

To the University of Wyoming:

The members of the Committee approve the project of Nicholas J. Whipps presented on
May, 7 2019.

Dr. Suzanne Young, Chair

Dr. Jenna Shim, Outside Member

Dr. Mary Alice Bruce

APPROVED:

Dr. Suzanne Young, School Director, School of Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, and Design

Dr. Ray Reutzler, Dean, College of Education

Whipps, Nicholas J., The Value of Co-Curricular Involvement at a Small Community College: Perspectives from Students Living on Campus. Ed.D., School of Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, and Design, May 2019.

Abstract

This study sought to determine student perspectives about co-curricular offerings at Casper College. It also looked at the extent to which participation in co-curricular organizations and activities enhances the achievement of academic success through GPA. Students were asked questions related to what co-curricular programs they participate in, attitudes of impact on success factors, barriers to participation, how often they participate, and program topic interests. Results of the study indicated students agreed that their co-curricular involvement had an impact on their success in many ways. Results also helped identify how often students are participating, barriers to participation, and ideas for topics of interest. The strengths and needs identified by the study could serve as essential information for practical evaluation and application of co-curricular programming on the Casper College campus. The study can also add to the growing body of knowledge about co-curricular involvement and student success.

THE VALUE OF CO-CURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT AT A SMALL COMMUNITY
COLLEGE: PERSPECTIVES FROM STUDENTS LIVING ON CAMPUS

By

Nicholas J. Whipps

A project submitted to the School of Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, and Design in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

EDUCATION

Laramie, Wyoming

May 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Background	1
Research Questions	3
Purpose of the Study	4
Definition of Key Terms	4
Significance of the Study	5
Summary	5
Literature Review.....	7
History and Overview of Co-Curricular Involvement in Higher Education.....	7
Foundational Theories	8
Assessment Practices	11
Institutional Best Practices	13
Co-Curricular Involvement at the Community College.....	14
Summary	17
Method	18
Research Questions.....	18
Data Collection	19
Setting	19
Population	20
Survey Design.....	20
Data Analysis	21
Summary	21
Results.....	23
Description of Respondents	23
Attitudes on Involvement.....	26
Involvement and GPA.....	29

Barriers to Participation	30
Frequency of Participation.....	33
Interest in Co-Curricular Program Topics	35
Summary	38
Discussion.....	40
Conclusions.....	40
Limitations	46
Recommendations.....	47
Suggestions for Further Research	48
Summary	49
References.....	51
Appendix A	
Survey	57
Appendix B	
Cover Letter	61
Appendix C	
IRB Approval Letters.....	62

List of Tables

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentages for Demographic Information.....	24
Table 2. Frequencies and Percentages for Co-Curricular Activities in Which Students were Involved.....	25
Table 3. Attitudes Regarding Co-Curricular Involvement among Students.....	27
Table 4. Attitudes Regarding Co-Curricular Involvement among Freshmen and Upperclassmen.....	28
Table 5. Pearson’s Product Correlation between GPA and Attitudes Regarding Co-Curricular Involvement among Students	30
Table 6. Frequency and Percent Responses of Barriers to Attending Co-Curricular Activities.....	31
Table 7. Frequency and Percent Responses of Suggestions for Involvement in Co-Curricular Activities.....	32
Table 8. Frequency and Percent Responses of Time Spent and Attendance in Co-Curricular Activities.....	34
Table 9. Interest in Co-Curricular Program Topics among Students.....	36
Table 10. Comparison between Freshmen and Upperclassmen Interest in Co-Curricular Program Topics.....	37

Introduction

The higher education climate is continuously evolving to meet the needs of students and stakeholders. Fostering student success inside and outside of the classroom is crucial to meeting those needs. There is a call for administrators to create an academic environment that develops the holistic growth of each student. A holistic approach to education creates a well-rounded and prepared college graduate. Part of creating a successful environment is the development and implementation of co-curricular opportunities campus wide. This study intends to identify student perspectives of co-curricular involvement on a community college campus. The background and purpose sections of this paper will establish context to co-curricular involvement and how it relates to student success factors.

Background

The role co-curricular involvement has in measures of student success is often not understood. In the research and practical application, co-curricular means “alongside the academic curriculum” (Dean, 2015, p. 30). Co-curricular involvement then inherently means student involvement in programs outside of the classroom, but is tied to curriculum through practical experience. Activities inside the classroom develop understanding in content matter and course objectives that are tied to institutional learning outcomes. Activities outside of the classroom can help reinforce those learning objectives (Storey, 2010). Much of co-curricular programming is run through student affairs offices. Examples include student activities, residence life, athletics, campus recreation, admissions, and health/wellness programs. These departments focus more on strategic design to impact student success in terms of retention, graduation, and aligning programming and outcomes that mirror closely the academic curriculum. Other co-curricular activities are often organized within the structure of academic

affairs, such as service-learning experiences, internships, and study abroad programs. The most impactful out of classroom experiences are integrated with academic experiences and help students achieve shared learning outcomes, such as skills in communication, leadership, problem solving, and multitasking (Suskie, 2015).

Stakeholders have held higher education institutions accountable for reaching traditional measures of success like retention and graduation. Recently, they have also asked for proof of value added to the educational experience through co-curricular experiences. The Higher Learning Commission Criteria for Accreditation, section 4B part two, specifically asks that each institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs (Higher Learning Commission, 2016). Developing objectives and outcomes associated with the achievement of learning goals through co-curricular programming are ways to meet outcomes that measure success. Assessment of co-curricular activities is necessary to determine the value programs hold for students as well as to determine which type of programs are most effective in meeting the developmental goals of the institution (Elliott, 2009). Many studies have shown, that student involvement leads to improvement academically, socially, and professionally (Zhao & Kuh, 2004; Webber, Krylow & Zhang 2013; Collaço 2017; Martin, 2017). Success in college is positively influenced by out-of-class experiences in addition to course-based learning (Bergen-Cico & Viscomi, 2012).

Employers are putting more weight on practical experience than they are on grade point average. They are interested in what students can do with their learning (Nicoli, 2011). Balancing school tasks, work, and other activities while participating in co-curricular organizations shows potential employers that students are capable of balancing many commitments and responsibilities. The addition of co-curricular involvement can be an important

factor in a student's college experience and future career opportunities. College students develop leadership skills through various activities and experiences with the most significant being peer interaction in the classroom or co-curricular settings (Haber, 2011).

The community college is different from the traditional university setting in many ways. Community colleges are complex institutions serving a multitude of constituencies with dozens of programs and activities (Bailey & Morest, 2006). The student population is different and the needs involved in creating a conducive environment for success are different. Because many community colleges have an open access mission that gives all students the opportunity to earn a college degree, they have become a first choice for both traditional and non-traditional students. America's public community colleges enroll almost half of all undergraduates in higher education's public sector (Callan, 2017). Community colleges are known by efforts to put students first with the emphasis on teaching and learning and enroll a wide array of students from different backgrounds, ages, and educational goals (Community College Survey of Student Engagement, 2014). Thus, the role of co-curricular activities may vary between community colleges and four-year institutions (Ragle, 2016). For the students that plan on community college as their only formal higher education experience, co-curricular involvement is crucial. There is not much time to gain practical experience in a two-year timeframe. If co-curricular involvement can be integrated into classroom learning right away, it can fill the gaps of personal, professional, and career development that can sometimes be missed (Storey, 2010).

Research Questions

1. What are the attitudes of Casper College students who live on campus about the impact co-curricular involvement has on their overall success?

2. What is the relationship between attitudes about co-curricular involvement and GPA of Casper College students who live on campus?
3. What are the barriers to participation in co-curricular offerings for Casper College students who live on campus?
4. How often are Casper College students who live on campus involved in co-curricular activities?
5. What are co-curricular programming topics that most interest Casper College students who live on campus?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to create a foundation for more effective planning, programming, and assessment of co-curricular offerings at Casper College. The study will look at the viewpoints of college students who live on campus about co-curricular programming as it pertains to attitudes of impact on success factors, barriers to participation, how often they participate, and what program topics they are most interested in. This information may assist Student Services at Casper College in identifying key needs in co-curricular programming and how implementation of that programming effects the success of students.

Definition of Key Terms

Co-curricular. Co-curriculum refers to non-academic experiences sponsored, sanctioned, or supported by the college. These programs mirror the academic curriculum and are an extension of formal learning experiences. Such experiences include participation in student clubs and organizations, intramural activities, student government, leadership programs, and community service programs. These are designed to promote student development in areas such as leadership, life skills, and professional development while enhancing campus life, with a focus

on student engagement (Dean, 2015).

Community College. The community college is defined as a two-year institution of higher education, generally public, offering occupational programs (employment preparation), transfer curriculum (credit toward a bachelor's degree), and community education programs (American Association of Community Colleges, 2018).

Student Success. Student success in college is defined in this study as academic achievement as measured by grade point average, retention, graduation, and by student satisfaction with the overall college experience.

Significance of the Study

Accountability pressures and accreditation processes have put more emphasis on community college campus efforts to provide an environment that adds value to student learning outside of the classroom. Co-curricular involvement and the relationship it has with measures of student success is well documented. Much of the research on the relationship between co-curricular involvement and student success has been conducted with students at four year institutions. The results of this study may hold practical implications as it could offer useful information to student services administrators when providing guidance about campus involvement. By determining the co-curricular needs and preferred delivery methods identified by students, appropriate programming and delivery may be implemented to foster a more holistic education environment.

Summary

Fostering student success inside and outside of the classroom while in college is an important role for faculty and administrators. Creating a holistic environment helps develop a well-rounded and prepared college graduate but the role co-curricular involvement has in

measures of student success is often not understood. In the next section, a review of the literature surrounding the theory and practical application of co-curricular programming in higher education is discussed.

Literature Review

This research project is focused on developing a better understanding of co-curricular involvement at the community college through perspectives and comparisons of students who live on campus. Many scholarly studies have looked at students' co-curricular involvement and how that pertains to success and development academically and personally. This section first gives a history of co-curricular involvement in higher education. It will then cover the foundational theories of student involvement in higher education. It will continue with the assessment practices and institutional best practices involving co-curricular involvement in higher education. The section will conclude with current research that looks at co-curricular involvement in the community college setting.

History and Overview of Co-Curricular Involvement in Higher Education

The history of co-curricular involvement in higher education is substantial and the role it plays has developed and changed over many years. The scope is broad and various researchers have developed descriptions for different categories of student organizations or co-curricular groups. Co-curricular experiences in college first developed alongside the curriculum in the late 1800s. The co-curriculum was based on the development of religiousness and moral character and not in intellectual and personal growth-based pursuits. As a result of this focus, students started to form clubs, societies, Greek organizations, and intramural athletic teams. These focused on the physical, emotional, and social aspects of campus and personal life (Rudolph, 1990). The co-curriculum became a way in which students began to express their own interests and goals. They started to prepare for success after college and felt involvement outside the confines of the classroom was a key component to that (Rudolph, 1990). After student organizations started to establish and take hold across higher education institutions in the US, the

development and focus of co-curricular involvement started to take shape. The American Council on Education (ACE) published a document called the *Student Personnel Point of View* (SPPV) in 1937 (American Council on Education, 1937). This was one of the first documents that supported the view that higher education institutions needed to provide departmental resources to assist with supervising, evaluating, and developing extracurricular pursuits for students on campus (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2008). ACE was one of the first organizations to recognize that co-curricular involvement was important to a well-rounded and fulfilling college experience. They also recognized that departments dedicated to coordinating those programs were crucial (Storey, 2010).

In the current higher education climate, the co-curriculum has grown to include a wider variety of programs in both the academic and student affairs areas. There are entire departments dedicated to influencing student success through out of classroom experiences that effect retention, graduation, and learning positively (Dean, 2015). These departments are different at every campus in their scope and name. Some of these departments are Student Life, Student Success, Student Involvement, and Campus Recreation. Through dedicated student development programs, professionals are tasked with facilitating learning experiences. This can be done through the practice and application of student development theories. With a grounded understanding of theory, college professionals can observe, understand, and influence patterns of student change, capabilities, behaviors, and overall success (Astin, 1984).

Foundational Theories

Theories of student development are helpful in several different ways. Theories help in providing explanation and description of student behavior. They also create meaning for students' unique perspectives and experiences (Long, 2012). The more involved a student is in

his or her campus community, the more likely that student is to focus on personal and professional growth (Astin, 1984). Therefore, co-curricular programming focuses on healthy relationships, community building, self-improvement, and professional development which is effective in developing a well-rounded student. Researchers like Astin (1975, 1984) and Tinto (1987, 1993) have provided the foundation for the alignment of assessment and programming of the co-curricular component in higher education.

The way in which a student chooses to become involved in college can vary greatly. One of the most studied theories in this area of research is that of Astin (1984), whose definition of involvement suggested student behavior is based, on the level of participation in an organization or group. According to Astin (1984), student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience. For example, a student who is highly involved devotes considerable energy to studying, spends more time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students. Uninvolved students typically do the exact opposite (Astin, 1984). The student's motivation and behavior are the biggest contributing factors to this. Inputs (I), environment (E), and outcomes (O) are the three elements of Astin's theory. A student's inputs are demographics based on past experiences and background. The environment is the accumulation of experiences in college, and the outcomes are the attitudes, beliefs, and values that exist after college graduation. Astin (1984) says that the more a student gets involved in co-curricular activities, the more desirable these outcomes become. This theory emphasizes the internal and external motivations of involvement. There are five basic principles in this theory:

1. Involvement is the investment of both physical and psychological energy in various objects.
2. Involvement occurs along a progression throughout a student's college experience.
3. There are both quantitative and qualitative features of involvement.
4. The amount of student learning and personal development is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement.
5. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement (Astin, 1999, p. 519).

Tinto's (1987, 1993) work is based on Astin's (1984) theory. Tinto developed a theory that says students invest in a greater effort to learn and develop personally and professionally when they become involved as members of the college community. Tinto's theory speaks specifically to student retention. He argued that students are more likely to leave an institution without completing based upon the nature and quality of interactions they have with staff and students. A well thought out and implemented co-curricular programming base is essential to facilitate these interactions. Co-curricular programming increases retention by bolstering students' sense of institutional attachment, which in turn fosters social development (Tinto, 1997).

Tinto (1987) proposed that there are three reasons students withdraw from an institution: academic problems, failure to integrate socially and intellectually with the culture of the college, or a low level of commitment to the college. Colleges must be intentional and deliberate in addressing these three factors to decrease the chance of student departure (Tinto, 1993).

Therefore, a successful co-curricular programming base that caters to many different interests and lifestyles is influential in fostering student retention.

The research of Astin (1975, 1984) and Tinto (1987, 1993) emphasizes that students learn through involvement. These scholars also theorized that a student's academic engagement is crucial to success while in school and social integration to the campus community is important to development and persistence. For this to happen, students need to be willing to participate in the college social environment. To be successful, an institution needs to be willing to create opportunities for involvement (Ragle, 2016).

Assessment Practices

Colleges have a responsibility to provide evidence to ensure they are fulfilling their mission. This can be done by providing assessment measures that look at all aspects of student life and success on campus (Millett, Payne, Dwyer, Stickler, & Alexiou, 2008). Knowing the success measures that must be met is something that all institutions strive to accomplish. Many college mission statements include commitment to the development of student attributes, such as self-reliance, personal growth, emotional well-being, and professional development (Hersh et al., 2009). The focus and growth of co-curricular opportunities are occurring at many colleges across the country (Feldman, Aper, & Meredith, 2011). Effective programming cannot grow and adapt to the ever-changing student population without assessment practices. While assessment has been a pillar in American higher education, and co-curricular assessment is growing, there are still relatively few assessment activities that focus on the impact of co-curricular programs (Elliot, 2009).

Colleges have historically been efficient at measuring students' cognitive achievements and outcomes. A focus solely based on classroom learning misses a few important elements of

the college experience. It may miss whether students are engaged in learning, engaged with their campus community, and getting the most out of their college experience (Schreiner, 2013). It can be argued that issues such as graduation rates and student academic performance are related not just to classroom learning, but to factors such as the quality of student life and student satisfaction with the institution (Kuh, 2001). If the relationship between the co-curriculum and broadly defined outcomes like retention and graduation are understood, administrators will be more effective in measuring and explaining student success outside of the classroom (Dean, 2015). They also will be effective in identifying key points of evidence in order to support decision making and planning. Assessing co-curricular learning can be more challenging than assessing classroom learning for many reasons. (Feldman et al., 2011).

Student affairs professionals are starting to partner with institutional research departments to come up with solutions for this problem (Busby, 2015). They can provide data that helps identify the contribution of co-curricular experiences to improve retention, academic standing, completion, and graduation rates at the institution. They can also help peers and colleagues understand how strategic outcomes can contribute to programming decisions (Dean, 2015). There are issues and challenges involved when deciding the framework of assessment. All of these are different and unique for each institution (Banta & Kuh, 1998).

Purposeful co-curricular participation involves creating the most effective conditions for learning. Learning outcomes can be linked to student experiences by measuring experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation (Stirling & Kerr, 2015). This could be done informally by listing potential learning outcomes next to each co-curricular activity on a webpage or formally by creating individualized learning agreements based on the outcomes given (Stirling & Kerr, 2015). Students should be encouraged to reflect on their experiences by

describing or critically examining them. They can also articulate what they learned (Ash & Clayton, 2009). Developing and implementing well thought out assessment practices for co-curricular learning will ultimately add to the depth and breadth of the programming process which in turn will foster a more meaningful student experience (Haber, 2011).

Institutional Best Practices

Many studies show that benefits of co-curricular participation include satisfaction, feelings of support, self-efficacy, retention, academic achievement, intellectual engagement, enhanced understanding of others, and practical skill acquisition such as interview skills and networking abilities (Kilpatrick & Wilburn, 2010; Lourens, 2014; Pasque & Murphy, 2005). The responsibility for student success and engagement through co-curricular involvement is a team effort. To meet accountability measures and create a successful environment for completion, colleges must do everything in their power to foster student success across the wide range of students they serve. All departments in an institution have an obligation to provide the necessary conditions, opportunities, and expectations for co-curricular involvement to occur (Coates, 2005). Without involvement in the campus community and interaction with others, students may have negative experiences which may lead to their departure (Garcia, 2010; Tinto, 1993). In order for students to be successful, a whole-hearted effort from all employees (faculty, staff and administrators) must be focused on the students. The ability to successfully implement change in higher education derives from experience and knowledge; in other words, the successful leader understands the character of his or her students, faculty, curriculum, and governance (Malm, 2008).

A student is more likely to get involved in co-curricular programming if there is plenty of opportunity to be engaged on campus. This is based on the time and effort put into co-curricular

programming. While the academic curriculum should be the main focus, an emphasis on the broader student experience can positively contribute to student success (Elias & Drea, 2013). It is important for student affairs administrators to have a baseline knowledge of co-curricular experiences, an understanding of student development theory, and a familiarity of how co-curricular involvement impacts student learning and success (Busby, 2015). If an institution commits itself to achieving maximum student involvement, administrators in charge of co-curricular programming should occupy a more important role in institutional operations. They are in a unique position to monitor the involvement of their students in the academic process (Hernandez & Hernandez, 2014). Student life directors must foster a culture that encourages all employees to work one on one with students in an attempt to increase their involvement. These one on one interactions are more intimate by nature, and create a deeper understanding of the individual needs of the student population. Colleges that focus on creating individual connections with their students may reap benefits for both the students and the institution (Tinto, 1998).

Co-Curricular Involvement at the Community College

Students enroll at community colleges for many different reasons. These include transfer opportunities, certificates, updating skills, job training, and personal enrichment (Martin, Gelentino, & Townsend, 2014). These institutions are multifaceted, diverse, and serve many purposes that traditional four-year institutions do not. Community colleges have a foundation set in open access which in turn recruits a diverse population of students. To serve a diverse student population, the curriculum usually includes developmental education coursework, technical degree and certificate programs, continuing education opportunities, and academic transfer

programs (Storey, 2010). A community college mission statement usually supports inclusion, advocacy, opportunity, and collaboration.

For many community college students, wearing multiple hats is a way of life. Coordinating academic commitments with off-campus work, family life, and commuting schedules is necessary. Therefore, co-curricular activities must be able to accommodate the busy lives of these students. Student affairs professionals who work at community colleges must know the demographics of the population they serve. They must be intentional about setting outcomes for co-curricular programming that will foster growth and development among diverse groups of students (Ragle, 2016). Outcomes for co-curricular programming could include; time management, effective communication, leadership, wellness, professionalism, career planning, and identity formation (Stirling & Kerr, 2015). Co-curricular activities encompass a wide range of out-of-classroom programs, and there have been many studies looking at how involvement affects different outcomes.

The research that has been conducted on community college students has looked at the relationship between involvement in co-curricular programs and success, achievement, and satisfaction (Elliot, 2009; Ragle, 2016; Storey, 2010). These studies all have commonalities. Elliot (2009) looked at first-time, full-time freshman at three public community colleges in Kansas and the relationship between involvement in co-curricular programs and student success and development. Storey (2010) researched students at a Chicago metropolitan area community college and examined the extent to which participation in co-curricular events correlated with the general education learning outcomes of the institution. Ragle (2016) researched first generation college students at a Midwestern community college and investigated the relationship between the participation in co-curricular activities and academic success, satisfaction, and persistence.

While each of these researchers studied a different population base, they found that various types of co-curricular activities are related to different student outcomes. All three studies looked at outcomes related to academic success, and institutional satisfaction. The results of these studies seem to have a connection with the amount a student is involved in his or her campus community. Elliot (2009) and Storey (2010) compared results from students who were involved in co-curricular programming and students who were not involved in co-curricular programming. Both of them found statistically significant results that an involved student is more likely to be successful than an uninvolved student. Elliot (2009) found that students involved in one of the three co-curricular programs in the study had significantly higher grade point averages and satisfaction with the college experience compared to students who were not involved in co-curricular programming. Also, the involved students were more self-confident, better able to manage emotions, and more emotionally independent from parents when compared to students who were not involved. Storey (2010) found that co-curricular involvement presented statistically significant correlations with performance on general education learning outcome measures in six of the 15 identified co-curricular activity groups in the study. These groups included internship/co-op, multicultural, career/professional, service and awareness, creative arts, and leadership. Ragle (2016) indicated that first-generation students' GPA, college satisfaction, and college persistence did not correlate with their involvement in co-curricular programming. The author does indicate the results should be interpreted with caution. The other community college studies were not exclusively first-generation students. Also, the largest group in the study by far was not involved in co-curricular programming (Ragle, 2016). Previous studies in the traditional four-year setting align with these results and have shown that first

generation college students are less likely to participate in co-curricular activities (Pascarella et al., 2004; Terenzini et al., 1994).

Summary

A review of the literature revealed that, coupled with the academic curriculum, co-curricular involvement can positively contribute to students' success and development (Elias & Drea, 2013). This section began with a brief history and overview of co-curricular involvement in higher education and the theories that are the foundation of the field. The section continued with co-curricular assessment practices and best practices for higher education institutions. The section concluded with current research that has focused on co-curricular involvement at community colleges.

Student life administrators assume critical roles in ensuring that quality co-curricular programming takes place in schools. These roles will require employees to be informed, confident, responsible, and skilled. Informed co-curricular advocates can raise awareness, highlight resources available, and communicate the impact co-curricular programs can have on student success to the campus and its broad range of stakeholders (Dean, 2015). The next section describes the study methodology.

Method

This study utilized a cross-sectional online survey approach. Students who live on campus were surveyed to identify participation in co-curricular programming offered at Casper College. The study focused on student perspectives about co-curricular offerings. It also looked at the extent to which participation in co-curricular organizations and activities enhances the achievement of academic success through GPA. Students were asked questions related to what co-curricular programs they participate in, attitudes of impact on success factors, barriers to participation, how often they participate, and what program topics they are most interested in. The survey was designed based on a review of the literature.

Research Questions

To identify future co-curricular programming needs, prioritize those needs, assess current involvement in co-curricular activities, and determine how involvement pertains to success, the following research questions were examined:

1. What are the attitudes of Casper College students who live on campus about the impact co-curricular involvement has on their overall success?
2. What is the relationship between attitudes about co-curricular involvement and GPA of Casper College students who live on campus?
3. What are the barriers to participation in co-curricular offerings for Casper College students who live on campus?
4. How often are Casper College students who live on campus involved in co-curricular activities?
5. What are co-curricular programming topics that most interest Casper College students who live on campus?

Data Collection

Prior to beginning data collection, approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Wyoming and at Casper College was sought and received (Appendix C). An e-mail with an introduction and a link to the survey (Appendix B) was sent to participants. Participants could choose to take the survey or decline participation in the study. One follow up e-mail per week for four weeks was sent after the original e-mail requesting participants complete the survey. All participants who completed the survey were eligible for a drawing that offered eight \$25 gift cards. An email list and permission for distribution of the survey to the student population was obtained from the Casper College Director of Student Life.

Setting

The study was conducted with students who attended Casper College and lived on campus. The college has a full-time student enrollment of 3,759, with 8% of that population living on campus. Casper College offers 140 academic transfer, technical, and career programs. Casper College was selected as the case study for this project because of the proximity to the researcher and because of its robust co-curricular activity programming. Casper College offers 37 different clubs and organizations in addition to hundreds of work-study opportunities, dozens of intramural sports and weekly special events.

There was a two step process to determine which programs Casper College considered co-curricular. The first step was to create and get approval for a standardized definition campus wide. The definition was then approved by administration. The second step in the process was program identification. This involved first researching and identifying all programs at Casper College that fit under the approved definition of co-curricular. Then each of the programs were categorized and sorted into the appropriate school or department. After identification and

categorization, a rationale was written for each program as to why it should be considered co-curricular. After the rationale for each program was developed, meetings were set up with each dean, department head, and director on campus to gain approval for the programs that were under their oversight to be officially defined as a co-curricular program.

Population

The survey was sent to all Casper College students who lived on campus ($N= 308$). Participants in the study all maintained residence in on campus housing which includes one residence hall and three apartment complexes.

Survey Design

The survey (see Appendix A) consisted of 40 items. Of the 40 items, eight collected demographic information. Demographic data collected included age, gender, race, academic major, current year in school, number of classes taken, and GPA. The remaining 32 items consisted of an assessment of what specific co-curricular programs students were involved in (one item), attitudes about co-curricular programming and impact on overall success (16 items), interest levels in different types of co-curricular programming (11 items), frequency and time spent involved in co-curricular programs (two items), reasons that prevent participation in co-curricular programming (one item), and opinions on how to get students more involved in co-curricular programming (one item).

Types of co-curricular programming students were involved in was assessed using questions where survey participants could select all options of co-curricular activities in which they were involved. Attitudes regarding co-curricular programming and impact on overall success were assessed using a five-point Likert scale. The scale had possible responses of strongly agree (5), agree (4), neither agree nor disagree (3), somewhat disagree (2), strongly

disagree (1). Two questions were asked of participants in regards to their time spent involved in co-curricular programming. The time per week students were involved in co-curricular programming was assessed using a scale with possible responses of 16 or more hours per week (5), 11-15 hours per week (4), 6-10 hours per week (3), 1-5 hours per week (2), and never (1). Frequency in attendance of special events was assessed using scale with possible responses of more than once per week (5), once per week (4), once per month (3), once per semester (2), and never (1). Student interest in different co-curricular topics was assessed using a five-point scale. The scale provided had possible responses of very interested (5), interested (4), moderately interested (3), not very interested (2), not interested at all (1).

Data Analysis

Demographic characteristics were assessed using frequency statistics. Frequencies are presented as sample sizes and sample percentages. Pearson's product correlation was used to assess the linear relationship between GPA and attitudes of co-curricular involvement. Effect size was used to compare differences in attitudes and interest, between freshmen versus upperclassmen. Upperclassmen are a combined group of sophomores, juniors, and seniors due to sample size limitations. Participants' barriers to participation and statistical analyses were performed using SPSS v. 24.0.

Summary

This study utilized a survey approach that focused on student perspectives of co-curricular offerings. Those perspectives were examined in relation to academic success through GPA. Students were asked questions related to attitudes and success, interest, time involved, and barriers to participation. An e-mail with a link to the survey was sent to all students who lived on

campus at Casper College asking them to take the survey. The next section provides the results of the study.

Results

This section presents the results of the study conducted to assess the current co-curricular involvement of students living on campus at Casper College. After describing the characteristics of the respondents, analyses are organized by the research questions. Means, standard deviations, and effect sizes are reported.

Description of respondents

Emails were sent to all 308 students who lived on campus at Casper College during the spring semester of 2019. A total of 106 participants completed the survey for a response rate of 34.4%. Out of those responses, 13 were not usable because the respondents did not complete the survey after agreeing to the informed consent. Demographic data collected included age, gender, race, academic major, current year in school, full-time/part-time status, and GPA. The sample included 47 freshman, 29 sophomores, 10 juniors, and 2 seniors. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages were used to describe the sample. Table 1 shows demographic details for the 93 respondents.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages for Demographic Information

Characteristic	<i>N</i>	%
Gender		
Female	54	58.1%
Male	33	37.5%
Other	1	1.1%
No response	5	5.4%
Race		
Hispanic or Latino	4	4.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	1.1%
White	76	81.7%
Black or African American	1	1.1%
Other	2	2.2%
I prefer not to respond	4	4.3%
No response	5	5.4%
Age		
18-21 years	85	91.4%
22-24 years	2	2.2%
28-30 years	1	1.1%
No response	5	5.4%
Year		
Freshman	47	50.5%
Sophomore	29	31.2%
Junior	10	10.8%
Senior	2	2.2%
No response	5	5.4%
Full-time		
Yes	85	91.4%
No	2	2.2%
No response	6	6.5%

Of the 93 respondents, almost all were full time students ($n=85$; 91.4%) and between the age of 18-21 years old ($n=85$; 91.4%). Just over 58% of the participants were female ($n=54$). Almost 82% of the respondents were white, with the second highest represented race being Hispanic or Latino at 4%. Fifty percent of the respondents were freshman, and 91% of the students were attending school full time. The mean GPA for the sample of student respondents

was 3.29 ($SD=0.35$) on a 4-point scale. Table 2 shows the co-curricular programs in which survey respondents were involved.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages for Co-Curricular Activities in which Students were Involved

Co-Curricular Program	<i>N</i>	%
Work Study	21	22.6%
Phi Theta Kappa	18	19.4%
Intramural Sports	14	15.1%
Resident Assistant	9	9.7%
Livestock Judging Club	8	8.6%
Livestock Judging Team	8	8.6%
Association of Theater and Dance Students at CC	7	7.5%
Dance Company of the Department of Theater and Dance	7	7.5%
International Students Club	7	7.5%
National Society of Leadership and Success	7	7.5%
Fitting and Showing Club	6	6.5%
Help Yourself Academy	6	6.5%
Oil City Ag Club	6	6.5%
Alternative Spring Break	5	5.4%
Student Activities Employee	5	5.4%
Student Senate	5	5.4%
United States Institute of Theater Technology	5	5.4%
Art Club	4	4.3%
Campus Kitchen at Casper College	4	4.3%
Classroom Service Learning	4	4.3%
Criminal Justice Club	4	4.3%
Campus Democrats	3	3.2%
German Club	2	2.2%
Occupational Therapy Assistants Club (OTA)	2	2.2%
Student Ambassador Employee	2	2.2%
Chinook Student Newspaper	1	1.1%
Fire Science Club	1	1.1%
Japanese Club	1	1.1%
Phi Rho Pi (Forensics)	1	1.1%
Social Science Club	1	1.1%
Student Association of Respiratory Care (SARC)	1	1.1%

Students indicated that they were involved in 31 different co-curricular programs at Casper College. The co-curricular program with the highest response rate was the work study

program ($n=21$; 22.6%). The club that had the highest number of student participants was Phi Theta Kappa ($n=18$; 19.4%). Intramural sports were played by 15% of the student respondents. 93 student respondents indicated that they were involved in 176 different co-curricular programs.

Research question 1. What are the attitudes of Casper College students who live on campus about the impact co-curricular involvement has on their overall success?

Likert-scale responses to questions regarding attitudes about co-curricular involvement and success were collected; means of responses and standard deviations are found in Table 3. Responses to the attitudes about co-curricular programming are rank-ordered from highest mean to lowest mean. Students were asked for opinions on how their co-curricular involvement impacted their success in different areas of the student experience. Students had the most positive attitudes in regards to co-curricular programming helping them become a better student, helping them step outside of their comfort zone, and helping them make more friends. Each of these items elicited a mean higher than 4 indicating the attitudes were between agree and strongly agree on the attitude scale. The item with the smallest mean of 3.27 ($SD=1.05$) asked if students felt more confident with personal finances because of involvement with clubs or campus programming.

Table 3

Attitudes Regarding Co-Curricular Involvement among Students

Items	<i>M</i> (<i>n</i>)	<i>SD</i>
Because of my involvement in co-curricular activities		
I have become a better student	4.19 (83)	0.86
I am more likely to step outside my comfort zone	4.17 (81)	0.86
I have made more friends	4.02 (82)	0.98
I feel more connected to our campus	3.93 (82)	0.94
I feel more comfortable approaching my instructors	3.92 (83)	1.03
I have gained practical experience	3.92 (83)	0.95
I have become a better leader	3.90 (83)	0.89
I feel more independent	3.87 (83)	1.00
I feel more confident speaking in public	3.82 (83)	1.05
I can problem-solve more effectively	3.80 (82)	0.94
Has helped keep me on track to graduate	3.78 (81)	1.04
Has helped me set a direction for my future	3.66 (83)	1.04
I have an increased understanding of different cultures	3.60 (82)	0.99
My grades are better	3.54 (82)	0.86
I have stayed at Casper College	3.46 (80)	1.15
I feel more confident with personal finances	3.27 (81)	1.05

Note. Likert-scale responses were measured on a scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

All 16 attitude items had a mean above 3.0. The remaining attitude items that were not included in the previous paragraph had a mean attitude that fell between 3.46 and 3.93. These results indicate students agree that co-curricular programming had an impact on their success in all items presented in the survey.

Mean attitudes of freshmen and upperclassmen were also compared. Sophomores, juniors and seniors were combined into one group because of low sample sizes in each group. Effect size (*d*) was used to examine the differences between attitudes of freshmen and upperclassmen (see Table 4).

Table 4

Attitudes Regarding Co-Curricular Involvement among Freshmen and Upperclassmen

Items	Freshman <i>M (SD)</i>	Upperclassmen <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>d</i>
Because of my involvement in co-curricular activities			
I have become a better student	4.21 (0.89)	4.28 (0.68)	0.09
My grades are better	3.62 (0.91)	3.55 (0.75)	0.08
I am more likely to step outside my comfort zone*	4.34 (0.75)	4.15 (0.81)	0.24
I feel more independent*	4.10 (0.94)	3.75 (0.95)	0.37
I feel more comfortable approaching my instructors	4.05 (1.10)	3.90 (0.87)	0.15
I feel more connected to our campus*	4.13 (0.87)	3.80 (0.81)	0.39
I have made more friends	4.05 (1.01)	4.13 (0.85)	0.09
I have an increased understanding of different cultures*	3.87 (0.99)	3.43 (0.90)	0.46
I have become a better leader	3.95 (0.86)	3.98 (0.83)	0.04
I feel more confident speaking in public*	4.32 (1.22)	3.80 (1.05)	0.46
I can problem-solve more effectively*	3.97 (0.78)	3.72 (1.00)	0.28

I feel more confident with personal finances*	3.54 (1.02)	3.05 (1.01)	0.48
Has helped me set a direction for my future	3.79 (1.01)	3.65 (1.03)	0.14
Has helped keep me on track to graduate*	4.08 (0.93)	3.61 (1.03)	0.48
I gain practical experience*	4.08 (0.74)	3.88 (1.02)	0.22
I have stayed at Casper College	3.51 (1.12)	3.49 (1.17)	0.02

Note. * $d > 0.2$; Likert-scale responses were measured on a scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

When comparing the effect size of freshmen and upperclassman, freshman had higher mean responses in 13 out of the 16 attitude questions. All of the effect sizes that exceeded Cohen’s convention for a small effect indicated that freshman had a higher mean response. Of the attitudes that had a meaningful effect size, four attitudes were very close to Cohen’s convention for a medium effect. These attitudes were co-curricular involvement has kept me on track to graduate, made me more confident with personal finances, increased confidence in public speaking, and increased understanding of different cultures. These attitudes fell between 0.46 and 0.48, indicating that freshmen had higher agreement than upperclassmen on all attitudes that showed a meaningful effect.

Research question 2. What is the relationship between attitudes about co-curricular involvement and GPA of Casper College students who live on campus?

Pearson’s Product Correlation was used to examine the linear relationship between attitudes regarding co-curricular involvement and GPA. Little to no relationship was found between GPA and items regarding attitudes towards co-curricular involvement (see Table 5). Five other items also showed small but visible effects. Overall, the average of the 16 attitude items correlated with GPA also showed a weak negative relationship ($r = -.049$).

Table 5

Pearson's Product Correlation between GPA and Attitudes Regarding Co-Curricular

Involvement among Students

Items	<i>r</i>	<i>n</i>
Because of my Involvement in Co-Curricular Activities		
I have become a better student	-0.046	79
I am more likely to step outside my comfort zone	-0.107	77
I have made more friends	-0.087	78
I feel more connected to our campus	-0.108	78
I feel more comfortable approaching my instructors	-0.054	79
I have gained practical experience.	-0.044	79
I have become a better leader	-0.149	79
I feel more independent	-0.113	79
I feel more confident speaking in public	-0.088	79
I can problem-solve more effectively	-0.176	78
Has helped keep me on track to graduate	-0.140	77
Has helped me set a direction for my future	-0.132	79
I have increased understanding of different cultures	-0.164	78
My grades are better	-0.019	79
I have stayed at Casper College	-0.106	76
I feel more confident with personal finances	-0.133	77

Note. Sample size for correlations was reduced for pairwise removal of participants with missing data.

Research question 3. What are the barriers to participation in co-curricular offerings for Casper College students who live on campus?

Participants were asked what reasons prevented them from participating in co-curricular activities. Participants' responses were grouped into seven categories. These categories were

identified based on themes of the responses. Many open-ended responses had key words or sentences that helped the researcher categorize them, i.e. homework, time, and work. The themes, number of responses for each, and percentages are listed in Table 6. The top three barriers students identified were conflict with academic responsibilities, not being able to allocate enough time to participate, and conflict with other commitments. In addition, in the open-ended questions, students noted that they have busy schedules, homework conflicts with activities, and that they have little extra time.

Table 6

Frequency and Percent Responses of Barriers to Attending Co-Curricular Activities

Barriers	<i>n</i>	%
Conflict with academic responsibilities	20	21.5%
Cannot allocate enough time to participate	18	19.4%
Conflict with other commitments	16	17.2%
Conflict with work schedule	6	6.5%
Unaware of activities	4	4.3%
Social apprehension	4	4.3%
No interest	4	4.3%

Of the 72 responses, 60 students (83%) indicated that barriers to participation involved a conflict with other commitments and responsibilities in their lives. The remaining 12 students (17%) were either unaware of the programs, apprehensive of social interaction, or not interested.

Participants were also asked about their suggestions on how to get other students involved in co-curricular programming. Responses were grouped into seven categories. These

categories were identified based on themes of the responses. Many open-ended responses had key words or sentences that helped the researcher categorize them, i.e. advertising, incentives, and variety. The themes, number of responses for each, and percentages are listed in Table 7. The top two suggestions on how to get more students involved were making more of an effort toward advertising, and making more of an effort getting to know the students.

Table 7

Frequency and Percent Responses of Suggestions for Involvement in Co-Curricular Activities

Ideas	<i>n</i>	%
More effort advertising	28	45.2%
More effort getting to know students	13	21.0%
More flexibility in times activities are offered	5	8.1%
More variety of activities	5	8.1%
More incentives to participate in activities	4	6.5%
More food offered activities	4	6.5%
More activities offered overall	3	4.8%

Of the 62 responses, 42 students (66%) indicated that there should be more effort given to making sure students know about programming and getting to know the participants. The remaining 21 students (34%) thought there should be more variety, flexibility, incentives, and frequency of activities offered.

Research question 4. How often are Casper College students who live on campus involved in co-curricular activities?

Two questions were asked of participants in regards to their time spent involved in co-curricular programming. Students were asked how much time per week they were involved in activities. Participants most frequently reported that they spent between 1 and 5 hours per week involved with a club or campus programming. Students were also asked how often they attended campus sponsored special events. Participants most frequently reported attending activities once per month (see Table 8).

Table 8

Frequency and Percent Responses of Time Spent and Attendance in Co-Curricular Activities

Questions and Responses	<i>n</i>	%
About how much time per week are you involved with a club or campus co-curricular program?		
Never	14	15.1%
1-5 hours per week	37	39.8%
6-10 hours per week	15	16.1%
11-15 hours per week	9	9.7%
16 or more hours per week	13	14.0%
No response	5	5.4%
Total	93	100%
How often do you attend campus sponsored special events?		
Never	0	0%
Once per semester	20	21.5%
Once per month	34	36.6%
Once per week	22	23.7%
More than once per week	12	12.9%
No response	5	5.4%
Total	93	100%

Note: Percent response is of the total sample, including those who did not respond to the question.

Total involvement in co-curricular programs was also compared between freshmen and upperclassmen (sophomore, junior, senior). Sophomores, juniors, and seniors were combined

because of the small number of juniors and seniors living on campus at Casper College. An independent samples t-tests showed a significant difference between total involvement of the two groups and indicated that upperclassmen reported participating in more co-curricular activities ($M = 2.46, SD = 1.82$) compared to freshman students ($M = 1.45, SD = 1.41$), $t(86) = 2.95, p = 0.004$.

Research question 5. What are co-curricular programming topics that most interest Casper College students who live on campus?

Responses to questions regarding interest level in co-curricular program topics were collected; means of responses and standard deviations are found in Table 9. Mean responses were rank-ordered from highest mean (most interested) to lowest mean (least interested). Students were most interested in co-curricular programs that offer job skills or professional development, and leadership skills. Both elicited a mean above 4, indicating that these programs fell between interested and very interested on the scale. Students showed moderate interest in all of the rest of the topics. The item that elicited the smallest mean was family-oriented programming.

Table 9

Interest in Co-Curricular Program Topics among Students

Program Topics	<i>M</i> (<i>n</i>)	<i>SD</i>
Job skills or professional development	4.13 (93)	0.94
Leadership skills	4.05 (93)	0.86
Special events	3.89 (93)	0.81
Physical activity or healthy practices	3.87 (93)	1.06
On campus clubs	3.84 (93)	0.97
Community service	3.76 (93)	1.16
Cultural diversity	3.72 (93)	1.20
Service learning	3.47 (93)	1.08
Intramural sports	3.41 (93)	1.28
Social, political, or economic issues	3.23 (93)	1.22
Family oriented programming	3.02 (93)	1.15

Note. Likert-scale responses were measured on a scale from 1 = Not Interested at All to 5 =

Very Interested

A comparison of co-curricular interest between freshmen and upperclassmen was also done. Again, sophomores, juniors and seniors were combined into one group. Effect size (*d*) was used to measure the associations between interest of freshmen and upperclassmen (see Table 10).

Table 10

Comparison between Freshmen and Upperclassmen Interest in Co-Curricular Program Topics

Program Topics	Freshmen	Upperclassmen	<i>d</i>
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	
On campus clubs	3.85 (1.00)	3.85 (0.91)	0
Intramural sports	3.34 (1.24)	3.54 (1.27)	0.16
Special events*	3.96 (0.75)	3.76 (0.83)	0.25
Service learning	3.45 (1.14)	3.49 (0.93)	0.04
Leadership skills	3.98 (0.90)	4.07 (0.69)	0.11
Cultural diversity*	3.94 (1.17)	3.41 (1.05)	0.48
Social, political, economic issues	3.13 (1.36)	3.24 (0.89)	0.10
Physical activity or health	3.83 (1.19)	3.85 (0.82)	0.02
Family oriented programming	2.98 (0.99)	3.00 (1.16)	0.02
Job skills/professional development*	4.22 (0.79)	4.02 (0.85)	0.24
Community service	3.72 (1.14)	3.76 (1.04)	0.03

Note. * $d > 0.2$; Responses were measured on a scale from 1 = Not Interested at All to 5 = Very Interested.

Effect sizes that are greater than .20 indicate differences that are noticeable and not trivial. Three of the topic areas that exceeded Cohen’s convention of .20 indicated that freshman had noticeably higher means compared to upperclassmen. One of these three topic areas was cultural diversity with a difference approaching a medium effect. The other two areas, with small effects, were special events and job skills or professional development.

Summary

This section presented the results of the study to determine how attitudes about co-curricular involvement pertained to success factors and the relationship of student attitudes on co-curricular involvement and GPA. It also tried to determine opinions on barriers to participation in co-curricular activities, how often the students were involved in co-curricular activities overall, and interest in co-curricular program topics. A description of respondents included gender, race, age, current year in school, and full-time/part-time status. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages were used to describe the sample.

Of the self-reported Likert scale items on attitudes about co-curricular involvement and success, students agreed with all 16 statements. Effect sizes showed a substantive difference in means between freshmen and upperclassmen in their attitudes about co-curricular involvement and success. Quantitative data from the survey of Casper College students who live on campus showed that student attitudes about their participation in co-curricular activities had a very weak relationship with GPA.

Students felt that their most significant barriers to participation were conflict with academic responsibilities, not being able to allot enough time in their schedule to participate, and conflict with other commitments. On average, students reported that they spent about 1 to 5 hours per week participating in co-curricular programming and went to a campus special event about once per month. Upperclassmen reported that they were involved in at least one more co-curricular program than freshmen and spent more time participating in co-curricular activities.

In an evaluation of student interests in co-curricular programming, survey respondents indicated they were most interested in programs that offer job skills or professional development. Effect sizes showed substantive differences between freshmen and upperclassmen in co-

curricular program interests. Conclusions, limitations, recommendations, and suggestions for further research are discussed in the final section.

Discussion

The holistic learning experience evolved in the 1900s as the use of co-curricular activities was slowly given a defining role on college campuses (Rudolf, 1990). These activities are diverse and varied. Programming is based on the individual landscape of each higher education institution and the students they serve. Involvement opportunities can vary to include clubs, organizations, work study opportunities, intramural sports, community service, special events, and speakers or lectures.

There is support from student development theorists in higher education that co-curricular activities enhance student learning and success. The works of Astin (1984, *Theory of Involvement*), and Tinto (1993, *Interactionist Theory*) support this study. Community colleges differ from four-year institutions in the role co-curricular involvement plays on their campuses (Elliot, 2009; Ragel, 2016; Storey, 2010). There is very little research that focuses on co-curricular involvement at two-year institutions. For that reason, this study focused on co-curricular involvement in the community college setting.

The purpose of this study was to gather perceptions of Casper College students who live on campus about co-curricular involvement. Through these perceptions, attitudes about co-curricular involvement as it pertained to success, the relationship of attitudes on co-curricular involvement and GPA, opinions on barriers to participation, frequency of involvement, and interest in co-curricular program topics were investigated.

Conclusions

This project began with a review of the literature to bring context and background to the development of co-curricular involvement on college campuses. From this review, a lack of scholarly research in the community college setting was identified. A survey to collect

information from Casper College students living on campus regarding their viewpoints and opinions about their co-curricular involvement was conducted. In the following sections, the research questions are referenced for further discussion about conclusions of the study.

Research question 1. What are the attitudes of Casper College students who live on campus about the impact co-curricular involvement has on their overall success?

There was a positive response to all 16 items about attitudes on co-curricular involvement and success. Casper College students who live on campus reported the highest agreement with three areas about co-curricular involvement impacting success. These were being a better student, stepping out of a comfort zone, and making new friends. All of these items had means of 4.0 and above.

These results were not surprising and support similar findings from other researchers. Many researchers found that students were more likely to step out of their comfort zone and make new friends because of co-curricular involvement (Martin et al., 2014; Peck et al, 2016; Sims, Lubsen, & Guggiari-Peel, 2017; Webber et al., 2013). Webber, et al. (2013) also found that engagement led to academic success and becoming a better student.

When comparing the effect sizes of freshmen and upperclassmen, freshman had higher mean responses in 13 out of the 16 items. Of the items that had a meaningful effect size, four were very close to Cohen's convention for a medium effect. These were co-curricular involvement has kept me on track to graduate, made me more confident with personal finances, increased my confidence in public speaking, and increased my understanding of different cultures. This could indicate that freshmen have a more positive outlook on the programming offered and its impact on their success. It could also indicate that some upperclassmen could have had a bad experience with a program. They also may not have felt their co-curricular

experience as upperclassmen was as valuable compared to when they were freshmen.

Upperclassmen have already experienced a year of co-curricular programs. Freshmen have not had that extra experience yet. These factors could have contributed to upperclassmen having a slightly more negative outlook about the impact activities had on their success. The items that were meaningful can also serve as indicators for employees to spend more time focusing on programming in those specific areas.

Overall, student attitudes about the effects of involvement in co-curricular programming from this survey show that they are seeing value from time invested in being involved. It also indicates that co-curricular programming can contribute to the student experience. These attitudes can be connected to success factors and can be included in already existing student assessment practices at Casper College. These findings can also serve as a prompt for employees to consider how they can best facilitate success through co-curricular programming. When employees better understand student opinions on how involvement impacts their success, a stronger plan of action can be developed to allocate resources.

Research question 2. What is the relationship between attitudes about co-curricular involvement and GPA of Casper College students who live on campus?

Study results indicated little to no relationship between attitudes about co-curricular involvement and GPA for the participants. All correlations indicated weak negative relationships. The results could be attributed to the low variability with GPA. Ninety-three percent of the total respondents reported a GPA of 3.0 or above, and 16.1% of the respondents reported a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Research question 3. What are the barriers to participation in co-curricular offerings for Casper College students who live on campus?

The results from the survey indicate that students felt the most significant barriers to participation were conflict with academic responsibilities, not having enough time to participate, and conflict with other commitments. It is encouraging to hear that academics come first for the students and their GPAs reflect that commitment. Co-curricular involvement should not have to conflict with academic responsibilities and there should be a more focused effort to integrate these programs into the classroom experience. Similar studies have emphasized the need to make a more directed effort to link co-curricular opportunities to the academic experience and bring these programs into the conversation when it comes to meeting learning outcomes (Banta & Kuh 1998; Busby, 2015; Dean, 2015; Feldman et al. 2011; Storey, 2010).

Not having enough time and already being committed to other responsibilities is not surprising. For many community college students, wearing multiple hats is a way of life. Even when living on campus these students have other commitments. This gives student life employees a short period of time to provide activities that fit in the busy schedules of students.

Participants were also asked for suggestions on how to get other students involved in co-curricular programming. Participants' indicated that the best ways to increase involvement was to make more of an effort advertising, and to make more of an effort getting to know the students. Better advertising is an obvious suggestion. The more students are aware of programming, the more likely they are to participate. It can also be said that students are more likely to be involved if they feel cared for. If students feel like staff have made an effort to get to know them, they are more likely to make an investment to participate.

Research question 4. How often are Casper College students who live on campus involved in co-curricular activities?

The study showed that about 40% of students involved in co-curricular programming spend about 1-5 hours per week participating in activities. It also showed that about 37% of students attended a campus special event about once per month. These results indicate that the survey respondents make a directed effort to get involved in some way, but only have a limited amount of time to do so. These findings align with studies done at community college settings, indicating community college students have limited time to participate (Elliot, 2009; Ragle, 2016; Storey, 2010).

Total involvement and time spent participating in co-curricular programs was also compared between freshmen and upperclassmen. An independent samples t-test showed a significant difference between total involvement of the two groups. Upperclassmen reported that they were involved in at least one more co-curricular program than freshman. This could be an indication that upperclassmen see the value of their participation in co-curricular programming, explaining the finding of increased involvement. It could also be an indication that upperclassmen have more time to participate, or have made more friends through their time involved. All of these could explain an increased involvement in different organizations and programs.

With this insight, effort should be put into determining when students are available. This may ensure programming is provided when students do not have other commitments. Because students suggest their time for these pursuits is limited, a more directed effort should be put into developing programming that will make the most impact on success factors while also fitting into their schedule. These results show that stakes are high when it comes to co-curricular

programming. Employees get limited opportunities to implement impactful programming. If that programming does not provide a connection, or fit into the busy lives of students, they may not be willing to participate.

Research question 5. What are co-curricular programming topics that most interest Casper College students who live on campus?

Overall, students indicated that they were interested in all co-curricular program topics presented in the survey. The topics that had the highest interest levels were programs that offered job skills or professional development, and leadership skills. This suggests that students want to learn tangible skills from co-curricular programming that they can utilize in the workforce. Other studies have considered how co-curricular involvement can facilitate leadership and professional development (Dean, 2015; Haber, 2011; Nicoli, 2011). The results of this present study suggest that there is an opportunity for collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs on the Casper College campus. Employees could look at specific leadership and professional development practices related to each program of study, then develop programs focused on those outcomes. The topic with the lowest interest among students was family oriented programming. This is not surprising considering the demographics of the population that was surveyed. Many of these students do not have spouses or children.

A comparison of interest on programming topics between freshmen and upperclassmen was also conducted. All of the effect sizes that exceeded Cohen's convention for a small effect indicated that freshman had higher means. Program interests involving cultural diversity, special events, and job skills or professional development saw an effect. This could be an indication that when students at Casper College first start their educational journey, they are excited about the different opportunities available to them. They want to expand their cultural horizons (cultural

diversity), meet new people (special events), and gain experience that will prepare them to be successful professionals (job skills/professional development).

These responses can be aligned with the mission and vision statements at Casper College, which are conveyed to all incoming students and throughout the recruitment funnel. In the mission and vision statements, the values held by the institution are communicated. One of them is creating a community on campus. This value aligns with the interest in meeting new people through special events. Another is cultivating diversity. This aligns with interest in expanding cultural horizons. On the front page of the website in the first sentence, Casper College expresses the goal for students to transfer or join the workforce after their experience at the institution. This aligns with the interest in job skills and professional development. The results from the survey may be an indication that the sentiments conveyed by Casper College to incoming freshmen are having an impact on the interests they have in co-curricular programming topics.

Limitations

Although the survey was sent to all students who live on campus at Casper College, the response rate may not allow for generalization to all students enrolled at Casper College. In addition, due to the demographics of the survey respondents, results may not be generalizable to students of different races, genders, or ethnic backgrounds.

Another limitation for the survey is that the researcher may not have included all possible items that relate to students' attitudes on co-curricular programming. The reliance on student self-reporting could be another limitation. The idea of co-curricular involvement can sometimes be a confusing one and is still a relatively new concept among students. The description of each item about attitudes of co-curricular involvement could be interpreted differently by each student. The items may not have been transparent to all students, who were unable to ask

questions for clarification.

Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to create a foundation for more effective planning, programming, and assessment of co-curricular offerings at Casper College. The study also investigated barriers to participation, time spent participating, and interest in co-curricular program topics. This study adds to increasing knowledge concerning co-curricular involvement for students in community colleges. Co-curricular activities can continue to enhance the success of community college students. There are opportunities for faculty and staff to gain a better understanding of the role co-curricular programming holds in the student experience.

It is recommended that efforts be improved to link co-curricular activities to initiatives focused on student success. The results from this study can help inform employees at Casper College about the perceptions students have about co-curricular involvement and how it pertains to their success. These attitudes can be correlated with student success factors that are consistent with the mission and vision of the college. A more focused effort can be put on initiatives where co-curricular programming can have the most significant effect. Based on the student responses to the survey, examples could include programming focused on adapting to new environments (I feel more independent), socialization skills (I have made more friends), leadership skills (I have become a better leader), learning to be independent (I feel more independent), public speaking skills (I feel more confident speaking in public), problem solving skills (I can problem solve more effectively), skills on navigating the classroom environment effectively (I am more comfortable approaching my instructors), and skills specific to workforce preparation (I have gained practical experience).

It is also recommended that a more focused effort be put forth to identify the barriers to participation, time involved, and interest in program topics on a yearly basis. The reason for making this a yearly practice is because the student population changes from year to year. This is even more prevalent at the community college where turnover rate is much higher than four-year institutions. If those are not identified at the beginning of each academic year, programming strategies may be ineffective. At the beginning of each year a survey should be sent to students asking what their perceived barriers, time involved, and interests include. These responses will help direct efforts to create more opportunities for involvement. This will also help identify the average time students are willing to dedicate to programming so efforts can be made to create schedules that can match up with the needs of the students. Additionally, this may help focus programming efforts that pique the interest of students.

Suggestions for further research

Because of the low variability for demographics in the students surveyed, age, race, and status (full-time vs. part-time) were not compared. More variability in all aspects might yield more insight and generalizability. Further research could focus on comparisons of these demographics within more diverse populations.

A longitudinal study could also be conducted to compare attitudes students have about co-curricular programming across multiple years. In the community college setting, a two year study would be most appropriate, starting with the freshmen and revisiting that same group a year later as sophomores. Comparisons between GPA, attitudes, barriers, time spent involved, and interests in co-curricular programming could be used to assess differences between year one and year two. This approach might bring insight into the changes students go through in regards to their attitudes, barriers, time spent involved, and interests in co-curricular programming as

they progress through the academic experience. This could prove valuable to campus administrators when considering how to implement programming that aligns with these changes.

A final recommendation would be to conduct a similar study using a qualitative approach. This could permit a different perspective of students' attitudes about co-curricular activities and would give a more detailed insight into barriers to participation from an individual perspective. Qualitative research methodology could help answer questions quantitative research may not answer. It may provide a more in depth examination of student experiences. It may also bring to light compelling personal stories.

Summary

The current higher education landscape demands an emphasis on continuous improvement, attention to student success, and data-based decisions. Colleges spend considerable effort and institutional resources attempting to maximize success and satisfaction for students. There are many opportunities to continuously link co-curricular activities to academic programs, courses, and outcomes. Often what happens outside of credit bearing classes is not thought about or given an educational value.

Community college professionals should participate in ways to improve the learning of all students. A continuous effort needs to be made to understand co-curricular offerings. This can strengthen a perspective that these activities are not just valuable as student learning tools, but are investments in the success of the college as a whole (Storey, 2010). By understanding the factors that influence student success, employees can provide a broader perspective to help institutions improve.

This study sought to add to the growing body of knowledge about co-curricular involvement and student success. It also sought to give a platform for practical evaluation and

application of co-curricular programming on the Casper College campus. In this study, students agreed that their co-curricular involvement had an impact on their success in many ways. They also helped identify how often they are participating, barriers to participation, and ideas for topics of interest. By gathering information regarding attitudes about involvement and success, perceptions on barriers to participation, and gathering a student perspective on programming, a framework for further investigation into this subject has been developed, specifically at Casper College but also in the community college setting overall.

References

- American Association of Community Colleges (2018). Retrieved July 7, 2018, from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Template.cfm?section=AboutCommunityColleges>
- American Council on Education. (1937). *The student personnel point of view*. (American Council on Education Studies, series 1, no. 3). Washington, D.C.
- Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2008). *College learning for the new global century: Outcomes and assessment approaches*. Washington, D.C.
- Astin, A. W. (1975). *Preventing students from dropping out*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Astin, A. W. (1977). *Four Critical Years. Effects of College on Beliefs, Attitudes, and Knowledge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Astin, A.W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25, 297-308.
- Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco.: Jossey-Bass.
- Astin, A. W. (1999). "Involvement in Learning" Revisited: Lessons We Have Learned. *Journal of College Student Development*, 40(5), 587-98.
- Bailey, T. R., & Morest, V. S. (2006). *Defending the community college equity agenda*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Banta, T. W., & Kuh, G. D. (1998). A missing link in assessment: Collaboration between academic and student affairs professionals. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 30(2), 40-46.

- Bergen-Cico, D., & Viscomi, J. (2012). Exploring the association between campus co-curricular involvement and academic achievement. *Journal of College Student Retention, 14*(3), 329-343.
- Busby, K. (2015). Co-Curricular Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 2014*(164), 39-50.
- Callan, P. M. (2017). Stewards of opportunity: America's public community colleges. In *The American academic profession* (pp. 95-112). New York: Routledge.
- Coates, H. (2005). The value of student engagement for higher education quality assurance. *Quality in higher education, 11*(1), 25-36.
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). 2014. *Engagement by design*. Austin: University of Texas Community College Leadership Program.
- Collaço, C. M. (2017). Increasing student engagement in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice, 17*(4), 40-47.
- Dean, K. L. (2015). Understanding student success by measuring Co-Curricular learning. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 2014*(164), 27-38. doi:10.1002/ir.20113
- Elias, K., & Drea, C. (2013). The Co-Curricular Record: Enhancing a Postsecondary Education. *College Quarterly, 16*(1).
- Elliot, J.R. (2009). The Relationship of Involvement in Co-Curricular Programs on Community College Student Success and Development. *Open Access Theses and Dissertations from the College of Education and Human Sciences*. Paper 44. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cehs/diss/44>.
- Feldman, M., Aper, J. P., & Meredith, S. T. (2011). Co-curricular assessment scale development. *JGE: The Journal of General Education, 60*(1), 16-42.

- Garcia, V. (2010). First-generation college students: How co-curricular involvement can assist with success. *The Vermont Connection*, 31(1), 6.
- Haber, P. (2011). Peer education in student leadership programs: Responding to co-curricular challenges. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2011(133), 65-76. doi:10.1002/ss.385
- Hernandez, J., & Hernández, I. (2014). The Role of the Executive-Level Student Services Officer Within a Community College Organizational Structure. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2014(166), 33-39.
- Hersh, R. H., Bundick, M., Keeling, R., Keyes, C., Kurpius, A., Shavelson, R., Silverman, D., & Swaner, L. (2009). A well-rounded education for a flat world. *Educational Leadership*, 67(1), 50-53.
- Higher Learning Commission. (2016). The criteria for accreditation and core components. Retrieved July 7, 2018.
- Kerr, G. A., & Stirling, A. E. (2015). Professionalization of Coaches to Reduce Emotionally Harmful Coaching Practices: Lessons Learned from the Education Sector. *International Journal of Coaching Science*, 9(1).
- Kilpatrick, B. G., & Wilburn, N. L. (2010). Breaking the ice: Career development activities for accounting students. *American Journal of Business Education*, 3(11), 77-84.
- Kuh, G. D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement. *Change*, 33(3), 10-17.
- Long, D. (2012). Theories and models of student development. *Environments for Student Growth and Development: Librarians and Student Affairs in Collaboration* (pp. 41-55). Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries.

- Lourens, A. (2014). The development of co-curricular interventions to strengthen female engineering students' sense of self-efficacy and to improve the retention of women in traditionally male-dominated disciplines and careers. *South African Journal of Industrial Engineering*, 25(3), 112-125.
- Malm, J. R. (2008). Six community college presidents: Organizational pressures, change processes and approaches to leadership. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 32(8), 614-628.
- Martin, K., Galentino, R., & Townsend, L. (2014). Community college student success: The role of motivation and self-empowerment. *Community College Review*, 42(3), 221-241.
- Martin, J. M. (2017). It just didn't work out: Examining nonreturning students' stories about their freshman experience. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 19(2), 176-198.
- Millett, C. M., Payne, D. G., Dwyer, C. A., Stickler, L. M., & Alexiou, J. J. (2008). A Culture of Evidence: An Evidence-Centered Approach to Accountability for Student Learning Outcomes. *Educational Testing Service*.
- Nicoli, G. T. (2011). *The impact of co-curricular involvement on college students' need for cognition*. University of Iowa.
- Pasque, P. A., & Murphy, R. (2005). The intersections of living-learning programs and social identity as factors of academic achievement and intellectual engagement. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(4), 429-441.
- Peck, A., Hall, D., Cramp, C., Lawhead, J., Fehring, K., & Simpson, T. (2016). The co-curricular connection: The impact of experiences beyond the classroom on soft skills. *NACE Journal*, 76(3), 30-34.

- Ragle, C. (2016). *The effects of co-curricular involvement on first-generation community college students* (Doctoral dissertation, Indiana State University).
- Rudolph, F. (1990). *The American college and university: A history*. University of Georgia Press.
- Schreiner, L. A. (2013). Thriving in college. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2013(143), 41-52.
- Sims, S., Luebsen, W., & Guggiari-Peel, C. (2017). Exploring the role of co-curricular student engagement in relation to student retention, attainment and improving inclusivity. *The Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change*, 3(1), 93-109.
- Storey, K. L. (2010). *Bridging the gap: Linking co-curricular activities to student learning outcomes in community college students*. National-Louis University.
- Suskie, L. (2015). Introduction to measuring Co-Curricular learning. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2014(164), 5-13.
- Terenzini, P. T., Rendon, L. I., Upcraft, M. L., Millar, S. B., Allison, K. W., Gregg, P. L., & Jalomo, R. (1994). The transition to college: Diverse students, diverse stories. *Research in higher education*, 35(1), 57-73.
- Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving college*. University of Chicago Press.
- Tinto, V. (1993). Building community. *Liberal Education*, 79(4), 16-21.
- Tinto, V. (1997). Classrooms as communities: Exploring the educational character of student persistence. *The Journal of higher education*, 68(6), 599-623.
- Tinto, V. (1998). Colleges as communities: Taking research on student persistence seriously. *The review of higher education*, 21(2), 167-177.

Webber, K. L., Krylow, R. B., & Zhang, Q. (2013). Does involvement really matter? Indicators of college student success and satisfaction. *Journal of College Student*

Development, 54(6), 591-611.

Zhao, C. M., & Kuh, G. D. (2004). Adding value: Learning communities and student engagement. *Research in higher education*, 45(2), 115-138.

Appendix A

Survey of Co-Curricular Involvement at Casper College

In this survey, please give your opinion on co-curricular involvement at Casper College. Answer each question to the best of your ability.

I really appreciate your input!

1. What Casper College sponsored co-curricular programs are you involved in?

Please check all programs in which you are involved on the list below of Casper College sponsored co-curricular programs.

Alternative Spring Break

Art Club

Association of Theater and Dance Students at CC (The Flight)

Campus Democrats

Campus Kitchen at Casper College

Chinook Student Newspaper

Civic Engagement Program

Classroom Service Learning (Community service as a part of classroom requirements)

Computer Science Club

Criminal Justice Club

Culture Club

Dance Company of the Department of Theater and Dance (The Bakkai).

Entomology and Beekeeping

Expression Literary and Arts Magazine

Fire Science Club

Fitting and Showing Club

French Club

Geology Club

German Club

Help Yourself Academy

International Students Club

Intramural Sports program (Played in an on campus intramural sport(s))

Japanese Club

Livestock Judging Club

Livestock Judging Team

National Society of Leadership and Success

Occupational Therapy Assistants Club (OTA)

Oil City Ag Club

Opera Club

Phi Rho Pi (Forensics)

Phi Theta Kappa

Residence Hall Association

Resident Assistant Program (Employed as an RA)

Robotics Club

Shanklin Travers Addictionology Resource Society (STARS)
 Social Science Club
 Student Activities Employee Program (Employed as a student activities assistant)
 Student Ambassador Employee Program (Employed as a student ambassador)
 Student Association of Respiratory Care (SARC)
 Student Nurses' Association
 Student Pharmacy Association
 Student Radiographer Association
 Student Senate (Hold a role as a student senate officer)
 Thunderbird Student Leadership Institute
 United States Institute of Theater Technology
 Welding and Autobody Club
 Work Study Program (Employed as a work study on campus)

How much do you agree with each of the following statements about co-curricular involvement?

If you have no experience with co-curricular activities, please choose NA (not applicable).

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree or disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree, NA= Not applicable

1 2 3 4 5 NA

2. Involvement in clubs or campus programming helps me become a better student.
3. My grades are better because of my involvement in clubs or campus programming.
4. I am more likely to step outside of my comfort zone because of my involvement with clubs or campus programming.
5. I feel more independent because of my involvement in clubs or campus programming.
6. I feel more comfortable approaching my instructors because of my involvement in clubs or campus programming.
7. I feel more connected to our campus because of my involvement with clubs or campus programming.
8. I have made more friends because of my involvement with clubs or campus programming.
9. I have an increased understanding of different cultures because of my involvement in clubs or campus programming.
10. I feel like I have become a better leader because of my involvement with clubs or campus programming.
11. I feel more confident speaking in public because of my involvement with clubs or campus programming.
12. I can problem-solve more effectively because of my involvement in clubs or campus programming.
13. I feel more confident with personal finances because of my involvement with clubs or campus programming.
14. Being involved with clubs or campus programming has helped me set a direction for my future.
15. Involvement in clubs or campus programming has helped keep me on track to graduate in a timely manner.
16. I gain practical experience from involvement in clubs or campus programming that I can use when I graduate.
17. I have stayed at Casper College partly because of my involvement in clubs or campus programming.

How interested are you in the following types of co-curricular programming below?

If you have no experience with co-curricular activities, please choose NA (not applicable).

1=Not interested at all, 2=Not very interested, 3=Moderately interested, 4=Interested, 5=Very interested, NA=Not applicable

1 2 3 4 5 NA

18. On campus clubs
19. Intramural sports
20. Special events

21. Service learning

How interested are you in the following co-curricular program topics below?

If you have no experience with co-curricular activities, please choose NA (not applicable).

1=Not interested at all, 2=Not very interested, 3=Moderately interested, 4=Interested, 5=Very interested, NA=Not applicable

1 2 3 4 5 NA

22. Leadership skills

23. Cultural diversity

24. Social, political, or economic issues

25. Physical activity or healthy practices

26. Family oriented programming

27. Job skills and professional development

28. Community service

Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible by choosing the answer that best represents you or filling in the space provided.

29. What is your academic major?

30. What is your current year in school?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

31. Are you currently a full time student taking at least 12 credit hours?

Yes

No

32. How many of your current courses are online?

33. What is your current GPA?

34. What is your age?

18-21

22-24

25-27

28-30

31 and above

35. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Other

36. What is your racial or ethnic identification?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other
- I prefer not to respond

37. About how much time per week are you involved with a club or campus sponsored co-curricular program.

- Never
- 1-5 hours a week
- 6-10 hours per week
- 11-15 hours per week
- 16 or more hours per week

38. How often do you attend campus sponsored special events (an example of this would be intramural sports, residence hall sponsored events, or theater/music productions)

- Never
- Once per semester
- Once per month
- Once per week
- More than once per week

39. What are some reasons that prevent you from participating in co-curricular activities?

40. How do you think Casper College get more students involved in campus sponsored events, clubs, or organizations?

Appendix B

Survey Cover Letter

Hello Students,

My name is Nick Whipps and I am conducting a research study as a part of the requirements to complete my Doctor of Education through the University of Wyoming. The purpose of this study is to examine the degree to which involvement in co-curricular programming here at Casper College relates to overall success.

I am hoping for your opinions on this topic and I am asking you to please complete a short (5-10 minute) survey about your current involvement in co-curricular programming on campus and your opinions on the co-curricular offerings at Casper College.

If you complete my survey, you will have an opportunity to put your name in a drawing to win one of four \$25 dollar gift cards.

If you have questions about my study, you can contact me at nwhipps@caspercollege.edu.

Thank you for your assistance and participation.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Whipps
Special Populations Coordinator
Casper College

Follow this link to the Survey:

[\\${1://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[\\${1://SurveyURL}](#)

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[\\${1://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

Appendix C

IRB Approval Letters

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Vice President for Research & Economic Development
1000 E. University Avenue, Department 3355 • Room 305/308, Old Main • Laramie, WY 82071
(307) 766-5353 • (307) 766-5320 • fax (307) 766-2608 • www.uwyo.edu/research

January 25, 2019

Nicholas Whipps
Special Populations Coordinator
Enrollment Services
Casper College

Suzanne Young
Associate Dean
Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, and Design
University of Wyoming

Protocol #20190125NW02254

Re: IRB Proposal "*The Value of Co-Curricular Involvement at a Small Community College: Perspectives from Students Living on Campus*"

Dear Nicholas and Suzanne:

The proposal referenced above qualifies for exempt review and is approved as one that would not involve more than minimal risk to participants. Our exempt review and approval will be reported to the IRB at their next convened meeting on February 14, 2019.

Any significant change(s) in the research/project protocol(s) from what was approved should be submitted to the IRB (Protocol Update Form) for review and approval prior to initiating any change. Further information and the forms referenced above may be accessed at the "Human Subjects" link on the Office of Research and Economic Development website: <http://www.uwyo.edu/research/human-subjects/index.html>. Please note that exempt protocols are approved for a maximum of three years. If your study extends beyond three years, or beyond the duration that is approved in your protocol form, please be sure to submit an update before expiration to extend the duration. If you are not able to submit the update in time, you will need to submit a new exemption request for the project.

You may proceed with the project/research and we wish you luck in the endeavor. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Nichole Person

Nichole Person
Staff Assistant, Research Office
On behalf of the Chairman,
Institutional Review Board



January 27th, 2019

P.I. name: Nicholas Whipps

Project title: "The Value of Co-Curricular Involvement at a Small Community College"

Decision:

Casper College's Institutional Review Board approves this project as exempt upon the discretion of the Chair.

On behalf of the IRB,

Jake McIntyre
IRB Co-Chair
Casper College
jjmcintyre@caspercollege.edu
(307) 268-2769