creating student success (Mechur, 2016). Studies have shown that students, particularly community college students, perform well when they understand the purpose of their education (Cox, 2009). Therefore, having clear goals and gaining an understanding of how course work relates to future career goals influence retention (Booth et al., 2013; Luke, Redekop & Burgin, 2015). Services such as academic advising can be instrumental in helping students understand how course work leads to careers, utility, (Visher, Butcher & Cerna, 2010) as well as student success courses (Cho & Karp, 2013). In a related study, Thomas, Wolters, Horn and Kennedy (2014) found that utility value was the only significant predictor of self-reported persistence. Utility value was the average of six items designed to measure an individual’s belief that their college education will be useful in their future care. Thomas et al. conducted a study that used a multiple linear regression to predict self-reported student persistence and logistic regression to predict actual enrollment in the following semester. The study examined campus involvement, faculty mentorship, motivational beliefs, such as self-efficacy, utility value, and sense of belonging as predictors of the academic persistence of African American college students at a large urban university. The results showed that campus involvement, faculty mentorship, self-efficacy, utility value, and sense of belonging combined accounted for 14% of the variance in student persistence. However, utility value alone was the strongest predictor of self-reported student persistence, 29%. The logistic regression, using the same five predictors combined, was 92% successful at distinguishing between students who persisted and those who did not. Self-efficacy was the only significant predictor of students enrolling the following semester. The results
showed that student having a high level of self-efficacy was .26 times less likely to continue than those with low self-efficacy.

Another nonacademic mechanism is developing college know-how. The understanding of how to succeed in college makes navigating college manageable; however, there are many unwritten rules that need to be explain for student to be successful (Karp & Bork, 2012). Karp and Bork attempted to clarify the role of the community college student, thus establishing its connection to what it is like to be a successful community college student. Their qualitative study conducted at three community colleges was built upon role theory (Karp & Bork, 2012). Role theory purposes that individuals play roles throughout their lives and as they grow and mature, they take on new roles (Turner, 1990). Karp and Bork supposed that students needed to be taught what this role is because not all the rules for educational roles are written. The study revealed that community college students are expected to be self-aware and that the roles of community college students are fluid as there are many ways to success. In addition to these two results, Karp and Bork also revealed four areas that make up the community college student role. To be a successful community college student, students should engage in new academic habits or methods to support their academic success. Moreover, they must be able to demonstrate cultural know-how and interpret the unwritten rules of the institution (Karp & Bork, 2012). Lastly, successful community college students must be able to balance the multiple roles they have in their lives and also engage in self-directed help-seeking behavior (Karp & Bork, 2012).

College know-how is a nonacademic mechanism skill many community college students lack according to Campa (2013). Services design to assist students in understanding these unwritten rules can be effective in helping students develop this non-cognitive skill
(Heller & Marchant, 2015). Heller and Marchant conducted a study that compared psychology students that were given strategies to assist them in studying with students that did not receive the same strategies. Students who received the strategies scored higher on class exams and course grades (Heller & Marchant, 2015). Another study found that first-year seminar students given learning strategies to help them navigate the college environment increased in grades and persistence that extended two years past the course (Karp, Raufman, Eftimious, & Ritze, 2016). Cho and Karp, 2013 provided additional evidence showing the relationship between first-year seminars and student success. Cho and Karp examined the outcome of 23,822 community college students enrolled in first-year seminars and found that 10% more of students enrolled in first-year seminars within the first semester earned college credit and 10% more persisted into the second year compared to students not enrolled in a first-year seminar.

There is also evidence that college know-how is infused by a student’s self-perception and sense of belonging (Mechur, 2016). Yeager and Walton (2011) addressed the importance of students learning how to work through feelings of dislocation, challenge and alienation that prevent them from focusing on their academic task. Other studies have addressed how a sense of belonging can affect persistence. Strayhorn (2008a) found that interactions with people and perspective difference from one’s own had a great influence on Latinx student’s sense of belonging. Similar results were found for Black and white men (Strayhorn, 2008b). Strayhorn (2008b) found that Black and white men that interacted with peers of different ethnic groups and others that hold different interest reported high levels of belonging.

The last nonacademic mechanism found by Mechur (2016) is making college life feasible. Feasibility pertains to not just financial but other issues, such as housing food and
childcare, which can interfere with students’ ability to focus on schooling (Chaplot, Cooper, Jonstone, & Karandjeff, 2015). Michalski (2014) discovered 11 reasons students withdraw from school with the top four nonacademic reasons being: personal issues involving job/work, family, financial, and health matters. Notably, Nakajima, Dembo and Mossler (2012) conducted a study that asked students attending a community college in southern California to complete a survey that assessed their integration into the college, their self-efficacy level, and individual reasons for selecting career and school. Results showed that financial variables such as financial aid and on campus work hours impacted persistence (Nakajima et al., 2012). Furthermore, the study showed that the more hours students worked the less likely a student will persist (Nakajima et al., 2012). Nakajima et al. also found that financial aid was associated with an increase in student persistence. In a related study, Mendoza, Mendez, and Malcom (2009) found that the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP), Pell grants, and Stafford loans combined, were predictors of persistence for students attending community colleges in Oklahoma. Mendoza et al. found that African American and Native American students who used Pell grants were more likely to become 2nd year students than white students using Pell grants. In addition, Booth et al. (2013) found that African American and Latinx students are more likely to withdraw in the absence of financial assistance. However, Chaplot et al. (2015) stress that traditional financial aid such as grants and student loans are not enough considering that low-income students have additional financial needs such as nutrition, transportation, housing and child care which go beyond tuition, fees, and books. In fact, Silva et al. (2015) found that 29.2% of college students who do not have adequate nutrition are more likely to withdraw from courses and not re-enroll for the next semester. Additionally, Silva et al. found that 42.9% of students
who do not have housing are also likely to withdraw from courses and not enroll for the next semester. For these reasons, colleges need to examine ways to assist students, particularly low-income students, by increasing financial support and provide services to assist students with food, housing and childcare (Chaplot et al., 2015). Increasing financial support provides benefits for students and the institution (Chaplot et al., 2015). Making college more feasible can increase student retention and increase credit hours earned which would result in additional revenue for the college (Chaplot et al., 2015). Additional results include reduced cost upon graduation and increase wages over lifetime due to short duration of degree attainment (Chaplot et al., 2015).

**Summary of Review of Literature**

This review of literature started with the history of community colleges by exploring its origins as an extension to high schools, which provided an opportunity for students to better prepare for four-year institutions. The review furthered explained the various groups that viewed community colleges as a place for lower division work, which allowed four-year institutions to focus on higher learning concepts, freeing them from the challenges and burden of lower level curriculum. Additionally, the importance of understanding that community colleges have been the gateway to higher education for many different populations was explored as well as the impact of this truth for African American and Latinx students.

While reviewing the history of community colleges the reasons for the growth of community colleges such as the use of the G.I. bill and the start of federal financial aid were identified. These events eventually made community colleges the gateways to higher education for many students particularly African American and Latinx students. This review
also examined the retention and persistence rates of community colleges identifying African American and Latinx students as having the lowest of all students. This reality pointed to the need for interventions that would assist in the success of these two populations. The focus on the history of academic advising and its importance as a tool for retention and persistence were also emphasized. There are various services on community college campuses that could be effective in retaining African American and Latinx students. Academic advising has been noted to be effective in assisting students in being successfully in college. With the extreme low retention and persistence rates at community colleges, the mandating of mandatory academic advising could prove to be an effective tool to assist students in becoming more integrated and engaged with community colleges.

The following chapter will provide a description of the methodology and the methods used to answer the research questions as well as address the hypotheses posed. Chapter five will report on the finding from the study and chapter six will describe implications of the findings and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology used to address the impact of advising on the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students at a community college located in the Midwest. The influence of advising was determined by comparing the retention and persistence rates of African American and Latinx students who were required to see an advisor with those that self-advised.

African American and Latinx students tend to enroll at community colleges at disproportionately high rates, yet they have the lowest retention and persistence rates of all students (Ma & Baum, 2016; Shapiro, Dundar et al., 2017). Studies have shown that a student’s integration, engagement, and involvement through academic advising can have a positive impact on the retention and persistence of students, particularly for students of color (Bahr, 2008; Kot, 2013; Swecker, Fifolt & Searby, 2013). However, many community colleges do not require students to see an academic advisor, thus students self-advice leaving them to navigate their college experience alone.

This study sought to contribute to existing literature related to the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students at community colleges. A description of the research design, setting and participants, sample size, data collection, instrumentation, research procedure, and data analysis are included in this chapter to provide a clear representation of the methodology of this study.
Research Design

Purpose

This was a quantitative study that used descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics describe or identify characteristics that are common to the complete sample (Mertens, 2014). A Chi-square test was used to determine statistical significance between groups of interest. The study’s purpose was to determine whether African American and Latinx students who were required to see an advisor at community colleges would be retained and persist at a higher rate than African American and Latinx students who had self-advised. Four-year longitudinal student retention and persistence data collected at an urban-serving community college in the Midwest were the major data source.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1- Are there statistically significant differences between retention rates of community college students who receive mandatory advising and community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

2- Are there statistically significant differences between persistence rates of community college students who receive mandatory advising and community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

3- Are there statistically significant differences between retention rates of African American and Latinx community college students who receive mandatory advising and African American and Latinx community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?
4- Are there statistically significant differences between persistence rates of African American and Latinx community college students who receive mandatory advising and African American and Latinx community college students who do not receive mandatory advising?

Hypotheses

The research is based on the following hypotheses concerning African American students and Latinx students at community colleges:

H1: Community college students who receive mandatory advising will persist at a higher rate than community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Kot (2014) found that students who met with an academic advisor had a higher retention rate than those who did not.

H2: Community college students who receive mandatory advising will be retained at a higher rate than community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Barbatis (2010) found that students benefited from being engaged by faculty and staff.

H3: African American and Latinx community college students who receive mandatory advising will persist at a higher rate than African American and Latinx community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Bahr (2008) found that students of color greatly benefited from academic advising.

H4: African American and Latinx community college students who receive mandatory advising will be retained at a higher rate than African American and Latinx community college students who do not receive mandatory advising.
advising. Museus and Ravello’s (2010) study supports the impact of advising on the success of students of color.

H5: Male community college students who receive mandatory advising will persist at a higher rate than male community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Forche (2009) found that men need specialized initiatives to succeed in college.

H6: Male community college students who receive mandatory advising will be retained at a higher rate than male community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Perrakis (2008) found that men need to have a strong connection to the college and advising is noted to assist in connecting students to a college.

H7: African American male community college students who receive mandatory advising will persist at a higher rate than African American male community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Wood and Williams (2013) found that interaction and conversation about academic matters with faculty had a positive effect on persistence of African American males.

H8: African American male community college students who receive mandatory advising will be retained at a higher rate than African American male community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Williams’ (2013) study also supports that academic advising would be effective in the retention of African American males.
H9: Latinx male community college students who receive mandatory advising will persist at a higher rate than Latinx male community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Bahr’s (2007) study showed that advising was beneficial to students who face academic deficiencies.

H10: Latinx male community college students who receive mandatory advising will be retained at a higher rate than Latinx male community college students who do not receive mandatory advising. Bahr’s (2007) supports this hypothesis to as the results of the study showed that academic advising was effective helping all students succeed.

Data Analysis

Study Site

The site for this study was a community college located in an urban community in the Midwest. The college has three campuses with one campus serving as the main campus and one as a technical education center and the third as a satellite campus that provides associate degrees and technical certificates in a rural area. The college serves two county areas with most of its student coming from those counties. The college has 5,514 students enrolled, as of the 2017 spring semester, with 68.4% of the population (3,772) enrolled full-time and 31.6% (1,742) enrolled part-time. In Fall of 2013, the college chose to move to a mandatory advising policy for all degree-seeking students, students seeking to complete an associate degree or certificate, who were under 30 credit hours were required to meet with an academic advisor prior to enrolling. This policy was adapted as a retention strategy with the belief that students who are seen by an advisor are more likely to take the correct courses and persist.
**Instrument**

One data set was developed with two markers for mandatory advising and non-mandatory advising. The first marker set consisted of data collected on students with less than 30 credit hours of course work completed at the community college from Fall 2013 to Fall 2016. These students were required to meet with an academic advisor prior to enrolling each semester until they completed 30 credit hours at the community college. The second marker consisted of student data collected on students with less than 30 credit hours of course work completed at the community college from Fall 2009 to Fall 2010, prior to the community college implemented a mandatory advising policy. Only data from students classified as degree or certificate seeking were used in this study.

Data for this research were provided by the community college student information system. This data set contained student level data with identifying information was stripped from data to protect students’ identity and comply with FERPA laws. Retention rates were calculated from Fall to Fall for both the mandatory advising and non-mandatory advising group using enrollment data. Persistence rates were calculated by the completion of six or more semesters for both mandatory advising and non-mandatory advising group. Statistical significance was set at .05.

**Participants**

The study sample consists of a cohort of students who were seeking either an associate degree or the completion of a certificate and had earned under 30 credit hours attending an urban community college in the Midwest. The college gender demographics
were 59.9% female and 40.1% male. The average age of students at the college was 29. The college’s ethnic and racial population consists of 45% white, 22.7% African American, 20.8% Latinx, 4.1% Asian, 4.2% Multi-Racial, .5% Native American, .1% Hawaiian, and 2.3% unknown, which is representative of the urban community in which it is located. The community had a reported population of 39.4% white, 26.6% African American, 29.3% Latinx, 4.3% Asian, 3.0% Multi-Racial, .3% Native American, and .02% Hawaiian. Data were focused on African American and Latinx students for research questions 2 -6 as they made up the largest population of students of color attending the college and are discussed more in current literature. Data focused on all students for research questions 1-2.

For comparison purposes, Fall 2013 through Fall 2016 was counted as the mandatory advising unit and compared to Fall 2009 through Fall 2012, which was counted as non-mandatory advising unit. In addition, cohorts were “paired” or “companioned” based on the semester. For example, the Fall 2013 mandatory advising cohort was compared to the Fall 2009 non-mandatory advising cohort and the Fall 2014 mandatory advising cohort was compared to the Fall 2010 non-mandatory advising cohort. Pairing cohorts allowed for multiple measures over time to determine consistency and reliability of findings. Table 1 provides a list of the cohort comparisons.

Table 1
Cohort Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandatory Advising Cohort</th>
<th>Non-Mandatory Advising Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 presents the comparison of the frequency of African American, Latinx and white students during non-mandatory and mandatory terms. The purpose of this table is to demonstrate the consistency of African American, Latinx, and white students during both terms. The table shows that within comparison 1, 26.3% of non-mandatory cohort was African American compared to 25% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 2 showed that 24.5% of non-mandatory cohort was African American compared to 27.3% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 3 showed that 25.3% of non-mandatory cohort was African American compared to 22.8% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 4 showed that 23.2% of the non-mandatory cohort was African American compared to 24.4% of the mandatory cohort. Latinx students were a smaller percentage of both the non-mandatory cohort and mandatory cohort. Table 3 shows that within comparison 1, 11.5% of the non-mandatory cohort was Latinx compared to 17.9% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 2 showed that 14.5 of the non-mandatory cohort was Latinx compared to 19% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 3 showed that 15.9% of the non-mandatory cohort was Latinx compared to 21.2% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 4 showed that 17.3% of the non-mandatory cohort was Latinx compared to 21.8% of the mandatory cohort.
Table 2

Frequency of African American, Latinx, and White Students during Non-Mandatory Advising and Mandatory Advising in Valid Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latinx</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009(NonMandatory)</td>
<td>26.3 (n=217)</td>
<td>11.5 (n=95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013(Mandatory)</td>
<td>25.0 (n=254)</td>
<td>17.9 (n=183)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010(NonMandatory)</td>
<td>24.5 (n=238)</td>
<td>14.5 (n=141)</td>
<td>55.3 (n=536)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014(Mandatory)</td>
<td>27.3 (n=318)</td>
<td>19.0 (n=221)</td>
<td>45.2 (n=526)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>1062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011(NonMandatory)</td>
<td>25.3 (n=245)</td>
<td>15.9 (n=154)</td>
<td>53.1 (n=514)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015(Mandatory)</td>
<td>22.8 (n=328)</td>
<td>21.2 (n=305)</td>
<td>45.9 (n=659)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>1173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012(NonMandatory)</td>
<td>23.2 (n=240)</td>
<td>17.3 (n=179)</td>
<td>50.8 (n=525)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016(Mandatory)</td>
<td>24.4 (n=600)</td>
<td>21.8 (n=535)</td>
<td>41.6 (n=1022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>1554</td>
<td>1547</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study assessed the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students, however, the retention and persistence of white students was examined as a base comparison. Comparison 1 in table 2 showed that 56.4% of the non-mandatory cohort was white compared to 45.2% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 2 showed that 55.3% of the non-mandatory cohort was white compared to 45.2% of the mandatory cohort. Comparison 3 showed that 53.1% of the non-mandatory cohort was white compared to 45.9% of the
mandatory cohort. Comparison 4 showed that 50.8% of the non-mandatory cohort was white compare to 41.6 of the mandatory cohort.

**Variables**

The dependent variables for this study were retention, defined as enrollment from fall to fall, and persistence, defined as the completion of six or more semesters. The independent variables were required advising, self-advising, gender, and ethnicity (African American and Latinx). Retention and persistence was examined over a four-year period for students that were required to see an advisor and compared to students that self-advised four years prior.

For the purposes of this research, retention was defined as the rate in which students who enroll in a given fall semester matriculate to the next subsequent fall semester. Retention will be calculated by dividing the number of students who returned in a/the subsequent fall semester divided by the total number of students who enrolled in the previous fall semester. The following fall-to-fall retention rate comparisons were made for each cohort pairing in this study as shown in Table 3.
### Table 3

Cohort Paring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2013 Mandatory – Fall 2009 Non-Mandatory Cohort Pairing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F13 to F14 Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F09 to F10 Non-Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F13 to F15 Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F09 to F11 Non-Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F13 to F16 Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F09 to F12 Non-Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2014 Mandatory – Fall 2010 Non-Mandatory Cohort Pairing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F14 to F15 Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F10 to F11 Non-Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F14 to F16 Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F10 to F12 Non-Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2015 Mandatory – Fall 2011 Non-Mandatory Cohort Pairing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F15 to F16 Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F11 to F12 Non-Mandatory Retention Rate</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persistence was defined as the number and percentage of students who complete at least six or seven semesters for both the mandatory and non-mandatory. Only the Fall 2013 mandatory cohort and the Fall 2009 non-mandatory cohort was used to compare persistence rates since these are the only student cohorts where students could persist for either six or seven semesters.

Completion was defined as the number and percentage of students who complete either a degree or a certificate at any point between Fall 2013 and Fall 2016 for the mandatory group and at any point between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012 for the non-mandatory
group. Completion rates were compared between mandatory and non-mandatory, as well as, student ethnicity (African American, Latinx and white) and gender.

**Statistical Analysis**

To determine if there were statistically significant differences between retention, persistence and completion rates of students who received mandatory advising and students who did not receive mandatory advising, and descriptive statistics was used. To answer the research questions, this study used Chi-square tests. Chi-squares are conducted to observe whether distributions of a characteristic are different for two or more groups (Coolidge, 2012). Furthermore, a Chi-square is used to analyze categorical data, which means that the data has been counted and divided into categories (Coolidge, 2012). Significance was set at 0.05.

**Limitations**

One limitation of this study has to do with access to advising during the control period. This study compared the persistence and retention rates of African American students and Latinx students who were required to see an advisor with African American students and Latinx students who self-advised. The control group were not required to see an advisor however, these students were not kept from seeing advisors so there may be students in the control group who did see an academic advisor though they were not required. This may affect the prediction of a relationship between advising, retention and persistence as students within the control group may have a high persistence and retention rate due to their own choosing to see an advisor.

Another limitation is that only one college was used in this study. The possible use of multiple campuses could allow the results to be generalized to a larger population. The
location of the campus could also present some limitations as the school district that the college serves has a higher rate of first generation college students. These students may be more incline to see an advisor because they are not aware of the rules and regulations of college, thus causing the control group to have a higher rate of students that have seen an advisor. This could affect this study by possibly affecting any relationship with advising, persistence and retention as control students might have a high rate of students who have seen an advisor.

An additional limitation could be found in the possible difference between the students attending during the non-mandatory period and the students attending during the mandatory period. There could possibly be different reasons why students were attending the community college during 2009-2012 and 2013-2016. Within these differences, age could also play a factor for determination to complete a degree or certificate. Since these items were not take into consideration for this study, these variables could have an unknown impact on the results of this study.

**Ethical Consideration**

Since this was a quantitative study, there were not concerns regarding the violations of the ethical rights of the students. The college’s department of institutional effectiveness removed all identifying labels from the raw data used. Further, all data collected were pre-existing data.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The present study examined whether there was a difference in retention and persistence rates for community college students who had mandatory advising and those who did not. The differences were further evaluated by gender and ethnicity and race (African American and Latinx). To determine the difference, if any, several statistical tests were conducted on persistence and retention data collected for students over a multi-year period. In this chapter, I present the results of these statistical tests in conjunction with the research questions and hypotheses presented in chapter Four.

Difference in Retention and Persistence Rates

Research question one and H1 statistical test and results

Research question one asked: Are there statistically significant differences between retention rates of community college students who received mandatory advising and community college students who did not receive mandatory advising? I hypothesized that community college students who received mandatory advising would be retained at a higher rate than community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address research question 1, I examined retention using a Chi-square test. Students who had mandatory advising retained through the first year at a rate of about 75%, while students who were not required to advise retained at about 78% (see Table 5). The results revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($x^2 = 3.582$, $p = .058$). Because no significance was found, I would reject H1. In other words, these students retained at the same rate as student that did not receive mandatory advising.
Table 4

Retention of Community College Students by Advising Status (N=5955)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=3350)</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=2605)</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question two and H2 statistical test and results

Research question two asked: Are there statistically significant differences between persistence rates of community college students who received mandatory advising and community college students who did not receive mandatory advising? I hypothesized that community college students who received mandatory advising would persist at a higher rate than community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address research question 2, I examined persistence using Chi-square for students who matriculated in 2009 and 2012 (described in Chapter 4 as “Cohort 1”). Fifty-seven percent of students, who were not required to have advising persisted, compared to over 75% of students who had required advising. These results were statistically significant (x²= 65.865, p=.000). Since there was significance, I accepted H2. These results showed that students who received mandatory advising persisted at a higher rate than those who did not receive mandatory advising.

Table 5

Persistence of Community College Students by Advising Status (N=1512)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Persistence Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=812)</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=700)</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research question three and H3 statistical test and results

Research question three asked: are there statistically significant differences between retention rates of African American and Latinx community college students who received mandatory advising and African American and Latinx community college students who did not receive mandatory advising? I hypothesized that African American and Latinx community college students who received mandatory advising would be retained at a higher rate than African American and Latinx community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address research question 3, I examined retention using Chi-square. African American and Latinx students who had mandatory advising retained through the first year at a rate of about 73%, while African American and Latinx students who were not required to advise retained at about 75%. The results showed that there were no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($x^2 = .596 \ p = .440$). Because no significance was found, I rejected H3.

Table 6
Retention of African American and Latinx Students by Advising Status (N=2726)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=1636)</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=1090)</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question four and H4 statistical test and results

Research question four asked: Are there statistically significant differences between persistence rates of African American and Latinx community college students who received mandatory advising and African American and Latinx community college students who did not receive mandatory advising? I hypothesized that African American and Latinx
community college students who received mandatory advising would persist at a higher rate than African American and Latinx community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address research question 4, I examined persistence using Chi-square for African American and Latinx students who matriculated in 2009 and 2012. Thirty-five percent of African American and Thirty-one percent of Latinx students who were not required to have advising persisted, compared to 65% of African American and 70% of Latinx students who had required advising. Though the rates of persistence appear different (see Table 8), there was no significant difference ($x^2= 1.140$, $p= .286$). Because no significance was found, I rejected H4.

Table 7

Persistence of African American and Latinx Students by Advising Status (N=553)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>Non-Mandatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American (n=330)</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx (n=223)</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H5 statistical test and results

I hypothesized that Male community college students who received mandatory advising would be retained at a higher rate than male community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address H5, I examined retention using Chi-square. Male students who had mandatory advising retained through the first year at a rate of about 75% while male students who were not required to advise retained at 78%. The results showed that there was no significant difference ($x^2=3.310$, $p=.069$). Therefore, I rejected H5.
Table 8

Retention of Men by Advising Status (N=2027)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=1136)</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=891)</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**H6 statistical test and results**

I hypothesized that male community college student who received mandatory advising would *persist* at a higher rate than male community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address H6, I examined persistence using Chi-square for male students who matriculated in 2009 and 2012. Forty-nine percent of male students, who were not required to have advising persisted, compared to over 73% of male students who had required advising. The results showed that there was a significant difference (χ²=30.982, p=.000), therefore, I accepted H6. In other words, men who had mandatory advising were more likely to persist over multiple semesters. In other words, male community college students who received mandatory advising are more likely to persist through multiple semesters.

Table 9

Persistence Rates of Men by Advising Status (N=500)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Persist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=270)</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=230)</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**H7 statistical test and results**

I hypothesized that African American male community college students who received mandatory advising would be *retained* at a higher rate than African American male community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address H7, I examined retention using Chi-square. African American male students who had mandatory advising retained through the first year at a rate of about 68%, while African American male students who were not required to advise retained at about 76%. The results showed that there was no significant difference ($\chi^2=3.691, p=.055$). Because no significant difference was found, I rejected H7. Thus, the results of the Chi-square showed that mandatory advising was not related to the retention of ‘African American males.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=278)</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=222)</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**H8 statistical test and results**

I hypothesized that African American male community college students who received mandatory advising would *persist* at a higher rate than African American male community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address H8, I examined retention using Chi-square for African American male students who matriculated in 2009 and 2012. Sixty percent of African American male students, who were not required to have advising *persisted*, compared to over 63% of African American male students who had required advising. Though the rates of persistence appear different, there was no statistical
difference ($x^2= .118, p=.731$). Because no significance was found, I rejected H8. In other words mandatory advising was not found to be related to the persistence of African American male students.

Table 11

Persistence of African American Males by Advising Status (N=96)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Persist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=54)</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=42)</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**H9 statistical test and results**

I hypothesized that Latinx male community college students who received mandatory advising would be retained at a higher rate than Latinx male community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address H9, I examined retention using Chi-square. Latinx male students who were not required to advise retained through the first year at about 79% whereas those who had mandatory advising were retained at a rate of about 75%. The results showed that there was no significant difference ($x^2= .576, p=.448$). Because no significance was found, I rejected H9. The results of the Chi-square showed that mandatory advising was not related to the retention of Latinx males.

Table 12

Retention of Latinx Males by Advising Status (N=363)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=241)</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=122)</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H10 statistical test and results

I hypothesized that Latinx male community college students who received mandatory advising would persist at a higher rate than Latinx male community college students who did not receive mandatory advising. To address H10, I examined retention using Chi-square for Latinx male students who matriculated in 2009 and 2012. Fifty percent of male Latinx students, who were not required to have advising persisted, compared to over 72% of male Latinx students who had required advising. Though the rates of persistence appear different (see Table 16), there was no significant difference ($\chi^2 = 3.614, p=0.057$). Because no significance was found, I rejected H10. In other words, mandatory advising was not found to be related to the persistence of Latinx male students.

Table 13

Persistence of Latinx Males by Advising Status (N=76)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Status</th>
<th>Persist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory (n=50)</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory (n=26)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of findings

The review of the results of this study created more questions than answers. Mandatory advising was shown to have some relationship between the retention and persistence of some populations. However, most results showed no statistically significant differences between mandatory advising among several populations. In some examples, the lack of significance may have more to do with sample size as the rates and percentage of change for some research questions showed growth but again were not supported by statistical data. One constant theme was the small sample size for African American and
Latinx men. The literature addresses the challenges that African American and Latinx men face in higher education, yet this study was not able to provide data that would support the use of mandatory advising as a strategy for the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx men. However, there was statistically significant evidence that mandatory advising was effective for the persistence of men overall and for the persistence of all community college students.

**Conclusion**

The data for this study showed that there were only statistically significant differences for research questions two and six. The results for research question two show statistical significance in the persistence of community college students who received mandatory advising. There was also statistical significance in the persistence of male community college students who received mandatory advising, as asked in research question six. Though the majority of the analyses in this study showed no significance, the percentage of increase seen in the tables raises some questions and offers implications for advising in the community college.

Chapter six will discuss implications and limitations of this study. The possible challenges of the sample population will be discussed and suggestions for future studies will be presented.
CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Community colleges are the gateway for African American and Latinx students. The retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students are among the lowest of all students attending community colleges. The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship existed between mandatory advising and the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx community college students. In addition, the purpose was to add to the knowledge base that present strategies for the retention and persistence of community college students, particularly African American and Latinx students. The foundation of this study was laid through the development of the prior chapters. Chapter one provided an overview of this study by introducing the problem that undergird the topic of this study, the long-term impact of the lack of success of African American and Latinx community college students. Chapter two presented three major foundational theories that stressed the importance of academic and social integration, involvement and student engagement. Chapter three introduced the history of community colleges and the significance they have for African American and Latinx students. Academic advising was also introduced as a strategy that could be instrumental in assisting students in academic and social integration as well as an expansion of involvement and student engagement as presented in chapter two. In addition, an in-depth historical background was presented on academic advising and its current role in helping with the retention and persistence of college students. Chapter four outlined the methodology and Chapter five described the mixed results of the study. The discussion and implications of the results are the focus on this chapter, which also includes limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.
Discussion and Implications

Significance was found between the mandatory advising of community colleges students and persistence and the mandatory advising of male community college students and persistence. These results supported the findings of Wood (2012) who concluded that students who experienced informal or social interaction with faculty members had 283% greater odds of persisting and completing their educational goals. However, the results of this study revealed that there were no statistically significant correlations between mandatory advising and the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx community college students. Nevertheless, the noticed increase in the retention and persistence rates of African American and Latinx students who received mandatory advising did present some questions regarding the possible effectiveness of mandatory advising. It is possible that the population size for African American and Latinx students was not large enough in this study. The results of this study show that there is a need for more research that examines the impact of academic advising on African American and Latinx community college students.

Since there was a significance difference found between the mandatory advising of all college students and persistence, it might also be possible to find a relationship between the persistence of African American and Latinx students who received mandatory advising if sample size was larger. Furthermore, findings of the study also suggested that a relationship existed between the mandatory advising of all male students and persistence. However, no significance was found between the persistence of African American and Latinx male students who received mandatory advising. I believe that with a larger population for both groups significance could possibly be found for the persistence of African American and Latinx males. It could be possible that a qualitative factor is not being addressed in that
Hausmann, Ye, Schofield and Woods (2009) found that sense of belonging was a significant predictor of persistence for African Americans. Furthermore, Wood and Williams (2013) found that as interactions with faculty increased from never and sometimes to eventually often, the odds of persistence grew by 89% for African American males.

Findings also indicate academic advising that is required could possibly be an important strategy in assisting African American and Latinx community college students in the successful completion of their education. Additionally, Wood and Williams (2013) concluded that just meeting with an academic advisor raised persistence by 39.5% for African American males. Museus and Ravello (2010) learned that proactive academic advising, has a strong impact on the success of students of color.

In short, the implications of these results could be useful to academic advising centers located on the campuses of community colleges. They suggest that a mandatory advising system may have an impact on the persistence of community college students. Further, the study’s results extend far beyond academic advising centers. Individuals with higher levels of education are also likely to enjoy a higher level of income and physical health (Baum et al., 2013; E.M.S., 2014). Other implications of the results of this study are related to the breaking of the social status of poverty. Education provides many benefits that exceed a good job and low employment rates, our society benefits as communities are saved from generations of poverty, and our economy and tax payers are saved from the burden of providing government assistance to undereducated communities (Baum et al., 2013; E.M.S., 2014). Furthermore, Fortunato and Panizza also suggested that education improves political engagement (2015). The participation in a democratic society is important to ensure the issues and topics relevant to communities are addressed. Kilgo, Pasquesi, Sheets and Pascarella (2014) discovered that
college students, who participated in service learning, were more likely to participate in political and social engagement after college.

The results of this study have implications that far exceed the original intent of this study but these implications are all rooted and connected to one main focus and purpose and that is student success. The findings of this study could prove useful for directors of student success centers, student-advising center, academic deans that have faculty members who advise, deans of student services and vice presidents of student affairs. Though additional research is needed to examine the qualitative factors related to academic advising, this study adds to the empirical literature regarding the use of academic advising as a strategy for the persistence of community college students and the unique challenges of male community college students. This study showed that overall mandatory advising was effective for all students; hence, the use of mandatory advising should continue to be used as strategy for student success.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study is found in the study design. The use of a correlational design study to find statistically significance proves to be a limitation as correlational design studies cannot be used to prove that one variable caused changes in relation to another variable only that a relationship exists between the two (Coolidge, 2012). Furthermore, there could be other variables involved that the researcher is not aware of or is not able to control. Correlational design studies do not allow for the recognition of unknown variables nor do they allow for the research to infer results regarding the ending data (Coolidge, 2012).
A second limitation of this study is the sample size. Though the school at which the data was collected is the most diverse community college within its state, the population of African American and Latinx students was too small. Furthermore, within these ethnic populations the male population was also too small. Since the students within the sample of this study come from one Midwestern community college located in an urban area, caution is recommended when generalizing the results of this study to all African American and Latinx urban community college students. Differences might exist between African American and Latinx students attending urban community colleges within different regions of our country.

Another limitation of this study is that students in the non-mandatory advising cohort are not intended to be the same students in the mandatory advising cohort. Students enrolled 2009 -2012 were compared to students enrolled from 2013-2016. This model did not allow for a true pre and post assessment of mandatory advising because the study was not comparing the same students. In addition, students in the non-mandatory advising cohort were not prohibited from seeing an advisor so an advisor may have seen them though they were counted in the non-mandatory advising cohort.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The results of this study presented many questions that the further exploration of would be beneficial for community college personnel that are charged with the success of students, particularly African American and Latinx students. One recommendation for future research would include a study that would examine the quality of academic advising and its possible impact on the retention of and persistence of African American and Latinx students. Orozco, Alzarez and Gutkin (2010) believed that the quality of the relationship between the advisor and student is important to students’ perceptions of the advisors’ concerns for their
success. Walters and Seyedian (2016) found that the active involvement of both the advisor and advisee were important factors in a successful advising program. A qualitative study would also allow students to express the type of advising that would be more effective. As such, Smith (2002) discovered that first year students preferred prescriptive advising to developmental advising. Donaldson, McKinney, Lee, & Pino, (2016) concluded in their research that intrusive advising was effective in improving student success-related behaviors in future semesters.

Another recommendation for future research would be an examination of the possible impact of academic advising on the retention and persistence of men of color. I would suggest the inclusion of more community colleges with a large population of men of color. The examination of the percentages for persistence and retention of men of color reflect an increase; however, populations were too small to be deemed significant.

A final recommendation would be a repeat of this study that would include additional community colleges that have a large population of African American and Latinx students. A larger population size would provide an opportunity to rule out sample size as being a deterrent to the significance of mandatory advising in relation to retention and persistence of African American and Latinx community college students.

Conclusion

This study emerged from my own personal belief that mandatory academic advising can be an effective tool in the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students. Furthermore, I believe that it is even more important for African American and Latinx men given their low retention and persistence rates (Mangan, 2014). In my former position as the director of a student advising center at an urban community college, I was
amazed that students were not required to see an academic advisor to enroll. Overtime, I began to see the results of not advising students and letting them advise themselves. This was even more alarming when considering the low retention rates of students of color. In my role as director, I was fortunate to be able to institutionalize a mandatory advising system for all degree seeking students under 30 credit hours. It was my belief that such measures would improve the retention and persistence of all students particularly African American and Latinx students. Understanding the even lower retention and persistence rates of African American and Latinx men, I wanted to see if mandatory advising would be effective in their retention and persistence as well.

Though there have been studies that examined academic advising as a strategy to improve student success (Drake, 2011; Harrison, 2009; Kim & Feldman, 2011; White, 2015b, Wood & Williams, 2013), fewer studies exist that compare students who are required to meet with an academic advisor with students who self-advised while attending a community college (Wood, 2012; Wood and Williams 2013). Furthermore, there is a limited amount of research regarding the academic advisement of African American and Latinx students, particularly men. (Bush & Bush, 2010; Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2014; Chacon 2013; Sandoval-Lucero, Maes, Klingsmith, 2014; Perrakis, 2008; Saenz et al. 2013; Wood, 2012; Wood and Williams, 2013)

This study adds to a short list of empirical studies that examine strategies such as academic advising and its role in improving the retention and persistence of African American and Latinx students enrolled at community colleges within our country. Community college administrators need to make a deliberate attempt to address the extremely low retention and persistence rates of African American and Latinx students,
particularly men, attending our countries’ community colleges. The statistically significant evidence is clear; these students are failing in comparison to white students. Given the vast amount of African American and Latinx students that attend community colleges, this problem cannot be ignored, more action is required.
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VITA

Shawn Pierre Derritt was born August 6, 1970 in Denver, Colorado. He was raised and schooled in the Leavenworth and Kansas City Kansas Public School systems where he graduated from F.L. Schlagle High School in 1988. Shawn attended Kansas City Kansas community college where he received an Associate of Art with an emphasis in Psychology. Following graduation in May of 1991, Shawn transferred to the University of Kansas where he received a Bachelor of General Studies. While working toward his bachelor’s degree, Shawn worked as an assistant house parent for a local boy’s home in Lawrence KS. He also served as a member of the Douglas county foster care review board. Following graduation in May of 1995, Shawn returned to the University of Kansas to earn a Master’s in Counseling Psychology. While completing his Master’s, Shawn worked as an Admission Counselor for the University of Kansas. He later worked for the University of Kansas TRIO program, The Educational Talent Search program, as the middle school advisor. He later worked as the coordinator for the University of Missouri-Kansas City Upward Bound program. Within a year, he was promoted to the Director of Upward Bound. Shawn graduated with his Master’s in Counseling Psychology from the University of Kansas May 2002. Following graduation, Shawn accepted a position at Kansas City Kansas Community College as a Counselor in the Counseling and Advising Center. Ten years later, he was hired as the director and was later promoted to Assistant Dean of Student Services and then Dean of Student Services. Shawn started work towards his Educational Doctorate through University of Missouri – Kansas City in August of 2014.

Upon completion of his degree requirements, Shawn plans to continue his tenure as the Dean of Student Services at Kansas City Kansas Community College.