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A COMPARISON OF ADULT AND TRADITIONALLY-AGED STUDENTS’ EXPECTATIONS ABOUT COUNSELING

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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*****
The Ohio State University
1998

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Approved by
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to compare the expectations about counseling held by adult and traditionally-aged students through the use of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. For the quantitative portion of the study the Expectations About Counseling - Form B (EAC-B) questionnaire was completed by 142 students (71 traditionally-aged and 71 adult). A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed significant differences between adult and traditionally-aged students and between men and women in their EAC-B responses. In general, traditionally-aged students held more positive expectations about counseling than adult students. Traditionally-aged students expected counselors to be more accepting, directive, self-disclosing, expert, and tolerant than adult students. Adult and traditionally-aged students did not differ in their expectations about clients or counseling process and outcome. Adult and traditionally-aged students were also compared in terms of formal help-seeking. Results revealed that adult students were significantly more likely to have received counseling and rated it significantly more helpful than their traditionally-aged counterparts.

The MANOVA also revealed significant gender differences. In general, women held more positive expectations about counseling than men. Women expected clients to be more motivated, open, and responsible than men. Women expected counselors to be more
accepting, confrontational, genuine, nurturing, attractive, expert, tolerant, and trustworthy than men. Women also expected the counseling process would be more concrete and immediate than men. Expectations about outcome did not differ for men and women. Men and women were also compared in terms of formal help-seeking. No differences were found in their reported use of counseling or in their ratings of helpfulness, however, women reported a significantly greater number of counseling sessions than men.

For the qualitative portion of the study 12 students (six traditionally-aged and six adult) participated in individual interviews. The interview transcripts were analyzed and seven themes were identified, two addressing similarities in expectations and five addressing differences in expectations. The results of both research strategies are discussed as they apply to counseling research and practice with an emphasis on strategies aimed at meeting the counseling needs of the adult-student population.
To Steve and Ryan
I express sincere gratitude to my adviser, Dr. Ted Kaul, for his patience, his guidance and his insight throughout my research. Thanks also go to the other members of my advisory committee, Dr. Lyle Schmidt and Dr. Don Dell, for their helpful suggestions and comments. I would like to thank Dr. Howard E. A. Tinsley for granting me permission to use his Expectations About Counseling questionnaire. Special thanks go to Dr. Sally Brandel and Jan Winchell for assisting me in my data collection and analysis. I am grateful to my parents, my in-laws, Heather, and Michael for their support and encouragement. Finally, to my husband, Steve, and my son, Ryan, thank you for providing inspiration, support, and constructive criticism in just the right combination. Without your patience and persistence it would have remained a dream unfulfilled.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The present study investigated the expectations about counseling of adult students in comparison to the expectations of traditionally-aged college students. Adult students in this study were defined by two criteria. They were 25 years old or over and, between graduating from high school and their most recent entrance into college, they had taken at least a consecutive two year hiatus from school. Traditionally-aged students refer to those aged 18 to 23 who, since graduating from high school, had never had a consecutive two year period or more when they were not enrolled in college classes part-time or full-time. Expectations are defined as cognitively mediated preparatory sets or dispositions to behave in particular ways in a given situation (Tinsley, Workman, & Kass, 1980). Research has shown that individuals approach counseling situations with certain expectations (Bordin, 1955; Frank, 1968) and that these expectations can influence client behavior in counseling (Tinsley, Brown, de St. Aubin & Lucek, 1984). In particular, these expectations have been shown to be related to help seeking behavior (Parham & Tinsley, 1980; Tinsley et al., 1984; Yanico & Hardin, 1985), persistence in therapy (Heilbrun, 1972), counseling effectiveness (Goldstein, 1962), and duration in counseling (June & Smith, 1983). Thus, an individual's expectations may
influence his/her decision to enter into and remain in counseling as well as the effectiveness of the counseling process.

The research on adult students has consistently recommended counseling as an important mechanism for assisting this population during their transition into college and their time in the role of student (Apps, 1981; Bicknell, 1975; Brians & Quann, 1977; Campbell, 1984; Goldberg, 1980; Hooper, 1979; McMillan, 1977; Nowak & Shriberg, 1981; Ray, 1977; Smallwood, 1980; Wilcoxon, Wilcoxon, & Tingle, 1989). Studies surveying adult students have also clearly identified counseling as a perceived need among this group (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Ballmer & Cozby, 1981; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Hooper & Rice, 1978; Mardoyan, Alleman, & Cochran, 1983). Yet, we know very little about how adult students view counseling services or what they expect from counseling. Thus, one goal of the present study was to better understand how adult students view counseling. Understanding adult students' perceptions of and expectations for counseling may help researchers identify and develop more effective counseling services for this population. The limited research on adult students' utilization of counseling services suggests that this population is not seeking counseling in proportion to their perceived need for counseling services (Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Graff & Horne, 1973). One possible barrier to utilization is the expectations that adult students hold about counseling. Thus, another goal of the present study was to identify expectations that may serve as barriers to the adult students' use of available counseling services.

The adult-student population first received attention in the literature in the 1960s when it became apparent that the proportion of traditionally-aged college students would
decrease in the future and the proportion of adult college students would increase (Apps, 1981; Jewell & Lubin, 1988; Lance, Lourie, & Mayo, 1979; Prager, 1983; Rawlins, 1979; Simpkins, 1980; Solmon & Gordon, 1981). These predictions have been born out in reality. Currently, adult college students in the United States make up approximately 48% of the total college student population (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1994). As the adult-student population has grown, however, institutions of higher education have been slow to respond to the needs of this group, perhaps because research interest in this area has waned. In the early 1970s and 1980s a considerable amount of research was published describing the needs, goals, and characteristics of the adult student. Numerous books and articles listed recommendations for assisting this population and predicted that failure to address the needs of adult students would result in decreasing student enrollment (Hughes, 1983; Kuh & Ardiolo, 1979; Martin, 1988). However, since the early 1980s few articles have been published on adult students. Thus, the literature provides a series of recommendations but few attempts to evaluate these suggestions. The present study represents a step toward evaluating one of the most frequently cited recommendations for assisting adult college students, that is, to provide specialized counseling for these individuals. Specifically, the present study examined adult students' expectations about counseling in relation to the expectations of traditionally-aged college students. The purpose of this study was to better understand how adult students view counseling as well as to identify expectations that may serve as potential barriers which make it more difficult for adult students to utilize available counseling services.
Although, most college counseling centers were originally developed to serve adult students in the form of veterans returning to school after WWII, many shifted their focus as the demographics of the college population returned to a younger age group. Since the 1970s the adult-student population has again been growing, yet many counseling centers have remained focused on the needs of traditionally-aged students. As the demographics of the college population change, there is an increasing need to examine counseling services and to evaluate whether they are adequately serving the needs of all college students. Research has supported the notion that adult students differ from traditionally-aged students in terms of their characteristics, their reasons for seeking education, and the barriers that they face. Given these differences it is likely that the counseling needs and expectations of adult students may also differ from those of traditionally-aged students. In the next section, each of these areas of difference will be examined with respect to the counseling needs of adult students.

Adult students tend to differ from their traditionally-aged counterparts on a number of characteristics. The adult learner approaches school differently than the younger student. They are more active, autonomous, motivated, and self-directed than younger students (Apps, 1981; Kuh & Ardaioio, 1979; Slotnick, Pelton, Fuller & Tabor, 1993). Adult learners desire knowledge that is more directly applicable and practical than younger students and are less willing to accept a solely theoretical or "hands-off" approach to learning (Bicknell, 1975; Von der Embse & Childs, 1979). These characteristics are played out in the adult student's academic performance. Studies have shown that adult students tend to have higher Grade Point Averages (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Prager, 1983; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Von der Embse & Childs, 1979) and more positive attitudes toward education than younger
students (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Tittle & Denker, 1980). Although their academic performance is generally superior to their traditionally-aged counterparts, adult students tend to have lower self-confidence about their ability to succeed in school (Bicknell, 1975; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Grabowski, 1976; Schlossberg, Troll & Leibowitz, 1986; Smallwood, 1980) and more anxiety about academic pursuits (Betz, 1978; Grabowski, 1976; Roehl, 1980). Thus, there are considerable differences between adult and younger students in the academic realm.

Adult students also differ from traditionally-aged students in terms of psychological and social development. As individuals age they generally fill a greater number of life roles. While traditionally-aged students may only have the student role to think about, adults often must balance a number of roles including spouse/partner, parent, employee, and student (Apps, 1981; Hughes, 1983; Rodin & Ickovics, 1990). Age also brings more life experience and new psychosocial needs (Erikson, 1963; Grabowski, 1976; Kimmel, 1976; Schlossberg et al., 1986; Taylor, 1995; Van Dusen & Sheldon, 1976). The life experience of adult students often increases the relevance and practicality of learning as well as its intrinsic interest value. Because traditionally-aged students lack this life experience they may find it difficult to maintain interest in classroom material because it seems distant from their life goals. In terms of psychosocial development, college often serves to fill the social needs of traditionally-aged students by providing peers suitable for friendships and romantic relationships. Older students generally have already created many of their significant intimate relationships. While they may utilize college to develop new interpersonal relationships it is likely that the majority of their social needs will be filled elsewhere. Thus, the needs that
college fills for adult students may be considerably different than those it fills for traditionally-aged students.

The academic and personal characteristics of adult students provide insight into their counseling needs. It is important for college counselors to understand adult-student characteristics in order to offer appropriate and useful counseling services to this population. For example, adult students may need academic counseling services aimed at reducing anxiety and increasing self-confidence to enable them to use their life experience in ways conducive to academic success. Likewise, adults may need personal counseling to help them figure out ways to balance their multiple roles, to deal more effectively with role conflict, and to identify ways that the college experience can help them meet their psychosocial needs. Colleges and universities which provide counseling specialized to the characteristics of the adult-student population, encourage adult students to utilize available counseling services, ease adult students' transition into the student role, and strengthen their programs for the recruitment and retention of this population.

The reasons that adults return to school are often different from those of traditionally-aged students. Whereas college represents a continuation of schooling for high school students, those returning to school after some years away must undergo significant life changes in order to return. In most instances the decision to go to college involves more familial, financial and emotional sacrifices for the adult student than the traditionally-aged student. One reason that adult students are returning to college in increasing numbers has to do with the changes that are taking place in our society. As technology and demographics change at an ever increasing rate previous education becomes obsolete and individuals must
receive new training if they want to keep abreast of developments in their fields. These vocational changes create significant pressure for adults to return to school (Bolles, 1979; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Nichols, 1974). Thus, adults enter college for a variety of vocational reasons including needing updated job skills, desiring job change or promotion, desiring increased earning power, and job loss or obsolescence. The direct link between college and work is well understood by adult students and accounts for their focus on practical knowledge. Often, this is not the case with younger students because they have not yet entered the world of work. Traditionally-aged students often are interested only in choosing a potential career in order to declare a major and earn a degree. They may be unaware of the impact their choice will have on the rest of their lives. Given the differences between the vocational experience of adult and younger students their vocational counseling needs will also differ. Vocational counseling for the traditionally-aged student appropriately focuses on initial job search strategies. Vocational counseling that serves the needs of adult students must address more than this if it is going to be an effective way of helping adults deal with vocational life transitions. Exploring such things as the adult's decision to return to school, his/her previous job experiences, and the feelings associated with vocational changes must be incorporated into the vocational counseling process with the adult student. Counseling centers that provide vocational counseling with a broader focus are more likely to attract adult students to their services.

Adults are also returning to college for self-fulfillment reasons such as finding meaning in life, increasing intellectual stimulation, increasing self esteem, and realizing one's full potential (Apps, 1981; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Karelius-Schumacher, 1977; Simpkins,
Due to differences in life experiences and levels of psychological, physical, and social development, it is likely that the self-fulfillment needs of traditionally-aged students will differ significantly from those of adult students. The self fulfillment needs of adult students can be addressed through a variety of counseling modalities including individual, family, and group counseling. Individual counseling which focuses on personal issues such as life transitions, self esteem, and familial concerns may be particularly useful to adult students who are returning to school for self fulfillment reasons. Likewise, offering support groups for adult students and family counseling aimed at balancing the needs of all family members may help adult students legitimize their self fulfillment needs and remain in school. Counseling centers which can adapt their services to meet these needs will more likely be utilized by adult students than those seen as geared solely for the traditionally-aged student.

The barriers that adult students face both upon consideration of returning to school and their actual enrollment in college differ in some ways from the barriers facing traditionally-aged students. Adult students must confront four types of barriers when seeking to further their education: Institutional barriers, situational barriers, sociological barriers, and psychological barriers. Institutional barriers refer to the policies, procedures, and services created by institutions of higher education that exclude or discourage adult students from seeking to enroll or remain in college. These barriers come in the form of both blatant and subtle discrimination. Colleges and universities may create barriers for adult students directly by enforcing age quotas, sex quotas and discriminatory attitudes (Tittle & Denker, 1980). Indirect forms of discrimination are even more common such as financial aid practices which discriminate against adult students (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Grottkau & Davis, 1987;
Martin, 1988; Swift, Colvin & Mills, 1987), lack of child care facilities on campus (Brandenburg, 1974; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Martin, 1988; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983), inaccessible class times and locations (Cross, 1981), and counseling and advising services that are only available during traditional business hours (Lance et al., 1979; Mardoyan et al., 1983). Many of these barriers are the result of policies and procedures which were initially created for traditionally-aged students that do not make sense when applied to an older student body (Grottkau & Davis, 1987).

Situational barriers are obstacles to education that arise from one's life situation. Discrimination and poor access to education due to one's race, ethnicity, geographic location, and/or socioeconomic status represent important situational barriers for a large proportion of the adult population (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Arbeiter, 1976; Cross, 1981; Tittle & Denker, 1980). Likewise, individuals who have child or elder care responsibilities may also find themselves limited in terms of their ability to pursue education due to situational barriers such as lack of time, finances, and alternative care-taking options (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980). In a study of barriers that face adult learners Cross (1981) found that institutional barriers affected as much as 50% of all potential learners and represented the most detrimental of all types of barriers to adult education.

The socialization practices and structure of our society also create barriers for adult students. These barriers come in the form of internal attitudes that shape our beliefs about what are appropriate roles for certain aged individuals (Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Tittle & Denker, 1980). These attitudes also shape our behaviors in ways that support discrimination based on age. In our society there is a timetable for major life events such as marriage,
schooling, work, and retirement. When an individual is "off-time" in terms of society's schedule, they are considered to be age deviant and penalized accordingly. Thus, adults who return to school are faced with prejudicial beliefs and discriminatory behaviors on the part of administrators, faculty, staff, students, and even themselves.

Sex role stereotyping is another sociological barrier. Although this barrier influences both traditionally-aged and adult students, adults often have more inflexible belief systems about appropriate roles for men and women than younger students. From the time we are born we receive clear messages about what is appropriate for males and females to do. These messages can be damaging to the child or adult who prefers to engage in behavior not considered appropriate for his/her sex. The messages of passivity and dependence that we send to little girls are especially damaging. These messages socialize girls into the world of homemaker and housewife, a world that no longer exists for the majority of women in our society. Thus, adult women returning to school face special sociological barriers including occupational segregation, glass ceilings, and the inadequate mathematics and science preparation for girls perpetuated by our compulsory school system (Betz, 1989).

Finally, adult students encounter psychological barriers including negative thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings that stand in the way of furthering their education. Many adult students report fears and doubts about their ability to succeed academically (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Cross, 1981; Smallwood, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Deficits in academic preparation may cause adult students to conclude that they lack the intelligence to earn a college degree (Brandenburg, 1974; Rawlins, 1979; Simpkins, 1980). Guilty feelings about taking time and money away from family or other important endeavors may also plague
returning adults, especially women (Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Shiskoff, 1973; Tittle & Denker, 1980). Other psychological barriers that commonly affect adult students' decisions to return to or remain in school include low self esteem, lack of assertiveness, unrealistic goals, and difficulty making decisions (Apps, 1981; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983).

The multitude of barriers that face adult students who return to college create a number of special counseling needs for this population. Because counseling centers deal with psychological issues, they are an ideal place to confront the psychological barriers that face students. Personal counseling can be used to deal with feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and low self esteem that many adult students bring with them to college. Likewise, helping these individuals to set realistic goals and to learn good decision-making strategies through group or individual interventions will combat many of their psychological barriers to education. However, psychological barriers are not the only barriers to the adult's pursuit of education which counseling centers can effectively address. Educational activities have been a component of counseling centers from their initial inception. Providing lectures, workshops, group discussions, and in-service training on topics such as sex role stereotypes, assertiveness, relationships, ageism, and gender issues can be an effective mechanism for battling sociological barriers that discriminate against adult students. Counseling center staff members are also in a position to serve as student advocates in terms of institutional and situational barriers. In this role staff members must be sensitive to the differences that exist between traditionally-aged and adult students in order to appropriately represent adult students' concerns. Since counseling may be an effective tool to assist adult students in overcoming potential barriers to their education, it seems crucial that we understand more
about how adult students perceive the counseling process so that we can institute more appropriate counseling services and reduce barriers to utilization.

The present study compared the expectations about counseling of adult students and traditionally-aged students in an effort to better understand how adult students perceive counseling. This research question was approached through the simultaneous application of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in an attempt to incorporate the strengths of both approaches. In a quantitative research design an operationally defined construct of interest is measured in a sample and compared to a normative group. These designs allow for complex statistical analyses of the variables of interest. The emphasis in quantitative research is placed on scientific rigor in the form of reliability, validity, generalizability, and objectivity. This rigor enables explanatory and predictive statements to be made with a high degree of statistical confidence (Denzin, 1994). In contrast, the purpose of qualitative research is to produce full and rich descriptions of the constructs of interest. Rather than focusing on statistical analyses and probabilistic relations, qualitative research seeks to identify relationships and concepts that make the data more understandable (Polkinghorne, 1991). The data production and interpretation processes in qualitative designs are on-going and recursive. The researcher is intimately involved with the participants and the subject matter in order to facilitate the collection of "thick" data versus the "thin" data collected in quantitative designs (Geertz, 1973). The benefit of thick description is to:

allow us to know people personally and to see them as they are developing their own definitions of the world. We experience what they experience in their daily struggles with their society. We learn about groups and experiences about which we may know nothing. Finally, qualitative methods enable us to explore concepts whose essence is lost in other research approaches (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p.4).
The use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in the present study provided a more thorough understanding of adult students' expectations about counseling through statistically derived inferences and a more accurate perception of the participants' worldviews.

The quantitative part of the present study employed the Expectations About Counseling (Form B) (EAC-B; Tinsley, 1982) questionnaire. This paper and pencil measure was developed to tap all of the theoretically important expectancies an individual might hold about counseling and will be used to measure expectations. The 17 scales of the EAC-B measure four areas of expectation: Client Attitudes and Behaviors, Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors, Counselor Characteristics, and Counseling Process and Outcome. The qualitative part of the study involved semi-structured interviews with both adult and traditionally-aged students. The general content of the interviews was imposed on the participants through interviewer prompts (e.g., What kind of characteristics do you expect a counselor to have?), however, open-ended prompts were employed such that discussions of the general topic developed naturally.

The hypothesis of the present study involved two parts:

A. In terms of the quantitative data, it was hypothesized that significant differences would be found between adult and traditionally-aged students in their responses to the EAC-B.

B. In terms of the qualitative data, it was hypothesized that significant differences would be found between adult and traditionally-aged students in the themes regarding expectations about counseling identified in the interview data.
Both research strategies were hypothesized to uncover significant differences in the expectations about counseling held by adult and traditionally-aged students based on differences in characteristics, life stage, and life experience of these two groups rooted in previous theory and research. In the present study the differences between adult and traditionally-aged students were operationalized by two variables, age and time out of school. Most developmental theories link stages of development to approximate age groups (Chickering, 1976; Erikson, 1963; Gilligan, 1982; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978). Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that age operationalizes at least some of the developmental differences between adult and younger students. The literature is relatively consistent in defining traditionally-aged students as those aged 18 to 23 (Carnegie Council on Policy Studies on Higher Education, 1980). In fact, the government bases financial aid for higher education on this age criterion (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Thus, consistent with governmental standards for federal student aid, the present study defined traditionally-aged students as those aged 18 to 23. The literature is less consistent in defining the age range for adult students, however, the majority of studies identify adult students as those aged 25 years and over (Heretick & Doyle, 1983; Kostka & Wilson, 1986; MacKinnon-Slaney, Barber, & Slaney, 1988; Mardoyan et al., 1983; Naretto, 1995; Noland & Feldman, 1984; Roehl & Okun, 1984; Smallwood, 1980; Yarbrough & Schaffer, 1990). This age criterion was used in the present study.

Age is not the only variable that indicates developmental differences. According to the literature, time away from an academic environment is another variable which operationalizes some of the differences in life experience and life stage between adult and
traditionally-aged students (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Brandenburg, 1974; Farmer & Fyans, 1983; Hetherington & Hudson, 1981; Martin, 1988; Prager, 1983). There are no strict guidelines in the literature for determining how much time away from school is necessary for life stage changes to occur. At least two years out of school was selected as the cutoff in the present study based on past research (Adelstein, Sedlacek, & Martinez, 1983; Lance et al., 1979; Roehl & Okun, 1984) and because this minimum amount of time coupled with age seemed to be criteria that would allow for the hypothesized developmental differences as well as maximize the number of subjects who would provide useable data.

The results of this study should foster a better understanding of how adult students view counseling. Increasing our understanding of this unique population may help identify barriers to counseling utilization and enable colleges and universities to begin to create more effective counseling services for adult students. Offering counseling services that meet the needs of adult students may help colleges and universities in both the recruitment and retention of this population.
CHAPTER 2

THE SELECTED LITERATURE

We live in a society that is rapidly changing. This fact is aptly reflected in Margaret Mead's vision that the world in which we are born is not the world in which we will live, nor is that the world in which we will die (as cited by Cross, 1981). As our society experiences demographic, social, and technological change it is increasingly clear that no education will last a lifetime. The concept of lifelong learning is becoming more widely accepted and recognized in our aging society. This acceptance hinges on a number of changes including increasing technology, lengthening of the life span, increasing leisure time and early retirement, better health and health care, increasing emphasis on the quality of life, and a greater tolerance of a variety of life styles for persons of all ages (Kimmel, 1976).

The adult college student population constitutes one avenue of lifelong learning. This population has been of interest to researchers and administrators of higher education since the 1960s. Both in number and in influence, this group has become an increasingly significant part of the college student population as a whole. Statistics show that the proportion of traditionally-aged (18-23) college students has been decreasing over the past two decades while the nontraditionally-aged (25 and over) student population has been increasing (Apps, 1981; Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Jewell & Lubin, 1988; Kostka & Wilson, 1986; Lance
et al., 1979; Martin, 1988; Prager, 1983; Rawlins, 1979; Rawlins & Lenihan, 1982; Simpkins, 1980; Solmon & Gordon, 1981). This dramatic shift in composition has led some researchers to suggest that the survival of institutions depends on their ability to attract and maintain the older student (Hughes, 1983; Kuh & ArdaioI, 1979; Martin, 1988). In the early 1980s already more than one-third of all college students were over the age of 25. By the late 1980s researchers estimated that adults accounted for between 45% and 74% of the total enrollment in colleges and universities (Wilcoxon et al., 1989). Betters-Reed (1980, as cited by Hughes, 1983) predicts that by the year 2000 there will be in excess of 20 million adult college students. Conversely, the traditionally-aged college student population is expected to decline 23% by the year 2000 (Carnegie Council on Policy Studies on Higher Education, 1980). Within the adult-student population the number of women students is growing rapidly. Between 1970 and 1978 the number of adult women enrolled in college increased 45% compared to 18% for adult men (Spreadbury, 1983). As of 1992, women made up 58% of the total adult college student population aged 25 and up (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1994). Thus, adult women are a particularly important target group for institutions wanting to increase adult-student enrollment.

It is not surprising that with the increasing importance of the adult-student population and the dramatic predictions for the future of higher education came a flurry of research describing the characteristics, goals, and needs of this population. However, given the continued growth of the adult-student population and its increasing importance in college enrollment, it is surprising that after the initial explosion of articles in the 1970s and early 1980s came a significant lull in research published on this group. The research that is
available provides a baseline of information on the adult-student population and a series of recommendations for serving the needs of this group. While the literature is replete with descriptions of programs attempting to implement these recommendations, relatively few articles have provided evaluation of these programs or the appropriateness of these recommendations.

The present study examined one of the most common recommendations in the literature, the need to provide special counseling for the adult-student population. The expectations about counseling of adult students were compared with the expectations of traditionally-aged students. Based on the differences between these two groups in terms of psychosocial development and life experience, it was hypothesized that differences would exist in their expectations about counseling. It is important to examine the expectations about counseling of the adult-student population in order to improve our understanding of these students, to provide more effective counseling for them, and to increase our knowledge about potential barriers that keep adult students from utilizing counseling services. The following review of the literature will examine what we know about the adult-student population in terms of characteristics, reasons for enrolling in college, barriers to the adult's pursuit of education, persistence of adult students, the impact of returning to school on the family, and program recommendations for assisting the adult learner. Counseling will be identified as an important recommendation for helping adult students that is commonly cited in the literature. The literature on expectations about counseling will be briefly reviewed with particular emphasis on findings related to age and psychosocial development. Finally, the literature review will conclude with an explanation of and justification for the present study.
Organizing the literature

Organizing and understanding the literature on adult students is problematic due to the various terminology and criteria utilized by different researchers for identifying this population. The terms adult students, adult learners, returning students, reentry students, stop-outs, older students, and mature students have all been used to describe adult-student samples. Likewise, the criteria used to define this population have not been consistent between studies. The most consistent criterion utilized has been age; however, the cutoff age for inclusion has varied between the ages of 23 (Brandenburg, 1974; Kuh & Ardaiolo, 1979); 24 (Jewell & Lubin, 1988; Lance et al., 1979), 25 (Heretick & Doyle, 1983; Kostka & Wilson, 1986; Noland & Feldman, 1984; Sturtz, 1971; Yarbrough & Schaffer, 1990), 27 (Glogowski & Lanning, 1976; Swift et al., 1987; Swift, Mills, & Colvin, 1986), 28 (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Bauer & Mott, 1990; Geisler & Thrush, 1975), and 30 (Pirnot, 1987; Rawlins, 1979; Spreadbury, 1983). However, the majority of studies have defined adult students as those aged 25 and up, consistent with the present study. In some studies age is the only criterion for inclusion in the adult-student sample. In others, age is one among several criteria including number of years out of school, part-time versus full-time status, four-year versus two-year college, degree versus nondegree status, and/or marital status. These differences have made it difficult to compare studies and accentuate the heterogeneity of the adult-student population (Adelstein et al., 1983; Yarbrough & Schaffer, 1990). This heterogeneity has led some researchers to study subgroups of adult students rather than the entire population. For instance, Swift and his colleagues (Swift et al., 1986; Swift et al., 1987) studied displaced homemakers as a subgroup of adult students. Tittle and


Denker (1980) categorized women returning to school into three subgroups based on age, work status, educational level, and personal and educational needs. Carfagna (1995) also categorized returning women into 3 subgroups; however, she used the criteria of marital status, career status, and children. Cross (1981) identified five subgroups of returning adults based on age, socioeconomic status, reason for attending college, program entered, and personality characteristics. Obviously, the adult-student population is a complex group. Although there are similarities among adult students, it seems likely that once a baseline of knowledge is created, subgroups of this population may need to be explored in more detail.

Other limitations in previous studies of adult students include the tendency to be institution specific; to rely heavily on descriptive, survey and self-report data; and to contain sample biases. Because of the preliminary nature of the present study and the limited resources available, a general research approach was utilized. Once expectations about counseling have been studied in this general adult-student sample, it may be useful to examine differences among subgroups, compare results to those from other institutions, and create a program of research including both descriptive and experimental studies.

**Characteristics of adult students**

There are several characteristics that differentiate traditionally-aged and adult students. Adult students tend to have higher achievement needs than their traditionally-aged counterparts (Glogowski & Lanning, 1976). Studies have shown that adult students consistently hold higher Grade Point Averages (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Prager, 1983; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Von der Embse & Childs, 1979) and more positive attitudes toward
academic work than younger students (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Tittle & Denker, 1980). Adult students tend to be more active, autonomous, and self-directed than younger learners (Kuh & Ardaioio, 1979; Slotnick et al., 1993). They see the importance and limitations of what they learn, they use life experience to interpret information presented, and they tend to focus more on the process than the outcome of learning (Slotnick et al., 1993). In general, adult learners want knowledge that is applicable and practical (Bicknell, 1975; Von der Embse & Childs, 1979). As Slotnick et al. (1993) state, adults see themselves as users of rather than recipients of education. Although as a group, adults perform better academically in college, they do tend to need more remedial work than younger students, especially in mathematics (Betz, 1978; Hughes, 1983). Adult students also often have a need for study skills training (Apps, 1981; Grabowski, 1976; Hughes, 1983; Rawlins, 1979; Simpkins, 1980). Many adult students have been away from an academic environment for years and have either forgotten some of their previous study habits or never acquired good study habits in the first place. Younger students have the benefit of continued education to not only develop but to utilize these study skills on a daily basis.

Even though adult students tend to perform better in college, research has shown that at least initially adult students tend to have lower self-confidence in their ability to succeed academically than younger students (Bicknell, 1975; Evans, 1989; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Grabowski, 1976; Hughes, 1983; Rawlins, 1979; Schlossberg et al., 1986; Schofield & Caple, 1971; Smallwood, 1980; Von der Embse & Childs, 1979.) This may be partially due to the fact that adult students tend to underestimate the value of the skills they have acquired through life experience and only consider their academic achievements when determining their
ability to succeed in college (Prager, 1983). If the adult lacks past academic achievement, he/she may conclude that ability is lacking as well. Adult students also appear to have more anxiety about school than traditionally-aged students (Betz, 1978; Grabowski, 1976; Roehl, 1980). Betz (1978) studied mathematics anxiety in traditionally-aged and adult female students. She found that older women reported greater math anxiety than younger women and that the higher the level of math anxiety the lower the math achievement. The anxiety that adult students experience may be the result of a multitude of factors including time away from college, past memories of poor performance, unrealistic expectations, and time pressure. The physical changes brought on by aging such as decreased vision, hearing, and overall energy, and loss of manual dexterity may also increase anxiety in adult students (Schlossberg et al., 1986).

Adult students also differ from their traditionally-aged counterparts in terms of the number of roles they fill. While traditionally-aged students are primarily students, adults generally have multiple roles to cope with such as spouse/partner, parent, employee, and student (Appes, 1981; Campbell, 1984; Hughes, 1983; Huston-Hoburg & Strange, 1986). Slotnick et al. (1993) found that adult students allocate their time quite differently than younger students. Adults spend more hours working at jobs outside the home and working on domestic responsibilities than traditionally-aged students. They also take fewer class hours than younger students. Interestingly, however, Slotnick et al. (1993) found that adults and younger students spend the same amount of time studying. This translates into more study hours per class for adult students and may be one factor in the tendency of adult students to academically out-perform their younger colleagues. Under certain circumstances multiple
roles may be beneficial to an individual's psychological health (Rodin & Ickovics, 1990).
Baruch, Barnett & Rivers (1983) found women who had the most roles (employee, wife and mother) in their study were also those with the highest well-being scores. Likewise, Kopp and Ruzicka (1993) found women with two or more roles gave a significantly higher happiness rating than women with only one or no role. Thus, multiple roles, if not excessive, may work in the adult student's favor.

Adult students tend to be less campus focused than younger students. This may be partly the result of multiple roles. Adults must divide their attention among their various roles and may simply have less time to focus on the student role than their younger classmates. Their lack of interest in campus activities outside of the classroom may also be related to the social needs of adults (Auer, 1973; Bauer & Mott, 1990; Schofield & Caple, 1971). Because adults have accomplished the developmental tasks of adolescence they may be less oriented toward the social value of campus life (Erikson, 1963). Adults generally have their social needs met elsewhere, through spouses/partners, children, relatives and friends. In a study of value differences between mature and younger students, Glogowski and Lanning (1976) found that mature women placed less importance on social values in their work than young women. Thus, the social needs of traditionally-aged and adult students and the way they are met may be quite different for these groups. This may mean that institutions of higher education need to reassess what types of environments are useful in meeting the needs of their students.

Even though adult learners generally have their social needs met outside of the campus environment, they still report frequent concern about how they will fit into campus life and
whether their maturity will cause conflicts with younger students (Auer, 1973; Pirnot & Dunn, 1983; Rawlins, 1979; Schofield & Caple, 1971). Pirnot and Dunn (1983) conducted a study of values in traditionally-aged and adult students. They found that adults ranked theoretic, aesthetic, and political values most highly and economic, social, and religious values at the bottom of the hierarchy. This rank ordering was similar to that for both traditionally-aged college students and faculty. Although adult students tend to have concerns about fitting in, the results of this study suggest their values are similar to those of others in the academic community. This may explain why many adult students report feeling comfortable interacting with younger students once they are integrated into the college environment even though they initially reported fears (Farmer & Fyans, 1983; Rawlins & Davies, 1981).

Life experience is an asset which adult students bring to college that younger students do not have (Grabowski, 1976). Based on their life experience, adult students often find more interest in educational material and more value in its application than younger classmates. Younger students may have developed study skills that enable them to perform well on tests, but they often lack interest in classroom material because they lack the life experience to make learning relevant. In Glogowski and Lanning’s (1976) study of work values among women in different age categories, mature women placed a higher value on interesting activity and variety than young women. Badenhoop and Johansen (1980) found that lack of personal interest was identified by younger students as the greatest obstacle to completing their education. Due to their life experience, older students are less willing to accept the experience of another without questioning, and they are more likely to offer their own viewpoint as a valid alternative. This active approach to learning is certainly a factor in the
adult student's academic success. Institutions of higher education must recognize the importance of adult-student life experience and its relationship to academics if they hope to interest adults in further education. Some colleges and universities have put this philosophy into action by offering life experience credits, allowing adult students to test out of classes, and eliminating curriculum requirements that do not make sense for older students. By valuing adult students' life experience, institutions are likely to increase the number of adult students enrolling in degree programs.

Finally, adult students differ from their younger counterparts in that they often have more motivation for academic pursuits (Apps, 1981; Evans, 1989; Kuh & Ardaio, 1979). For traditionally-aged students it is often expected that they will go to college after finishing high school (Bicknell, 1975; Evans, 1989). Many of these students enter college in order to comply with the wishes of their parents. Badenhoop and Johansen (1980) found that attending school to please parents was rated as an important factor by 63.8% of the continuous students in their sample (i.e., students younger than 28 and less than 4 years interruption in education) while 88.6% of the reentry students in their sample (i.e., students 28 or older and at least 5 years interruption in education) rated this as an unimportant factor in their college enrollment. Many times younger students have no set goals for being in school, and they have little experience on which to base their future plans. For these reasons traditionally-aged college students continue to approach academics in a passive manner and do not understand the pragmatic value of many things they are learning. Adults, on the other hand, often have to overcome considerable obstacles in order to attend college (Apps, 1981; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Grottka & Davis, 1987; Plotsky, 1975; Roehl & Okun, 1984;
Wheaton & Robinson, 1983.) They are more likely than their younger counterparts to be enrolled in college based on their own decisions and their expectations for themselves. Adults often see college as a privilege (Sturtz, 1971). Due to life experience, they are more likely than younger students to have set goals and to have successfully negotiated the developmental tasks of adolescence that hinder younger students in their academic and career pursuits.

Adult students differ from younger students in physical, intellectual, personal, and interpersonal ways. These differences indicate that adult students have different needs and perhaps different goals for their educational experience than younger students. It is likely that the types of interventions that may effectively assist adult students may be different from those best suited to traditionally-aged students. Counseling may be one way to meet the needs of adult students. However, student counseling services may no longer effectively serve the adult students' needs. Counseling services aimed at increasing self-confidence, reducing anxiety, and remediating study skill deficits seem particularly useful for adult students. Likewise, individual, group, or family counseling focused on helping adult students balance their multiple roles, cope with role conflict, and explore their psychological needs may be beneficial to adult students. More information about how adult students view counseling will help researchers evaluate the effectiveness of presently available counseling services and determine possible ways of increasing adult-student utilization of these services.

Reasons for entering or returning to college

A return to the learning environment for many adults is precipitated by a significant life change or transition. Aslanian and Brickell (as cited by Bolles, 1979) studied Americans
aged 25 years and older and found that 50% perceived themselves as having participated in some type of adult learning during the past year. Of these adult learners 83% reported that their learning experience was triggered by some kind of significant life change. Thus, changes in one's life situation may create reasons for an individual to seek out further education and help motivate her/him to pursue this course. Adults who return to college generally cite several reasons for returning brought on by one or more significant life transitions. Vocational changes and the need for self fulfillment are generally the most common reasons cited by adults for returning to school (Adelstein et al., 1983; Bolles, 1979; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Karelius-Schumacher, 1977; Mardoyan et al., 1983; Nichols, 1974; Rawlins, 1979; Schlossberg et al., 1986; Shishkoff, 1973; Slotnick et al., 1993; Yarbrough & Schaffer, 1990). Changes in an individual's vocational situation may include the need for skills to enter the job market, the desire for occupational change, job obsolescence, the desire for promotion, being laid-off or fired, needing to "catch up" after leaving the work force for a certain amount of time, the desire to increase earning power, and the desire for a more satisfying job. The likelihood that an individual will experience one or more of these changes in her/his lifetime is increasing due to a number of factors in our society such as increased longevity, increased job competition, higher aspirations of individuals and families, greater social acceptability of career change, and portability of pension plans (Cross, 1981). All of these trends make continuing education and training in one's field an important aspect of job security. Because many adults who return to school have participated in the work force, they are familiar with the direct link between education and employment and often have specific vocational goals already in place. Traditionally-aged students, on the other hand, may be less aware of the
connection between education and career pursuits. They perceive work as distant from academic activities and are, therefore, less likely to have well planned vocational goals.

Vocational changes are not the only reason that adults are returning to school. Self-fulfillment reasons have consistently appeared in the literature in various forms including finding meaning in life (Karelius-Schumacher, 1977), increasing intellectual stimulation (Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Simpkins, 1980), enriching life (Schlossberg et al., 1986), realizing one's full potential (Simpkins, 1980), increasing personal satisfaction (Bicknell, 1975), and increasing self-esteem (Apps, 1981). It is clear that adults returning to college do so for more than just practical, vocational reasons. Schofield and Caple (1971) studied the self concept of mature and young women students. They found that the mature women in their sample were more likely to endorse self improvement as their goal for attending college while the younger women were more interested in vocational goals. These results indicate that for a large number of adult students feeling some kind of personal growth is as or more important than increasing one's marketability.

Beyond the two main reasons for enrolling or re-enrolling in higher education are a number of other factors that influence adults. A shift in time perspective often occurs in adulthood. Individuals begin to think in terms of time they have left rather than in terms of time since birth. For adult students, this change in thinking accentuates the distance between themselves and younger students and is likely to make returning to school an intimidating thought. Yet, many adult students report the feeling that time is running out as a pressing reason to return to school (Schlossberg et al., 1986). Changes in family life may also create pressure to return to school. Thirty-four percent of Aslanian and Brickell's (as cited by
Bolles, 1979) sample cited family changes as triggers for returning to education. Divorce, separation, and widowhood can be especially motivating for women who have not previously been involved in the labor force (Brandenburg, 1974; Karelius-Schumacher, 1977). These women are often left as heads of households and must become gainfully employed in order to support their families. Dissatisfaction with or decreasing home responsibilities in terms of child care and/or housework have also been identified as reasons motivating individuals to return to college (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980). As domestic responsibilities change over an individual's life span, they may become less satisfying and, consequently, trigger a need for fulfillment through other means. Education can become one avenue of filling this need. Changes in personal health (Bolles, 1979), the desire to improve social status and prestige (Apps, 1981), and the desire to improve social relationships (Morstain & Smart, 1974) are other reasons for returning to school identified by adult students. Apps (1981) surveyed instructors about their perceptions of the reasons adults are enrolling in college in ever increasing numbers. The reasons cited by the instructors mirrored those identified by adult students themselves. Occupationally related reasons such as increased earnings and promotions were ranked first. The increasing social acceptability of adults in school was ranked second followed by life enhancement, change in life situation such as divorce, separation, widowhood, or grown children, societal premium on degrees, and university recruiting. Thus, faculty members working with increasing numbers of adult students seem aware of the forces that drive these individuals to further their education.

It is not surprising that research suggests that the reasons people give for enrolling in education logically match their life situations (Cross, 1981). People who have good jobs
enroll in order to advance or be promoted. People who are unemployed or dissatisfied with their jobs return to college in order to attain employment or change their current positions. Younger individuals who have some college experience generally focus on earning a degree while older, financially secure individuals often enroll for personal satisfaction reasons. Thus, an individual's vocational and social standing in society tell much about his/her reasons for enrolling in education. Likewise, the reasons cited by individuals for returning to school tell us much about their counseling needs. Individuals who return to college based on occupationally-related issues are likely to have a strong need for vocational counseling involving exploration of interests, values, abilities, and personality, job search skills, and job placement strategies. Those individuals who are driven to further their education by self-fulfillment reasons may benefit from exploration of more personal issues in either group or individual counseling. Focusing on issues such as aging, changes in family life, and dissatisfaction with current life circumstances may help adults cope with their newly acquired role as students. When counselors work with adult students, it is often useful to explore their reasons for entering or returning to college because the reasons that provoke adults to seek further education are often directly related to their reasons for needing counseling.

**Barriers to adult education**

There are generally four types of barriers that face adults seeking higher education: Institutional barriers, situational or practical barriers, sociological barriers, and psychological or internal barriers. Institutional barriers refer to those created and maintained by institutions of higher education. They relate to policies, procedures, and services which exclude or
discourage adults from participating in educational activities. Situational barriers are those elements of one's situation in life that present obstacles to education including race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. Sociological barriers refer to obstacles created and maintained by our social structure through socialization messages that influence how individuals think about and act in the world. Many of these messages put limitations on individuals and may discourage adults from reentering higher education. Finally, psychological barriers are internal to the individual. They are feelings, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and self-perceptions that work against the adult returning to school.

Institutional barriers pervade higher education. Some institutional barriers overtly discriminate against adult students such as age and sex quotas while others come in more covert guises such as timing classes in ways that make it difficult for adults to attend. Whether subtle or blatant these barriers affect adult-student enrollment. Attitudinal biases can serve as institutional barriers to adult students. Some college and university administrators hold discriminatory attitudes against adult students, especially older women students (Tittle & Denker, 1980). They may believe that older students will drop out of school prematurely and are, therefore, not worth the school's investment of time and energy, or they may believe that these students will not use their education if they attain a degree. These types of attitudes are played out in more stringent admissions standards for adults and other institutional policies that make it difficult for adults to enroll (Brians & Quann, 1977; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Faculty and staff may also hold stereotypical attitudes that discriminate against adults such as lower expectations for adult students (Brians & Quann,
1977; Rawlins & Lenihan, 1982; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). These attitudes may covertly effect how classes are taught and how adult students are treated by university personnel.

Lack of child care assistance is another major institutional barrier to adult education (Brandenburg, 1974; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Martin, 1988; Slotnick et al., 1993; Smallwood, 1980; Swift et al., 1987; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Individuals who desire more education and have child care responsibilities are often excluded from college by the high cost of alternative care taking systems. Furthermore, strict attendance requirements may discriminate against students with small children and lower socioeconomic status adults. The timing of classes is also a significant issue (Cross, 1981). Adults who work during the day or have sole responsibility for young children may need to attend evening and weekend classes. Conversely, those whose children are in school during the day may need morning and afternoon classes before their child care responsibilities resume at night. By limiting course offerings and restricting times of day, institutions create barriers that keep adults from enrolling. Similar timing issues arise with offices on campus. Adults who require evening or weekend courses often encounter difficulties scheduling appointments with advisors, registrars, and counselors because most offices are only open during traditional business hours. Thus, accessibility of classes and services is a major barrier for adult students.

Many colleges and universities are beginning to identify institutional barriers and have made attempts to lessen or eliminate these. Financial aid practices represent one area where significant progress has been made. In the 1970s and 1980s financial aid was largely unavailable for part-time students (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Martin, 1988; Smallwood, 1980; Swift et al., 1987; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Wheaton &
The majority of adult students were, and still are, part-time, often because they could not afford the tuition and expenses of full-time education. Thus, adult students were caught in a catch-22 situation. They could not afford to attend college full-time due to finances, but financial assistance was only available to those students enrolled full-time (Brandenburg, 1974; Grottkau & Davis, 1987). More recently, governmental aid in the form of loans and grants has been made available to part-time students (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Some colleges and universities have followed suit, making private scholarship and loan monies available to both part-time and full-time applicants. Although large steps have been taken toward reducing financial barriers to adult-student enrollment, discrimination remains. Students must be enrolled for at least six credit hours in order to qualify for federal financial assistance leaving those taking fewer hours without aid. Sex discrimination in financial aid practices also exists and can be especially damaging to adult women students. The need for financial assistance is greater among adult women than men because they are more likely to be paying for their own education (Cross, 1981). This is the result of covert discrimination mostly in employer-funded programs which provide financial assistance for executives and managers to receive training and education. The fact that these positions are predominantly filled by males creates an imbalance in the proportion of men versus women receiving financial assistance. This adds up to a significant amount of financial discrimination given that employers were estimated to be spending $30 billion per year on formal courses of instruction and training as of 1983 (Calvert, 1985). There are also more scholarships, fellowships and loans received by men than women for adult education (Tittle & Denker, 1980). Indirect discrimination may also occur in the decision-making process for
determining financial need. Applicants for federal financial assistance must report all forms of income including spouse's salary, even if one's spouse is not contributing to one's education. This results in a greater burden for female applicants than male applicants given the fact that, on average, men make more money than women. The outcome is that women who are financing their education without the help of their spouses receive less financial aid than men in the same situation. Thus, finances continue to represent a significant barrier for adult students.

Other attempts to lessen or eliminate institutional barriers include offering classes at various times such as weekends and evenings, having special registration for adult students, offering extended hours for counseling and advising services, and offering classes at locations convenient to community individuals. These efforts are based on the predictions that the traditionally-aged student population will continue to decrease and that increasing the proportion of adult students is one way to bolster enrollment. However, even with changes, many adults still perceive obstacles and these perceptions create barriers even if they are inaccurate. If we truly believe that receiving a college education is beneficial not only to the individual but to society as a whole in terms of enhancing national productivity, improving socioeconomic status, and changing attitudes, values, and behaviors in desirable ways (Solmon & Gordon, 1981) then eliminating institutional barriers and making higher education available to all individuals who are willing and able to benefit from it should be of serious concern to all of society.

Situational barriers arise from an individual's life situation and may include gender, race, ethnicity, geographic location, issues of transportation, child care responsibilities, issues
of time, and socioeconomic status. Research shows that minority groups are highly underrepresented in organized learning activities (Arbeiter, 1976; Cross, 1981). Furthermore, except for African-American women, the college attendance rate of minority women is under that of both males of all ethnic groups and white females (Tittle & Denker, 1980). Thus, race and gender have an influence on college attendance. Geographic location may limit access to colleges and universities particularly in more rural areas (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984). Research shows that the percentage of urban adults studying general academic subjects is more than twice that of rural adults (Arbeiter, 1976). Likewise, lack of private or public transportation may keep individuals from enrolling. This is especially true for older individuals and lower socioeconomic status individuals. Having child care responsibilities serves as a situational barrier in that it may hinder an individual's ability to pursue education due to time constraints, financial issues, or lack of alternative child care systems. In fact, Badenhoop and Johansen (1980) found that children and the time necessary to devote to them were seen as the most significant obstacle to completing their education by 45.7% of their sample of reentry women.

Cross (1981) suggests that situational barriers influence up to 50% of all potential learners and are the most detrimental of all types of barriers in terms of pursuing education. In particular, the cost of education and lack of time have been identified as the most important situational barriers to enrollment. Education for adults is contaminated by socioeconomic elitism. Research shows the elderly, African-Americans, and those with lower incomes are highly under-represented in organized learning activities (Arbeiter, 1976; Cross, 1981). It is difficult to assess the full impact of cost on enrollment because saying something "costs too
much" is a socially acceptable reason for not doing it. However, it is clear that cost does have an impact (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Martin, 1988; Rawlins, 1979; Smallwood, 1980; Swift et al., 1987). For instance, in 1976 when the veterans educational benefits were terminated, enrollment in televised courses in 35 community colleges in the Los Angeles area fell 43% indicating that the loss of money greatly influenced participation (Carlisle, 1978 as cited by Cross, 1981). Lack of time and difficulty with time management are also considerable situational barriers for many adult students (Martin, 1988; Simpkins, 1980; Slotnick et al., 1993; Swift et al., 1987; Wratcher & Jones, 1986). These barriers are associated with the number of roles filled by adults returning to school (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Geisler & Thrush, 1975). Often these individuals fill the roles of spouses/partners, parents, employees, and students. The excessive time demands required by each role may cause adults to withdraw from education in order to satisfy the demands of other roles. Overall, situational barriers represent a significant impediment to adult education.

Sociological barriers are those created by the socialization practices of our society. As a whole our society continues to socialize individuals into sex stereotyped roles (Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). In terms of education this translates into significant discrimination, especially for women. The socialization process results in both external barriers such as occupational segregation and glass ceilings, and internal barriers such as an individual's beliefs about what kinds of jobs or roles are appropriate for men and women. Young girls are inundated with messages about developing a feminine identity based on being a wife and a mother. We may encourage little girls to
achieve, but at the same time we send them clear messages that little boys do not like girls who are too smart and that their achievements should be limited to appropriate realms (Tittle & Denker, 1980). We encourage girls to remain passive and dependent while boys are reinforced for action and independence. We socialize girls into a world that no longer exists. They grow up believing in the myth of homemaker and mother which stands in stark contrast to the reality of women's involvement in the labor force. The discrepancy between what we teach our children to believe and reality creates many barriers for women who want to further their education, especially in fields traditionally dominated by men (Smallwood, 1980). Another important sociological barrier is the inadequate background in mathematics and the sciences that women receive in elementary and secondary school (Betz, 1989). Girls are not encouraged to pursue these fields even though it is clear that their career and educational options will be severely limited by this lack of preparation.

Ageism refers to assumptions made about people purely on the basis of their age and is another significant sociological barrier (Schlossberg et al., 1986). In our society there is a socially prescribed time-table for the ordering of major life events such as schooling, marriage, work, and retirement. If an individual is "off-time", whether too early or too late, they are considered to be age deviant which carries social penalties such as isolation, ridicule, and discrimination. In our society young adults are supposed to be autonomous, exuberant, driven to achieve, and oriented toward education. Middle-aged adults, on the other hand, are seen as responsible, settled, and starting to think about giving up roles rather than taking on new ones. When individuals do not live up to the societal stereotypes of what is appropriate and acceptable for their age, they rarely question the stereotypes, rather they see themselves
as to blame and they are blamed by society. Thus, adults who consider returning to school must battle both their own prejudice about what is appropriate for their age group as well as the prejudice of society.

Psychological barriers refer to thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and self-perceptions that hinder individuals from seeking further education (Brians & Quann, 1977). These are certainly related to sociological barriers due to the influence of culture on an individual's understanding of him/herself and the world. Fears about one's ability to succeed in an academic environment are a significant psychological barrier that must be confronted if the individual wants to enroll in college (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Cross, 1981; Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Slotnick et al., 1993; Smallwood, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). This can be a difficult process and may involve dealing with fears about being too old to learn, having forgotten past learning, having never developed study skills, and/or having had past negative learning experiences. Real deficits in academic preparation may also be a barrier that needs to be confronted and remediated if an individual wants to seek further education (Brandenburg, 1974; Rawlins, 1979; Simpkins, 1980). One of the most common psychological barriers to education cited in the literature is the experience of guilty feelings, especially for women (Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Malin, Bray, Dougherty, & Skinner, 1980; Nichols, 1974; Shiskoff, 1973; Tittle & Denker, 1980). Guilt may arise from beliefs that an individual's child care responsibilities are suffering due to the added student role, from being excited about focusing on one's own life, or from the belief that going back to school is self-indulgent or selfish. Guilt may also be perpetuated by disapproving relatives and friends that resist an individual's reentry into education (Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). The experience
of guilty emotions tends to be particularly strong in adult women who enter or return to school. To a significant degree these feelings are the result of taking actions contrary to those prescribed by the socially sanctioned role for women in our society. Further psychological barriers include unrealistic goals, lack of assertiveness, difficulty making decisions, low self-esteem, and dependency (Apps, 1981; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Feeling socially isolated, out of touch, and different from younger students also serve as barriers to adult-student enrollment in college (Byrne, 1989; Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Martin, 1988; Rawlins, 1979; Swift et al., 1987). These psychological barriers influence the way adults think about themselves and their world and make entering college a difficult course to pursue.

It is important to understand the multitude of barriers that face adults as they add the student role to their repertoire. These barriers can create enormous pressure and difficulty in an individual's life. Some of these barriers can be dealt with at an institutional and societal level but many must be approached on an individual level. Counseling has long been an arena for dealing with these types of concerns through personal counseling, educational programming, and advocate services. These services allow adults to challenge societal messages, cognitively reconstruct their internal beliefs, and take a stand against institutional policies that discriminate against adult students. By creating student counseling services that are sensitive to the needs and experiences of adult students, institutions of higher education take a step toward managing and eliminating the barriers that face adult students.
Persistence of adult students

If adults are able to overcome the institutional, situational, sociological, and psychological barriers that face them and enroll in college, then they have won only part of the battle. Several studies have suggested that adult students have a higher rate of retention than traditionally-aged students (Anderson & Darkenwald, 1979; Pirnot, 1987; Reimal, 1976, as cited by Tittle & Denker, 1980). Yet, a number of adult students do not remain in the educational system. In an effort to understand and bolster retention, researchers have become interested in identifying factors related to both persistence and nonpersistence in the adult-student population. Generally, nonpersistence seems to be a function of factors external to the university environment. Although nonpersisters may identify problems within the university setting as factors in their decision to withdraw, they are most likely to cite external constraints such as lack of time, lack of money, family responsibilities, health problems, distance to campus, or employer non-support as reasons for discontinuing their education (Meers & Gilkison, 1985; Naretto, 1995). As welfare reform takes hold these external factors may become an even more potent influence on adult-student nonpersistence in college.

Secondarily, issues internal to the university community such as problems with coursework, difficulty meeting admissions requirements, and dissatisfaction with faculty and advisers are cited as reasons for nonpersistence. Thus, for many nonpersisters situational factors seem to account for a large portion of the decision to withdraw from college.

Factors in persistence, on the other hand, seem to be related to university life. Several studies have shown that persisters have significantly higher Grade Point Averages than nonpersisters (Brenden, 1985; Naretto, 1995). Persisters also generally have done better in
previous learning activities. Brenden (1985) found a positive relationship between rate of persistence and high school class rank. Thus, having a history of academic success and doing well currently may encourage students to continue in their studies despite other obstacles. Naretto (1995) found that persisters spent significantly more nonclass time on campus and reported a higher level of integration with fellow students, faculty, and nonfaculty than nonpersisters. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of persisters reported experiencing a feeling of support and encouragement from the college while nonpersisters reported that the college was either noncommittal or negative in their lives. Services offered by the college also appear to be an important factor in retention. Reimal (1976, as cited by Tittle & Denker, 1980) reported that reentry women ranked counseling, child care, block classes, and financial aid as the most important factors in their decisions to stay in school. Thus, persistence in college is not merely the absence of negative external environments but is strongly influenced by the presence of a supportive university environment that addresses the needs of adult students.

These studies suggest that persistence of adult students may depend to a large degree on the efforts the university community makes to welcome and encourage these students and on the services offered to help students perform well personally and academically (Heretick & Doyle, 1983; Naretto, 1995). Providing counseling appropriate for adult-student issues may be one way to help adult students feel connected to the university. Counseling aimed at supporting adult students through the transition process and helping them to strengthen their academic skills may be particularly useful in retention efforts.
The impact of returning to school on the family

Given the significant barriers of lack of time and multiple roles for adults returning to school, researchers have become interested in the impact of this return on families. If an adult overcomes the barriers to enrollment and is able to persist in college the effects on her/his family may be both positive and negative (Ballmer & Cozby, 1981). Hendel (1983) studied 1,134 women who had contact with a continuing education program and found that these women reported an overall positive effect on marital satisfaction after returning to school. Likewise, approximately two-thirds of the women felt they had become better parents after returning to school. They also reported a positive impact on their children. More than one-third felt that their children had benefitted from the return to school by becoming more organized, self-reliant, and responsible. Hendel's (1983) study suggests that a mother's return to school may have positive effects on the family unit and its individual members.

Other studies suggest a mixture of positive and negative effects on the family. Spreadbury (1983) found that of the 110 adult women in her sample 70% reported doing less cooking and cleaning after returning to school. Sixty-six percent reported that their families had to give them time to study. 59% had less time with their husbands, 65% had less time with their children, and 49% reported that the rest of the family did more housework. Even with these adjustments 56% felt that their marriage had not suffered at all due to their return to school. Likewise, 42% and 46% felt their husbands and children had not suffered, respectively. Ballmer and Cozby (1981) compared 78 married couples, 39 where the wife had returned to school and 39 where the wife was a homemaker. They also found a mixture of positive and negative effects on the families. Those couples where the wife had reentered
school described their family environment as having significantly more independence, greater intellectual-cultural orientation, greater active-recreational orientation, and less rigidity than couples where the wife was a homemaker. However, they also perceived more conflict, less cohesiveness, lower moral-religious emphasis, and less organization than couples where the wife was a homemaker. Ballmer and Cozby (1981) suggest that these results may be a function of the role a woman takes prior to entering college and the restructuring of family relationships once she is enrolled. Other studies have found that a woman's return to school has an impact on home-nonhome conflict and methods of coping utilized (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983; Beutell & O'Hare, 1987). Thus, the literature suggests that the impact of a woman's return to school on the family is not a simple concept. When a wife and mother reenters college the family routine must change but the impact of this change will depend on a number of other factors and in most cases will produce a mixture of positive and negative results. Whether the same results hold true for husbands and fathers who return to school is a question in need of study.

The amount of support an adult experiences from family members is an important issue in his/her decision to return to school (Hooper, 1979; Hooper & Rice, 1978; Huston-Hoburg & Strange, 1986; MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Mangano & Corrado, 1981). Most of the literature examines adult women returning to school and the support they receive from husbands or family members. The results of many studies indicate that a significant number of women who return to school receive little or no support from their families (Farmer & Fyans, 1983; Hendel, 1983; Spreadbury, 1983). Brandenburg (1974) reported that husbands and families may initially be supportive of the wife or mother's return to school only to
withdraw this support once they realize the far reaching impact of her decision to return. This lack of familial support may be a function of other conditions in the family environment. Often a woman's return to school creates an imbalance between herself and her husband in terms of educational level. This imbalance may result in the husband feeling threatened by his wife's new role and uncomfortable adjusting to the changing family dynamics. The outcome is often a withdrawal of support on the part of the husband and intensified guilt feelings on the part of the wife. Parelman (1974, as cited by Hooper, 1979) found that families of returning women students were more supportive when the marriage was already nontraditional in the assignment of roles than when roles were assigned along traditional sex stereotypes. Furthermore, the more the husband agreed with the wife's decision to return to school the more likely he was to be supportive in terms of sharing household tasks. Hooper (1979) found that a husband's level of support was dependent upon his anxiety level about the affects of his wife's return to school. The more anxious a husband was the less supportive he reported himself as being. Thus, the roles taken by various family members and their individual expectations about the affect of the wife or mother's return to school may influence the amount of support available for the returnee.

The literature which explores the impact on the families of both male and female returning adult students is equivocal in terms of which gender receives more negative reactions upon returning to school (Huston-Hoburg & Strange, 1986; Malin et al., 1980). Regardless of which sex is least supported, it is clear that a significant proportion do not receive encouragement from family or friends upon their decision to return. They may not receive overt discouragement; however, the lack of support may function like a null
environment (Betz, 1989; Freeman, 1979) leaving them at the mercy of society's expectations which are generally negative. Increasing the support that adult students receive from family members and friends or counterbalancing the lack of support with encouragement from the university may help more adults return to and remain in college.

Many adults returning to school express considerable guilt about their return. Much of this guilt emanates from feelings that they are not devoting as much time and attention to their families as they "should" be and that they are changing the family dynamics and balance of power by receiving more education. Hooper (1979) found that women in couples who divided tasks among family members on a rotating basis without regard to sex had lower guilt than women in couples who divided tasks along traditional sex lines. Parelman (1974, as cited by Hooper, 1979) also explored guilt in returning women and found that mothers who had ventured out of the homemaker role more than once expressed less guilt than mothers who were doing so for the first time. The experience of guilt seems to be related to an individual's perception of his/her role in the family and the amount of rigidity in this perception. If guilt is experienced by the adult student, it can have a significant impact on her/his academic performance and may serve as a factor in nonpersistence.

Clearly, when an adult returns to school there is a significant impact on the family. The valence of this impact seems to be determined by a combination of factors including the adult student's feelings about him/herself, the power dynamics in the family system, and the amount of support received from external sources. All of these factors are related to counseling. Helping individuals build on their strengths, increase their self-esteem, and develop stronger support systems is a common goal of individual and group counseling.
Counseling may also be useful in helping adult students deal with changing family roles, role conflict, family power structures, family cohesiveness, and issues of guilt. Making counseling services which focus on adult issues available to returning adult students may help them to ease the negative affects and increase the positive affects of returning to school on their families and themselves.

Program recommendations for adult students

As research and interest have grown in the adult-student population, programs for adult students have been designed and implemented in a number of colleges and universities (Gelling, 1981; Heretick & Doyle, 1983; Nichols, 1974; Powell & Rodgers, 1975; Rawlins & Lenihan, 1982; Ray, 1977; Swift et al., 1986; Wilcoxon et al., 1989; Wratcher & Jones, 1986). These programs meet a number of needs on university campuses. They serve as a resource for adult students, they assist in both recruitment and retention efforts, and they satisfy the demands of affirmative action policies (Whatley, 1975). The interventions implemented in these programs vary; however, most are based at least partly on recommendations offered in the literature. Following is a list of recommendations drawn from the literature for developing programs to serve adult students. These recommendations are discussed in terms of enhancing both the recruitment and the retention of adult students.

In terms of recruitment there are a number of ways in which universities could reduce potential obstacles to adult enrollment. Having a special admissions counselor for adult students, providing evening registration, and providing special orientation programs for adults and their families may encourage more adult students to enroll (Campbell, 1984; Hughes,
1983; Lance et al., 1979; Nowak & Shriberg, 1981; Powell & Rodgers, 1975; Rawlins, 1979; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Likewise, adopting more flexible admissions policies may bring in adult students that are daunted by previous negative experiences in education (Bicknell, 1975). Research shows that old transcripts and letters of recommendation, and even more current standardized testing are not particularly accurate predictors of adult-student academic performance and may exclude individuals who would perform quite well in college (Brandenburg, 1974). Bicknell (1975) suggests that basing admission on life experience, realistic expectations, ability to do work, and a potential for putting education to use may be more reasonable standards of admission for adult students.

Timing and location of classes often serve as barriers for adult students who work or have children. Offering courses at various times and locations, offering block classes, and offering classes that meet on the weekend, during the evening, and in the summer are ways of increasing enrollment (Apps, 1981; Hughes, 1983; Mangano & Corrado, 1981; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Giving credit for life experience and removing nonessential course requirements may also motivate some students to continue with their education (Bicknell, 1975; Brandenburg, 1974; Droegkamp & Taylor, 1995; Hughes, 1983; Rawlins, 1979; Tittle & Denker, 1980). Perhaps one of the most important factors in college enrollment is cost. Increasing student awareness and helping adult students take advantage of all potential sources of financial aid is a crucial component in recruitment. Likewise, providing child care facilities on campus or financial assistance with child care off campus would reduce one of the most significant barriers to education, especially for women students (Bicknell, 1975; Brandenburg, 1974; Hughes, 1983; Lance et al., 1979; Smallwood, 1980;
Tittle & Denker, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983) . Adult students often need to strengthen their study skills in order to perform well in college. A specialized reentry credit course that familiarizes adult students with the campus and academic environment, and workshops or courses to help adults brush up on academic skills may also make enrollment more appealing to prospective adult students (Hughes, 1983; Lance et al., 1979; Mangano & Corrado, 1981; Nowak & Shriberg, 1981; Smallwood, 1980).

Once adults have entered the academic environment, retention efforts become important. Adults have different needs than their traditionally-aged counterparts and the university must respond to these needs if it hopes to retain adult students (Rawlins & Davies, 1981). Research has linked integration to retention; therefore, colleges and universities should strive to integrate adult students into the campus community (Brenden, 1985; Farmer & Fyans, 1983). Faculty and staff must be prepared for the academic challenges and greater variety of personal and social needs that adult students bring to campus (Von der Embse & Childs, 1979). In-service training can be used to help change faculty and staff attitudes and stereotypes that negatively impact adult students (Brians & Quann, 1977; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Nowak & Shriberg, 1981; Rawlins, 1979; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983). Providing an effective information outlet for adult students and temporary housing for adult commuters are other ways that the campus can show support to this population (Rawlins, 1979; Rawlins & Davies, 1981). Finally, universities that establish adult-student centers which disseminate information, provide encouragement, and serve as a central meeting place for adult students show these students that they are a valued and integral part of the campus community (Bicknell, 1975; Lance et al., 1979; Tittle & Denker, 1980).
While many colleges and universities have increased their awareness of the adult-student population over the last few decades, programming for this population is still in its infancy. Few colleges and universities are willing or able to make the philosophical and financial commitments necessary to introduce a truly comprehensive plan for the recruitment and retention of adult students. Yet, colleges and universities which do implement these recommendations are likely to see an increase in the number of adults seeking to enroll and remain in their degree granting programs. Thus, adult students are one way to help fill the enrollment gap left by the declining population of traditionally-aged college students. Without such a commitment to serve the adult-student population, many potential students will continue to be thwarted in their efforts to further their education by the significant institutional, situational, sociological, and psychological barriers that help keep adults out of the student role.

Counseling services and adult students

Perhaps the most often cited suggestion for adult-student programming is to provide counseling services for these individuals (Apps, 1981; Bicknell, 1975; Brians & Quann, 1977; Campbell, 1984; DiSilvestro, 1981; Goldberg, 1980; Hendel, 1983; Hooper, 1979; Hughes, 1983; Lance et al., 1979; Malin et al., 1980; McMillan, 1977; Meers & Gilkison, 1985; Nowak & Shriberg, 1981; Powell & Rodgers, 1975; Rawlins, 1979; Ray, 1977; Simpkins, 1980; Smallwood, 1980; Tittle & Denker, 1980; Wheaton & Robinson, 1983; Wilcoxon et al., 1989). Peer and professional counselors, personal counseling, career counseling, academic counseling, life style counseling, support groups, family counseling, workshops, and
outreach programming have all been recommended as crucial components of a campus that is sensitive and responsive to adult-student needs. In particular, services aimed at building self-confidence, problem-solving skills, assertiveness, coping strategies for role conflict, time management skills, and stress management skills are needed by this population (Beutell & O'Hare, 1987; Cross, 1981; Swift et al., 1987). Furthermore, these services need to be available, accessible, and affordable in order to reach adult students (Mangano & Corrado, 1981; Rawlins, 1979).

Several researchers have looked at self-reported need for counseling among the adult-student population. These studies have revealed a significant need for various types of counseling services including vocational, educational, interpersonal, and personal counseling (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Ballmer & Cozby, 1981; Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Hooper & Rice, 1978; Mardoyan et al., 1983). Lance et al. (1979) found that between 50 and 60 percent of the 583 reentry students they surveyed indicated they would use individual counseling, career exploration and educational-vocational counseling if these services were readily available. Likewise, 46.7% indicated they would use evening counseling, and a majority indicated a need for workshops on issues such as career development and communication skills. Rawlins and Davies (1981) surveyed students 30 years old and over. Fifty-six percent of their sample felt they could benefit from individual counseling and 64% felt they could benefit from vocational counseling. Over half indicated a desire for workshops on things like assertiveness and relaxation. These studies suggest that adult students perceive themselves as needing counseling services.
There also appears to be a considerable degree of urgency to this need. Williams, Lindsay, Burns, Wyckoff and Wall (1973) surveyed 9,283 students in continuing education courses on their counseling needs. Thirty-four percent of their sample indicated some degree of urgency for counseling while only 26% indicated no need for counseling services. The most endorsed types of counseling desired included administrative advice, assistance evaluating educational and career plans, and the need to get more information on careers. Nine percent of these subjects indicated a need for personal counseling. Although this is clearly a need endorsed by fewer subjects, it still was requested by a significant number of individuals. Graff and Horne (1973) also found that their subjects perceived relatively urgent needs for a number of counseling services. They studied male graduate and undergraduate students and their spouses and found that 15% or more indicated a moderate or considerable need for counseling dealing with child rearing problems, academic or vocational concerns, personal concerns, role conflicts and financial problems. These studies indicate not only a desire for counseling services but a definite need for help with a variety of personal, academic, and vocational issues among the adult-student population.

Some researchers have studied the counseling needs of subgroups of adult students. For example, MacKinnon-Slaney et al. (1988) studied female adult students subgrouped according to marital status. They found women in the different subgroups expressed different counseling needs. Divorced women returning to school indicated that their strongest needs were for help with financial issues, career decision making, emotional issues, and adaptation to children growing older. Married women returning to school were most likely to need personal counseling for family issues and career issues. Finally, reentry women who were
single indicated they needed most help with career change, emotional issues, and financial planning. Researchers should be sensitive to the probability that other subgroups of the adult-student population may need special foci in counseling as well.

The previous studies support the conclusion that there is a considerable need for counseling in the adult-student population. However, there appears to be a large discrepancy between indicated need and utilization of available counseling services. Geisler and Thrush (1975) found that 21% of their sample of adult students expressed a need for vocational counseling but only 7% had received this service. Likewise, 16% expressed a need for personal counseling but only 5% reported receiving personal counseling. There are several possible explanations for the discrepancy between counseling need and utilization of services. One possibility stems from the fact that counseling services on campus are often neither visible nor accessible to the adult-student population. Graff and Horne (1973) found that the majority of the students they questioned did not know the location of the counseling center on campus. Similarly, Mardoyan et al. (1983) found that 50% of their adult-student sample were not even aware that counseling was available on campus. Time may also play a role in adult-student underutilization of counseling services. Many adult students have very structured time schedules due to their multiple responsibilities. They may not have time during the day to schedule counseling appointments because they must work or resume their child care duties immediately after classes. In various surveys adult students have requested evening and weekend counseling hours and counseling locations near to where they live (Geisler & Thrush, 1975; Graff & Horne, 1973; Mardoyan et al., 1983; Wertheim, 1981). Implementing these requests may increase adult-student utilization of counseling services.
The underutilization of counseling and other support services by adult students may go beyond accessibility issues. Adult students may fail to use these services because they feel they should be able to handle problems on their own (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980). Being older brings considerable expectations about one's ability to deal with life problems. Thus, adult students may not seek help because they feel pressured by society and themselves to give the impression that they do not have problems. The discrepancy between need for and utilization of counseling in the adult-student population may also be related to the adult student's perception of counseling services. If these services are perceived to be geared for traditionally-aged students, adults may doubt the efficacy of counseling for their issues. They may see counseling center staff as skilled only in working with 18-23 year olds and, consequently, be deterred from using these services. Even if an adult student considers counselors to have skills and knowledge applicable to adult life issues, he/she may fear ageist attitudes from counselors, especially if he/she has experienced ageism elsewhere on campus. Thus, issues of accessibility, applicability, efficacy, and discrimination may keep adult students from utilizing campus counseling centers.

If adult students do seek out counseling, the literature offers recommendations for working with this population. There appears to be some agreement that academic, vocational, and personal issues are often delicately intertwined for adult students. Counselors may need to go beyond educational or vocational foci to encompass a broader view of the client's issues (Brown, 1971; DiSilvestro, 1981; Goldberg, 1980). In particular, they may need to explore dependency issues, self-defeating behavior, and coping strategies for dealing with family resistance to the adult's reentry into education (Brandenburg, 1974). Other
suggested areas of focus include work, leisure, aging, and coping with a growing variety of lifestyles (Kimmel, 1976). Discussion of the importance of social support and how to increase this resource may be a crucial part of the counseling process (Hooper & Rice, 1978; Roehl & Okun, 1984; Taylor, 1995). Counselors need to be knowledgeable about the special barriers that face adult students, both those created by external forces such as institutions and society, and those that adult students place in front of themselves. Counselors need to be especially aware of their own attitudes toward adult students (Grabowski, 1976; Schlossberg et al., 1986). Schlossberg et al. (1986) found that more than half of the counselors that they surveyed showed some form of age bias. Counselors must be extremely sensitive to their own attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes and refrain from making assumptions about individuals based solely on information about the group from which they come.

Although there are numerous recommendations for counseling styles and interventions in the literature, there have only been a few experimental studies investigating the effects of counseling in an adult-student population (Grottkau & Davis, 1987; Hetherington & Hudson, 1981; Kostka & Wilson, 1986). The findings from these studies have been somewhat equivocal. Those that have used broad based interventions generally have shown little or no positive changes as a result of counseling while those with more circumscribed interventions have shown some positive changes as a result of counseling. Obviously, more experimental studies are needed. However, the limited results available do indicate that counseling can be helpful for adult students at least under some circumstances. These studies also lend support to the notion that, when adult students return to college they bring unique problems, conflicts, fears, and needs that require counselors to have specialized skills and knowledge.
It seems relatively clear that adult learners may be different from their traditionally-aged counterparts in terms of their counseling needs. Group counseling, short term counseling, and utilizing active-directive approaches in counseling have all been suggested as ways of meeting the needs of adult students (Goldberg, 1980). Likewise, involving families early on in the student’s academic career has been suggested as a mechanism for reducing family resistance and easing the reentry of an adult to the educational system (Hooper, 1979). Using paraprofessional, indigenous, or peer counselors has also been recommended as a way to serve adult students in the face of decreasing budgets and professional staff members (Goldberg, 1980).

New forms of counseling services may also help better serve the adult-student population. Educational brokering refers to a system in which students are assigned to a "broker" who assists them in making the most beneficial career and educational decisions (Goldberg, 1980). This system has been recommended for use with the adult-student population because of the emphasis on career issues and the need for educational skills in this group. Other nontraditional forms of counseling have also been suggested for use with adult students including telephone counseling (Jewell & Lubin, 1988), counseling through audio cassettes, computer assisted counseling, programmed self-instructional materials, and written forms of counseling (Wertheim, 1981). These nontraditional forms of counseling represent potential tools that counseling centers can embrace in order to serve the needs of adult students. However, to fully serve this student group changes must take place on a larger scale. Counseling efforts must be seen as the responsibility of all staff members not just counselors. Administrators must begin to understand the contribution that counseling can
make to enrollment, retention, and financial stability rather than perceiving this simply as an expense for the university. Finally, counseling centers must offer a broad range of services that will benefit most students and not just a select group with problems (Knox, 1981). If these changes are implemented at the institutional level, then the counseling needs of adult students may begin to be met.

**Expectations about counseling**

Before we can begin to create changes on an institutional level, we must better understand how adult students view counseling and the discrepancy between adult students' expressed need for counseling and their utilization of these services. Few researchers have explored barriers that keep adult students from seeking counseling. One potential barrier is the expectations that adult students hold about the counseling process. Expectations are defined as cognitively mediated preparatory sets or dispositions to behave in a particular way in a given situation (Tinsley et al., 1980). Research has shown that individuals hold certain expectations about what counseling will be like and the roles that they and their counselors will play in the counseling process (Bordin, 1955; Frank, 1968; Hardin & Subich, 1985; Tinsley et al., 1980). Studies that explore psychologists' perceptions of expectations held by their clients suggest that psychologists perceive many of their clients as holding unrealistically high and/or unrealistically low expectations about counseling (Tinsley, Barich, & Bowman, 1992; Tinsley, Bowman, & Barich, 1993). Unrealistic expectations may serve as barriers which hinder individuals from seeking or remaining in counseling. Research has shown that expectations are linked to various behaviors in therapy including persistence (Heilbrun, 1972),
counseling effectiveness (Frank, 1968; Goldstein, 1962), and duration of counseling (June & Smith, 1983). Expectations about counseling have also been linked to utilization of counseling services and help-seeking behavior (Parham & Tinsley, 1980; Tinsley et al., 1984; Yanico & Hardin, 1985; Ziemelis, 1974). Thus, adult students' expectations about the counseling process may influence their decision to enter into and remain in therapy as well as the effectiveness of therapy. It is important for those involved in higher education to know how adult students view counseling in order to identify ways of making counseling more responsive to adult students' needs and to facilitate utilization of available services.

There are numerous studies on expectations about counseling in the literature. Most research has focused on the relationship between personal characteristics and expectations about counseling. In particular, expectations about counseling have been studied in relation to demographic variables such as gender, race, and age (Pecnik & Epperson, 1985; Richmond, 1984; Tinsley & Harris, 1976; Tinsley, Hinson, Holt, & Tinsley, 1990; Tinsley et al., 1980; Yanico & Hardin, 1985; Yuen & Tinsley, 1981). Other researchers have explored expectations about counseling as a function of personal, attitudinal, and cognitive variables (Galassi, Crace, Martin, James, & Wallace, 1992; Hardin & Yanico, 1983; Leong, Leong, & Hoffman, 1987; Pecnik & Epperson, 1985; Tinsley, Tokar & Helwig, 1994). Counseling expectations have also been compared in a variety of populations including clients and nonclients (Hardin & Subich, 1985; Richmond, 1984; Subich & Coursol, 1985), International students and American students (Yuen & Tinsley, 1981), and athletes and nonathletes (Miller & Moore, 1993). The other major focus of research in this area has been the relationship between expectations about counseling and process and outcome in therapy (Tinsley,
Bowman, & Ray, 1988). Generally, these studies involve attempts to manipulate client expectancies and measure the resulting impact on different aspects of counseling (Bednar & Parker, 1969; Friedlander & Kaul, 1983; Ziemelis, 1974). These studies help to clarify how expectations are played out in the counseling interaction. Overall, the literature provides a solid base of information on counseling expectancies from both descriptive and experimental studies.

Variables of age and psychological development are of particular importance to the present study which will examine the expectations about counseling of both traditionally-aged and adult students. There is limited evidence to suggest that expectations for counseling are related to these variables. Tinsley and Harris (1976) conducted a study on student expectations for counseling. In a preliminary analysis of their data they found significant differences between the expectancies of subjects aged 22 or younger and the expectancies of subjects aged 23 or over. However, due to the small number of older subjects in their sample, Tinsley and Harris (1976) excluded this group from further analysis leaving the issue of age as a variable for future study. Kunkel and Williams (1991) compared elderly participants (65 years and older) with college students (22 years and younger) on their expectations about counseling. In an attempt to provide a triangulated perspective on counseling expectations of the elderly these researchers simultaneously utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodology. In general, the quantitative analysis suggested a high level of similarity between the elderly and student participants. A significant main effect for age was found on only one variable, with elderly participants expressing lower expectations for counselor disclosure than younger participants. The qualitative analysis, on the other hand, provided
more discrepant information between the two subject groups. Elderly subjects appeared to
be more guarded about personal information, they tended to believe in self-reliance for
problems, and they tended to view counseling as a punitive and remedial experience useful
only in dire situations. Younger subjects expressed more openness and self-disclosure, relied
more on social networks to deal with problems, and saw counselors as helpful guides on a
journey of self-discovery. Thus, the elderly in this study may have had more negative
expectations than their younger counterparts. The relationship between age and expectations
about counseling remains unclear for a number of reasons. It is possible that a curvilinear
relationship exists between age and counseling expectations that accounts for young and old
individuals holding more negative attitudes about counseling than middle-aged adults. The
relationship between these variables may also be confounded by a cohort effect making it
difficult to identify the influence of age on counseling expectations. Clearly, much more
research is needed in this area before any firm conclusions can be made.

Psychological, social, and physical development issues which are related to age may
also be related to expectations about counseling. After excluding older subjects from their
study, Tinsley and Harris (1976) chose to focus on psychological development. Although
they used only subjects aged 22 and younger, they did find differences in counseling
expectancies among this group as a function of college class level. The results suggested that
as students progressed through college they were less likely to expect a counselor who was
expert and accepting. These findings may be related to the development of the students' critical thinking skills and may have a significant impact on the likelihood that more advanced students will use available counseling services. Later, Tinsley et al. (1990) examined
expectations about counseling in relation to level of psychosocial development. They found that students with more appropriate educational plans, more mature career plans, and more mature lifestyle plans had more positive expectations about counseling. Their findings indicate that expectations may be related to level of psychosocial development. Since most adult students are at different levels of psychological and social development than their traditionally-aged counterparts (Bauer & Mott, 1990; Cross, 1981; Erikson, 1963; Kimmel, 1976; Schlossberg et al., 1986; Slotnick et al., 1993; Van Dusen & Sheldon, 1976), it is likely that their expectations for counseling may also differ.

The present study

The present study examined the expectations about counseling of both traditionally-aged and adult students in order to further our understanding of this population. Adult students in this study were defined by two criteria. They were 25 years old or older and, between graduating from high school and their most recent entrance into college, they had taken at least a consecutive two year hiatus from school. Traditionally-aged students were defined as those aged 23 or younger who, since graduating from high school, had never had a consecutive two year period or more when they were not enrolled in college classes part-time or full-time. The literature is filled with recommendations for educational institutions about providing counseling services to assist the adult-student population. Yet, we know very little about what adult students expect from these services or how to make these services more appealing in light of adult-student underutilization.
Expectations about counseling of both traditionally-aged and adult students were examined through the use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Both research strategies were employed in order to compensate for some of the weaknesses in each method. Quantitative strategies attempt to randomly sample instances of a category and use probability theory to explain and predict phenomenon with a high degree of statistical confidence (Kunkel & Williams, 1991). In quantitative designs issues of validity, reliability, and objectivity are seen as benchmarks of scientific rigor and value. Although much is gained by controlling and quantifying phenomena, a great deal is also lost. The data that is produced is "thin" because it attends only to the presence and magnitude of a phenomenon and not to the kinds of variance that occur within a phenomenon or the relations among these kinds (Polkinghorne, 1991). Qualitative methods, on the other hand, focus on providing rich descriptions that change and unfold as the data reveals itself (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1991). The researcher is intimately involved with the phenomenon of interest in an attempt to understand this phenomenon as it exists in complex social settings. Qualitative data-production theory does not require the formal control found in quantitative theory and relies primarily on observations and interviews to generate data. "The researcher is the instrument of data collection and the validity of the data is dependent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person collecting the data" (Polkinghorne, 1991, p. 184). The rich descriptions found in qualitative designs provide an understanding of the phenomena not available through quantitative methods. The aim is to collect information in a way that uncovers its interconnectedness and relatedness (Huberman & Miles, 1994). The loss of scientific rigor through control, randomness, and objectivity is the price paid for "thick" data. Qualitative
and quantitative methodologies appear to complement each others strengths and weaknesses. The combination of research strategies in the present study allowed for statistical analysis as well as rich description of expectations about counseling and provided a triangulated approach to understanding this phenomenon.

The quantitative data for the present study were collected using the Expectations About Counseling (Form B) questionnaire (EAC-B; Tinsley, 1982), while the qualitative data came from in-depth interviews with adult and traditionally-aged students. The Expectations About Counseling questionnaire is a paper and pencil measure designed to tap all of the theoretically important expectancies an individual might hold about counseling. It consists of 17 scales measuring four general areas of expectation: Client Attitudes and Behaviors, Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors, Counselor Characteristics, and Counseling Process and Outcome. The qualitative interviews consisted of discussions of counseling expectations. Open-ended questions were used to focus the interviewees' answers around the general topic of counseling expectations (e.g., How do you think counselors should act in session) while still allowing discussions of the general topic to develop naturally.

The hypothesis of the present study involved two parts:

A. In terms of the quantitative data, it was hypothesized that significant differences would be found between adult and traditionally-aged students in their responses to the EAC-B.

B. In terms of the qualitative data, it was hypothesized that significant differences would be found between adult and traditionally-aged students in the themes regarding expectations about counseling identified in the interview data.
It was hypothesized that both research strategies would uncover significant differences in expectations about counseling held by adult and traditionally-aged students due to the different life experiences, needs, and level of psychosocial development of these two groups. In the present study these differences were operationalized by the variables age and time out of school. These two variables were selected because they seem to capture the essence of being an adult student; that is, adult students are older than traditionally-aged students and have had life experiences removed from the academic world. Most developmental theories link stages of development to approximate age groups (Chickering, 1976; Erikson, 1963; Gilligan, 1982; Knox, 1980; Levinson et al., 1978). Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that age operationalizes at least some of the developmental differences between adult and traditionally-aged students. The age criteria for the present study were based on previous research and governmental standards. Traditionally-aged students are defined by the United States federal government in national educational reports and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid as those aged 23 and younger (Carnegie Council on Policy Studies on Higher Education, 1980; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Previous research has been less consistent in defining the age range for adult students. However, the majority of studies have defined adult students as those aged 25 years and over (Heretick & Doyle, 1983; Kostka & Wilson, 1986; MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Mardoyan et al., 1983; Naretto, 1995; Powell & Rodgers, 1975; Wilcoxon et al., 1989; Yarbrough & Schaffer, 1990). Thus, these age criteria were used in the present research to differentiate adult and traditionally-aged students. Time out of school is another variable which operationalizes some of the developmental differences between these two student groups (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; Brandenburg,
1974; Byrne, 1989; Farmer & Fyans, 1983; Martin, 1988; Prager, 1983). The literature does not provide strict guidelines for determining how much time away from school is necessary for life stage changes to occur. At least two years out of school was selected for two reasons. First, some previous research has used this guideline (Adelstein et al., 1983; Lance et al., 1979; Roehl & Okun, 1984). Secondly, this minimum amount of time coupled with age seemed to represent criteria that would allow for the hypothesized differences as well as maximize the number of subjects who would provide usable data. The direction of the hypothesized differences was not specified given the differing results of previous studies exploring the relationship between age, psychosocial development, and expectations for counseling. Differences in expectations may illuminate important mechanisms for providing more effective counseling services to adult students. This study should also help identify unrealistic expectations of adult students that may hinder their utilization of counseling services and that may be amenable to modification either prior to or during the counseling encounter.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects for the present study were 191 college students at a medium sized university in the Midwest.

A. Subjects for the Quantitative Analysis

One hundred seventy-nine subjects participated in the quantitative part of the study. Of these, 14 subjects provided unusable data due to clerical errors and another 23 subjects were eliminated due to their failure to meet the inclusion criteria. The remaining 142 students constitute the data set upon which the quantitative analyses are based. The traditionally-aged student group consisted of 71 subjects aged 18 to 23 who, after graduating from high school, had never had a consecutive two-year period or more when they were not enrolled in college classes part-time or full-time. Eighteen of the traditionally-aged students were males and 53 were females. The adult-student group consisted of 71 subjects aged 25 or over who, between graduating from high school and their most recent entrance into college, had taken at least a consecutive two year hiatus from school. Eighteen of the adult students were males and 53 were females.
The age range of the traditionally-aged student group was 18 to 23 with a mean age of 20.7 and a median age of 21. The majority (80.3%) of the traditionally-aged group were Caucasian students with 15.5% African-American, 2.8% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 1.4% who did not complete this part of the demographic questionnaire. The traditionally-aged students were split relatively evenly among the various class ranks. Fifteen and one half percent were freshmen, 25.4% were sophomores, 23.9% were juniors, 33.8% were seniors, and 1.4% did not complete this question. As anticipated, the vast majority (85.9%) of the traditionally-aged students were single and only six (8.5%) had one or more children. Only 14.1% of the traditionally-aged students identified a marital status other than single with 8.5% married, 4.2% partnered, and 1.4% identifying as other on the demographic questionnaire. Most of the traditionally-aged students (88.7%) were enrolled in college full time while 9.9% were enrolled part-time and 1.4% failed to complete this part of the questionnaire. Per the inclusion criteria, the amount of time during which traditionally-aged students were not enrolled in college after graduating from high school was required to be less than two consecutive years. In fact, the vast majority (92%) of the traditionally-aged group reported taking no time off from school at all. Only six (8%) students reported taking time away from school. All six of those who did leave school temporarily reported taking only one year off before returning to school. In terms of academic performance, traditionally-aged students reported doing relatively well. The range of Grade Point Averages for this group went from 1.6 to 4.0 with a mean of 3.0 (see table 1).

When asked if they had ever been in counseling 36.6% (26) of the traditionally-aged students responded yes, 62% (44) responded no and 1.4% (1) did not answer this question.
(see table 2). Of those students who had been to counseling 80.8% received counseling for personal concerns, 11.5% received counseling for career concerns, 3.8% received counseling for both career and personal concerns, and 3.8% received counseling for other concerns than those listed. Of the traditionally-aged students who received counseling the mean number of sessions was 12.1 (excluding the one student who received more than 100 counseling sessions) with a range of one to 75. The helpfulness of counseling varied a great deal for traditionally-aged students. Twelve percent found their experience in counseling to be not at all helpful while 48.0% found it to be quite a bit or extremely helpful (see table 3).

The adult student group ranged in age from 25 to 73 with a mean age of 37.7 and a median age of 36. Similar to the traditional students, the majority of the adult group identified as Caucasian (66.2%) with 22.5% African-American, 5.6% Asian or Pacific Islander, 2.8% Hispanic, 1.4% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 1.4% identifying as other. The split among class rank favored the upper-classes with 11.3% identifying as freshmen, 26.8% as sophomores, 14.1% as juniors, 42.3% as seniors, and 5.6% as other. As anticipated, many students in the adult group were married (36.6%) and the majority (71.8%) had one or more children. Of the remaining adult students 28.2% were single, 16.9% were divorced, 9.9% were partnered, 4.2% were separated and 4.2% were widowed. Enrollment for the adult students was split relatively evenly with 47.9% enrolled full-time and 52.1% enrolled part-time. The amount of time during which adult students were not enrolled in college after graduating from high school ranged dramatically. The inclusion criteria required that there be at least a two year hiatus at some time after graduating from high school. Many students took time off both before entering college for the first time and once they had started
work on a college degree. Adult students reported taking anywhere from two to 40 years off with a median of 9 years. As for their academic performance, the vast majority of the adult student group reported their Grade Point Averages ranging from 2.1 to 4.0 with a mean of 3.2. One student (1.4%) fell significantly below this range (reporting a GPA less than 1.0) and one student (1.4%) did not report this data (see table 1).

The majority (N=45, 63.4%) of adult students answered yes when asked if they had ever been in counseling while 36.6% (26) answered no (see table 2). Of the students who answered affirmatively, 86.7% received counseling for personal concerns, 4.4% received counseling for career concerns, and 8.9% received counseling for both career and personal concerns. Of the adult students who received counseling the mean number of sessions was 16.3 (excluding the two individuals who reported seeing a counselor more than 100 times) with a range of one to 75. Only 4.4% of the adult students who received counseling found it to be not at all helpful, while 68.9% found counseling to be quite a bit or extremely helpful (see table 3).

B. Subjects for the Qualitative Analysis

Twelve students, six who fit the criteria for the traditionally-aged student group and six who fit the criteria for the adult student group participated in the qualitative part of the study. These students did not complete the quantitative surveys but instead participated in one-on-one interviews with the researcher. In both the adult and traditionally-aged groups two (33%) of the subjects were males and the remaining four (67%) were females.
The six traditionally-aged subjects were fairly representative of the group who completed the survey portion of the study. The age range for these six students was 20 to 23. Five students (83%) in this group were Caucasian, one (17%) was African American and all six (100%) were single. None (0%) of the traditionally-aged students had children. All six (100%) of the students in this group were enrolled full time. None of these students identified themselves as freshmen, two (33%) were sophomores, one (17%) was a junior and three (50%) identified themselves as seniors. Per the inclusion criteria, the amount of time during which traditionally-aged students were not enrolled in college after graduating from high school was required to be less than two consecutive years. One student (17%) reported taking one year off, the rest (83%) reported no time away from school. Students in the traditionally-aged group had grade point averages that ranged from 2.1 to 3.5 with an average of 2.8 (see table 1). When asked if they had ever been in counseling two students in this group responded yes while four responded no (see table 2). The two that had been in counseling went for personal concerns, had between six and 13 sessions and found counseling somewhat helpful (see table 3).

The six students who comprised the adult qualitative group were fairly representative of those adult students who completed the survey portion of the study. The age range for the six adult students was 30 to 68. Three (50%) students in this group were Caucasian and three (50%) were African American. Three (50%) of the adult students were married, two (33%) were single, and one (17%) was divorced. All six (100%) of the adult students had at least one child with the number of children ranging from one to six. When asked to identify the amount of time taken away from college, four (66.7%) of the six adult students had taken
years off both between high school and college and after entering college. The number of consecutive years taken at any one time for these four students ranged from one to 42. The remaining two students took 12 and eight years off between high school and college, respectively and no time off after entering college. Currently, two (33%) of the six students in this group reported that they were enrolled full-time while four (67%) were enrolled part-time. One student (17%) identified as a freshman, none were sophomores, two (33%) of these students were juniors and three (50%) were seniors. Students in the adult group had grade point averages that ranged from 2.6 to 4.0 with an average of 3.2 (see table 1). When asked if they had ever been to counseling five students in this group responded yes while one responded no (see table 2). Four of the five that had been to counseling went for personal concerns while one went for both personal and career concerns. Four of the five adult students who went to counseling had between three and 10 sessions while one individual had over 100 sessions. Three individuals who received counseling rated it as extremely helpful, one rated counseling as somewhat helpful and one rated it as a little helpful (see table 3).

Procedure

A. Procedure for the Quantitative Part of the Study

Subjects for the quantitative part of the study were solicited in two ways by Student Assistance Center personnel. First, individuals who utilized the Student Assistance Center were asked to participate in the study. Second, students were solicited to participate from a number of introductory and upper level courses in the social sciences. Students who utilized the Student Assistance Center’s services were approached individually to participate in the
present study while those in selected courses were solicited in groups. The courses were selected based on timing of classes and willingness of instructors to facilitate the data collection. The gender split in these courses generally favors women over men similar to the sample in the current study. The research purposes and procedures were orally explained to all students who were solicited. If students expressed interest in participating in the study, they were given a research packet to take home and return by mail within three weeks. Solicitation of students continued until at least 75 students in each group had returned research packets.

The research packets contained a letter (asking students to participate in the present study and securing their informed consent), the Expectations About Counseling (Form B) (EAC-B; Tinsley, 1982) questionnaire, a short demographic questionnaire, an index card, and a postage-paid return envelope. Subjects were instructed to return their completed instruments in the enclosed envelope or drop them off at the Student Assistance Center. If subjects were interested in a summary of the research findings they were instructed to write their name and address on the enclosed index card and return it along with their research instruments. In order to maintain anonymity, subjects were instructed not to write their name on any of the research material. The instruments in each research packet were given an identification number so that subject names were never recorded. The index cards did not contain the identification numbers and were kept separate from the data so that subject names and responses could not be matched. The EAC-B was completed first by all subjects followed by the demographic questionnaire. The standard written instructions for the EAC-B
were utilized which directed subjects to imagine that they were about to see a counseling psychologist for the first time and to report their expectations for this initial interview.

B. Procedure for the Qualitative Part of the Study

Students who received help in the Student Assistance Center were asked to participate in one-on-one interviews with the investigator for the qualitative part of the study. The research purposes and procedures were orally explained to all potential subjects by Student Assistance Center personnel. Solicitation continued until six students in each subject group (adult and traditionally-aged) agreed to participate.

Each subject met individually with the investigator to discuss his or her expectations about counseling. Prior to beginning the interview, the investigator reiterated the purposes and procedures to be followed. Subjects were reminded that their participation was voluntary and that they could decline or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Students who agreed to participate in the qualitative part of the study signed a consent form for participation that gave the researcher permission to tape record the interview. Subjects were given a copy of the consent form and a written summary of the oral solicitation to participate.

The individual interviews lasted between 25 and 60 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured. The investigator asked open-ended questions (e.g., What do you expect a counselor to be like?) to direct the general content of the session while allowing for the discussion of topics to develop naturally (see Appendix A for a general outline of the interviews). After the interview, subjects completed the demographic questionnaire used in the quantitative part of the study. The interview tapes were transcribed for subsequent
analysis. In order to ensure confidentiality, subject names were not used during the tape-recorded interviews. In all subsequent analyses and write-up of the data subjects were identified only by code numbers and demographic information in order to protect their identities.

Instruments

*Expectations About Counseling - Brief Form (EAC-B)*. Tinsley, Workman, and Kass (1980) constructed the Expectations About Counseling questionnaire to measure expectancies that clients might have about counseling (see Appendix B). Tinsley (1982) developed a brief form of this scale, the EAC-B, that yielded scores that correlated > .83 with scores from the EAC in secondary analyses of data from six investigations. The EAC-B is a 66 item test with 17 scales measuring expectancies in four general areas: (1) Client Attitudes and Behaviors (Motivation, Openness, and Responsibility), (2) Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors (Acceptance, Confrontation, Directiveness, Empathy, Genuineness, Nurturance, and Self-Disclosure), (3) Counselor Characteristics (Attractiveness, Expertise, Tolerance, and Trustworthiness), and (4) Counseling Process and Outcome (Concreteness, Immediacy, and Outcome). Each scale contains between three and four items. Individuals respond to each item on a seven point Likert scale ranging from "not true" to "definitely true." Items are scored according to the individual's response with a range of one to seven points. Answers of "not true" receive one point, answers of "slightly true" receive two points, and so on through answers of "definitely true" which receive seven points. Scale scores on the EAC-B are calculated by summing the responses to the items assigned to each scale and dividing by
the number of items. Thus, scale scores can range from one to seven with higher values indicating more positive attitudes toward counseling.

The internal consistency reliabilities for the scales of the EAC-B are sufficiently high to warrant their use in research. Based on a sample of 446 students, coefficient alphas for the EAC-B scales ranged from .69 to .82 with a median reliability of .76 (Tinsley, 1982). Using a two month interval, test-retest reliability for the EAC-B scales ranged from .47 to .87 with a median reliability of .71. All scales excluding the responsibility scale had a test-retest reliability of .60 or higher (Tinsley, 1982).

Several studies have provided evidence for the validity of the Expectations About Counseling questionnaire. Tinsley and Westcot (1990) found that the items of the EAC-B stimulated cognitions about expectations as distinct from preferences and perceptions. They also found that subjects understood the items and were able to maintain attention throughout the inventory. These results suggest the length of the test is not a problem and the EAC-B is measuring expectations rather than other related constructs. Hayes and Tinsley (1989) compared instruments measuring perceptions of counseling with the EAC-B. They found evidence that the EAC-B measures something different than the instruments measuring perceptions. Their findings add support to the discriminant validity of the EAC-B. The Expectations About Counseling instruments have also been factor analyzed in a number of studies. Tinsley et al. (1980) analyzed the EAC and reported four principal components which they named personal commitment, facilitative conditions, counselor expertise, and nurturance. Hayes and Tinsley (1989) were able to replicate the first three components in a subsequent factor analysis. Tinsley, Holt, Hinson, and Tinsley (1991) examined the EAC-B
and found strong evidence to support its factorial validity. The EAC-B has also been shown to be related to external validity criteria including overall satisfaction and positive results in counseling (Washington & Tinsley, 1982, as cited by Hardin & Subich, 1985).
### Table 1: Demographic statistics for the quantitative and qualitative subjects

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<th></th>
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<th>Qualitative subjects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Children</td>
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Table 1: Demographic statistics for the quantitative and qualitative subjects
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<td>Traditionally-aged*</td>
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<td>62.0% (44)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>36.6% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women**</td>
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<td>48.1% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>47.2% (17)</td>
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<tr>
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Table 2: Frequencies and percentages of subjects who reported having been in counseling by group status and sex

* 1.4% (1) missing data
** .9% (1) missing data
Table 3: Helpfulness of counseling experience by group status and sex

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CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Statistical Analysis Results (Quantitative Data)

In terms of the quantitative data it was hypothesized that significant differences would be found between adult and traditionally-aged students in their responses to the EAC-B. In order to evaluate this hypothesis a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed using the 17 EAC-B scale scores as dependent variables and the participant's group status (adult or traditionally-aged) and sex as independent variables. Sex was included as an independent variable in order to determine whether any interaction effects exist between group status and sex with regard to expectations about counseling. Mean scale scores for EAC-B responses were computed across group and sex categories. These means and standard deviations are found in Table 4. The results of the MANOVA showed a nonsignificant interaction effect between group status and sex in their influence on expectations about counseling.

A significant main effect was found for group status $F(1,138)=1.89$, $p<.05$, Wilks's lambda=.78. Therefore, a univariate analysis was conducted to determine which variables contributed most strongly to this effect. Significant differences were found on 5 of the EAC-B scales (see table 4). None of the scales addressing expectations for Client Attitudes and
Behaviors (Motivation, Openness, and Responsibility) showed significant differences between adult and traditionally-aged students. Three of the seven scales addressing expectations for Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors were significantly different for the two student groups. Traditionally-aged students had higher expectations on all three scales. Traditionally-aged students ($M=5.30$) expressed higher expectations for counselor acceptance than adult students did ($M=4.74$; $F=7.19$, $p<0.05$). Traditionally-aged students ($M=4.28$) expected a higher degree of counselor directiveness than adult students did ($M=3.47$; $F=8.72$, $p<0.05$). Traditionally-aged students ($M=3.46$) also expressed a greater expectation for counselor self-disclosure than adult students did ($M=3.03$; $F=6.61$, $p<0.05$). The four remaining scales which measure expectations for Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors (Confrontation, Empathy, Genuineness, and Nurturance) were not significantly different for adult and traditionally-aged students. Two of the four scales measuring expectations for Counselor Characteristics were significant. Again, traditionally-aged students expressed greater expectations than their adult counterparts on both scales. Traditionally-aged students ($M=5.59$) expected counselors to have more expertise than adult students did ($M=5.25$; $F=4.16$, $p<0.05$) and traditionally-aged students ($M=5.36$) expected counselors to be more tolerant than adult students did ($M=4.51$; $F=10.59$, $p<0.05$). The two remaining scales that measure Counselor Characteristics (Attractiveness and Trustworthiness) were not significantly different for adult and traditionally-aged students. Neither of the two scales addressing expectations for Characteristics of the Counseling Process (Concreteness and Immediacy) were significantly different for adult and traditionally-aged students. Likewise, there was no significant
difference between adult and traditionally-aged students on the scale measuring expectations for Quality of Outcome (Outcome).

To assess whether differences existed between adult and traditionally-aged students in terms of formal help-seeking, students were asked to identify whether they had ever been in counseling. The majority of traditionally-aged students (62%) answered no to the question "Have you ever been in counseling" (see table 2). Of the traditionally-aged students who received counseling the mean number of sessions was 12.1 (excluding the one student who received more than 100 counseling sessions) with a range of one to 75. The helpfulness of counseling varied a great deal for traditionally-aged students. Twelve percent found their experience in counseling to be not at all helpful while 48.0% found it to be quite a bit or extremely helpful (see table 3).

In comparison, the majority (63.4%) of adult students answered yes when asked if they had even been in counseling (see table 2). The number of sessions reported by those adults who received counseling ranged from one to over 100. The mean number of sessions for this group was 16.3 excluding the two individuals who reported seeing a counselor more than 100 times. Compared to their traditionally-aged counterparts, adult students found their counseling experience to be more helpful. While only 4.4% of the adult students who received counseling found it to be not at all helpful, the majority (68.9%) found counseling to be quite a bit or extremely helpful (see table 3).

In order to evaluate whether statistically significant differences existed between the number of students who sought counseling in each group a chi-square test was run. Table 2 shows the frequencies of receiving counseling for the two groups. The results from the
chi-square test performed on these data showed a significant relationship between having been in counseling and whether subjects were traditionally-aged or adult students ($\chi^2 = 9.706$, $p<.01$, df=1). Adult students were significantly more likely to have utilized counseling services than their traditionally-aged counterparts. T-tests were then run to determine whether significant differences existed in ratings of helpfulness or number of sessions utilized between the two student groups. A significant difference was found between adult and traditionally-aged students' ratings of helpfulness. Adult students ($M=3.93$) rated counseling as more helpful than their traditionally-aged counterparts ($M=3.24$; $T(68)=2.30$, $p<.05$). The number of sessions utilized was not significantly different for the two groups.

The MANOVA also produced a significant main effect for sex $F(1,138)=3.63$, $p<.05$, Wilks's lambda=.65. A univariate analysis was therefore conducted to determine those variables contributing most strongly to this effect. Significant differences were found on 13 of the EAC-B scales (see table 4). All three scales addressing expectations for Client Attitudes and Behaviors showed significant differences with women expressing greater expectations than men in each area. As clients, women ($M=5.28$) expressed higher expectations for motivation than men ($M=4.08$; $F=26.15$, $p<.05$), women ($M=5.98$) expected to be more open than men ($M=5.28$; $F=12.28$, $p<.05$), and women ($M=6.15$) expected to take more responsibility than men ($M=5.58$; $F=12.14$, $p<.05$). Four of the seven scales addressing expectations for Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors were significantly different for men and women. Again, women expressed greater expectations in all four areas than men. Women ($M=5.28$) expected counselors to be more accepting than men did ($M=4.26$; $F=16.20$, $p<.05$). Women ($M=5.37$) expected counselors to be more confrontational than men did ($M=4.87$;
Women (M=6.51) expected counselors to be more genuine than men did (M=5.97; F=12.68, p<.05). Women (M=5.81) also expected counselors to be more nurturing than men did (M=5.33; F=5.94, p<.05). The three remaining scales which address expectations for Counselor Attitudes and Behaviors (Directiveness, Empathy, and Self-Disclosure) were not significantly different for men and women. All four scales measuring expectations for Counselor Characteristics were significantly different for men and women. Again, women expressed greater expectations in all four areas than men did. Women (M=4.73) expected counselors to be more attractive than men did (M=3.95; F=9.04, p<.05). Women (M=5.54) expected counselors to have more expertise than men did (M=5.06; F=5.82, p<.05). Women (M=5.07) expected counselors to have more tolerance than men did (M=4.55; F=4.16, p<.05). Women (M=6.30) also expected counselors to be more trustworthy than men did (M=5.53; F=16.83, p<.05). The two scales addressing expectations for Characteristics of the Counseling Process were significantly different for men and women with women expressing higher expectations in both areas. Women (M=5.91) expected a higher degree of concreteness in counseling than men did (M=5.44; F=6.19, p<.05) and women (M=5.45) expected a greater degree of immediacy than men did (M=4.88; F=9.62, p<.05). The one scale addressing expectations for Quality of Outcome (Outcome) was not significantly different for men and women.

Women and men were also compared in terms of formal help-seeking. The women students were evenly split in their response to the question "Have you ever been in counseling" (50.9% answered yes, 48.1% answered no and .9% left this question blank, see table 2). Of the women who answered affirmatively, 85.2% received counseling for personal...
concerns, 7.4% received counseling for career concerns, 5.6% received counseling for both career and personal concerns, and 1.9% received counseling for other concerns than those listed. The mean number of counseling sessions for the women who received counseling was 21.7 with a range of one to more than 100. Most of the women students who had been in counseling found it to be at least somewhat helpful. Only 1.9% rated their experience in counseling as not at all helpful while 64.2% rated it as quite a bit or extremely helpful (see table 3).

The men in the present study were also evenly split between those who had received counseling (47.2%) and those who had not (52.8%) (see table 2). Of the male students who had been in counseling, 82.4% received counseling for personal concerns, 5.9% received counseling for career concerns, and 11.8% received counseling for both career and personal concerns. The number of sessions reported by the men who received counseling ranged from one to 20 with a mean of 8.1. Fewer men reported a positive counseling experience than women. Twenty-three and one half percent reported that counseling was not at all helpful, while 52.9% of the men who received counseling found it to be quite a bit or extremely helpful (see table 3).

A chi-square test was run in order to evaluate whether statistically significant differences existed between the number of men and women who sought counseling. The frequencies of men and women who received counseling can be found in table 2. The results from the chi-square test showed no association between receiving counseling and a subject's gender ($\chi^2=190$, $p>.05$, df=1). T-tests were then run to determine whether significant differences existed in ratings of helpfulness or number of sessions utilized between the two
genders. Men and women did not rate the helpfulness of counseling differently. However, a significant difference was found in number of sessions with female students ($M=21.7$) utilizing many more sessions on average than male students ($M=8.1$; $T(68)=-2.07$, $p<.05$).

**Qualitative Analysis Results (Qualitative Data)**

In terms of the qualitative data it was hypothesized that significant differences would be found between adult and traditionally-aged students in the themes regarding expectations about counseling identified in the interview data. In order to evaluate this hypothesis the interview data was analyzed using Polkinghorne's (1991) stages in analysis. In his chapter entitled *Qualitative Procedures for Counseling Research* (1991), Polkinghorne compared qualitative analysis to a downward helix. The analysis starts at the surface where data is disconnected and fragmented and moves downward where the data begin to coalesce around categories and themes. Further analysis uncovers patterned relationships among the data and ultimately a comprehensive and illuminating structure is discovered. According to Polkinghorne (1991) four basic steps are involved for each stage of analysis:

1) The data is reviewed and re-read by the investigator.

2) Data units (usually sentences or paragraphs) which express a single theme are identified and coded by a term that captures the category or theme to which they belong.

3) Data units with the same code are collected together and analyzed for common elements and relations.
4) The investigator looks for data that might contradict the relations that are being uncovered in the data and revises the data description in light of this evidence.

These steps were followed to analyze the interview data collected in the present study. Data units derived from this analysis are presented for adult and traditionally-aged students in a contrast and comparison format. A description of each data unit will be presented followed by verbatim examples from the actual interviews (further verbatim examples of each data unit are located in Appendix C). This format will illustrate the understanding of subjects' expectations about counseling achieved by the investigator while allowing for possible alternative interpretations.

Data Unit 1: Seriousness of problems. The majority of both adult and traditionally-aged students agreed that problems had to be perceived by the individual as quite serious in order to pursue counseling. Most interviewees allowed for the fact that from an outside perspective the problem may not seem significant. However, the individual generally needs to see the problem as serious in order to take the steps to access professional help. In general, counseling was seen as one of the last options that people utilize to solve their problems. If the individual has exhausted other possibilities such as family, friends, mentors, and other authority figures then they may seek counseling. (See Appendix C for further examples).
Traditionally-aged students:

"Personally, I think it's one of the last things. They want to try things themselves or maybe get friends' advice or parents' advice. I think that counseling is a lot of times the last thing..." (S6)

"To the client it would probably have to be pretty serious for someone to get up and go to a counselor...It might be perceived to us, outside of them, as a simple problem but to them I think it would probably have to be a deep problem, a serious problem." (S5)

"I think they would go to friends or family before a counselor." (S11)

Adult students:

"I think they probably try other ways to get the problem solved before they seek counseling. Family and friends, self-help books, TV gurus and movements and all those kinds of things." (S9)

"If I felt like it was really, really serious and I desperately needed help, I might go anyway or take the chance. But I would have to feel like whatever I was dealing with was really overwhelming." (S10)

Data Unit 2: Counseling Tools. Adult and traditionally-aged students were in agreement that a variety of both verbal and nonverbal tools are used in counseling such as handouts, role plays, hypnosis, art therapy, psychological tests, group sessions, and bibliotherapy. Most students were uncertain how frequently these tools are used to supplement therapy. Most tools were seen as helpful, however, their feelings about psychological tests were somewhat ambivalent. Eleven of the 12 interviewees agreed that
they had no expectations that medications would play any part in the counseling process on campus, although several students recognized that medications are used for some psychological problems. (See Appendix C for further examples).

**Traditionally-aged Students:**

"...Maybe they would show them or give them a book or some kind of supplemental information to read while at home, something to think about other than the counselors words..." (S6)

(Interviewer: "Do you expect to take any tests?") "I think they...I don't know. I think they might. I don't know why they would do that." (S1)

"No. When I think of counseling I usually don't think of medications." (S4)

"I wouldn't think that (taking medications) was something associated with counseling, at least not at the university level." (S11)

**Adult Students:**

"I know some counselors use hypnotherapy. I know that from time to time they will ask you to practice certain types of behavioral modification techniques, positive reinforcement of your own attributes." (S10)

"Yes I do (associate psychological tests with counseling) because I think the counselor may be able to find out more information about the person..." (S8)

"Well, I don't think that that (medication) is something that would happen with someone that has to go into counseling." (S8)

"I don't think (medications would be used at counseling centers)". (S9)
Data Unit 3: **Counseling Effectiveness: Talking versus Acting.** Traditionally-aged students and adult students agreed that part of a counselor's role is to provide options or suggestions to clients. Clients can then make better choices about future behavior. However, in terms of the effectiveness of counseling, traditionally-aged students felt that talking about your problems is helpful in and of itself. If the client is able to do this then therapy is successful to some degree, even if the problem is not necessarily resolved or the available options are not acted upon. Most of the adult students, on the other hand, believed that clients had to act on the options created by counseling in order to gain any benefits. The adult students felt that success is measured mostly by an alleviation of the problem for which an individual seeks help. (See Appendix C for further examples).

**Traditionally-aged students:**

(A client would know counseling has been successful) "...because they feel better about themselves. They feel better because they self-disclosed. Maybe because they have a more positive attitude, or they just feel better because they talked about it." (S6)

"I would think it (counseling) would be useful no matter what the problem would be because I would assume the information that they got, even though maybe they can’t go out and use the information necessarily...I think maybe still talking with someone and getting their feelings out would still help just to get it off your chest and to have someone to talk to about it." (S4)

"I think just talking to someone about your problems is good, you know what I mean, just like getting it off your chest." (S3)
Adult students:

"You can give me the best advice and insight, but if I don't accept it and act on it then it is pointless... You come with a problem and if you get the problem solved or feel better about it then it is successful. If it isn't, it's not successful no matter what a counselor would say." (S9)

"Early in the counseling you establish certain goals about how you want to see it resolved, and when you reach that point then you have done your work." (S10)

"I guess it would be helpful - if you followed the recommendations of the counselor..." (S7)

"If you look at the end result, the counselor has assisted you in solving your problem. That is what one goes into counseling for and that should be the end result." (S12)

Data Unit 4: Counseling Trainees: Acceptance versus Apprehension. Many of the traditionally-aged students recognized that trainees may be providing at least some of the counseling at the counseling center. Although several stated that they might have some apprehension about this situation the traditionally-aged students were more likely to delay their judgment and give the trainee a chance than their adult counterparts. The traditionally-aged students seemed to base their confidence in a belief that any student counselor would be supervised or specially trained in some way, or their service would be limited to acceptable areas. In contrast, the adult students seemed more concerned with the issue of receiving counseling from a trainee. When asked about their level of comfort many of the adult
students questioned whether these individuals would really be able to provide adequate help. (See Appendix C for further examples).

Traditionally-aged students:

(If the person was a trainee) "...I think I would be OK with it personally. I guess if the information I was getting from them - if I didn't feel it was adequate maybe I would request someone else - but initially, I would be open to it." (S4)

"...they have graduate students working, but by the time they get to that point I imagine that they have some practice so I imagine some amount of good, moderate experience..." (S11)

Adult Students:

"I think it might make me a little nervous to get someone who is still in school. It might concern me that I would get a student who would give me wrong information or might do something, unintentionally granted, but might not do the right thing to help me." (S10)

"I think that I would personally probably choose not to (use the counseling center) because...I would be concerned that they were students and that they might not have enough experience or that they might not be able to give me good direction." (S7)

Data Unit 5: Identified Problems: Assumed Similarity versus Recognized Differences.

Although traditionally-aged students recognized that people seek counseling for a variety of issues none of them verbalized any thoughts about the special issues of different groups. They did not distinguish between themselves and adult students, or any other group, in terms of the typical problems that students bring to the counseling center. They identified
school-related issues as the primary concerns of students who seek counseling with a secondary focus on other problems such as relationship issues or family concerns. Their responses speak to the tendency for younger students to make the assumption that most others on campus are like themselves, that is, aged 18 to 23 and just out of high school. Many of the adult students, on the other hand, verbally recognized that adult and traditionally-aged students generally suffer from different problems because of their very different life circumstances. The adult students tended to down play the need for counseling. However, when pressed for issues they focused more on family and relationship issues, crises, and issues of balancing time than school-related concerns. (See Appendix C for further examples).

Traditionally-aged Students:

"I guess here on campus it would be problems with maybe a teacher or a class or things like that but also I know people go for problems with relationships such as divorce or separation and I've even heard of people going for problems with their children or other members of the family." (S6)

"I think that most students who go to the counseling center would have things like test anxiety issues, maybe bring some family concerns, adapting to college life, that sort of thing." (S11)

"Probably stress, I guess school work, stuff like that. Probably a lot of relationships, maybe breakups..." (S1)
Adult Students:

"I'm not sure if I would have any use for the services at all. In my age group, I am guessing one of the most likely things would be trying to balance the pressures of home, work and school. It's a difficult thing to do and if you don't have a support system it could get very trying." (S10)

"...traditional and non-traditional students are two different monsters, they both have totally different problems. Just think what a non-traditional student goes through working full time, trying to fit a home-life in...trying to fit in a family life before your kids go to bed. Telling your children you 'have to leave because daddy has to study.' Trying to get the house taken care of. Those are totally different problems than what the on-campus life is." (S12)

"The adult students that I'm familiar with here on campus have problems like guilt from being away from their kids, not being home with their families in the evenings, those kind of issues." (S10)

Data Unit 6: Barriers: Stigma versus Institutional/ Situational Barriers. All subjects agreed that a significant number of students who have problems do not utilize the counseling center. A variety of barriers which keep these students from seeking counseling were identified by both traditionally-aged and adult students. Many of these barriers seem to affect both groups of students but to varying degrees. The stigma associated with utilizing counseling was seen as the main barrier which keeps traditionally-aged students from using these services. These students seem to be highly affected by the fear of being labeled "crazy" or ostracized in some way if others found out they sought help. After stigma,
reluctance to admit they have a problem, questioning whether a counselor can really help, and limited time were the next most prevalent barriers for traditionally-aged students. In contrast, adult students were less likely to fear the stigma of counseling and more likely to point to other barriers. Most adult students recognized that a stigma exists in regard to counseling but felt that it had little effect on older, more experienced students. The perception of most adult students was that the counseling center was set up to deal with the needs of traditionally-aged students. Thus, many doubted that the available counselors were qualified to handle adult student problems. They also identified time constraints and a lack of information about the services as barriers to utilization. A reluctance to admit problems was also seen as a barrier for adults. (See Appendix C for further examples).

**Traditionally-aged students:**

(Interviewer: "What keeps students who have problems from going to the counseling center?")

"I can see where people are reluctant because of social perceptions, how people kind of have a stigma if they have mental health concerns." (S11)

"...People have bad perceptions of counseling. They're afraid that you have a big problem if you go into counseling...Some people might be afraid that they might be labeled...they don't want other people knowing that they have to go to counseling." (S5)

"If they went to counseling they would have to admit that they couldn't deal with it (the problem) by themselves..." (S6)
Adult Students:

(Interviewer: "What keeps students who have problems from going to the counseling center?")

"I think for the younger population the concern that one of their friends would see them going in there...I think for the adults the stigma has less meaning to them once they see that they have a problem that needs to be dealt with. Just the question of where is the student counseling center? And is it convenient to get to?" (S10)

"I think the counseling center is set up to meet their (younger students') needs." (S7)

"...the hours of the counseling center (could be a barrier)..." (S7)

Data Unit 7: View of Counseling: Optimism versus Pessimism. Adult and traditionally-aged subjects appear to differ in terms of how they view counseling. While traditionally-aged subjects seemed to have faith and confidence in the counselor and the counseling process, adult students approached both with a great deal of skepticism and negativity. The majority of the traditionally-aged students agreed that counselors are very trustworthy, especially in terms of maintaining confidentiality. They saw counselors as genuinely devoted to helping their clients and they believed that when necessary, counselors refer their clients to others. Traditionally-aged students recognized that counselors are likely to judge their clients, however, they were convinced that counselors keep these judgments from affecting their work in a negative way. In contrast to this confidence, adult students were much more skeptical about counselors, clients and the counseling process. Many of the adult students questioned the trustworthiness of counselors in a college environment. They
were pessimistic about the likelihood of confidentiality being maintained and they wondered whether counselors actually refer their clients when they are unable to help them. Adult students agreed with their traditionally-aged counterparts that counselors are likely to judge their clients, however, they were much less certain that counselors keep these judgments from affecting their work in a negative way. Adult students also seemed pessimistic about the client's role in counseling. They questioned whether clients actually do the hard work necessary for the desired results and felt that many ignore the suggestions raised in counseling. Overall, adult students seemed to question the professionalism of counselors on campus and the commitment of students in the client role. (See Appendix C for further examples).

Traditionally-aged students:

"I think that they (the counselor) would be compassionate and patient certainly...I think that they would be very trustworthy..." (S6)

"I think that they (the client) would be pretty honest because there is no way the counselor could help if they don't even know the truth about what is happening with them. And they'd probably be comfortable being honest because they know it is confidential and the counselor is not going to talk about this to people..." (S6)

"I imagine the counselor would (make judgments about the client)...but I would not expect it would influence their role as a therapist..." (S11)

"...if you've (the counselor) exhausted everything you know then maybe you could refer to somebody else that might have a better chance to help him (the client) -- I think that's done a lot..." (S1)
"Yes, definitely — that it would be confidential." (S4)

**Adult Students:**

"I think that is one of the hardest things about going to counselors, you have to be willing to hear the answers and most people aren't willing to hear the answers." (S10)

"...I would be concerned that if there were students working in there (the counseling center) that I would wonder about the actual confidentiality or whether they would be going back to their frat house at night and...it would worry me." (S10)

"...the confidentiality is supposed to be there, but I don't think I would feel that." (S7)

"I would think that being on campus (for counseling) would feel...I think it would feel very non-private." (S12)

"Yeah, I think counselors do (make judgments about their clients), as a matter of fact I think they do...I think it does affect counseling in some ways because they may fail to...give the client the best counseling that they are capable of." (S8)
### Table 4: Means and standard deviations for Expectations About Counseling—Brief Form (EAC-B) scale scores by group status and sex

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* All scales scored on a 7-point Likert scale with anchors 1 = Not True and 7 = Definitely True
The hypothesis of the present study, that both quantitative and qualitative research strategies would uncover significant differences in the expectations about counseling held by adult and traditionally-aged students, was confirmed. The first part of the discussion will focus on the quantitative results and their meaning in terms of understanding the adult-student population and serving their needs more effectively. The second part of the discussion will address these issues with respect to the qualitative findings.

A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to determine whether differences existed in EAC-B responses for adult and traditionally-aged students or for men and women. The results showed significant differences for both groups with no interaction effects. Since gender differences were not the focus of the present study the gender effects will be discussed briefly followed by a more in-depth discussion of the differences found between adult and traditionally-aged students in their expectations about counseling. Men and women differed on the majority of the EAC-B scales (14 of 17). In general, women had higher and more positive expectations for themselves as clients, for counselors, and for the counseling process than did men. Women, as clients, expected they would be more motivated, more open, and more responsible than their male counterparts. They expected counselors to be more
accepting, confrontational, genuine, and nurturing than men did. They also expected counselors to be more attractive, expert, tolerant, and trustworthy. Finally, women expected the counseling process would be more concrete and more immediate than men. Interestingly, although women seemed to view the participants and the process more positively, there was no difference between men and women in their expectations for outcome. In other words, men and women felt similarly in terms of how successful counseling is even though they differed greatly in their view of the components that play into this success. Women expected that as clients they would be highly motivated and responsible and that counselors would be genuine, trustworthy, and confrontational are similar to findings in previous studies (Hardin & Yanico, 1983; Kunkel & Williams, 1991). The present finding that women see counseling more positively than men also lends some support and explanation to previous research findings that women are more likely to utilize counseling services than men (Belle, 1990; Kirk, 1973; Russo, 1990; Tracey, Leong, & Glidden, 1986; Wills & DePaulo, 1991). Perhaps these results speak to the fact that women are more comfortable with the mechanisms used in counseling to resolve issues, namely dealing with emotional content by talking with others about feelings, and consequently, they are more positive about the counseling process and its participants.

Men and women were further compared in terms of actual help-seeking behaviors. Contrary to previous findings women students were no more likely to have utilized counseling services than their male counterparts (Belle, 1990; Kirk, 1973; Russo, 1990; Tracey, Leong, & Glidden, 1986; Wills & DePaulo, 1991) and no significant differences existed between their ratings of helpfulness. These results appear consistent with the finding that men and women
did not differ in their expectations for counseling outcome on the EAC-B. The number of sessions utilized did differ significantly for men and women. On average, women reported using more than twice the number of counseling sessions than men (21.7 versus 8.1). Similar results have been found in previous studies (APA, 1975; Fabrikant, 1974). The present findings are consistent with the tendency for women in the study to view counseling in a more positive way than men and also support the notion that women may be more comfortable with the counseling process, resulting in a longer duration in counseling.

Comparing adult and traditionally-aged students on their expectations about counseling was the primary purpose of the present study. The multivariate analysis of variance showed a significant difference between these two groups of students in their responses to the EAC-B. In general, traditionally-aged students held higher and more positive expectations for counselors than their adult counterparts. Traditionally-aged students expected counselors to be more accepting, directive, self-disclosing, expert, and tolerant than adult students. No differences were found in expectations about clients, the counseling process, or counseling outcome for these two groups of students. The finding that younger students expect more self disclosure by counselors than older students is similar to the quantitative results of Kunkel and Williams (1991). Likewise, the general sense that traditionally-aged students have more positive expectations for counselors than adult students replicates the qualitative findings of Kunkel and Williams' study. Their results suggested that elderly participants were very guarded with personal information, believed in self reliance, and viewed counseling as a punitive and remedial experience while younger participants were very open, self-disclosing, and likely to see counselors as helpful guides to self understanding. It
is possible that the negative expectations for counselors held by adult students may be one barrier that keeps some of these students from seeking help at the counseling center when they do have problems.

The finding that adult students had more negative expectations about counseling than traditionally-aged students should be addressed by universities in several ways. First, more research must be done in order to determine whether the negative perception of counseling held by adult students is replicable. If other research findings support this result the next step is to evaluate the accuracy of these negative expectations. If these expectations are born out by actual experience with specific counselors then education and sensitivity training are crucial to help counseling center staff develop skills in working with the adult-student population. On the other hand, if adult students' expectations are based on false information then increasing accurate information about the counseling center and its mission, and disseminating this information in an effective manner to adult students may help them feel more comfortable utilizing this service. Furthermore, providing an opportunity for these students to meet the counseling center staff members in a casual environment may be even more significant in diminishing their negative bias toward on-campus counselors. Helping adult students view the counseling services offered in a more realistic manner may help them feel that the university cares about and provides for their needs which may have a direct effect on adult students' levels of satisfaction and an indirect effect on issues of future adult student recruitment and retention.

Adult and traditionally-aged students were also compared in terms of actual help-seeking behaviors. Interestingly, although their responses to the EAC-B seem to suggest that
adult students have more negative expectations for counseling than traditionally-aged students, adults were significantly more likely to have utilized counseling services and rated these services as more helpful than their traditionally-aged counterparts. A similar result emerged from the interview data. The adult interviewees held more negative expectations about counseling but were also more likely to have been in counseling than the traditionally-aged interviewees and rated their counseling experiences as more helpful. There are several possible explanations for the apparent contradiction of these findings. When subjects completed the demographic part of the questionnaire they were asked to indicate whether they had ever been in counseling. The questionnaire did not differentiate between on-campus and off-campus counseling services. However, in the interview portion of the study the researcher did ask specifically about expectations related to the on-campus counseling center. It is possible that some of the discrepancy may be the result of negative expectations about the on-campus counseling service that do not carry over to off-campus counseling. In fact, most of the adult interviewees who spoke critically of on-campus counseling did differentiate this from counseling services offered elsewhere. It is likely that at least some of the adult interviewees who reported having been in counseling went to counseling services that were not associated with the university and thus, may have been seen more positively by the adult students. Future research needs to address this issue more specifically by structuring qualitative and quantitative measures to explore the differences in expectations for on-campus versus off-campus counseling.

The failure in the present research to adequately differentiate between on and off campus counseling services may explain part of the inconsistent findings, however, it cannot
account for the differences between adult and traditionally-aged students on the quantitative measure because neither the EAC-B nor the demographic questionnaire were specific about what type of counseling they were referring to. Thus, there must be some other way to account for the quantitative findings. It is possible that adult students use counseling more than traditionally-aged students even though they see it more negatively simply because adult students have had to endure more years of life. The issue of time may increase counseling utilization on two accounts. First, a greater time span provides more opportunity to use counseling. Second, a greater time span provides more opportunities for difficult life experiences which may increase the need for counseling. It is conceivable that if the traditionally-aged students were followed long enough their counseling utilization might equal or exceed that of adult students when they reached comparable ages thus, eliminating the apparent contradiction.

The finding that adult students rated their counseling experiences as significantly more helpful than traditionally-aged students while simultaneously reporting more negative expectations about counseling also appears contradictory. One possible explanation is that traditionally-aged students may have an unrealistically positive view of counseling that may result in disappointment when these services are actually utilized. This disappointment could translate into lower satisfaction ratings in terms of helpfulness and a general disillusionment in counseling. Perhaps the traditionally-aged students who had utilized counseling services rated them as less helpful due to this disillusionment while those who had not been in counseling retained their positive expectations creating the discrepancy between their expectations for counseling and their ratings of helpfulness. In contrast, adult students may
have a more realistic, although negative, view of counseling services. These realistic expectations may translate into higher satisfaction ratings because adults may enter the counseling process knowing better what to expect, thus, avoiding disappointment or contradiction of their expectations. An alternative possibility is that adult students' expectations for counseling are unrealistically negative. They may find counseling a pleasant surprise because it exceeds their expectations and thus, report higher ratings of helpfulness. Consequently, adult students who actually utilized counseling would rate it as helpful while those who had never been in counseling would retain their negative expectations accounting for the discrepancy between adult students' expectations for counseling and their ratings of helpfulness. Other studies lend some support to the notion that clients may hold unrealistic expectations about counseling. Tinsley, Barich, and Bowman (1992) and Tinsley, Bowman, and Barich (1993) found that psychologists often perceive their clients as holding unrealistically high and/or unrealistically low expectations about counseling. Although these researchers did not look at the degree of realism of expectations as a function of age it is possible that a relationship exists which may then influence perceptions of counseling effectiveness.

Another possible explanation for the finding that adult students rated their counseling experiences as significantly more helpful than traditionally-aged students while simultaneously reporting more negative expectations about counseling may be that the counselor characteristics which produced different expectations for traditionally-aged and adult students are not related to counseling effectiveness or outcome. Thus, helpfulness may not be a function of these particular variables making the differences irrelevant to outcome assessment.
The qualitative analysis in the present study was used both to compliment and support the quantitative analysis. Although there was some convergence between the results of the two methods, the qualitative data uncovered information about adult and traditionally-aged students that did not appear in their quantitative responses. It may be that the domains of expectations accessed by the interviews and the questionnaire overlapped in some areas while diverging in others, thus, creating two related but distinct sets of results. The first part of the qualitative discussion will illuminate the themes present in the interview data, their relation to the quantitative results and their meaning for the adult-student population. The second part of the qualitative discussion will address quantitative findings in relation to the interview data outside of the identified themes.

The interview data was analyzed in a comparison and contrast format in order to identify consistent themes. Several themes emerged from the data on which adult and traditionally-aged students seemed in overwhelming agreement. First, the majority of both groups of students felt that accessing counseling services was a last resort in terms of problem resolution and that problems must be deemed quite severe by the individual in order to take such a step. This finding is in contrast to those of Kunkel and Williams (1991). They found that the elderly participants in their study felt counseling was an extreme remedy for extreme problems while the younger participants viewed counseling as a normal mechanism for self-discovery. It is interesting that, although the interviewees were in agreement about using counseling as a last resort, approximately half of both the questionnaire and interview subjects reported having been in counseling. It may be that, while counseling is seen as an extreme measure, there is also agreement that most individuals will experience severe enough life
circumstances to require using such a measure within their life time. The interviewees in the present study were not asked about this issue. Therefore, it remains a question for future research.

Quantitative information on the issue of problem severity or when counseling services are accessed is not directly available in the present study because none of the EAC-B scales measure these constructs. However, one item in the EAC-B does ask subjects to respond to the statement, "I expect to go to counseling only if I have a very serious problem." When adult and traditionally-aged students were compared in their responses to this statement some differences were found. Adults were more likely to agree with this statement than their traditionally-aged counterparts. While only one (1.4%) adult subject felt this statement was not true, 64.7% (46) reported that this statement was very true or definitely true. In comparison 21.1% (15) of traditionally-aged subjects rated this statement as not true while only 32.4% (23) rated it as very or definitely true. Thus, adult subjects who participated in the quantitative part of the study felt more strongly than traditionally-aged subjects that individuals need to have very serious problems in order to access counseling services. These differences did not appear in the qualitative analysis, perhaps because they capture varying degrees of a common theme. On average, both groups of subjects felt the statement "I expect to go to counseling only if I have a very serious problem" was relatively true. The mean rating for traditionally-aged students was 3.9 (fairly true) while the mean rating for adult students was 5.5 (in between quite true and very true). Further research is necessary to understand the subtle differences that may exist in this theme for adult and traditionally-aged students.
The qualitative and quantitative results suggest that psychoeducation is needed regarding the circumstances that are suitable for someone to seek counseling. It seems especially relevant in a college setting that students recognize the wide variety of issues for which they can receive help from the counseling center and the range in problem severity for which counseling may be useful. Although most counseling centers provide information about their services to students, the results of the present study would suggest that this information is not being heard or remembered in productive ways. Future research which focuses on better ways of disseminating information about counseling services may aid counseling centers in reducing stigma and increasing utilization by both adult and traditionally-aged students. Helping students to reap the benefits of on-campus counseling services is one way of meeting their needs and increasing the quality of their college experience. Serving the needs of students more effectively may then have an indirect effect on the recruitment and retention of future students.

A second area of agreement among the interviewees related to the tools used in counseling. Both adult and traditionally-aged students felt counselors would have a variety of verbal and nonverbal tools at their disposal such as handouts, role plays, hypnosis, art therapy, psychological tests, group sessions, and bibliotherapy. However, virtually all of the interviewees felt that medications would not play any part in the counseling process, even though several students recognized that medications are used for some psychological problems.

The use of medications in student counseling centers varies among universities. At the school where the present research was conducted psychiatrists are not part of the
counseling center. Thus, the students' tendency to dissociate counseling and medications was somewhat realistic, at least in terms of the counselor's role in prescribing such drugs. However, it is unclear whether students recognized how medications are used in conjunction with therapy and how frequently they are used even in college settings. It is also unclear whether this dissociation is specific to the present context or whether students generally believe medications are not part of counseling. Regardless of the specificity, it seems that both adult and traditionally-aged students may need education about how medications are used in conjunction with counseling, especially with issues involving depressive symptoms (a common presenting problem for college students). Education may help students become more effective consumers of the counseling services available to them and may decrease the stigma associated with psychotropic drugs. Again, increased utilization of counseling services is one factor in more effectively meeting the needs of students which may indirectly effect their satisfaction with and success in their college experience. Future research aimed at exploring how students feel about the use of medications in counseling and how to better relay accurate information about this issue to students may help students understand the benefits of counseling both with and without medications. Since the use of medications in counseling is not measured by the EAC-B, comparison with the quantitative data is not possible regarding this issue. Thus, it is uncertain whether the quantitative results would support or contradict the qualitative findings in this area.

Five data units were identified in the qualitative analysis that contrast the responses of adult and traditionally-aged students. First, differences existed in the students' assessment of counseling effectiveness. Traditionally-aged students agreed that talking about problems
is the baseline for counseling effectiveness. They reported that as long as clients are able to self-disclose in counseling then they will derive a benefit from this process, even if the problem is not necessarily resolved. In contrast, adult students focused on client's actions to assess the effectiveness of counseling. Counseling is effective, according to the adult participants, if clients act on the options created in session and if the problem is alleviated in some way. Otherwise, counseling is considered ineffective and not worth the time involved. These findings provide important information about what adult students are looking for in the counseling process. Short-term, solution-focused therapy may be most appropriate given their focus on implementing options and taking action. Work given to clients outside of session or self-directed types of help may also prove beneficial for this group of students. Whatever the type of therapy it seems most crucial that adult students see themselves as active participants in the process. Counseling center staff may also focus on helping adult students recognize the value in self-understanding even without problem resolution. Talking about problems can be helpful even when no direct actions are taken. Educating adult students in this regard may help them take advantage of available counseling services even when they feel no good solutions exist for their problems.

The quantitative results were examined in relation to the qualitative findings regarding counseling effectiveness. Although a direct comparison between the stated effectiveness of counseling and the quantitative measure is not possible, there are two scales from the EAC-B which address aspects of this component. First, the Immediacy scale includes those items from the EAC-B which address practice or work that the client expects to have in the counseling relationship. This scale appears to capture some of what the adult students are
referring to when they speak of taking action or implementing options in some way. Second, the differences between adult and traditionally-aged students in terms of counseling success are related to the Outcome scale of the EAC-B. The responses to this scale give information about the participants expectations for outcomes and are related to the interviewees' responses to the extent that therapeutic gains such as self-understanding, improving relationships, and future coping skills are measures of counseling effectiveness. Although there were clear differences between the adult and traditionally-aged interviewees in terms of counseling effectiveness, neither the Immediacy scale nor the Outcome scale of the EAC-B were statistically different for the two groups. Differences were found between adult and traditionally-aged students who had been in counseling on their ratings of helpfulness. However, this data does not provide information on what aspects of counseling were considered helpful. Thus, it neither supports nor contradicts the qualitative results. In terms of counseling effectiveness the research methodologies fail to provide convergence in their results perhaps because the expectation domains are too dissimilar. The failure to find support for the qualitative data make the conclusions based on these results tentative and in need of further study.

A second area of contrast for adult and traditionally-aged students in the interviews related to the use of counseling trainees. Many of the interviewees recognized that counselors-in-training may provide services at the university counseling center. While both groups of students expressed some apprehension about seeing a trainee, the traditionally-aged students were much more likely to accept this situation than their adult counterparts. Traditionally-aged students expressed a willingness to base their judgment on the services
provided rather than the counselor's credentials. Adult students, on the other hand, were very hesitant about seeing counseling trainees and identified this as one of several reasons to avoid using the counseling center.

These findings suggest that in universities where counselors may be in training adult-student utilization needs to be addressed. A variety of possibilities exist for increasing adult student acceptance of counselors in training. First, education about the experience of counselor trainees may help alleviate some of the adult student apprehension that these individuals would not be qualified to provide appropriate services. Second, information about the range of professionals who provide services and an individual's ability to choose among these counselors may help adult students feel they have more control over the course of their therapy. Finally, information about referral services and the specific guidelines for referral which counselors adhere to at a particular school may help increase adult students' comfort level that they will receive adequate service. These and other possibilities for alleviating some of the adult student apprehension about counselors in training remain to be tested by future research.

The quantitative results were examined in relation to the qualitative findings regarding counselors in training. The Expertise scale of the EAC-B assesses the participants expectations that a counselor will be able to help them resolve their issues and that counseling will meet their needs. The results of the statistical analysis did show that traditionally-aged students had higher expectations for counselor expertise. This is consistent with their attitude toward trainees, although this scale does not differentiate between licensed counselors and people in training. It seems possible that traditionally-aged students have a more positive and
accepting attitude about the ability of counselors to help them simply by virtue of their role. In other words, traditionally-aged students seem to take on faith the experience and ability of counselors (whether in training or not), whereas adult students seem much more skeptical and questioning. This is similar to research done on the classroom interaction of adult students. They are more likely to question teachers, other students, and the academic system than traditionally-aged students (Altmaier & McNabb, 1984; Tittle & Denker, 1980) and they are less likely to accept information without explanation (Bicknell, 1975; Slotnick et al., 1993; Von der Embse & Childs, 1979). Thus, there is some convergence between the quantitative and qualitative findings in this area.

A third area of contrast for adult and traditionally-aged students in the interviews involved their identified problems. While adult students recognized that different groups of students may present different needs to a counselor, traditionally-aged students seemed to overlook this concept. The traditionally-aged interviewees lumped all students together and assumed that school-related concerns would be the primary issue for any student followed by relationship problems and family concerns. They failed to verbalize any recognition of the fact that adult students or any other special group might have different concerns than the typical 18 to 23 year old college student. Many of the adult students, on the other hand, mentioned the likely differences in terms of what problems an adult student might encounter versus his/her traditionally-aged counterpart. Most of the adult students felt the counseling center would be unlikely to meet their needs because their concerns were more likely to be focused on family and relationship issues, crises, and time management instead of school-related concerns. These results speak to the need for counselors to be sensitive to the
problems of various groups on campus if they hope to increase their utilization of the available
counseling services. This involves a two-pronged approach. The first prong is to have
knowledgeable professionals who can address adult concerns such as balancing time, dealing
with guilt, and handling crises. The second prong is for information about these professionals
to be channeled to adult students in a meaningful way so they know that the available services
will actually meet their needs. The effort involved in increasing adult-student utilization of
counseling services seems worthwhile given its relationship to meeting the needs of this
student group. Statistics show that adult students are an increasingly significant part of
college enrollment (Apps, 1981; Jewell & Lubin, 1988; Martin, 1988; Solomon & Gordon,
1981). Some researchers have even suggested that the survival of institutions of higher
education depends on this group of students (Hughes, 1983; Kuh & Ardaioio, 1979; Martin,
1988). If these predictions are true, meeting the needs of adult students becomes of utmost
importance to administrators who are concerned with issues of recruitment and retention.

Quantitative information about types of problems is not available in the present study
because none of the EAC-B scales measure this concept. The EAC-B does provide some
support for the qualitative finding that adult students expected that counseling would not be
able to meet their needs. The Expertise Scale of the EAC-B appears to measure this concept.
The qualitative findings regarding this issue are consistent with the finding that traditionally-
aged students held higher expectations for counselor expertise on the EAC-B than their adult
counterparts. These findings suggest that adult students may consider the counseling center
as set up to meet the needs of the "traditional" student versus students of special groups. The
above approach, which addresses both the need for competent professionals and meaningful dissemination of accurate information, would help correct this issue.

Adult and traditionally-aged students also differed in their perceptions of the barriers which keep students who have problems from utilizing the counseling center. For traditionally-aged students the primary barrier to counseling was stigma. There was a very serious concern about being labeled or ridiculed if others found out they were seeking counseling. Denial of problems, questioning the efficacy of available services and limited time were also identified as barriers by traditionally-aged students. Adult students recognized that a stigma does exist around seeking professional counseling however, they denied the importance of this to adult students. They suggested that a skepticism about the available services in terms of their ability to deal with adult problems was the most prevalent barrier for adult students. Time constraints, lack of information, and denial of problems were also identified as barriers by adult students.

The barriers identified by both groups of students provide information about how to increase student utilization of available counseling services. Because the stigma associated with counseling may be the most significant barrier to traditionally-aged students it is important to attack this barrier in several ways. First, education about what counseling is and is not and why "normal" people may need counseling services might help break down some of the stigma that exists. Normalizing the whole process would go a far way in diminishing this barrier. Depending on the resources available, it may even be possible to require students to meet with a counselor once or twice during their first year of classes, much like they meet with their academic advisers. Providing students with firsthand information about counseling
would alleviate many of the myths that produce the stigma barrier. Beyond education, there are also some ways that counseling centers could increase students' assurance that if they sought counseling it would remain confidential. Currently, it is common in many schools for students to have work-study positions in the counseling center. Although this provides an opportunity for some students to pay bills and/or gain experience it may be a large factor in the fear of stigma. Students who might need the counseling center may be dissuaded because they know some of the student workers or they fear these individuals would talk about clients outside of the counseling center. Hiring only professionals to staff the counseling centers may be worth the added expense in terms of serving student needs. Another issue for many of the interviewed students was the fact that others might see them entering the counseling center and make assumptions based on this knowledge. It may be helpful to house the student counseling center somewhere discrete, for instance, within the student health center. If students felt more comfortable accessing the services without fear of being labeled their utilization may increase.

For adult students stigma does not appear to be the primary barrier to utilization. Instead, they tended to focus on institutional barriers such as staff members untrained in adult student needs, time constraints and lack of information and psychological barriers such as denial of problems. The belief that the counseling services cannot meet adult student needs can be best altered through the mechanisms discussed above, namely, specific education of professionals in this area and dissemination of information about these qualified professionals to the student body in a meaningful way. The issue of time constraints needs to be addressed by expanding the range of hours during which these services are available, particularly,
providing evening and weekend hours when adult students are likely to be on campus. Finally, one approach to the issue of denial in the adult student population would be to mandate attendance at workshops addressing the typical problems that adult students face on campus such as balancing work, school and family, or dealing with guilt over taking time away from others for their schooling. It seems possible that once these students hear that their concerns are common they may be more willing to recognize them and accept help. By more effectively meeting adult student needs these students are more likely to be satisfied with their college experience and successful in their endeavors.

No quantitative data was gathered directly addressing the barriers that keep students from seeking counseling. However, the fact that adult students perceived the primary barrier as an inability to solve their "specialized problems" is consistent with the finding that traditionally-aged students held higher expectations for counselor expertise on the EAC-B than their adult counterparts. This scale measures a subject's expectation that a counselor will be able to meet his/her needs. Traditionally-aged students expected counselors to be able to meet their needs significantly more than adult students. Again, this finding suggests a need for well-trained professionals who can address adult student concerns as well as meaningful dissemination of information about the available counseling services.

The final theme in the qualitative data contrasts the traditionally-aged students' optimism and the adult students' pessimism in terms of their expectations of counseling. In general, the traditionally-aged students had a much brighter view of counselors, clients, and the counseling process. They expected clients to work hard in counseling and counselors to be genuinely devoted to helping their clients. They trusted counselors to maintain
confidentiality and not to practice outside of their expertise. In contrast, adult students were very skeptical of counselors and clients. They questioned whether confidentiality is maintained and whether counselors refer clients when appropriate. They also held pessimistic expectations for clients, wondering whether they actually follow through on the recommendations provided by counseling. These results again point to the need for education about counseling for adult students. Their skepticism may be diminished with accurate information about how the counseling process works. Addressing adult students' fears about breaches in confidentiality may be a bit more difficult. Again, eliminating student workers from the counseling center and making its location more discrete might help in this area. Educating students about what confidentiality means and the limits involved might also help. Even providing information about the possible legal ramifications of these breaches may help students understand the importance of confidentiality to counselors and how it differs from other professions. If these measures fall short it is possible that providing students access to counseling services from an outside agency may be one way to meet their needs more effectively. Future study needs to address these possibilities.

The more optimistic view of counseling held by the traditionally-aged interviewees is supported by the quantitative results. All of the statistical differences on the EAC-B showed that traditionally-aged students held higher and more positive expectations for counselors than adult students. In particular, traditionally-aged students held higher expectations for counselors in terms of liking their clients (Acceptance), disclosing information about themselves to their clients (Self-Disclosure), knowing how to help solve the problems presented by their clients (Expertise), and being calm, easygoing, well-adjusted people.
(Tolerance). All of these differences seem consistent with the notion that adult students hold more critical views of counseling. This pessimism may be the result of their expectation that counseling centers were created for traditionally-aged students, or possibly because of specialized life experience or misinformation. Regardless of the origin of this pessimism, future study must address this issue in more detail if adult student needs are to be met more fully which in turn may influence the recruitment and retention of this important part of the student population.

The second part of the qualitative discussion will address quantitative findings in relation to the interview data outside of the identified themes. Because the interviews were conducted using an open-ended discussion format their content did not directly address all of the issues contained in the EAC-B. Several of the EAC-B scales which resulted in significant differences for adult and traditionally-aged students (Acceptance, Tolerance, and Expertise) were not explicitly discussed with the interviewees. Even so, some support for these quantitative findings was gleaned from the qualitative analysis as stated above.

One area which resulted in significant differences for adult and traditionally-aged students on the EAC-B was discussed explicitly with all of the interviewees. The quantitative analysis showed that traditionally-aged students held higher expectations for counselor self-disclosure than adult students. In contrast to these findings, the interviews revealed no differences between adult and traditionally-aged students in their expectations for counselor self-disclosure. The majority of both groups agreed that counselors would be likely to give limited information on their personal and professional background as well as examples from their own experience when applicable. The contrast in quantitative and qualitative findings
in this regard may be the result of differences in expectation domains. Future research is necessary to clarify whether differences in expectations for self-disclosure exist between these two groups and the meaning this holds for both populations.

The final area of difference in the quantitative data showed that traditionally-aged students had higher expectations for counselor directiveness than adult students. Counselor directiveness was not discussed consistently in the interviews, therefore, the data is lacking to determine whether there is support or contradiction for this finding.

In summary, although the quantitative and qualitative data provide some conflicting information, most of their findings are either supportive or complimentary. It appears that both sets of data are in agreement that traditionally-aged students have higher and more positive expectations for counseling than adult students. Future research needs to elaborate on these findings and explore them in more detail to uncover ways of increasing adult student expectations for counseling in a positive way. This research is important in terms of understanding the adult-student population as well as meeting adult student needs and ultimately influencing the recruitment and retention of this important segment of the student body.

There are a number of limitations to the present study that must be taken into account when discussing the meaning of the results. First, because all of the data were collected through self-report measures it is impossible to ascertain how accurately subjects' responses reflect their behaviors. The presence of social desirability may have complicated the procedure and resulted in inaccurate reporting in both the questionnaire and the interview data. Attempts were made to minimize the influence of this variable in the quantitative data.
collection by stressing the anonymity of responses and the necessity of accurate data. Similarly, during the interviews subjects were assured that their responses would not be matched with their names and that no "right" answers existed. The interviewer made special efforts to encourage subjects to give honest responses whether negative or positive. It appears that these efforts were at least somewhat successful given that many of the subjects did talk about negative things in regard to their expectations about counseling. However, since no measure of social desirability was included in the study the possibility that this variable was operating cannot be ruled out.

A second possible limitation in the present study results from the fact that a nonrandom sample of students was used to generate the data. This may directly limit the degree of external validity in the present study in several ways. First, although age and time out of college were used as checks for representativeness of the adult and traditionally-aged student groups, no further checks were conducted to ascertain whether these samples accurately match the characteristics of the populations from which they were taken. Second, the gender split in the quantitative sample does not match the demographics of the university as a whole. The women far outnumbered the men in the present study. This gender imbalance is likely due to the particular courses from which subjects were solicited. Introductory and upper level courses in the social sciences were targeted for ease of data collection. The baseline gender split in these types of classes does generally favor women. Had other classes been included in the data solicitation, the gender split in the sample may have been more balanced. The unequal numbers of men and women in the present sample may have led to bias in the results regarding gender differences. Due to the sample limitations
regarding group status and gender, any generalizations to students within the university where the data was collected or to students at other institutions of higher education must remain tentative until more research is conducted.

A third limitation of the study is the small number of students included in the qualitative sample. This sample needed to be small given the time demands necessary to conduct interviews and process the data. However, it is possible that the information gathered from these interviews does not represent the perspectives of all the research participants. Furthermore, the results from the qualitative analysis are based on the understanding of subjects' expectations about counseling achieved by the investigator and are reliable only to that extent. Alternative interpretations of the interviewees' responses are possible which might lead to different conclusions. The qualitative findings are best understood as an adjunct to the quantitative analysis at this stage of inquiry.

The terminology used to describe the quantitative findings may represent a fourth limitation of the present research. In the group status results and discussion, adults were described as having "more negative" expectations about counseling than traditionally-aged students. Similarly, in the gender results and discussion, men were described as holding "more negative" expectations about counseling than women. A comparison of the mean scale scores for those variables that showed significant differences in either set of results revealed that on an absolute scale some of these differences would appropriately be labeled "more negative" (their means were significantly below the comparison group and below the midpoint of the scale) and some of these differences would more appropriately be labeled "less positive" (their means were significantly below the comparison group but above the midpoint
of the scale). The terminology “more negative” was utilized throughout the results and discussion in order to decrease the possible confusion arising from using both “more negative” and “less positive” to describe findings. The choice of terminology was further supported by the qualitative data where adult students did express “more negative” expectations about counseling than their traditionally-aged counterparts.

A fifth limitation of the present research involves the decision of the researcher not to ask the interviewees directly about differences between adult and traditionally-aged students. Since the research in this area is not well developed the researcher attempted to take the simplest approach possible. The subjects were not asked directly about these differences in order to see if they would be discussed naturally. The researcher felt that directing subjects to these differences through specific questions may create sets of expectations that otherwise would not have been emphasized. Since differences between adult and traditionally-aged students were discussed by many of the interviewees without prompting and differences were found in the quantitative measure, it is a logical progression for future research to ask about these differences more directly with both quantitative and qualitative measures. The data units uncovered in the qualitative part of the present research could be used to help create quantitative measures to assess these issues. Likewise, the differences identified by the quantitative measure in the present study may provide areas to explore directly with future interview subjects.

The purpose of the present study was to investigate whether differences exist between adult and traditionally-aged students in their expectations for counseling. Clarifying whether these differences exist is important for several reasons. Past research has shown adult
students experience a host of stressors subsequent to their decision to return to school (Ballmer & Cozby, 1981; Beutell & O'Hare, 1987; Farmer & Fyans, 1983; Hendel, 1983; Hooper, 1979; Spreadbury, 1983). Many of these studies recommend counseling as an important mechanism for assisting the adult-student population with these stressors (Apps, 1981; Bicknell, 1975; Campbell, 1984; Goldberg, 1980; McMillan, 1977; Nowak & Shriberg, 1981; Wilcoxon et al., 1989) yet, little research has been done on adult student expectations for or perceptions of available counseling services. If counseling is indeed an appropriate mechanism for aiding adult students in stress management it is imperative that we understand how adults view these services in order to improve their effectiveness. The present study uncovered a number of differences between adult and traditionally-aged students in terms of their counseling expectations that may, through additional research, provide avenues to improve counseling effectiveness for both groups.

It is also important to understand the differences between adult and traditionally-aged student expectations for counseling in order to clarify possible barriers to counseling utilization. Many students who have problems do not utilize the on-campus counseling services (Geisler & Thrush, 1975). The results from the present study suggest that utilization barriers may be a function of student status. If future research supports this finding institutions will have a more complete picture of student utilization and a better understanding of changes which could be implemented to increase utilization in both adult and traditionally-aged student groups.

Providing counseling services to adult students that meet their needs and address their most pressing concerns will also indirectly effect the recruitment and retention of these
students. If students feel that their needs are being met and support exists for them within the campus structure then their level of satisfaction with their school experience should increase to some degree. This increase may have an effect on those students who might leave the university because they feel alienated, overwhelmed or unsupported in some way. Although research shows that adult student nonpersistence is generally related to factors external to the university, there are students who leave based on internal factors (Meers & Gilkison, 1985; Naretto, 1995). Naretto (1995) found that an overwhelming majority of persisters in his study reported experiencing a feeling of support and encouragement from the college while nonpersisters reported that the college was either noncommittal or negative in their lives. Improving the ability of counseling centers to meet the needs of adult students should enhance their feelings of being supported by the university. Thus, counseling services aimed at supporting adult students and helping them feel connected to the university may be valuable in terms of recruitment and retention efforts.

In summary, the results of the present study provide some evidence that differences do exist in adult and traditionally-aged students' expectations for counseling. These differences are important in terms of understanding how adult students view counseling services, barriers to utilization, and issues of recruitment and retention. Future research must explore the present differences more completely using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Once these differences are more discretely defined issues of generalization and implementation in actual counseling centers can be addressed.
APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW OUTLINE
Imagine that you are considering going to the student counseling center for help:

1. Why do people go to counseling?
2. What kind of things are appropriate to talk about in counseling?
   A. What is not appropriate to talk about?
   B. Who decides what is talked about in counseling?
3. Tell me what you think happens in a typical counseling session.
4. How useful do you think counseling is for solving problems?
5. What do you expect a counselor to be like?
   A. Describe his/her characteristics.
   1. How much experience do you expect her/him to have?
   2. How trustworthy do you expect her/him to be?
   B. How do you expect a counselor to act in counseling? What's the counselor's role?
   1. Will he/she ask questions?
   2. Will he/she be direct?
   3. Will he/she confront the client on their problems?
      a. What about problems the client does not bring up?
   4. Will he/she talk about himself/herself?
   5. Will he/she give advice?
   6. Will he/she make decisions for the client?
   7. Will the counselor have the right answer? Will he/she give it to you?
   C. What do you think the counselor will think about you when you tell him/her your problems?
      1. Will he/she like you? Think you're silly? etc.
   D. What makes somebody a good counselor?
6. What do you expect a client to be like?
   A. Describe his/her characteristics.
   B. How do clients act in session? What is the client's role?
      1. How active are they in session?
      2. How much should they disclose about themselves to the counselor?
      3. How much responsibility should they take for solving their own problems?
   C. What makes somebody a good client?
7. What kinds of things do you expect to do in counseling (e.g., take tests, talk, role play, problem solve, take medications)
8. How serious do your problems need to be in order to go to counseling?
9. What makes counseling successful?
   A. How do you know when counseling has been unsuccessful?
   B. Do you think your relationship with the counselor will affect the outcome of counseling?
10. How do people know when counseling is no longer needed?
    A. How is this decided?
    B. How long does counseling take?
    C. How are people different at the end of counseling?
    D. After someone has been through counseling do you think they might ever need more counseling? Why or why not?
11. If you had a problem, do you think there are people here at the student counseling center who could help you with it? Why or why not?
12. What do you think keeps people from using the counseling center when they have a problem?
13. Anything else that you want to add in terms of your expectations?
APPENDIX B

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT COUNSELING (FORM B)
I EXPECT TO...

_____ 1. Take psychological tests.
_____ 2. Like the counselor.
_____ 3. See a counselor in training.
_____ 4. Gain some experience in new ways of solving problems within the counseling process.
_____ 5. Openly express my emotions regarding myself and my problems.

I EXPECT TO...

_____ 6. Understand the purpose of what happens in the interview.
_____ 7. Do assignments outside the counseling interviews.
_____ 8. Take responsibility for making my own decisions.
_____ 9. Talk about my present concerns.
_____ 10. Get practice in relating openly and honestly to another person within the counseling relationship.

I EXPECT TO...

_____ 11. Enjoy my interviews with the counselor.
_____ 12. Practice some of the things I need to learn in the counseling relationship.
_____ 13. Get a better understanding of myself and others.
_____ 14. Stay in counseling for at least a few weeks, even if at first I am not sure it will help.
_____ 15. See the counselor for more than three interviews.

I EXPECT TO...

_____ 16. Never need counseling again.
_____ 17. Enjoy being with the counselor.
_____ 18. Stay in counseling even though it may be painful or unpleasant at times.
_____ 19. Contribute as much as I can in terms of expressing my feelings and discussing them.
_____ 20. See the counselor for only one interview.
EXPECT TO...

_____ 21. Go to counseling only if I have a very serious problem.
_____ 22. Find that the counseling relationship will help the counselor and me identify problems on which I need to work.
_____ 23. Become better able to help myself in the future.
_____ 24. Find that my problem will be solved once and for all in counseling.
_____ 25. Feel safe enough with the counselor to really say how I feel.

I EXPECT TO...

_____ 26. See an experienced counselor.
_____ 27. Find that all I need to do is to answer the counselor's questions.
_____ 28. Improve my relationships with others.
_____ 29. Ask the counselor to explain what he or she means whenever I do not understand something that is said.
_____ 30. Work on my concerns outside the counseling interviews.
_____ 31. Find that the interview is not the place to bring up personal problems.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERN YOUR EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE COUNSELOR

I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

_____ 32. Explain what's wrong.
_____ 33. Help me identify and label my feelings so I can better understand them.
_____ 34. Tell me what to do.
_____ 35. Know how I feel even when I cannot say quite what I mean.

I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

_____ 36. Know how to help me.
_____ 37. Help me identify particular situations where I have problems.
_____ 38. Give encouragement and reassurance.
_____ 39. Help me to know how I am feeling by putting my feelings into words for me.
_____ 40. Be a "real" person not just a person doing a job.
I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

___ 41. Help me discover what particular aspects of my behavior are relevant to my problems.
___ 42. Inspire confidence and trust.
___ 43. Frequently offer me advice.
___ 44. Be honest with me.
___ 45. Be someone who can be counted on.

I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

___ 46. Be friendly and warm towards me.
___ 47. Help me solve my problems.
___ 48. Discuss his or her own attitudes and relate them to my problem.
___ 49. Give me support.
___ 50. Decide what treatment plan is best.

I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

___ 51. Know how I feel at times, without my having to speak.
___ 52. Do most of the talking.
___ 53. Respect me as a person.
___ 54. Discuss his or her experiences and relate them to my problems.
___ 55. Praise me when I show improvement.

I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

___ 56. Make me face up to the differences between what I say and how I behave.
___ 57. Talk freely about himself or herself.
___ 58. Have no trouble getting along with people.
___ 59. Like me.
___ 60. Be someone I can really trust.
I EXPECT THE COUNSELOR TO...

____ 61. Like me in spite of the bad things that he or she knows about me.
____ 62. Make me face up to the differences between how I see myself and how I am seen by others.
____ 63. Be someone who is calm and easygoing.
____ 64. Point out to me the differences between what I am and what I want to be.
____ 65. Just give me information.
____ 66. Get along well in the world.
Data Unit 1: **Seriousness of problems.**

**Traditionally-aged students:**

"Well, there is a difference to what is serious to a counselor and what is serious to the person. I guess if it is serious to the person then they should go, because if it is to them the only way to solve something then they go ahead and do it..." (S6)

"I wouldn't think that would matter because something that may be less to me may be more serious to someone else...It may be very serious to them even though the counselor may not see it as a big deal." (S4)

(Interviewer: "If they've exhausted some of the other options for getting help then a counselor is something to try?" ) "Right, right." (S4)

"I don't think anybody can make a judgment on it...I don't think you can professionally make a judgment on how serious the problem is to someone." (S1)

"One of the reasons (that people go to counselors)...is because they didn't think they had anywhere else to turn to. They feel that some of the other things they went to didn't help..." (S5)

**Adult students:**

"I think the network of family and friends is the first line of support. If you don't have that or you've tried that and are still not having any success in dealing with your issue, then counseling is probably a good idea." (S10)

"I was in one of those groups at a social gathering and this girl was all out of whack because she had bumped the fender of her car. She's not married, doesn't have any children, has a nice apartment, and she bumped her car. I thought she was going to lose it. And I'm
thinking to myself 'you wish you had a problem like that.' So, to her, she has a serious problem. To me, I can handle it... It must be serious to that person." (S7)

"I think they would try other things first" (S7)

Data Unit 2: Counseling Tools.

Traditionally-aged Students:

"I would say it is probably pretty typical of therapy to take those tests. I think it aids in giving the therapist some kind of perspective to go from." (S11)

"I don't think they do that many psychological tests. I can't foresee any." (S5)

"I don't know, would they give you handouts or something..." (S1)

(Interviewer: "How about something like doing role plays?") "Yes, I think so." (S1)

"I wouldn't expect to take any tests or anything like that..." (S3)

"I think that role-playing is good with some people. It's a good way to get people to open up and express the way they feel or express what's going on...I think in certain cases it would be a definite necessity to have role-playing." (S3)

"...some kind of role-play to maybe help the client in their next encounter with the person or to help open their communication." (S4)

"I'm not sure exactly what those (tests) are used for so I don't know exactly what situations they would be used in but they probably are in some instances." (S4)

"...your counselor isn't there to say 'you're a manic-depressive, you need to take this pill or that pill' because you're not there to be judged by them. I would take that as a
judgment kind of thing...I wouldn't expect it at all in counseling, any kind of medication." (S3)

"No. I don't think at this level (medications) would be used." (S1)

(Interviewer: "How about taking medications?") "No". (S5)

"I usually see counseling as people going of their own free will so I don't really see a need to get medicated." (S6)

Adult Students:

"I'm sure they (psychological tests) would be (part of counseling). I don't know how I feel about those tests, sometimes I feel they are baloney." (S9)

"The only thing I can think of right now is maybe a group session." (S8)

"...yes, I think that (role-playing) might happen because it might help the person be able to go back over the incident or to be able to help them through it a little bit." (S8)

"...maybe somewhat games...like ink blots and things...and if you're dealing with a child...a doll or draw you pictures..." (S2)

"I think your typical counselor no. I think it depends on the person, if they have psychiatric problems maybe or mental disorders or something like that, then maybe they may need to have some type of medication...But as far as your typical counseling session I would have to say no." (S2)

"I know people who take medications and they don't go to counseling. And I think people who take medications should go to counseling...but I think that (taking medications) is more unusual." (S7)

(Interviewer: What about medication?) "Not as a rule, no." (S10)
Data Unit 3: Counseling Effectiveness: Talking versus Acting.

Traditionally-aged students:

"I think it takes an open and honest client who is really going to talk about what is happening (to have successful therapy)" (S6)

(Interviewer: "So even if there wasn't a particular resolution it might help just to start to talk...") "Right." (S4)

"I think that just being able to open up to someone and tell them how you feel and what's been going on in your life and know that they're not going to make a judgment on you...I think that helps a lot...it definitely helps to get things out..." (S3)

"I think as long as the client has acknowledgment and awareness (of the problem) - if that point is reached then I think it's a success." (S1)

"Most of the time I think it (counseling) is very useful...if people feel that they have somebody to talk to it works." (S5)

"I would say it has been successful when you have a better understanding of the issues, a better understanding of yourself..." (S11)

"I would think that talking about yourself you would achieve some kind of insight so in that sense I don't see it as a failure." (S11)

Adult students:

"...(The clients) have the problems and they have the answers and it is up to them to be willing to hear the answers and take the necessary steps." (S10)

"I think that it would be very useful if that person, to the best of their ability, used whatever type of advice the counselor had given them...I don't think it would be helpful if that
person just took it lightly and didn't take the advice which the counselor was trying to help them with..." (S8)

"It can only be as useful as the people who are going to counseling make it. You can go and listen, but not really listen, or go and try and not really try, you can go and make a really surface effort and it will never really work... You really need to make the effort to incorporate the solutions determined in that session, incorporate those into your life and if you don't make the effort then counseling won't work at all." (S12)

Data Unit 4: Counseling Trainees: Acceptance versus Apprehension.

Traditionally-aged students:

"I imagine there's probably people in training here but I would probably think that there was also some supervisor with them...I think that would be OK because they have to learn too and they can probably have their own insight to give too..." (S6)

"...I wouldn't mind going to someone who is in training but I know friends who might...I don't think it would bother me at all." (S3)

(Interviewer: "Would graduate students alter your decision to use the services?") "It might initially, but I think I would be more concerned if I don't see any benefit or change a couple of weeks into it." (S11)

"...they use graduate students just to figure out what the student has and get the student information and stuff like that..." (S5)
Adult Students:

"Depending on what they want to talk about ...they may feel uncomfortable with someone who is a trainee as opposed to someone who is an experienced and licensed counselor...Probably if I had a sensitive issue I would discuss it with a counselor. I might be uncomfortable with a student being involved." (S9)

"...I just wonder, when you let students do that (counseling) and it is a long term thing, when that student's gone, then you give me another student, I mean, that kind of turns me off." (S7)

"I think the person, to be able to give advice, should have...lots of years of experience to be able to give the right variety of advice in counseling." (S8)

"If I were going to the University Counseling Center...I would expect the person to be a degreed person. I would also expect if that person were not a degreed person that that person was sharing that session with someone who was a degreed person who 'knew what they were doing'..." (S12)

Data Unit 5: Identified Problems: Assumed Similarity versus Recognized Differences.

Traditionally-aged Students:

"I'm guessing mostly its not any of the heavy duty stuff but the lighter stuff...distress, test anxiety...school anxiety or stuff like that." (S5)

"I would probably say maybe family problems or relationship problems." (S3)

"...family problems, relationship problems, school problems, even personal crises like rape or abuse." (S4)
Adult Students:

"Well, I suppose from my point of view, I am at an age and am mature enough that I can handle my own problems related to the conflicts going in school...I have kids in college right now and from their point of view I would think that their problems might be initially coping with being away from home for the first time ...and maybe some problems involving relationships with fellow students and/or instructors..." (S9)

"From my perspective...I don't really see any (problems). Most of the older students I've talked to, the only complaints they have are the ones most people have about courses...which certainly don't need any psychological counseling." (S9)

“The (older) student may not go and seek the counseling because they may feel that there isn’t counseling in that particular area or problem that they may be facing.” (S8)

"There are probably different issues, 'how can I cope with life away from home, how can I cope with my studies, I just feel overwhelmed, how can I cope with those feelings of being overwhelmed and still survive on campus and get good grades and make new friends...the (traditionally-aged) student probably goes to counseling services, in my opinion, for different reasons other than the reasons that a non-traditional student would have..." (S12)

"I think students in the dorm who have been away from home for the first time - I think the counseling center is set up to meet their needs...If a staff person was involved I think that would be kept to yourself because this is the community where you work..." (S7)

"I think the ones who seek counseling the most are white females...because I think counseling, when counseling was set up, it was set up to help that group of people...If you
are a new group coming in some of the problems have not been heard by the counselors..." (S7)

"I think...if a woman has been raped she may need to go to a counselor...or even maybe if a person's marriage is having problems...I guess any type of crisis that has come up that a student might not know how to deal with... (S8)

"...Any type of rape or something like that...for females if they were pregnant, lost the baby or had an abortion...if somebody is in an abusive situation...even if you're having a problem financially." (S2)

Data Unit 6: Barriers: Stigma versus Institutional/ Situational Barriers.

Traditionally-aged students:

(Interviewer: "What keeps students who have problems from going to the counseling center?")

"Maybe what their friends might think if they're going to counseling...I guess maybe some students may not think that it would really help..." (S4)

"...worried about what your friends will say, worried about what your family will say, I think those are the major barriers." (S11)

"...(some people) are not willing to admit the problem." (S11)

"People automatically think that when you're seeing a counselor its such a bad thing - you must have a lot of problems in your life or you must be screwed up...like if someone is going through this major problem they have to go see this counselor because they're crazy." (S3)
"...some people think that 'this is a stranger, how are they going to help me?' I think they're afraid that people are going to make judgment on them." (S3)

"...it's hard to make that first step to go and make the time to go especially when you're dealing with the problem." (S3)

"...they think that they might not even get help from there (the counseling center). That it would be worth nothing." (S5)

"...I think some people look differently at people because they had to go to counseling...they had to go to counseling, can you believe that, they couldn't deal with it." (S6)

"If they didn't have time or maybe didn't know enough about it..." (S6)

"For me its time...I don't have time to go to counseling." (S1)

**Adult Students:**

(Interviewer: "What keeps students who have problems from going to the counseling center?")

"...don't really know what's available in terms of what counseling there is here...I think I knew somewhere in my mind that there was psychological counseling somewhere on campus." (S9)

"I suppose my first idea would be to go somewhere else (for counseling). If I were a younger traditional student I might go to a counselor on the campus...I suppose it (the counseling center) is set up for the younger student." (S9)
"The other thing is that I thought it is probably not marketed enough. People are not aware of what is available... (also) taking it to be a waste or not helpful. I think it is a problem of education and marketing and selling the idea that the services are there for them." (S9)

"...I didn't even know it was there, I would not have known to go... In my experience, most of the things that are available on campus are not available when I can go." (S10)

"Usually I think that the person may be able to see it (the problem) but they may not want to accept that they really need to go to counseling..." (S8)

"...they may feel they don't need it or maybe they don't feel they have the time to go seek counseling, and then they may feel that the counseling may not help or not be a benefit to them..." (S8)

"I think it (stigma) may affect some of the younger students... I think if a person is a little bit older they may feel a little bit different about getting help or they may have experience to know that if I can't solve this problem I can get someone that can help me." (S8)

"First of all, I don't think people know what they offer, I didn't... They just kind of blend in. I call over there and I say 'send me such and such memo,' and then in the same breath 'could you make me an appointment, I'm having trouble with my husband.' I just don't see it." (S7)

"...I would say that they (the counseling center) would probably be more geared toward the traditional student that the non-traditional." (S12).

"...it may be an ego thing, you just cannot take that step to call somebody and say 'hey, I need help'." (S2)
"...do they even know these services are available, if they knew, do they know exactly what services are available or do they just think that they can go in there and talk about their grades..." (S12)

"...Now you're not going to go to counseling if you don't know that you have a problem. You don't want to admit your weaknesses. Many people don't like to admit their weaknesses." (S12)

Data Unit 7: View of Counseling: Optimism versus Pessimism.

Traditionally-aged students:

"If they do (make judgments about the client) I think that they would do it after the person left. They wouldn't say any of this to the client..." (S6)

"I imagine (a counselor) is open-minded, accepting of the person. I would anticipate somebody who is knowledgeable about the counseling field. Somebody who is helpful." (S11)

"...the problems where you need major counseling, I think you probably go down there (the counseling center) and end up with a referral somewhere else...I don't think they'd leave you hanging there." (S5)

"I expect the counselor to be very open-minded and very trustworthy..." (S5)

"Professionally, they (counselors) probably don't do that kind of thing but personally they probably can't help...make a little small judgment...I don't think it would be enough to influence the counseling sessions at all." (S5)
"I think when you go in there you are trusting that that person (the counselor) will respect confidentiality...you don't know that person who is your counselor but you are hoping that they have some kind of ethics and they're not going to say something." (S1)

"I think the counselor is going to be open-minded and has to always focus and keep in mind that this is serious to that person there in front of them..." (S1)

"...there should be no doubt in your mind that you could trust them (the counselor) cause how is someone going to open up and tell you their problems...I trust counselors...I think they know that's part of their job..." (S3)

"...I think that just as everyone's human, everyone makes judgments towards people...But I think being a counselor, you would have to be the kind of person who would have to set that aside and not let that get in between anything you are trying to do to help this person..." (S3)

"I picture them (counselors) as being caring and understanding, very interested in what you're saying and compassionate." (S4)

"They may (judge the client), but I don't think they would let those types of feelings show in front of the client." (S4)

**Adult Students:**

"...I think if they can't separate that (their judgments from counseling), they should be forthright enough to admit that and refer them to somebody else...I would venture to say that happens less often then it should." (S10)

"If I go in and something in the chemistry with that person makes me feel reticent to disclose certain personal things, then I am not in the right place. I am sure it is true with the
counselors too. If they have a really strong feeling that they are not comfortable with this
person, I think they have an obligation to refer them somewhere else because they are not
going to be effective. Whether they do it or not I don't know." (S10)

"I think I would personally probably choose not to (go to the counseling center if I
had a problem)." (S10)

"...if they (the client) are dishonest and non-cooperative I suppose in some cases it
would be the counselor’s obligation or duty to end the counseling. I don’t know if that
happens or if it doesn’t happen." (S9)

"I think they (counselors) keep those kinds of judgments to themselves. I’m not sure
how that would affect counseling. Depending on the counselor they might try to end it or
they might try to milk it, who knows. Counselor’s are people like everybody else and some
are in business just to make money and others are genuinely interested in helping people." (S9)

"I think some people come a time or two and others come until they run out of money.
I don't know whether they do much of that psychoanalysis that goes on for years and years
and never seems to do much of anything." (S9)

"I suppose my first idea would be to go somewhere else (other than the counseling
center)...if I needed that kind of service." (S9)

“Because let’s face it, we talk. Period. That is the bottom line, we talk. And I don’t
care who it is, they talk. We talk. I am in a confidential office, we talk. So I know they talk.
I’ve heard it.” (S7).
"...just say I'm a student and I'm having marital problems, I don't know if I would go there with it. You're in the community, you run into these people..." (S7)

"I just can't relate counseling with an eight to five schedule for some reason. It's like 'who's next, who's next?' How much help are they getting? Are you just there to listen or are you there to really help? Because sometimes people just want someone to listen to them, and it's like if lunch time came 'Oh, got to go to lunch.' It's a job. The caring, I don't feel that around here. I really don't." (S7)

"I doubt a client would be a professional person...it's more everyday people with problems, and I think those people (professionals) have bigger problems than everyday people do...but they don't seek counseling." (S7)

"...that's what people do now-a-days, they act anyway they want. If they want to holler and scream they feel that's their right...If they want to sit and listen they will...and if that's all they're going to get out of the session...I don't think they're getting much out of it..." (S7)

"...the people who need it (counseling) the most are the ones who are in the most denial that they do need it..." (S7)

(Interviewer: Do you think most counselors will do that, will go the extra mile...?)

"I wouldn't think so. I think its more business." (S7)

"...it is up to the counselor to put meaning into what was said. He's not there to scold, he's there to coach. He's not there to belittle, he or she, is there to support and I know there are probably counselors out there that probably don't do either." (S12)
"...hopefully the counselor doesn't have too big an ego that he's afraid to refer that person to somebody else. Hopefully that happens in this world..." (S12)

"I think they should be confidential about the information but maybe the counselor could get some other advice...now that we're talking about it I am beginning to think that maybe the counselor may do that, may get more advice or talk about that situation (the client's session) with someone else..." (S8)
LIST OF REFERENCES


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